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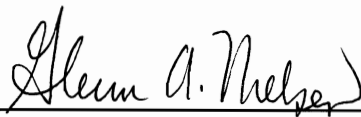
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A NARRATIVE APPROACH TO METAPHOR FOR PREACHING

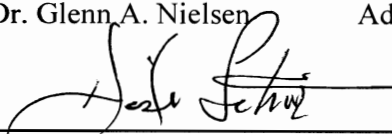
A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Practical Theology
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

By
Justin P. Rossow
May 2009

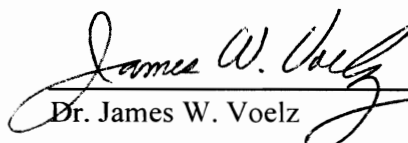
Approved by



Dr. Glenn A. Nielsen Advisor



Dr. David R. Schmitt Reader



Dr. James W. Voelz Reader

To my family

Once God in His wisdom committed Himself to language as a means to communicate His saving love, He simultaneously committed Himself to the use of metaphor. When words are used, metaphor is inevitable. I hasten to add that this outcome is not at all unfortunate. It is a cause for rejoicing. Our language is the richer for it. Metaphor helps rather than hinders communication. In brief, metaphor is a necessary good.

Francis C. Rossow, *Preaching the Creative Gospel Creatively* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1983), 34.

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ABSTRACT

Rossow, Justin P. "Preaching the Story behind the Image: A Narrative Approach to Metaphor for Preaching." Ph.D. diss., Concordia Seminary, 2008. 296 pp.

In response to an increasingly image-driven culture, preachers have focused more and more attention on the use of imagery and metaphor in the sermon. The homiletics of metaphor, however, currently lacks a sufficient hermeneutical foundation. This dissertation lays the groundwork for a fuller understanding of how interpreters fill in the blanks left by metaphors in the biblical text and in the sermon. While the appendix describes a range of different theories on what metaphor is and how it works, the dissertation itself presents a uniquely narrative approach to metaphor for preaching.

With some modification, A. J. Greimas' "actantial model" of narrative relationships provides a method for analyzing how the structured relationships in the "source domain" of a metaphor relate to structured relationships in the "target domain." The narrative structure implicit in the relationship of a shepherd and a lamb, for example, is strikingly different than the narrative structure of a lamb in a sacrificial system. A lamb metaphor will highlight different characters, attributes, roles, and expected outcomes in Jesus' relationship to his followers depending on which of these narrative structures is in view.

The actantial model depicts stable narrative relationships that can be instantiated by a wide variety of specific actors or features. Applying the actantial model to metaphor theory, a narrative approach to metaphor is able to describe important dynamics of metaphor interpretation. The complexities of "cross-domain mapping," the role culturally shaped "conceptual metaphors" play in interpretation, and the motivations and results of "blending" multiple metaphors together all directly affect how preachers interpret the biblical text and how hearers interpret sermons.

Textual and homiletic examples throughout the dissertation demonstrate how a narrative approach to metaphor helps preachers slow down the often automatic process of filling in the blanks left by metaphor. More aware of which interpretive decisions are being made and how, preachers are better equipped to approach the biblical text, individual sermons, and their preaching ministry over time.

CHAPTER ONE

CONTEMPORARY PREACHING AND METAPHOR

Introduction: Preaching an Image-Rich Text in an Image-Driven Culture

The Swiss theologian Karl Barth once famously commented that preachers should hold the Bible in one hand and a newspaper in the other.¹ Though preachers are still strategically positioned between the culture of the biblical text and the culture of their contemporary hearers,² the communications environment Barth knew has shifted. What once was a print-dominated world has been inundated with electronic media and seemingly omnipresent images. Today, preachers need not only the Bible in one hand and a newspaper in the other, but an HD-TV on in the background and a laptop computer regularly surfing the Internet.³ Taking such an image-rich setting seriously can lead preachers to a deeper appreciation of the rich imagery presented in the biblical texts themselves. As one specific kind of textual imagery, metaphor becomes an important way of bringing scriptural texts and contemporary hearers together.

¹ Arthur Michael Ramsey and Leon-Joseph Suenens, *The Future of the Christian Church* (London: SCM Press, 1971), 13–14.

² In other words, the preacher looks both at the text with the hearers in mind and back at the people with the text in mind. Richard R. Caemmerer describes this kind of double vision well: “Every stage of preparation for preaching, as well as preaching itself, requires that the preacher be equally concerned for the Word from God and for the people to whom the Word must come” Richard R. Caemmerer, *Preaching for the Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), xii, emphasis original.

³ Jolyon P. Mitchell, *Visually Speaking: Radio and the Renaissance of Preaching* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 35. Mitchell attributes the TV suggestion to Paul Scott Wilson and adds the World Wide Web suggestion himself.

An Image-Driven Culture

On a typical day in 2001, the average American consumed—intentionally or unintentionally—about five hundred visual advertisements.⁴ By 2007, that number had grown dramatically: from the time most people open the morning paper (or more likely, turn on the morning news) until they finally doze off in front of the *Late Late Show* or another rerun of *I Love Lucy*, Americans now typically encounter more than 2,000 advertising images.⁵ Since TiVo and other electronic devices have allowed consumers to skip TV commercials, advertisers have had to find new ways of incorporating brand images into the fabric of daily life. Today, ad images stare back at the consuming public from parking stripes, paving stones, even urinal tablets.⁶ The contemporary communications environment is awash with images.

This visual media phenomenon constitutes a major cultural shift: “In relation to communications technology, the 20th century . . . witnessed the most extensive changes in the means of communication since the development of writing. . . . The only media change that compares in magnitude with the shift from literacy to electronics is the shift from orality to literacy.”⁷ As media and attendant modes of knowing reality change, the way people talk and think—the way they hear, learn, mark, and inwardly digest—also changes: “Watching television conditions us to a way of knowing reality which operates not through reason and principle, but

⁴ James R. Wilson and S. Roy Wilson, *Mass Media, Mass Culture: An Introduction*, 5th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2001), 344.

⁵ Louise Story, “Anywhere the Eye Can See, It’s Now Likely to See an Ad,” *New York Times*, 15 January 2007.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Thomas E. Boomershine, “Biblical Megatrends: Toward a Paradigm for the Interpretation of the Bible in Electronic Media,” *Society of Biblical Literature 1987 Seminar Papers*, ed. Kent Harold Richards (New York: Society of Biblical Literature, 1987), 149.

through the capacities of the imagination to identify with vivid images and narratives of human life.”⁸

Such an historically significant development is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the decline of Modernism and one of the most pressing challenges for ministry in the 21st century. “[Modern] theologians tried to create an intellectual faith, placing reason and order at the heart of religion. Mystery and metaphor were banished as too fuzzy, too mystical, too illogical. After forfeiting to the media the role of storyteller, the church now enters a world where story and metaphor are at the heart of spirituality.”⁹

This culture shift has serious implications for contemporary homiletics. Graham Johnston observes, “Boomers and busters, both of whom were raised on television, and are trained to receive information visually and orally, process information in a more random, less linear fashion.”¹⁰ Richard A. Jensen writes, “I am convinced that it is the shift from a literate to a post-literate communications culture that calls forth changes in the way we conceptualize the preaching task in our time.”¹¹ According to Richard L. Eslinger, “Preachers stand in the midst of congregations already formed and informed by the images of the culture. They also come with some awareness of the imagery of faith. The sermon is at ground zero in this contest between the worlds that shape us.”¹²

⁸ Thomas H. Troeger, “Imaginative Theology: The Shape of Post-Modern Homiletics,” *Homiletic* 13, no. 1 (1988): 28.

⁹ Leonard Sweet, *Postmodern Pilgrims* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2000), 86.

¹⁰ Graham Johnston, *Preaching to a Postmodern World: A Guide to Reaching Twenty-First-Century Listeners* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001), 189.

¹¹ Richard Jensen, *Thinking in Story: Preaching in a Post-Literate Age* (Lima, Ohio: CSS, 1993), 46.

¹² Richard L. Eslinger, *The Web of Preaching: New Options in Homiletical Method* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 256.

All these preachers are attempting to address fundamental questions that stem from preaching in a communication environment that has changed from print-based media to predominantly visual media. This desire to engage an “image-driven culture”¹³ has in turn renewed homiletical interest in metaphor as a kind of textual image: “Whatever shape the sermon takes, people who preach are moving toward consensus that *Scripture and metaphor are essentials of the sermon for our time*, whether the metaphor comes from Scripture or from outside the Bible.”¹⁴ Preaching the biblical text in a visual communications environment means, in part, becoming more aware of the dynamics of imagery in general and metaphor in particular, not only in the sermon but in the biblical text itself.

The Image-Rich Text

Returning to the scriptures on behalf of visual listeners, “what we come to see is that God communicates through images. The prophetic vision is precisely the presence of images that are seen or heard, concerning which there may be an interpreting or explaining word.”¹⁵ Some sections of scripture easily fit this description: Ezekiel, Daniel, the parables of Jesus, the Apocalypse of John. These and other obviously image-rich texts take advantage of the whole “range of pictorial language,” including “representational” and “impressionistic” language.¹⁶

¹³ Sweet, *Postmodern Pilgrims*, 91.

¹⁴ Charles Rice, “Shaping Sermons by the Interplay of Text and Metaphor,” in *Preaching Biblically: Creating Sermons in the Shape of Scripture*, ed. Don M. Wardlaw (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983), 108, emphasis original. As another example, Robert G. Hughes and Robert Kysar are expressly concerned with thinking “systematically about preaching doctrine in a new century.” Robert G. Hughes and Robert Kysar, *Preaching Doctrine for the Twenty-First Century* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), viii. With preaching in mind, they contend that “theological language for the most part, if not entirely, is metaphorical” and that “the translation of the tradition entails the imaginative quest for new metaphors to say what has been said with metaphors in other cultural soil in very different ways” (15–16).

¹⁵ C. Benton Kline, Jr., “How Does the Sermon Mean?” *Liturgy* 8 (Fall 1989): 26.

¹⁶ Mitchell, *Visually Speaking*, 221.

Texts that tell of visions or graphic events seem to provide a natural connection to a culture whose primary communication currency is the visual image.

Even the most logical and tightly argued sections of scripture, however, are also shot through with less apparent imagery: the textual imagery of metaphor. The apostle Paul is a good example: “Today Paul is often viewed as the egghead of the New Testament and credited with (or blamed for) articulating the basic *propositions* of the Christian faith. . . . Actually, Paul’s letters are filled with metaphorical expressions.”¹⁷ As C. Benton Kline puts it, “The apostle writing to the churches shares what has been received from God in imaginative, image-charged, metaphor-shaped prose.”¹⁸ Indeed, the Pauline epistles are rife with metaphors taken from city life, building construction, agriculture, marriage, parenting, adoption, illness, clothing, the human body, household management, slavery, citizenship, the Roman court system, the Old Testament sacrificial system, the marketplace, banking, travel, warfare, theater, chariot races, gladiators, the Olympics—and the list could go on.¹⁹

In fact, a prevalent use of metaphor is found not only on the fringes, as it were, but at the very center of Christian theology and discourse: the Gospel itself can be proclaimed in terms of birth, life, salvation, light, food, ransom, redemption, inheritance, reconciliation, marriage, expiation, cleansing, salvation, liberation, victory, the payment of debt, or a verdict of innocence, to name just a few.²⁰ Going to the scriptures on behalf of an image-driven people causes

¹⁷ Hughes and Kysar, *Preaching Doctrine*, 60, emphasis added. This claim can be made both of the apostle in general and of his specific writings. Romans is a prime example: “Paul’s letter to the Romans is frequently characterized as the most theological and abstract of Paul’s letters, but in fact it displays a rich variety of imagery and metaphor.” Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, and Tremper Longman III, gen eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 734.

¹⁸ Kline, “How Does the Sermon Mean?” 26.

¹⁹ See David J. Williams, *Paul’s Metaphors: Their Context and Character* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999).

²⁰ See Jacob A. O. Preus, *Just Words: Understanding the Fullness of the Gospel* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2000).

preachers to become more aware of how often the Word of God uses metaphor to shape Christian faith and life.

In an image-driven context, textual imagery—especially the textual imagery of metaphor—provides a common ground between the Bible and the hearers. Preachers will therefore ask how metaphor interpretation works, both as they search culturally embedded scripture and as they prepare sermons for their culturally embedded hearers. How does metaphor in the biblical text or the sermon enable and facilitate communication? How do preachers and hearers alike make decisions—consciously or unconsciously—about what is obviously intended by metaphor, what is obviously not intended, and what is hinted at or suggested? Preachers will ask both how the biblical text guides and constrains their understanding of its metaphors, and how sermons can guide and constrain their hearers' interpretative process. A robust theory of metaphor is important for *interpreting* as well as *speaking from* the pervasive metaphorical language of God's Word for the sake of image-driven hearers.

Thesis and Scope of the Dissertation

The rest of chapter 1 describes the contours of contemporary homiletics with metaphor specifically in mind. Various approaches to preaching touch on metaphor in one way or another. At the same time, fundamental questions of how metaphor works have gone largely unaddressed. The need for a more complex understanding of the hermeneutics of metaphor will be felt only between the extreme objective and subjective poles of contemporary homiletics. Situated for linguistic and theological reasons between these extremes, this dissertation offers a uniquely narrative approach to the complexities of metaphor interpretation. Since preachers both interpret metaphors in the biblical text and craft metaphors interpreted by their hearers, a fuller understanding of metaphor will assist preachers throughout the homiletic process.

The central insight of this dissertation is summed up in its thesis statement: *A schema of implied narrative relationships guides and constrains metaphor interpretation.* By describing the implied narrative structure that shapes the interpretation of metaphor, preachers can slow down the often automatic and unconscious process of meaning production enough to notice which interpretive decisions are being made and how.

Just as chapter 1 places this thesis in the context of contemporary homiletic theory, appendix 1 situates a narrative approach to metaphor within a range of contemporary theories of metaphor. Chapter 2 lays the foundation of a narrative approach to metaphor and introduces the method used in the rest of the dissertation. The subsequent chapters flesh out this narrative approach to metaphor and demonstrate how it can help preachers manage complexities both in the biblical text and in the preaching event.

Several limits help define the scope of the discussion that follows. First, this dissertation will not treat the use of visual media or even non-metaphorical²¹ pictorial language in preaching.²² Nonetheless, since interpreting graphic images and interpreting verbal images are similar in important ways,²³ work with the specific textual imagery of metaphor will by

²¹ One of the important insights of contemporary metaphor theory is that metaphor is not bound to any particular syntactical form. For this reason (among others), the sometimes stark distinction between metaphor and simile has a diminishing number of adherents. Though trite similes may be mere comparisons, the same could be said of weak metaphors. Conversely, the impact of eloquent simile can be the same as eloquent metaphor; “my love is like a red, red rose” is not significantly different from “my love is a red, red rose,” for example. See Andrea L. Weiss, *Figurative Language in Biblical Prose Narrative: Metaphor in the Book of Samuel* (Boston: Brill, 2006), 161–79 for a concise discussion of metaphor and simile with helpful application to the biblical text. For the purposes of this dissertation, we will include metaphor and simile but exclude other kinds of non-literal language like metonymy, synecdoche, irony, hyperbole, allegory, typology, and so forth.

²² By limiting our study to metaphor, however, we not only narrow, we also deepen our focus: “[auf die Metapher hin zu konzentrieren] bedeutet nicht nur eine Eingrenzung, sondern auch eine Erweiterung und zwar in dem Sinn, daß das, was unter Metapher zu verstehen ist, nicht auf sprachliche ‘Bilder’ eingegrenzt werden darf.” Thomas Luksch, *Predigt als metaphorische Gott-Rede: zum Ertrag der Metapherforschung für die Homiletik* (Würzburg: Seelsorge Echter, 1998), 15–16.

²³ Though interpreting written or spoken words and interpreting visual images are sometimes cast as completely different processes, this stark opposition often assumes that words are more closed and images more open than is actually the case. As the foundational work in “visual literacy” puts it, we have become

implication also add insight into how the meaning-making process involved in the production and interpretation of other kinds of images is guided and constrained.

Second, this dissertation will focus on metaphorical language actually present either in the biblical text or in the preaching event. Metaphor at the conceptual level can be expressed in reasoning, feeling, and actions as well as by metaphorical utterances in a text or sermon. In this dissertation, however, discussion of conceptual metaphor is an extension of a concern for the hermeneutics of the text.²⁴ The focus of this dissertation therefore remains on actual metaphors in the text or sermon, rather than on reading the significance of events or actions (or even the events and actions themselves) metaphorically.²⁵

Finally, limiting the dissertation to particular ways of speaking and thinking that are called “non-literal” in no way limits a homiletical discussion of metaphor to that which is imaginary, unreal, fictitious, or otherwise untrue. As G. B. Caird so insightfully put it: “Any statement, literal or metaphorical, may be true or false, and its referent may be real or unreal . . . literal and metaphorical are terms which describe types of language, and the type of language we use has

“anachronistically locked into the notion that the primary influence in the understanding and forming of every level of visual message should be based on non-cerebral inspiration. While it is true that all information, input and output alike, must be strained at both points through a net of subjective interpretation, this consideration alone would make of visual intelligence something of a tree falling noiselessly in an empty forest.” Donis A. Dondis, *A Primer of Visual Literacy* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1973), ix. In other words, as a means of human communication, both words and images share a subjective element in production as well as in interpretation. They also share, however, an element of contextual and cultural constraints on interpretation: “[Visual communication] can be no more rigidly controlled than verbal communication, no more and no less” (x).

²⁴ Preus (*Just Words*, 215) contends: “Preaching the Gospel as metaphor is textual. It is based on sound principles of historical and grammatical interpretation of Holy Scripture. It finds the meaning of a text in the words. It does not impose words or meaning on the text, but rather draws the meaning out of the passage itself.”

²⁵ For example, Gail Ramshaw in her *Treasures Old and New: Images in the Lectionary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 30, suggests that “the Bible is filled with stories of good news: God affords solutions for our problems, food for our hunger, release from bonds, healing for leprosy, life to replace death. These stories, whether historically grounded or not, contain images for us of the gospel.” This way of reading metaphorically events that the Bible presents as actual (whether in literal or non-literal language) is an attempt to combat what Ramshaw sees as a “misguided,” “ill-educated,” “dangerous,” and “unfactual” “literalist interpretation of the Bible” (25). Though much of Ramshaw’s work is outstanding and she provides many helpful insights into the imagery present in the texts most often used by preachers, she not only explains the text, she at times explains the text away.

very little to do with the truth or falsity of what we say and the existence or non-existence of the things we refer to.”²⁶ Studying metaphor is not a means for avoiding the text or spiritualizing the claims of God. Instead, metaphor interpretation falls within the broader task of interpreting the specific and cultural means by which God spoke and still speaks to specific and cultural people.

The Current Status of the Homiletics of Metaphor

Image, Metaphor, and Contemporary Preaching

Contemporary homiletic literature often treats *metaphor* both in the biblical text and in the preaching event as a synonym, subspecies, or kissing cousin of *image*. David Buttrick, for example, groups “metaphor, simile, image, and the like” under the category of “analogical language,” something Buttrick says is “inevitable, and, obviously, desirable in preaching.”²⁷ The term “metaphor” is frequently used interchangeably with “image” or “imagery” in contemporary homiletic theory.²⁸ The *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*, for example, demonstrates this tendency.²⁹ The same can be said for Bryan Chapell’s *Using Illustrations to Preach with Power*, where “‘illustrative’ components,” “‘images,’” and “‘metaphors’” are equivalent.³⁰

Not only does the designation “image” often implicitly or explicitly include metaphor, images themselves are often treated metaphorically. For example, Robert G. Hughes and Robert

²⁶ G. B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980), 131.

²⁷ David Buttrick, *Homiletic: Moves and Structures* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 118–19.

²⁸ This contemporary impulse in preaching to conflate “image” and “metaphor,” though particularly fitting in a visually rich communications environment, may well have been inherited from the field of rhetoric. In 1936, I. A. Richards noted that rhetoricians have tended to use “metaphor” and “image” synonymously (usually to denote only the part of a metaphor Richards labels the *vehicle*). Richards also suggests that using the terms “metaphor” and “image” (and other designations) interchangeably is misleading and has contributed to the “backward state of the study” of metaphor which he is trying to remedy. See I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), excerpted in Mark Johnson, ed., *Philosophical Perspectives on Metaphor* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), 53.

²⁹ See, for example, the discussion of Hosea 14 in Michael Duduit, ed., *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching* (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 314.

³⁰ Bryan Chapell, *Using Illustrations to Preach with Power*, rev. ed. (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2001), 40, for example.

Kysar deal with metaphor under the homiletical category of images. They then go on to use images *as* metaphors: “When used to refer to another reality, the image becomes metaphoric . . . Whether the imaginary picture we evoke through language is a still image or a motion picture, we incite our listeners to reflect on its metaphorical quality.”³¹ Though recent books on preaching do not explore the connection between metaphor and image in detail, treating metaphor under the rubric of image is not the exception; it rather appears to be the rule. Tracing the contemporary trajectory of metaphor in preaching therefore includes descriptions of image or imagery as well as metaphor, understanding that metaphor is most often included implicitly or explicitly in any discussion of imagery in general.

Though few books are devoted entirely to the subject,³² metaphor is a significant—if at times underdeveloped—component of contemporary homiletic thought. A brief overview of different approaches to preaching will demonstrate that different assumptions about how preaching works lead to different construals of metaphor’s place in the homiletic craft.

Lucy Lind Hogan and Robert Reid offer a framework helpful for surveying the basic landscape of preaching theory. Hogan and Reid suggest that contemporary homiletics can be divided into four distinct, and at times, overlapping, ways of approaching the preaching task: the *Traditional*; the *Kerygmatic*; the *Practical Postmodern*; and the *Thoroughly Postmodern*.³³

³¹ Hughes and Kysar, *Preaching Doctrine*, 55.

³² Eduard R. Riegert, *Imaginative Shock: Preaching and Metaphor* (Burlington, Ont.: Trinity Press, 1990) deals primarily with the metaphorical move of applying the biblical text to our lives. Rodney Kennedy, *The Creative Power of Metaphor: A Rhetorical Homiletics* (New York: University Press of America, 1993) wants to make preaching more open and pluralistic by incorporating a “rhetoric of folly” and elements borrowed from twentieth-century metaphor theory. Luksch, *Predigt als metaphorische Gott-Rede*, is concerned especially with the homiletical possibilities of metaphorical speech about God. As we shall see below, others implicitly treat metaphor in works on biblical imagery (see Patricia Wilson-Kastner, *Imagery for Preaching* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989], for example) or imagery in general (see James A. Wallace, *Imaginal Preaching* [New York: Paulist Press, 1995]).

³³ Lucy Lind Hogan and Robert Reid, *Connecting with the Congregation: Rhetoric and the Art of Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1999), 121. See especially chapter 6, “What Do I Hope Will Happen?”

Though all of these can be heard from contemporary pulpits, each assumes a different understanding of what truth is and how communication takes place. These different contemporary approaches all include some place for metaphor in preaching, though none of them has undertaken an in-depth study of the hermeneutics of metaphor.

Traditional Preaching: Metaphor as Means of Explanation

In the “*Traditional*” approach to preaching, a propositional truth is *extracted* from the biblical text, *packaged* appropriately by the preacher, and *delivered* to the congregation. For Hogan and Reid, this propositional approach has “strong ties to the rationalist rhetorical tradition” in which “the speaker argues ‘points.’ . . . This is preaching as Explanation in which the purpose is to have listeners render a verdict by affirming or reaffirming their belief in the conclusions or propositions presented.”³⁴

If the main purpose of preaching is to explain objective and propositional truth about God in a way that conveys literal and objective meaning to the hearers, then metaphor in moderation can be a helpful but non-load-bearing part of the sermon. As Spurgeon so eloquently (and metaphorically) puts it:

While we thus commend illustrations for necessary uses, it must be remembered that they are not the strength of a sermon any more than a window is the strength of a house; and for this reason, among others, *they should not be too numerous*. Too many openings for light may seriously detract from the stability of a building. We have known sermons so full of metaphors that they became weak, and we had almost said *crazy*, structures.³⁵

In such an approach, metaphors are primarily useful for *conveying* a well-defined truth from the preacher to the congregation; metaphor serves explanation. For example, Hogan and

³⁴ Ibid., 122.

³⁵ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977 [1894]), Third Series, Lecture 1, 1–13, in Richard Lischer, ed. *The Company of Preachers: Wisdom on Preaching, Augustine to the Present* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 319, emphasis original.

Reid cite John Broadus's *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, first printed in 1895, as “the seminal twentieth century text for the Traditional approach to preaching, the purpose of which is to persuade listeners ‘of the truth.’”³⁶ In it, Broadus treats metaphor only briefly, along with other figures, under the rubric, “Energy of Style.” Broadus writes: “Usually, . . . figures are employed as means of *expressing* the thought . . . and are thus properly regarded as a part of style.”³⁷ Broadus is articulating an understanding of metaphor and rhetoric that Mark Johnson traces back to the Venerable Bede: “In Bede’s treatise on figures we see the emergence of a pattern that will contribute to the decline of metaphor for many centuries to come: rhetoric is distinguished from logic and then reduced to a manual of style. Thus metaphor, treated traditionally under rhetoric, becomes a stylistic device divorced from serious philosophical argument.”³⁸

Broadus and others do not devalue metaphor or seek to extirpate figurative language from all sermons or homiletic thought. On the contrary, Traditional preachers may value metaphor highly. A careful analysis of how metaphor interpretation is guided and constrained, however, is hardly necessary as long as the location of meaning remains the logical proposition—which may or may not be illumined by metaphor or other rhetorical devices.

Kerygmatic Preaching: Metaphor as Means of Encounter

For Hogan and Reid, the primary difference between the Traditional and Kerygmatic preaching is the understanding of how objective truth is conveyed. Rather than focusing on argument, proposition, or logic, Kerygmatic preaching focuses on encounter. “In its

³⁶ Hogan and Reid, *Connecting*, 122.

³⁷ John Albert Broadus, *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, ed. Jesse Burton Weatherspoon (New York: Harper, 1944), 373.

³⁸ Mark Johnson, ed., *Philosophical Perspectives on Metaphor* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), 9.

contemporary form the Kerygmatic approach views the function of preaching as providing an opportunity for the listener to have an encounter with God and the demands of the gospel.”³⁹ The basic content of Christian preaching, or *kerygma*, provides the means for bringing the hearers into an individual, redeeming encounter with Christ.⁴⁰ The apostolic kerygma evidenced in the text becomes the key to a salvific divine encounter: “In this approach, greater attention is given to the exposition and application of a theme derived from a specific text in the belief it can provide the opportunity for the individual to have an encounter with God’s active, redemptive presence.”⁴¹ Preaching becomes the “existentially relevant application of a particular text.”⁴²

Though Kerygmatic preaching tends to preserve a propositional view of truth, meaning is no longer located in the proposition itself, but in a saving encounter with the presence of God in the preaching event. “The *kerygma*, the content of preaching in kerygmatic homiletical theory, is like truth, the content of preaching in traditional homiletics. Both have a reality apart from human experience and perception. And both can be drawn from the Bible, stated succinctly, and offered to others in preaching. Thus, like truth, the *kerygma* is objective and propositional.”⁴³ The Kerygmatic approach, however, changes how this objective and propositional content gets delivered: “The difference is that in kerygmatic homiletical theory reality and language can be separated: *kerygma* is unchangeable, but the words that attempt to describe it are constantly

³⁹ Hogan and Reid, *Connecting*, 124.

⁴⁰ Hogan and Reid are building here on work by the now-deceased Lucy Atkinson Rose, *Sharing the Word: Preaching in the Roundtable Church* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997). Rose’s work describes Kerygmatic preaching’s dual concern for maintaining the basic content of Christian preaching on the one hand and facilitating the hearer’s encounter with God on the other. These two concerns fit together: “Preaching that communicates the *kerygma* mediates the saving presence of God” (Rose, *Sharing the Word*, 38).

⁴¹ Hogan and Reid, *Connecting*, 124.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Rose, *Sharing the Word*, 44.

changing.”⁴⁴ Moreover, the final goal is not merely the transmission of objective and propositional content, but the saving encounter facilitated by the (albeit objective and propositional) apostolic kerygma.

Metaphor facilitates a redemptive encounter with God in a different way than it facilitates explanation. Because the Kerygmatic approach emphasizes both a constant, core content⁴⁵ and variable linguistic forms, metaphor becomes more important both for interpreting the text and for crafting the sermon: “The kerygma, therefore, because its original form is metaphor and story, demands to be translated. The task of preaching is finding new, metaphorical words for the old, unchangeable gospel.”⁴⁶ In fact, one “legacy” of the Kerygmatic approach “involves the importance of the imagination, metaphoric language, and story. . . .”⁴⁷

At the level of sermon structure, metaphor in Kerygmatic preaching becomes the basic homiletical move from the kerygma in the biblical text to a redemptive encounter in the lives of the hearers. Whether the preacher starts with the setting of the text or the situation of the hearers, a kind of existential analogy brings the two together. The problems in the text become the problems of the hearers; the gracious action of God in the text becomes, by way of metaphorical analogy, the gracious action of God in the lives of the hearers.⁴⁸ This basic metaphorical move—

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Different Kerygmatic preachers from different theological perspectives will define this core apostolic kerygma differently; they share, however, the basic understanding that the core kerygma facilitates the *saving* activity of God.

⁴⁶ Rose, *Sharing the Word*, 45.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 46.

⁴⁸ Hogan and Reid cite Paul Scott Wilson’s approach as an example of this kind of basically metaphorical move: “(1) What is the trouble in the text? (2) What is similarly wrong today? (3) What is God’s gracious action in or behind the text? (4) What is God’s similar action today?” (*Connecting*, 126). Stephen Farris, *Preaching That Matters: The Bible and Our Lives* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998) and Riegert, *Imaginative Shock* both also deal with metaphor at the level of relating text and the lives of the hearers.

seeing the contemporary situation of the hearers *as or through the lens of* the situation described in the text—is central to the Kerygmatic approach.

Metaphor often functions in Kerygmatic preaching at this broader methodological level, relating the situation of the text metaphorically to the situation of the hearers in order to facilitate an encounter with God. Individual metaphors at the level of the biblical text or sermon can also work toward the same goal. James A. Wallace, for example, calls the preacher a “custodian of metaphor”⁴⁹ and suggests that images crafted with words “do not deserve to be treated merely as decorative coverings for abstract formulations of truth, but can be approached as living presences that mediate an encounter with Mystery . . . preaching hopes to join divinity and humanity, preacher and people, through the crafted beauty of imaginal language.”⁵⁰ In an almost iconic fashion, metaphor for Wallace facilitates an encounter with God.

On the whole, Kerygmatic preaching uses metaphor as a way of translating the core Christian message in the text into a form accessible to the hearers in order to facilitate a saving encounter with God. Because metaphor often works at the level of a general method for bringing text and hearers together, describing how metaphor works becomes similar to describing the overall homiletical method. Questions geared toward making a metaphorical connection between the hearers and the text like, “How are we like, and how are we unlike the groups in the text?”⁵¹ or, “Is there a way of deliberately crafting an image to ‘move’ us in a certain direction?”⁵² assume a basic understanding of the mechanics of metaphor, though no detailed hermeneutics of metaphor is offered.

⁴⁹ Wallace, *Imaginal Preaching*, 19.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 34, 54.

⁵¹ Farris, *Preaching That Matters*, 84.

⁵² Wallace, *Imaginal Preaching*, 19.

Practical Postmodern Preaching: Metaphor and the Experience of the Hearers

Moving farther away from preaching as a rationalistic distillation of biblical “truths” into “points” presented in a logical, linear fashion, Hogan and Reid use the term “Practical Postmodernism” for a wide range of approaches primarily concerned with the *experience of the hearer* in the preaching event. Unlike the emphasis on a *saving* encounter in the Kerygmatic approach, Practical Postmoderns value all kinds of experiences with the text or the sermon. Meaning is no longer located in a *proposition* or in an *encounter* with the redemptive presence of God. Instead, meaning is *the work of the hearers* as the sermon is interpreted. Meaning is a team event, a collaborative effort between the words offered by the preacher and the work of the hearers in making meaning from those words.⁵³ Rather than passive recipients, hearers are cast as actively participating in a “journey of discovery,”⁵⁴ a journey the preacher hopes to guide but cannot ultimately control.

This tension between an emphasis on the work of the interpreters and a desire to guide and constrain meaning production makes this approach “practical” rather than “thoroughly” postmodern: “Practical Postmodern preachers are aware that the question of ‘meaning’ is hermeneutically complex. They acknowledge that texts exert control over the limits of reasonable interpretations, but they are equally aware that ‘meaning’ is limited by what the reader or listener brings to the process of interpretation.”⁵⁵

⁵³ Fred Craddock, calling for a new form in preaching which better engages the people, summed up the passive role of the hearers in traditional deductive preaching: “If the congregation is on the team, it is as javelin catcher.” Fred B. Craddock, *As One Without Authority* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979), 56.

⁵⁴ Hogan and Reid, *Connecting*, 129.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 127.

For Hogan and Reid, the diverse approaches that are often grouped together under the heading “The New Homiletic”⁵⁶ fit this general category of Practical Postmodernism. As a “paradigm shift in homiletics,” the New Homiletic can be defined as “a radical shift away from the rationalistic and propositional logics of argumentation as the basis of sermon invention and arrangement.”⁵⁷ Instead of the flow of a sermon being dictated by logical relationships between abstract ideas, the preaching event is structured in light of how the hearers will encounter the sermon as it is being delivered in time.⁵⁸ The “inductive approach,” the “narrative or story form,” and a way of preaching particularly concerned with the “movement and structure of the biblical text”⁵⁹ are all attempts to shape the experience of the hearers.

As in the Traditional approach, metaphor can be used in Practical Postmodern preaching as a kind of illustration. While metaphor is used to explain a single thought or idea in the Traditional paradigm, however, the Practical Postmodern preacher recognizes the ability of metaphor to convey multiple or open-ended meanings. Taking advantage of the openness of

⁵⁶ Both the origins of the term and the impetus for the movement are open to some debate. Richard Eslinger, for example, notes: “Emerging sometime in the turbulent 1960’s and coined (probably) by David James Randolph—although both dating and authorship are subjects of contention—the new homiletic became an umbrella designation for a collection of homileticians and preachers who, for the most part, did not identify themselves by the term. . . . The roots of the movement are open to a variety of opinions as well.” Richard L. Eslinger, “Some Ruminations on ‘The New Homiletic,’” *Homiletix E-forum: An Electronic Journal of the Academy of Homiletics* (Fall 2006), http://www.homiletics.org/pdfvisitors/homiletixfall2006/homiletix_fall2006_eslinger.htm (accessed 1 Feb 2007). Eslinger goes on to suggest H. Grady Davis, David Randolph (himself influenced by Ernst Fuchs and Gerhard Ebeling), Paul Ricoeur and Amos Wilder as some of the important figures that contributed to the early development of the New Homiletic. Elsewhere, Eslinger names Charles Rice, Fred Craddock, and Edmund Steimle as examples of “early pioneers” Eslinger, *Web*, 11.

⁵⁷ Robert Stephen Reid, “Postmodernism and the Function of the New Homiletic in Post-Christendom Congregations,” *Homiletic* 20, no. 2 (1995): 7.

⁵⁸ “This common attention given to the experience of the audience may even be more indicative of the New Homiletic than its tendency to reject the notion of sermon as argument” (Ibid.).

⁵⁹ Richard L. Eslinger, *A New Hearing: Living Options in Homiletic Method* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1987), 13. Eslinger is here building on the work of F. Wellford Hobbie, especially his article “The Play Is the Thing: New Forms for the Sermon,” *Journal for Preachers* 5, no. 4 (1982): 17–23.

metaphor, Practical Postmoderns also want to give their hearers some interpretive guidance so that the power of metaphor does not become more confusing than insightful.⁶⁰

Beyond its use internally as a way of illustrating different experiences in the plotted sequence of the sermon, metaphor can also provide the over-arching structure of the preaching event. A more recent development is an approach to preaching “in which biblical and contemporary images organize the sermonic plot.”⁶¹ This use of image—and metaphor as textual image—to “organize and propel the homiletical plot” is less developed than the use of image or metaphor to “concretize some conceptual meaning within the sermon.”⁶² Nonetheless, for Practical Postmoderns concerned with shaping the experience of the hearer, metaphor is more than a kind of illustration within the structure of the sermon; metaphor is one way to shape the structure of the sermon itself.⁶³

Whether metaphor serves to organize or illustrate the sermon, the hearers produce the meaning of metaphors in the sermon as they participate in a preaching event. This process of meaning production, however, is still shaped by the preacher’s careful construction of the

⁶⁰ This is the way Thomas Long speaks of “metaphor-style illustrations”: “. . . they may create confusion rather than illumination. These illustrations must be so well-chosen and crafted that listeners can mine their insights and forge the relationships between them and the rest of the sermon. If we have to stop and explain them, they lose their power. On the other hand, if the listeners miss the connections, such illustrations evoke a bewildered shrug of the shoulders rather than an ‘Aha!’” Thomas G. Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1989) 175.

⁶¹ Eslinger, *Web*, 12.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 284.

⁶³ Eslinger argues that “it is also possible in certain circumstances to elevate the role of an image to a macrolevel of determining the movement and structure of the sermon’s entire plot” (*Web*, 272). He concedes, however, that this approach to preaching is still comprised mostly of “implied methods, often unarticulated” (284). For Eslinger, image-based sermon structures are especially useful when preaching from texts “whose meaning and intention are grounded in a dominant image that remains indispensable to the purposes of the text” (272). As is often the case in contemporary theory, Eslinger treats metaphors with images; his examples include biblical metaphors like “Paul’s evocative image of God’s treasure that is Christ being in clay pots” (272) and “the master image of the shepherd and the flock” in Ez 34 (274) alongside contemporary images, similes, and scenes from movies or lived experience. In “A Homiletics of Imagery,” the final chapter of *The Web of Preaching*, Eslinger makes more explicit some of the implicit methods for relating images in the text or culture to the structure of the sermon (271–287). A discussion of the hermeneutics of metaphor or image is unfortunately beyond the scope of that chapter and book.

sermon. Because it emphasizes the way language facilitates and guides meaning production, the Practical Postmodern approach could most naturally seek a more detailed and thoroughgoing hermeneutics of metaphor for preaching. To date, however, an in-depth treatment of metaphor for preaching is still lacking.

Thoroughly Postmodern Preaching: Metaphor as Means of Engagement for Formation

Recall that the Traditional paradigm is concerned with distilling objective and propositional truth from the particular setting of the biblical text and conveying it to contemporary hearers. The Kerygmatic approach, on the other hand, is less concerned with propositional *truths about* God and seeks instead to facilitate a *saving encounter with* God by translating the core Christian teaching in the text into kerygma for contemporary hearers. For Practical Postmoderns, truth is above all *interpreted*; the work of the hearer takes a central position, though the preacher is still concerned with shaping the meaning-making process.

Against all of these, the Thoroughly Postmodern approach understands truth to be primarily *discursive*; the only truth to which human beings have access is located within the language event itself. In this paradigm, preaching becomes “a performance of the church’s peculiar language,” rather than explanation, encounter, or event of meaning.⁶⁴ The language of the church *forms* the community and enables the community to *perform as church* without any necessary reference outside of the linguistic reference of the text itself: “scripture offers the narrative of God’s storied identity and . . . preaching’s purpose is to assist congregations in forming their own identity out of that revelation.”⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Reid and Hogan, *Connecting*, 130–31.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 129–30. Reid and Hogan (*Connecting*, 129) also note that these thoroughly postmodern preachers “have differences of opinion about how to access truth claims in the Bible.” Lucy Rose (*Sharing the Word*, 108) approvingly describes Joseph Sittler’s view that “the language of faith is confessional because, like theology, its

Lucy Rose, whose “Conversational Preaching” fits within this general category, asks, “What is preaching all about if its goal is not the transmission of truth, an encounter with God, or congregational transformation?”⁶⁶ Her answer captures the essence of engagement for formation: “Preaching’s aim is week after week to gather the community of faith around the Word in order to foster and refocus its central conversations . . . to set texts and interpretations loose in the midst of the community, so that the essential conversations of God’s people are nurtured.”⁶⁷ Forming the community through the enactment of biblical stories and imagery is the common goal of preaching from within this perspective.⁶⁸ This emphasis on the formation of the community by the language of faith deemphasizes a unique preaching office and makes the formative conversation of preaching intentionally non-hierarchical: “the preacher and the congregation are not separate entities but a community of faith.”⁶⁹

Metaphor in this approach becomes a tool of engagement and formation. Thoroughly Postmodern preaching challenges dominant metaphors in the contemporary culture neither by using metaphor to *transmit* a truth nor by leading the hearers to *experience* a new insight by way of metaphor. Instead, this approach “performs” or “enacts” the metaphor in a way that shapes the identity of the community and enables individuals to perform the metaphor in their own lives and situations. Charles L. Campbell points out that this performance for formation is not to be understood in an “*ex opera operato* fashion. Rather, Christian speech changes situations by

references are the biblical story itself and the community of faith.” The power of the biblical text comes not from its relationship to an outside reality, but from its power *as language* to shape the identity of people in a community.

⁶⁶ Rose, *Sharing the Word*, 98.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Richard Lischer, whom Hogan and Reid place in this category, summarizes: “. . . preaching, as opposed to individual sermons, forms a community of faith over time.” Robert Lischer, “Preaching as the Church’s Language,” in *Listening to the Word: Studies in Honor of Fred B. Craddock*, ed. Gail R. O’Day and Thomas G. Long (Nashville: Abingdon, 1993), 126.

⁶⁹ Rose, *Sharing the Word*, 89.

providing people with a language—a world of discourse—that may be learned and come to shape the world for them . . .”⁷⁰

Campbell gives an example of how metaphors in preaching can work against metaphors in the broader culture. Building on work by Michael Warren,⁷¹ Campbell claims, “. . . the image of domination and subordination has become a comprehensive metaphor through which many in our society see the world. This image tends to break personal and social reality into the basic categories of superior and inferior. . . . As an enactment of the story of Jesus, Christian preaching calls for a counter-imagery, a counter-speech, which both resists and challenges cultural imagery of domination and subordination.”⁷² Campbell wants “the Bible’s own images, its distinctive language, to function as altogether competent metaphor.”⁷³

In this view of preaching, metaphor has the power to shape a community over time. This formative power, however, is not unique to metaphor but part and parcel of language use itself. By virtue of the limits of all human language, even the most poetic characteristics of metaphor, like its ability to evoke multiple meanings or give different perspectives, are also characteristic of language in general.⁷⁴ In this sense, metaphor is not a unique use of language, but rather the preeminent example of the way all language works. This Thoroughly Postmodern view of

⁷⁰ Charles L. Campbell, *Preaching Jesus: New Directions for Homiletics in Hans Frei’s Postliberal Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 239. Campbell is another writer Hogan and Reid explicitly put in this category of Thoroughly Postmodern.

⁷¹ Michael Warren, “Culture, Counterculture, and the Word,” *Liturgy* 6 (Summer 1986): 90.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 218–19.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 153. Campbell is quoting Charles Rice, “Shaping Sermons by the Interplay of Text and Metaphor,” in *Preaching Biblically: Creating Sermons in the Shape of Scripture*, ed. Don M. Wardlaw (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983), 108. What Rice “rather wistfully longs for,” however, Campbell (building on Hans Frei) sees as “a specific direction for pursuing” (Campbell, *Preaching Jesus*, 153).

⁷⁴ See Lucy Rose, for example: “. . . language, including the language of faith, is never innocent or unambiguous” . . . “sermonic language inevitably generates a variety of meanings. Embracing the evocative dimension of words, preachers can intentionally invite the worshippers to formulate their own meanings besides, ahead of, and over against the sermon’s meanings” (*Sharing the Word*, 91, 111).

language in general may be one reason proponents of this approach have not yet felt the need for a hermeneutics of *metaphor in particular*.

Metaphor between the Extremes

Hogan and Reid present these four general approaches to preaching—the Traditional (Explanation), the Kerygmatic (Encounter), the Practical Postmodern (Experience), and the Thoroughly Postmodern (Engagement)—not as clear-cut, monolithic categories but as a kind of continuum with overlapping edges. At either end of this spectrum are views more extreme than those discussed by Hogan and Reid. For very different reasons, the opposing ends of the preaching continuum have little need for a developed hermeneutics of metaphor for preaching. If an in-depth study of metaphor, currently lacking in the broader homiletical field, is to be viable, it must find a home between these two extremes.

Metaphor at the Extremes Ends of the Spectrum

The way preaching appropriates metaphor is tied directly to the different ways the act of communication is characterized and conceived. At one extreme, the hearers tend to be seen as passive receivers of a well-defined meaning intended by the preacher and transmitted by the sermon. This view assumes direct access to objective truth and focuses on the intent of the author or speaker.⁷⁵ Metaphor as explanation can be a form of packaging or transmission: the preacher takes a thought, wraps it in a metaphor, and transmits it to the hearers, who unpack the metaphor and are left with the proposition as it was intended. At the extreme of this end of the

⁷⁵ This is an extreme version of the approach to communication Quentin J. Schultze labels the “Transmission View” of communication. Quentin J. Schultze, *Communicating for Life: Christian Stewardship in Community and Media* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000), 46.

continuum (not covered by Hogan and Reid), metaphor should be avoided because it is seen as a deficient means of explanation, lacking clarity and objectivity.⁷⁶

At the opposite end of the scale, meaning is not located in the mind of the author or in the words of a text, but in the action of the interpreters as they make sense of the words from within their own social and cultural context.⁷⁷ The most extreme manifestation of this view (not covered by Hogan and Reid) goes beyond the claim that human beings have no unmediated access to objective truth to suggest that truth itself is plural and each differing perspective is equally valid.⁷⁸ Metaphor at this end of the continuum is far from a defective use of language; metaphor becomes the basic mode of language use itself. Imagery in general and metaphor in particular are used to find new openness in the text.

Because all interpretation is radically subjective at this extreme, a concern for openness outweighs the need for any description of how a text or a preaching event enables the process of metaphorical interpretation by providing some kind of guidance or control. Robert Kennedy, for example, underscores the openness of the biblical text to multiple interpretations by claiming that metaphor theory shows how metaphor cannot be limited to a single point of comparison or even

⁷⁶ In 1690, John Locke expressed a very Modern attitude toward metaphor that would have found general acceptance all the way through the logical positivism of the early twentieth century: “Language is often abused by figurative speech. . . . if we would speak of things as they are, we must allow that all the art of rhetoric, besides order and clearness; all the artificial and figurative application of words eloquence hath invented, are for nothing else but to insinuate wrong ideas, move the passions, and thereby mislead the judgment; and so indeed are perfect cheats . . . Eloquence, like the fair sex, has too prevailing beauties in it to suffer itself ever to be spoken against. And it is in vain to find fault with those arts of deceiving, wherein men find pleasure to be deceived.” John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1894, 1690), vol. 2, bk. 3, chap. 10, no. 34, http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl302/texts/locke/locke1/Essay_contents.html (accessed 5 October 2007).

⁷⁷ Schultze (*Communicating for Life*, 53) labels this approach to communication the “Cultural View.”

⁷⁸ Millard J. Erikson, *Postmodernizing the Faith: Evangelical Responses to the Challenge of Postmodernism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 13 distinguishes “soft postmodernism” that “rejects the type of naive objectivity that denies the effect of historical and cultural situations” from “hard postmodernism” that “rejects the idea of any sort of objectivity and rationality.” Hard postmodernism “not only rejects the limitation of meaning of language to empirical reference; it rejects the idea that language has any sort of objective or extralinguistic reference at all. It moves from relativism to pluralism in truth. Not only is knowing and speaking done from a particular perspective, but each perspective is equally true or valuable.”

a single interpretation. Kennedy claims: “This view of *metaphor*, first illuminated by [I. A.] Richards, reverses the traditional literalist view that *a word or text* has only one meaning. Metaphor is by nature symbolic, ambiguous, and polysemous.”⁷⁹ Here, the openness of metaphor has become the openness of all texts; the subjective element in metaphor interpretation has become radical subjectivism in all interpretation.

Both extremes on this continuum would feel little need for an in-depth study of the hermeneutics of metaphor for preaching. If metaphor is merely a way of packaging objective truth, it receives about as much attention as any other way of packaging. As we saw with Broadus, metaphor becomes one—for Broadus helpful, for some others misleading—element of style. On the other hand, if all language and indeed all truth is radically subjective, then metaphor becomes itself a metaphor for all interpretation. Metaphor is not unique; metaphor both presents and describes the openness of all language events.

Somewhere between these two extremes, metaphor becomes not only helpful and necessary, but unique and describable; something more than mere packaging and something less than an opportunity for individual (or even communal) free-for-all. Linguistic and theological considerations help locate a metaphorical homiletics between these extremes.

Linguistic and Theological Reasons for Taking the Middle Ground

Linguistic Considerations. Linguistically, both the extreme objectivist and extreme subjectivist approaches to meaning appear untenable. At the one extreme, a communication model that pictures objective truth packaged by a sender and sent via the medium of language to be unpacked by the receiver may indeed provide a helpful description of how speakers and hearers often experience the communication process. Today, however, it is widely accepted that

⁷⁹ Kennedy, *The Creative Power of Metaphor*, 68, emphasis added.

words don't "have" "meanings" in any objective or proper sense, but that meaning is indeed a production of the interpreter.⁸⁰ The objectivist view of communication hides much of the complexity and dynamics of human thought and understanding.⁸¹

The other extreme, however, which admits no constraints on the work of the interpreter, also fails to account for the actual dynamics of human communication and meaning production. For example, Kennedy's championing of the openness of metaphor (and therefore of texts) cited above misses the point of the Richards passage he uses to establish the openness of all texts. Kennedy quotes Richards: "[the 'proper meaning superstition'] is only a superstition when it forgets (as it commonly does) that the stability of the meaning of a word comes from the constancy of the contexts that give it its meanings."⁸² For Richards, *stability of meaning is available, even for metaphor*—something Kennedy does not want to admit. Richards is simply pointing out that stability of meaning is not somehow inherent in the marks on the page but

⁸⁰ James W. Voelz, for example, describes the important role the reader (or hearer) plays in the production of meaning: ". . . the reader's beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, ideas, experiences, etc., become part of the matrix for textual interpretation, so that nothing is interpreted in a text, unless it is part of a matrix with what she is as a person. **She is, as it were, a 'text' herself—a complementary 'second text,'** which is always a factor in textual interpretation . . . it is because of the presence and activity of the interpreter's own person / self as text that there is **no possibility** of 'objective' interpretation." *What Does This Mean?: Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Post-modern World* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1995), 208–210, emphasis original. For Voelz, the active role of the interpreter in meaning production does not completely eradicate authorial intent ("**Text production . . . is not aimless**"), though authorial intent is neither exhaustive nor a "**hermeneutical key to the interpretation of a given text**" with reference to which interpretive decisions may be argued (ibid., 213). Lucy Rose acknowledges the effect of contemporary hermeneutics on preaching: "Traditional homiletical theory, which assumes that words grasp and convey reality, becomes problematic for . . . us who see ourselves as living and preaching in a new linguistic situation. For us, confidence in words and their one-to-one correspondence to objective reality, a fundamental presupposition of traditional homiletical theory, is no longer possible. New understandings of language in general and sermonic language in particular have entered the homiletical conversation" (*Sharing the Word*, 32).

⁸¹ In an article recognized as foundational to contemporary metaphor theory, Michael J. Reddy describes in detail the basic metaphor for the communication process that shapes this approach. See "The Conduit Metaphor: A Case of Frame Conflict in Our Language about Language," in *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd ed., ed. Andrew Ortony (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 164–201.

⁸² I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), 91.

depends on contextual (co-textual and cultural) factors that inform how the marks on the page are used and understood.

Stanley Fish has been misinterpreted in a similar way. Fish's response to the claim that his work makes meaning production completely subjective or arbitrary is helpful here. Fish claims that "determinacy and decidability are always available, not, however, because of the constraints imposed by the language of the world—that is, by entities independent of context—but because of the constraints built into the context or contexts in which we find ourselves operating."⁸³ The interpretation of metaphor, like all interpretation, is neither completely restricted nor completely arbitrary: ". . . metaphors, like texts, are determinate enough to convey stable meaning without being exhaustively specifiable. Metaphors, perhaps like much literal language itself, are neither wholly univocal nor wholly equivocal."⁸⁴

These linguistic insights into human language are extremely important for preachers. On the one hand, preachers are able to take advantage of the openness of metaphorical language as a way of engaging their hearers.⁸⁵ At the same time, metaphor interpretation never happens in a vacuum. Preachers are therefore also concerned with what elements of co-text, context, and culture are guiding hearers as they interpret a sermon: "What is needed is . . . a hermeneutics of imagery for preaching that retains their wonderful multivalence yet enables the preacher to speak

⁸³ Stanley Fish, "Normal Circumstances, Literal Language, Direct Speech Acts, the Ordinary, the Everyday, the Obvious, What Goes Without Saying, and Other Special Cases" in *Is There A Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1980), 268.

⁸⁴ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in this Text?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 130.

⁸⁵ Hughes and Kysar are speaking of the metaphorical use of image and story when they state: "If ambiguity is important for participation, we allow a story's polyvalence to perform its work in our listeners. We never quite get all its significance nailed down. By honoring the ambiguity of stories, we also honor the congregation and their role in preaching. We entrust to them the task of finding their own relationship with our story. That is to say, we practice the priesthood of all believers in preaching" (*Preaching Doctrine*, 71).

imagistically with theological integrity. Images [in general and metaphors in particular] need a certain discipline if they are to become faithful servants of the Word.”⁸⁶

Seeking to guide or even constrain the interpretive process in some way is not the same as trying to stifle the power or possibility of image or metaphor. Rather, accounting for cultural and linguistic constraints on metaphor simply acknowledges “. . . the creative role that limits perform in conferring orientation and specificity upon freedom.”⁸⁷ Such “limits” are necessary not to *restrict* meaning, but to *facilitate* meaning: “Precisely by virtue of the multivalence and ambiguity of imagery, the question arises regarding the context or location of the image. It is not that we can ever nail down an image to one discursive point . . . Rather, the challenge is that lacking some sort of location of rootage, images can be made to mean almost anything, or nothing.”⁸⁸

An objectivist view of human communication taken to the extreme tends to downplay the significance of the interpreter’s role in meaning production; an extreme subjectivist approach tends to downplay the possibility of cultural, contextual, or even textual constraints on interpretation. Preaching metaphor from between these extremes means being concerned both for the interpretive work of the hearer and for the ways in which the text, the preacher, and the broader culture guide and constrain this interpretive work. Linguistically, metaphors in the biblical text and in the sermon participate in the complexity of human communication.

Being thoroughly human, however, does not prevent these words from being divine. An in-depth hermeneutics of metaphor for preaching flows not only from linguistic concerns, but

⁸⁶ Eslinger, *Web*, 259–60.

⁸⁷ David Baily Harned, *Images for Self-Recognition: The Christian as Player, Sufferer, and Vandal* (New York: Seabury Press, 1977), 133.

⁸⁸ Eslinger, *Web*, 259.

from a theology of the written and proclaimed Word that acknowledges both divine and human aspects of text and sermon.

Theological Considerations. Theologically, to say God chooses human means to communicate His divine Word to human beings is to make a statement of faith. The biblical texts themselves lead to such a confession, for they claim that human and cultural words can also be the Word of God. Indeed, they claim that the Word Himself took on human and cultural flesh and dwelt among human and cultural beings. The witness of Scripture is that God promises to work through means; the means he chooses, however, in order to be *means*, are never outside of human history and culture. God’s Word comes only in, with, and under human language, human mouths, human ears, human expression, human experience. As Lesslie Newbigin puts it:

There is no such thing as a pure gospel if by that is meant something which is not embodied in a culture. . . . And this is so from the beginning. The Bible is a book which is very obviously in a specific cultural setting. Its language is Hebrew and Greek, not Chinese or Sanskrit. All the events it records, all the teachings it embodies, are shaped by specific human cultures. And, of course, it could not be otherwise. . . . God’s universal purpose of blessing has to be wrought out through specific acts at specific times and places involving particular people.⁸⁹

Not only is every utterance (including every sermon) and every text (including the Bible) “situated” or culturally contextualized, but every interpretation of an utterance or text is also “situated” or culturally contextualized.⁹⁰ The biblical text, preachers’ interpretations of the text, the sermons they prepare, and the hearers’ interpretations of their sermons are all thoroughly embedded in human culture. Preachers in all times and places must therefore ask, “What does the culturally embodied proclamation of the scriptures look like when it is embodied in the particular

⁸⁹ Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000) 144–45.

⁹⁰ See James W. Voelz, “Reading the Scripture as Lutherans in the Post-Modern Era,” *Lutheran Quarterly*, 14 (2000): 312–315.

culture of my hearers?” Indeed, faithful preachers may need to ask, “How does the culturally embodied proclamation of the scriptures *challenge* the particular culture of my hearers?”⁹¹

God’s Word comes through human words. Culture, context, and subjective experience therefore all affect how texts and sermons are understood. Being thoroughly human, however, does not mean these words cannot be divine: human language, in all its vagaries and variations, nonetheless remains a means of God’s grace. The words of the biblical text are human words through and through; yet they are also the Word of God. Similarly, “when pastors faithfully proclaim what God has revealed in Christ and in Scripture, their words deliver the actual Word of God himself.”⁹²

Preaching from a culturally embedded text to a culturally embedded people involves the whole complexity of human communication and yet deals with the very Word of God. This theology of the proclaimed Word relies on a basic understanding of the threefold nature of the divine Word.⁹³ First and foremost, the Word of God is the second person of the Trinity, the Word made flesh, Jesus the Christ. Secondly, the designation Word of God also applies to the apostolic and prophetic proclamation recorded in the canonical Scriptures. The Scriptures are the authoritative, normative witness to the person and work of Christ, crucified and risen for us. Though the text of Scripture can be used by God to drive sinners to repentance or to create and strengthen faith, this *causative* function of the Word is usually carried out in person-to-person communication, the third way in which the Word of God comes to specific people in specific

⁹¹ Though the gospel never comes outside of culture, it also stands over and against every human culture: “There can never be a culture-free gospel. Yet the gospel, which is from the beginning to the end embodied in culturally conditioned forms, calls into question all cultures, including the one in which it was originally embodied.” Lesslie Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 4.

⁹² Robert Kolb and Charles P. Arand, *The Genius of Luther’s Theology: A Wittenberg Way of Thinking for the Contemporary Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 181.

⁹³ See H. S. Wilson, “Luther on Preaching as God Speaking,” *Lutheran Quarterly* 19 (2005): 63–75 and Uuraas Saarnivaara, “Written and Spoken Word,” *Lutheran Quarterly* 2 (1950): 166–79.

times and places. As Luther said, “It is God himself who is speaking when it is God’s Word which someone uses to comfort you, and if it is God’s Word, then God is acting here, so remember that God himself is doing it.”⁹⁴

Preaching, then, is truly human communication, human and cultural words spoken in a specific time and place with particular people in mind. The words of the sermon, however, as they faithfully bear witness to the apostolic and prophetic proclamation, are also spoken on God’s behalf and therefore able to create and strengthen saving faith when and where it pleases him.

Theologically, this dissertation understands the sermon and the text to be both part of the complex process of human communication and a means of grace. Linguistically, this dissertation understands human communication to be more than a simple, objective transference of knowledge and less than a purely subjective play without guidance or constraint. These theological and linguistic presuppositions place this dissertation somewhere between the most extreme approaches to preaching and to metaphor. Though a reader who holds a different theological confession or linguistic perspective should still find the following discussion of a homiletics of metaphor useful, this dissertation will admittedly be most accessible to those located somewhere between these extremes.

⁹⁴ Martin Luther, “Sermons on Baptism, 1538,” *WA* 46:150.20–26, quoted in Kolb and Arand, *Genius*, 179. Public preaching is the form of person to person communication treated in this dissertation, but not the only method used by God as a means of grace: “Luther believed that God had entrusted the Word to all believers for their use in their own lives and the lives of fellow Christians, starting with their family circle” (Kolb and Arand, *Genius*, 185). “The Word in the mouth of the called Servant of the Word, the pastor, is the same Word that the Holy Spirit places in the mouth of all believers. In their mouths it has the same power as it does in preaching and formal absolution. It forgives sins, defies evil, and bestows life and salvation” (ibid., 188).

Conclusion

Preaching the Word of God from an image-rich text for hearers in an image-driven culture challenges preachers to take into account how the complexities of metaphor interpretation actually work, both as the preacher interprets the text and as hearers interpret the sermon. Contemporary homiletic theory in its various forms has noticed the importance of metaphor for preaching. All but the most extreme approaches to homiletics will benefit from a fuller understanding of how metaphor in the biblical text or in the preaching event is guided and constrained.

CHAPTER TWO

A NARRATIVE APPROACH TO METAPHOR

Introduction: Our Citizenship is in Heaven

This dissertation seeks to develop a deeper understanding of the hermeneutics of metaphor for preaching because metaphor plays a significant role both in the sermon and in the biblical text. Taking metaphor to be both complex and describable, preachers will ask homiletical questions as they encounter metaphor in specific biblical texts and prepare sermons for their particular hearers. The specific questions relevant to a particular text or sermon will be in some ways unique; preaching metaphors of adoption or light or sheep or citizenship will all involve different dynamics in the text and the sermon. Some *kinds* of questions—and ways of answering questions—will nonetheless remain constant. The purpose of this chapter is to develop the basic tools with which a preacher can approach metaphor in text and sermon from a narrative perspective.

Since preachers often begin with a text,¹ the kinds of homiletical questions that must be addressed by any theory of metaphor for preaching are perhaps best introduced by way of a specific textual example. In Php 3:20, Paul writes: “But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it

¹ According to David R. Schmitt, “Law and Gospel in Sermon and Service,” in *Liturgical Preaching*, ed. Paul J. Grime and Dean W. Nadasdy (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2001), 25–49, “textual exposition” is one of the fundamental tasks of the preacher; there are others. Schmitt suggests “hearer depiction,” “theological confession,” and “evangelical proclamation,” as other “modes of discourse” important for every sermon. Though the homiletic process or the sermon itself may begin with, or even feature, one of the other preaching tasks, this dissertation assumes that, no matter how a particular text is selected, the exposition of the text (in this case Php 3:20 in its broader context) will play a significant role in the formation of the sermon.

we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ . . .” (ESV).² What kinds of questions would a preacher preparing a sermon ask of this text?

“Our citizenship in heaven,” is only one of several metaphors in this passage. Even with such a narrow focus, the potential questions are various and diverse. Is this text about *citizenship in general*, i.e., would it be a good Independence Day text? Or is it primarily about how Christians should live their lives *as Christians*? Is it perhaps about both: is Paul suggesting that Christians should be good citizens *because* they are Christian?

What will come to mind for typical hearers in a particular congregation if the sermon focuses on heavenly citizenship? Which, if any, of the hearers’ most typical or immediate associations, like voting or paying taxes, should play an important role in the sermon?

How much background information is relevant for this metaphor? Is it significant that Caesar also carried the title “savior,” that the city of Philippi was a Roman colony, that Roman citizens wore distinctive clothing, had distinctive speech, were afforded legal rights as if they lived in Rome?³

How does this metaphor fit within the broader biblical witness? Should Christians, as citizens of heaven, in any way view non-believers as “enemies”?

How do law and gospel relate in this metaphor? Is this text about dying and going to heaven? Should the congregation be singing “I’m but a Stranger Here?” Does this metaphor convey that “heaven is my home”?

² Preachers select texts in different ways. Those who preach from a pericopal system will have more than one opportunity to preach on Paul’s metaphor of citizenship. Php 3:17-4:1 is the assigned Epistle lesson for Lent 2, Series C in the three-year lectionary as well as Trinity 23 in the one year series (without 4:1). A related citizenship metaphor in Php 1:27 is contained in Proper 20, Series A.

³ Gordon D. Fee, *Paul’s Letter to the Philippians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 162, includes these elements in his description of Php 3:20. See also the discussion of Php 1:27 and 3:20 throughout appendix 1, below.

What kinds of inferences or actions does Paul want the Philippians to draw or to take? Should the preacher come up with a list of analogies between the Christian life and being citizens of America? Rome? Is it perhaps better to describe some of the features of citizenship and let the hearers draw their own analogies or conclusions? How can a preacher describe this metaphor sufficiently? What, if anything, does this metaphor authorize a preacher to say?

These kinds of questions are being answered, intentionally or not, every time Php 3:20 and the surrounding verses are used in a sermon. Though these questions will not receive definitive answers in this dissertation, let alone in this chapter, the dynamics of the narrative method suggested by this thesis are designed to help preachers be aware of—and make—these kinds of interpretive decisions.

Metaphor Interpretation and Narrative Structure

The thesis presented in this dissertation claims that one important and helpful way to answer the kinds of homiletical questions raised above is by taking into account the narrative structure inherent in the interpretation of metaphor. Though this dissertation offers a uniquely narrative approach to metaphor interpretation, some precedent for seeing a connection between metaphor and narrative has already been set.

Relating Metaphor to Narrative

Contemporary homiletics and metaphor theory have both at least hinted that the dynamics of understanding the textual imagery of metaphor may somehow be tied to the dynamics of understanding narrative. From a preaching perspective, Richard Eslinger, for example, places a “homiletics of imagery” on the “web of preaching,” a web anchored on the “narrative center.”⁴

⁴ Richard L. Eslinger, *The Web of Preaching: New Options in Homiletical Method* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 10.

He also suggests that “an image’s *narrative context* provides for an interpretive decision regarding the multiple meanings inherent in the image.”⁵ In other words, narrowing the possible meanings of an image is deciding for or against different narrative contexts that diversely shape the way in which the image is understood.

Eslinger is building on work by David Harned, who claims: “To name an image is to furnish it with a context—in other words, *to place it within a story*. When images lose their anchorage in stories, they are divested of much of their significance and begin to drift aimlessly, growing enigmatic and increasingly indeterminate.”⁶ Hughes and Kysar, like Eslinger, treat metaphor as a kind of image and connect images intimately to narrative: “. . . images are miniature stories in themselves.”⁷ Since contemporary preaching theory often treats metaphor as a subcategory of image,⁸ what Eslinger, Harned, Hughes, and Kysar suggest of image in general can be applied to metaphor in particular: understanding a metaphor means putting it into a narrative context.

Metaphor and narrative have also converged in the discussion of preaching parables. Richard Eslinger, Thomas Long, and Eugene Lowry, for example, all briefly relate metaphor, narrative, and parable. None of them, however, provides any developed metaphor theory to aid the work of preaching or interpretation.⁹ This kind of omission is typical of the broader

⁵ Richard L. Eslinger, *A New Hearing: Living Options in Homiletic Method* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1987), 178, emphasis added.

⁶ David Baily Harned, *Images for Self-Recognition: The Christian as Player, Sufferer, and Vandal* (New York: Seabury Press, 1977), 133, emphasis added.

⁷ Robert G. Hughes and Robert Kysar, *Preaching Doctrine for the Twenty-First Century* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 58.

⁸ See the discussion of image, metaphor, and preaching above, pp. 9–11.

⁹ Eslinger uses Amos Wilder’s definition of parable as a “narrative metaphor” to introduce his essay, “Narrative and Imagery” in *Intersections: Post-Critical Studies in Preaching*, ed. Richard L. Eslinger (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 66, without going into any metaphor theory. Thomas G. Long, in his *Preaching and the Literary Forms of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989) 92–95, builds on C. H. Dodd’s “idea of parable as

homiletic field. Though image and metaphor are generally assumed to be connected to narrative in some way, especially in the case of parables, a lack of in-depth metaphor theory has limited the potential benefits of this connection.

Just as preachers have noted “a relationship between narrative and image” while “its specific implications for homiletic method have remained largely unexplored,”¹⁰ recent developments in metaphor theory have begun to suggest some kind of narrative connection without working out the hermeneutical implications. Three of the most influential writers in contemporary metaphor theory, George Lakoff, Mark Turner, and Mark Johnson, have all followed up their initial and collaborative works¹¹ by separately introducing some kind of narrative element either to move beyond or to develop more fully their original theory. Lakoff introduces the concept of “prototypical scenarios” as a way to describe how conceptual metaphors cohere in thought and experience.¹² Turner explores the dynamics of “story” and “projection” and relates both to metaphor.¹³ Johnson’s work with ethics leads him to describe both “The Metaphoric Basis of Moral Theory” and “The Narrative Context of Self and Action.”¹⁴ Though it offers no unified method or theory, the current work with “scenario,” “story,” and “narrative context” from several different authors suggests that a narrative approach to metaphor

metaphor.” The few comments on metaphor theory in Long’s discussion of parable have the same limitations as the comparison theory of metaphor described and rejected by Max Black (see appendix 1, below). Eugene Lowry’s *How to Preach a Parable: Designs for Narrative Sermons* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1989), 21–22 describes the “parabolic nature of stories” and suggests, in passing, that the same dynamic is present in metaphor.

¹⁰ Eslinger, *A New Hearing*, 180.

¹¹ One of the most influential recent books on metaphor theory is Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003). Another widely read work is Lakoff and Turner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

¹² George Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal about the Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

¹³ Mark Turner, *The Literary Mind: The Origins of Thought and Language* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

¹⁴ These are the titles of chapters 3 and 7, respectively, in Mark Johnson, *Moral Imagination: Implications of Cognitive Science for Ethics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

for preaching fits well within the scope of contemporary metaphor theory. This relationship between metaphor and narrative, between image and story, corresponds to general observations in homiletics that have yet to be more fully developed.

The unique contribution of this dissertation therefore goes beyond laying a theoretical foundation for a homiletics of metaphor. This dissertation also advances the study of the connection between narrative and metaphor, something noticed but not explored in detail by either preaching or metaphor theorists. Though this dissertation will not develop a complete theory relating metaphor and narrative, the relationship between the two needs further analysis for the sake of faithful and effective preaching.¹⁵ The present work will move in this direction by describing how an implicit narrative structure guides and constrains (and thereby enables) metaphor interpretation. The result will be not only a basic hermeneutical description but a narrative method, a basic interpretive tool able to facilitate the preacher's careful interaction with the biblical text and careful preparation of a sermon in light of how hearers make interpretive decisions.

Structuring the Blanks Left by Metaphor

The central thesis of this dissertation relates metaphor and narrative at a structural level: *A schema of implied narrative relationships guides and constrains metaphor interpretation.* What does a “schema of implied narrative relationships” look like? In what sense are these relationships “narrative?” Why are they only “implied?” If these narrative relationships remain *implied* rather than expressed, how can they be made available for description and analysis? In

¹⁵ “A systematic analysis of the interaction of image and narrative . . . may be needful for all of those who seek to move beyond the old discursive preaching. And it may well be that the next stages in the development of homiletic method will depend upon these considerations” (Eslinger, *A New Hearing*, 177).

what ways can a structure of narrative relationships help answer the homiletic questions raised of Php 3:20, above?

Before considering the less common metaphor of Christian citizenship in heaven, more familiar and straightforward examples can help describe a basic narrative method. Jesus, for example, is commonly referred to as the “Lamb of God.” Even without the textual setting of John 1, songs and graphic images repeatedly present the Lamb of God metaphor in Christian gatherings. Liturgically, the *Agnus Dei* is sung week after week by many congregations. Even where the Lamb of God is not regularly sung, other familiar songs, paraments, and stained glass images make this metaphor a standard part of most Christian metaphor systems.

Jesus as the Lamb of God is not a challenging metaphor to unpack. Without much difficulty or reflection, most Christians would likely relate Jesus and his sacrificial death on the cross to the forgiveness of sins and the salvation of sinners. Though some variation in specifics can be expected, Christians familiar with the Lamb of God imagery will naturally come to a general consensus about its meaning without much cognitive effort.

Consider as a counter-example the soloist from a local performance of Mozart’s *Requiem* who, when commenting on the *Agnus Dei* during a radio interview, mentioned that every time she sings a funeral mass she feels bad for that poor little lamb. Obviously, she is misunderstanding the Christological metaphor—but it is only *obvious* she misunderstands it to someone who knows the *Agnus Dei* is about a lamb who takes away the sins of the world, that a lamb taking away sins is a lamb in a sacrificial system, and that Jesus’ death on the cross can be understood in terms of substitutionary sacrifice for the removal of sin. Even when metaphor

interpretation seems natural or obvious, important interpretive decisions are being made behind the scenes.¹⁶

In fact, how the Lamb of God or any metaphor is understood—or misunderstood—depends on how the hearer fills in the blanks left by the metaphorical utterance.¹⁷ If the blanks assumed by the Lamb of God metaphor are filled in with the knowledge and experience taken from a sacrificial system that conforms to the promise of God in the Old Testament, Jesus' journey to the cross is readily seen as the salvation of the world. If, however, a contemporary animal rights paradigm is applied to the *Agnus Dei*, then the lamb is the one who needs to be saved from cruel and misguided people. How interpreters fill in the blanks determines how they understand the metaphor.¹⁸

Narrative *Structure* and Metaphor

What those blanks look like and how interpreters fill them in is the broader topic of this entire dissertation. Contemporary metaphor theory suggests that the blanks left by a metaphor have a shape or structure that enables interpretation. This structure can be variously described as

¹⁶ Mark Turner, *Reading Minds: The Study of English in the Age of Cognitive Science* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991) and *The Literary Mind: The Origins of Thought and Language* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996) makes the observation that only those things that take conscious effort are typically seen as complex or important. Against this view, Turner argues that much of the work of interpreting metaphor (as well as literature or even language) is too complex to be done consciously. Important and complex moves are being made even in the interpretation of the metaphors that seem most straightforward or obvious.

¹⁷ This dependence on the work of the interpreter is preeminently true of metaphor, but not uniquely true. The interpretation of any text or utterance involves the filling in of lexical blanks. See Wolfgang Iser, "The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach" in *Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism*, Jane P. Tompkins, ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 50–69.

¹⁸ The question of how the blanks left by sacrificial language for the death of Jesus are to be filled in has led some to suggest speaking of *atonement* is more problematic than it is helpful. See Tyron L. Inbody, *The Many Faces of Christology* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), esp. chapter 6, "Christology and the Atonement: Is Atonement Theology Sacralization of Abuse?" To understand the sacrifice of the Son as divine parental abuse, however, is to blend together Jesus' status as *Son* and as *lamb* in ways which are not warranted by the text. At the same time, even the language of sacrifice needs to be held together with other ways of proclaiming the gospel which highlight (and hide) different aspects of our relationship to God in Jesus Christ. Both the need for multiple metaphorical perspectives and the dynamics of blending are discussed below in chapter 6, "Metaphor in a Preaching Ministry."

a set of “associated commonplaces,”¹⁹ a “conceptual network,”²⁰ a “web of implications” or “network of meanings,”²¹ an “inferential structure,”²² a “cognitive topology,” “gestalt structure,” or “image-schematic structure.”²³ The common assertion behind all of these various formulations is that metaphor interpretation involves not a laundry list of attributes or characteristics, but a structured meaningful whole that shapes evaluation, attitude, expectation, and experience.

To call Jesus “the Lamb of God” is to evoke not only certain *characteristics* of a sacrificial lamb, but a broader narrative that casts Jesus in specific, *structured relationships* to things like sin, death, blood, guilt, sacrifice, punishment, expiation, forgiveness, the sinner, God. Interpreters know what to expect from Jesus *as lamb* if they know what to expect from a lamb within the structure of sacrifice. Interpreters can evaluate the work of Jesus on the cross and its import for them only if they know how the death of a sacrificial lamb relates to sinners. If the Lamb of God metaphor is interpreted from within a different structure of relationships, then the interpreter will have different expectations and will evaluate Jesus differently: a lamb being cruelly and unnecessarily tortured is in need of rescue by an animal rights activist.

Narrative Structure and Metaphor

Metaphor, then, evokes a kind of structure, a structure dependent on a specific kind of setting or situation. Interpreters understand John’s reference to Jesus as the Lamb of God by

¹⁹ Max Black, *Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy* (London: Cornell University Press: 1962).

²⁰ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 7.

²¹ Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

²² George Lakoff, “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor,” in *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd ed., ed. Andrew Ortony (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 209.

²³ George Lakoff, “The Invariance Hypothesis: Is Abstract Reason Based on Image-Schemas?” *Cognitive Linguistics* 1 (1990): 39–74.

situating a lamb—and therefore Jesus—in a particular kind of narrative. In fact, *changing the implied setting or narrative situation* assumed by a metaphor *changes the metaphor*. Take, for instance, another common and seemingly straight-forward lamb metaphor, “I am Jesus’ little lamb.” The children’s hymn places lambs in a different kind of situation: “I am Jesus’ little lamb / ever glad at heart I am / for my Shepherd gently guides me / knows my name and well provides me / when I thirst He bids me go / where the quiet waters flow.” This lamb has a pastoral setting, not a sacrificial one. As a result, the “I” in the song is not a lamb in the same way Jesus is. This lamb metaphor includes a shepherd, a protector, perhaps even a green pasture and still waters. Guilt, blood, and sacrifice are no longer in view. The implied narrative, or the “story behind the image,” has changed. As a result, there is a change not only in *how* an adequate interpretation will *fill in the blanks* of the utterance, but in *the kinds of blanks* that are left to be filled in. Interpreting these different lamb metaphors requires the asking of narrative questions: who is doing what to whom with what result? Is the lamb being sacrificed in accordance with the promise of God to remove sin from guilty offenders, or is the lamb being protected and guided and cared for by a loving shepherd? Changing the assumed setting or implied narrative changes the metaphor.

The importance of a broader implied narrative to the interpretation of metaphor is most obvious when a metaphor is specifically taken from a well-known story. Images taken from the Exodus or the wilderness wandering, for example, will be understood most fully only in light of their root narratives.²⁴ Similarly, calling Jesus the Lamb of God assumes the Old Testament institutions of Passover and sacrifice; the larger Old Testament story helps shape how the Lamb of God metaphor is understood.

²⁴ Eslinger for example, suggests that “to evoke the image of manna in sermon or song is to evoke as well the wilderness narrative with its drama of hunger, murmuring, and divine provision” (*Web*, 262).

Metaphors of manna or sacrifice or exodus or cross evoke specific stories; a narrative approach to metaphor, however, is not limited to metaphors that recognizably draw on specific narratives. Even when there is no specific narration from which they are drawn, *metaphors are understood in terms of some implied narrative structure*.²⁵ If Paul exhorts his hearers to “put on the full armor of God,” for example, his hearers don’t necessarily need to recall any particular story or any particular battle in the history of Israel. They will, however, make sense out of the metaphor by assuming—often without intentional thought—some situation or narrative setting that brings armor into a larger network of narrative relationships. Armor is good for something only in the right kind of situation: armor functions differently in a narrative setting of hand-to-hand combat than it does in a narrative setting of swimming across a river. Similarly, if a preacher tells a congregation their “citizenship is in heaven,” the hearers will understand *some kind* of narrative setting for “citizenship” as part of the interpretive process. Whether or not this implicit narrative is in line with the preacher’s intention or with the biblical text is a separate question.

The role of narrative structure in metaphor interpretation is not unique to special settings like Scripture reading or preaching, but is a part of normal, everyday communication. Even if one fan at a basketball game exclaims to another, “That number 21 is a *bear!*” interpretation turns on whether this “bear” is understood to be in a situation involving *conflict* where size, strength, and ferocity allow a bear to impose its will, or a narrative setting of *hibernation* where lethargy, clumsiness, and extra body fat come into view. Metaphor interpretation includes a kind of structure; that structure can be described in terms of narrative relationships.

²⁵ Whether or not we can helpfully describe *all* metaphors, even at their most simplistic or most highly poetic, in terms of narrative structure is not central to the discussion here. A wide range of biblical metaphors commonly found in sermon texts can be productively analyzed from a narrative perspective; the dissertation focuses on these kinds of metaphors. See also p. 96, n. 44 and p. 101, n. 48, below for more on the limitations of the method advocated here.

Story: Narrative Relationships Outside of Plot Development

The structure that enables metaphor interpretation is a *narrative* structure. This does not mean, however, that metaphor presents a fully developed plot or narration. The field of narratology recognizes several different aspects of narrative, not all of which apply to metaphor. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, for example, distinguishes among “the events, their verbal representation, and the act of telling.” These she respectively labels “story,” “text,” and “narration.”²⁶

The narrative elements in metaphor remain below the surface of the utterance. John, for example, doesn’t relate an epic about lambs, even though calling Jesus “the Lamb of God” places Jesus in narrative relationships appropriate for a lamb only in a setting of sacrifice. Since the implied narrative structure remains by and large implied, the verbal representation of a narrative (the *text*), and the act of its telling (the *narration*), are not helpful categories for metaphor interpretation. The category of *story*, on the other hand, focuses on narrative content and relationships rather than the telling itself. *Story* therefore provides a way of bringing narrative and metaphor together.

In terms of narrative theory, *story* is an abstraction from the text. *Story* focuses on the events themselves, as well as the participants that bring about the events, as opposed to focusing on the presentation or ordering of the events in the telling.²⁷ For purpose of analysis, the *form* of these events, with their “separable components” and therefore “networks of internal relations”

²⁶ Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*, New Accents, ed. Terence Hawkes (New York: Routledge, 1989), 3. Rimmon-Kenan notes that she is building on Gérard Genette’s terms *histoire*, *récit*, and *narration* and that others have made similar distinctions (*Narrative Fiction*, 133, n. 2). Seymour Chatman is one example. Chatman distinguishes between “discourse” (the expression of a narrative) and “story” (the content of a narrative). See Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Paperbacks, 1980), 26.

²⁷ Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 34.

can be distinguished from any *particular event* in any particular narrative.²⁸ The limits of this form, however, do not limit the variety of ways this form can be expressed: “An infinite number of narrative texts can be described using the finite number of concepts contained within the narrative system.”²⁹ Much as a language system (*langue*) can be studied apart from the utterances (*parole*) which both rely on and give rise to the system itself, narrative structures and relationships can be described at a level removed from the specifics of any given narrative.³⁰

This level of narrative analysis—the level of *story*—is helpful for metaphor interpretation. When John points to Jesus as the Lamb of God, he does not verbalize any particular events or outcomes. John’s words, however, do assume a “story” with implied participants and relationships quite distinct from other events or relationships which may involve a lamb. Metaphor interpretation is narrative in the sense that **the structured relationships assumed by any particular metaphor in its context can be described in terms of more general narrative structures.** This narrative structure can be shown as a model of relationships that, in turn, can be adapted for use in metaphor interpretation. The result is a method or tool useful for identifying, analyzing, and anticipating how preachers interpreting a biblical text and hearers interpreting a sermon will fill in the blanks left by metaphor.

The Actantial Model of A. J. Greimas: A Narrative Method

The Lithuanian-born structuralist A. J. Greimas worked to describe the kind of fundamental narrative relationships that lie underneath the surface of any particular narration. Aspects of his

²⁸ Ibid., 6.

²⁹ Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, trans. Christine van Boheemen (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 3.

³⁰ The analogy between Ferdinand de Saussure’s work with *langue* and *parole* and the relationship between narrative form or structure and particular instances of narrative is also used by Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 8, and Steve Cohan and Linda M. Shires, *Telling Stories: The Theoretical Analysis of Narrative Fiction*, New Accents, ed. Terence Hawkes (New York: Routledge, 1988), 53.

narrative theory have already been put to good use by exegetes and homileticians alike.³¹

Greimas' most helpful contribution to the current discussion comes from his analysis of a level between the deep structure and the surface presentation of a text, a level of basic narrative relationships. Using as examples work done by Vladimir Propp on Russian fairy tales and a theory of theater analysis proposed by Étienne Souriau, Greimas developed a model of important players, actions, and narrative relationships. Although possible *combinations* of characters and nuances of plot are unlimited, Greimas sought to describe a finite number of *relationships* that give structure to the particular events presented by any given narrative.

For Greimas, any narrative sequence assumes a basic set of relationships: a Sender intends to convey some benefit or Object to someone, the Receiver. The movement of the Object from the Sender to the Receiver is facilitated by the Subject, often the hero or protagonist. The Subject's job description of getting and delivering the Object is hindered by an Opponent. The Subject must overcome the Opponent with the aid of a Helper in order to deliver the Object to the Receiver. These relationships together comprise the "actantial model" (figure 1, below).

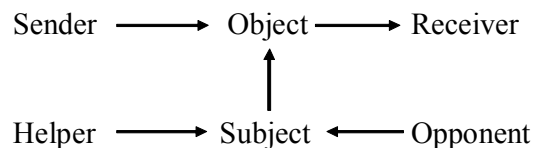


Figure 1. Greimas' Actantial Model

³¹ Daniel Patte is perhaps the best-known exegete to bring some of Greimas' insights to bear on the biblical text. Thomas Long wrote his doctoral dissertation at Princeton on the implications of Greimas' theory for preaching biblical narratives. I am unaware of anyone using Greimas to work with a general theory of metaphor. See Long's thesis, "Narrative Structure as Applied to Biblical Preaching: A Method for Using the Narrative Grammar of A. J. Greimas in the Development of Sermons on Biblical Narratives," (Ph. D. diss., Princeton) 1980 for a clear description of the general theory presented here.

Several “ground rules” of the actantial model will help guide the analysis of the implied narrative structure behind metaphor.

1. Discrete individuals may occupy the actantial positions on Greimas’ model, but so may inanimate objects, character traits, or qualities. Greimas distinguished *actants* from *actors*: *actants* (or *actantial positions*) are roles filled by different *actors* in different narrative sequences.³² These “actors” however are not the Hollywood kind; in fact, key narrative roles are not necessarily filled by human beings at all. Sometimes attributes or inanimate objects do the job. The Little Lamb metaphor, for example, includes *individuals* like a shepherd, *inanimate objects* like a shepherd’s staff, and *character traits* like a shepherd’s courage or skill as actors in different actantial positions.³³ Even nonentities or counterfactuals may fill an actantial position. The Opponent, for example, will not necessarily be as concrete as a lion or an enemy army; often, some kind of *lack* is the underlying obstacle that must be overcome in order for the Subject to facilitate the movement of the Object from the Sender to the Receiver.³⁴ A shepherd overcomes not only opponents like bears and thieves, but also a lack of food, water, and shelter. In this way, “my shepherd” “knows my needs and well provides me.”

³² Propp’s distinction of “function” and “dramatis personae” Greimas describes as “spheres of action” and “characters” before settling on the distinction of “actant” and “actor.” Algirdas Julien Greimas, *Structural Semantics*, trans. Daniele McDowell, Ronald Schleifer, and Alan Velie (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 200. According to Greimas, different actors in different narrative sequences can be “occurrence expressions of the same actant . . . defined by the same sphere of activity” (ibid.). As Corina Galland, “An Introduction to the Method of A. J. Greimas,” in *The New Testament and Structuralism*, ed. and trans. Alfred M. Johnson, Jr. (Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1976), 8 summarizes: “Unlike the *actor*, who is the character as he appears in the narrative, the *actant* is a semantic unit and it is situated on a more abstract level.”

³³ “It is necessary to state precisely that the actants are not necessarily anthropomorphous. They can also be abstract ideas, such as a desire to be healed, trust, or faith operating as a helper” (Galland, “Introduction,” 9).

³⁴ In some ways, lack is the quintessential Opponent that is overcome by definition when the Object is transferred to the Receiver: “The basic narrative syntagmatic unit is the action or, more precisely, the *transformation*. An Object is transmitted to a Receiver, who is transformed from a state of lack (not having the Object) to a state of lack fulfilled (having the Object)” (Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts*, 55).

2. More than one actor may occupy a single actantial position in any given narrative sequence. There are a limited number of actantial positions but an unlimited number of possible characters, character traits, or objects that can be related narratively. In practical terms, this means that all the important “players” in any given narrative situation can be placed somewhere on the actantial model, even if that means double casting.³⁵ In the Little Lamb metaphor, sheep receive from their shepherd more than one object; these benefits include but are not limited to provision, guidance, and quiet waters.³⁶

3. A single actor may occupy more than one actantial position in the same narrative structure. The actantial model also allows for the fact that sometimes the same individual, character trait, or object may occupy more than one actantial position in the same narrative sequence.³⁷ The shepherd, for example, is the Sender who communicates benefits like safety or guidance, the Object, to sheep in the Receiver slot. At the same time, the shepherd is also the Subject who, with the aid of Helpers like the shepherd’s staff or courage, overcomes Opponents like bears or wolves and therefore facilitates the communication of the Object to the Receiver.

³⁵ For Greimas, we can consider two characters with the same function “as two ‘actors’ of a single actant” (*Structural Semantics*, 204). This is in fact how Greimas gets from Propp’s list of 31 functions down to only 6 actantial positions; many of the functions in Propp are combined into a single actant in Greimas (the dispatcher and the father of the sought-for person, for example, both fit the actantial slot of Sender). Galland notices another important difference between Propp and Greimas: Propp’s functions are organized in a linear order, progressing narratively from one to the next over time. Greimas on the other hand analyzes functions or spheres of influence “according to a paradigmatic dimension, that is to say, in their achronic relationship of associations” (“Introduction,” 9). This focus on achronic, paradigmatic relationships is an important reason why Greimas is useful for a narrative approach to metaphor: metaphor interpretation depends in part on narrative relationships or implications but does not give us narrative development over time.

³⁶ Galland offers another example: “Several explicit actors or characters can form a single actant in a narrative. If a little girl departs on a search for her little brother and is helped by a stove, a river, and an apple-tree, the stove, river, and apple-tree are actors who form only one actant, the helper” (“Introduction,” 8).

³⁷ Greimas refers to the “often noticed plurality of two actants present under the form of one actor” (*Structural Semantics*, 203). In other words, as Daniel Patte puts it, “the same personage of the manifestation may actualize several actantial positions.” Daniel Patte, *What is Structural Exegesis?*, Guides to Biblical Scholarship New Testament Series, ed. Dan O. Via, Jr. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 43. Galland is even more succinct: a “single actor can occupy one or several actantial positions” (“Introduction,” 9).

4. Though specific actors may change from one narrative sequence to the next, the narrative relationships expressed by the model remain constant. God might be sending the Holy Grail to humanity, or lovers could be seeking to send marital bliss to themselves; the Helper could be a magical sword, super-human strength, or Jiminy Cricket; the Opponent could be a big bad wolf, the dark side of the Force, or a lack of money. The particular manifestations of these actants change from narrative to narrative, but the same basic structure of narrative relationships continues to guide and constrain how specific narratives take shape.³⁸

5. Any individual actantial position presupposes an entire actantial model. Because the actantial model expresses a network of relationships, knowing one part of the network assumes the existence of the rest of the model; the tip of the iceberg is an indication of what lies beneath.³⁹ This dynamic is especially important for metaphor theory where many important things—or kinds of things—that play a part in metaphor interpretation are often left unexpressed.⁴⁰ Though metaphor is therefore open to a variety of interpretations, these interpretations are not completely random or subjective. Even a few details expressed in an utterance, even a single actor placed in an actantial position will presuppose a broader narrative structure that guides how the rest of the metaphor is understood.⁴¹ To call Jesus the “Lamb of

³⁸ “The analyst must keep in mind that the structure as a relational network is a *constant* which is itself semantically empty and is only manifested when invested by *variable* semantic features.” Daniel Patte, translator’s preface to Jean Calloud, *Structural Analysis of Narrative*, The Society of Biblical Literature Semeia Supplements, ed. William A. Beardslee (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), xii, emphasis original.

³⁹ Daniel Patte (*What is Structural Exegesis?*, 43) identifies this important feature of analysis: “This actantial model is presupposed, evoked, suggested by any personage of the manifestation even though only a part of the model might be actualized.”

⁴⁰ Because it includes both specific actors which are variable and more abstract actantial positions which are constant, the actantial model is able to describe in part how metaphor can be open to a range of interpretations without becoming arbitrary. See the discussion of “underdetermination” in chapter 3, below (pp. 91–101).

⁴¹ This important relationship between *an actor* specifically manifested in the text, *an actantial position* filled by that actor, and *the broader system* of actantial relationships assumed by even a single actantial position relies on basic tenets of structuralist theory. Though words are related *synatagmatically* in an utterance (*parole*)—that is, words and their meanings depend on other words and their meanings in close temporal or spatial relationship—

God,” for example, is to presuppose an entire actantial model in which God sends forgiveness to sinners, facilitated by the sacrificial lamb who overcomes the sin of the world and perhaps even the wrath of God with the help of things like the lamb’s unblemished perfection or the promise of God.⁴² These actors and actantial relationships can be expressed in terms of Greimas’ model. See figure 2a, below.

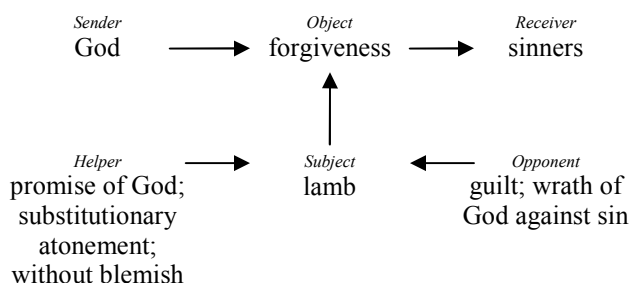


Figure 2a. The Lamb of God

Figure 2a shows one way of filling in the blanks left by the Lamb of God metaphor. It combines elements overtly expressed by the text with elements assumed by the sacrificial system. Though the specifics interpreters use to fill in the blanks may vary, the blanks

structuralism focuses on the *paradigmatic relationships* of words in the language system (*langue*) to which they belong. This language system is “not merely a *list* of words, but an organized whole, a *system* of words which are related to each other in specific ways” (Patte, *Structural Exegesis*, 27). Words evoke meanings not only in relationship to the other words around them in an utterance but also in relationship to the language system to which they belong. In a similar move, I am arguing that what maps in metaphor (and therefore what a metaphor means) is not a *list* of features but a *relational system*, only some of which finds explicit expression. Following the structuralists on this point, I want to read metaphors *paradigmatically*. We should therefore expect only parts of the actantial model to be expressed, even if we take the model as a whole to be guiding interpretation: “A paradigmatic reading gathers together the elements which manifest in the text a given structure. Yet it should be kept in mind that *these elements manifest only a part of this structure*: they evoke, suggest, and presuppose the structure. Thus in the paradigmatic reading of any text one cannot expect to find the whole structure. The structure has to be reconstructed from the few of its elements which are manifested” (Patte, *Structural Exegesis*, 26).

⁴² An implied narrative would shape our understanding of this metaphor even if we did not have the rest of John’s gospel narrative to flesh out what “Lamb of God” means. Many Pauline metaphors, for example, have no expressed narrative setting. When Paul uses armor or citizenship metaphorically, he assumes a situation or narrative in which armor or citizenship plays a meaningful part. He does not, however, tell us a story about soldiers or Roman citizens. We must—in fact, we do, consciously or not—posit some kind of situation or narrative setting in order to make interpretive decisions about metaphor.

themselves (that is, the actantial positions) help shape how a metaphor is understood. Some interpreters might not consider the wrath of God as an Opponent in the Lamb of God metaphor, but *some kind* of Opponent will be understood, even if an individual interpreter never takes a step back to ask *what exactly* must be overcome in the sacrificial system in order for forgiveness to be given to sinners.⁴³

Just as the Lamb of God metaphor includes an underlying narrative structure expressible by an actantial model, “I am Jesus’ little lamb” also presupposes a whole network of narrative relationships. In fact, *the difference in meaning and implication between these two very different lamb metaphors is precisely the difference in their implied narratives*, the structures of which can be expressed by using Greimas’ actantial model. Again in figure 2b, below, some details are provided by the text and some must be provided by the interpreter. The range of possibilities is constrained by narrative relationships assumed by the metaphor.

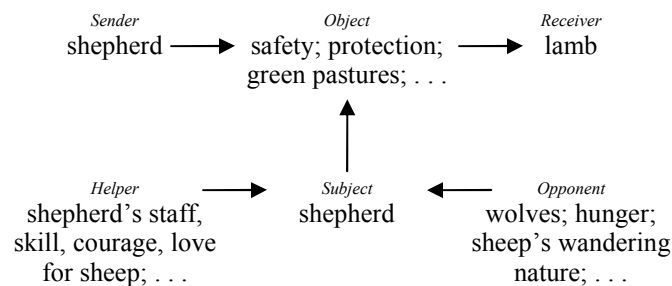


Figure 2b. I Am Jesus' Little Lamb

⁴³ The relationship between more general actantial positions and specific actors explains in part why some variation in the specifics of interpretation is inevitable and does not necessarily constitute contrary understandings of a metaphor. If the actantial positions and relationships are understood coherently, variation in actors will not greatly affect interpretation. See the discussion of underdetermination in chapter 3, below, esp. pp. 94–98.

Though different interpreters might dispute whether or not a shepherd's staff or courage, for example, are suggested by this second metaphor, they will likely understand *those kinds of things*, even if they can't agree on *which particular* things are specifically intended. More important than a specific list of shepherding paraphernalia is the fact that the *kinds of things* that come into question for the Little Lamb metaphor are decidedly different from the kinds of actors, relationships, and outcomes presupposed by the Lamb of God metaphor. In fact, the lamb in each metaphor finds itself in a different actantial position. In the sacrificial system, the lamb functions as the Subject that acts to bring God's forgiveness to sinners. In the pastoral setting the lamb is the Receiver of the shepherd's good intentions and action. *What an interpreter will expect from, or infer about, a lamb is directly related to the lamb's relationship to other significant characters and outcomes in the basic narrative setting assumed by the metaphor.* In other words, the lamb's actantial position guides the interpretive decisions and conclusions in each of these different lamb metaphors.

It seems natural to say that "I" am not a lamb in the same way Jesus is. Slowing down to consider the network of narrative implications behind metaphor helps express why this is the case. If *I* am the lamb, the lamb is the Receiver of the Shepherd's loving care. If *Jesus* is the lamb, "I" am still the Receiver, the guilty sinner in this case, but the lamb is the Subject who facilitates "my forgiveness." I am not a lamb in the same way Jesus is because *these two metaphors assume different implied narratives.*

A schema of narrative relationships guides and constrains the process of filling in a metaphor's implied narrative blanks. This concern for the implied narrative structure, for the story behind the image, facilitates the preacher's movement to the biblical text on behalf of the hearers and back to the hearers on behalf of God. Greimas' actantial model provides an interpretive tool, a method for describing narrative structure. In order to describe the implied

narrative structure of metaphor, however, Greimas' model must be adapted to include the basic duality inherent in metaphor.⁴⁴

Metaphor's Basic Duality: Narrative Structure in Source and Target Domains

The interpretation of a "lamb" metaphor will change dramatically, depending on whether the lamb is in a *pastoral* setting or a *sacrificial* one. To say it another way, interpreting a particular metaphorical utterance in a particular cultural and communicative context entails making a decision about the particular situation assumed by the culture, the context, and/or the speaker. A hearer or reader must know what is being expected of (or done to) a lamb in the right kind of situation in order to make sense of any lamb metaphor.

The particular narrative setting of a *lamb*, however, is only half of the story. When John the Baptist says, "Behold! The lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world," he is not, in fact, talking about a *lamb*; John is using the *story of a lamb*—a lamb in a sacrificial, *not* pastoral, setting—to speak about the *story of Jesus*.⁴⁵ **Metaphor entails thinking about, speaking of, or experiencing *one thing* in terms of *something else*.**

Source and Target Domains

This basic duality of *one thing* in terms of *something else* is widely recognized in the broad field of metaphor theory and has been described using various terms.⁴⁶ A common way of

⁴⁴ Appendix 1, below, considers different ways of describing metaphor's inherent duality—as well as some perspectives on metaphor that do not emphasize duality at all.

⁴⁵ According to Turner (*The Literary Mind*), the basic building blocks of metaphor (and, for Turner, of thought itself) include not only "story" but also "projection." In other words, it is not enough to notice that the Lamb of God metaphor requires a particular story involving lambs, sacrifice, and sinners in order to be understood; we must go one step further and see that the story of a sacrificial lamb (as opposed to the story of a shepherd and his lamb) is being *projected* onto the story of Jesus. Turner's discussion is not confined to metaphor, though it does clearly demonstrate that metaphor involves both story and projection.

⁴⁶ More important than differing nomenclature, however, is how an account of metaphor understands this basic duality. Briefly, metaphor can be described as a way of swapping out one *word* for another. Max Black labeled this the "Substitution View" of metaphor. Though it does describe metaphor up to a point, as a working definition it is

designating this duality in contemporary theory is to speak of two “domains” of knowledge or experience. Some aspects of one conceptual domain, the “source,” are “mapped” onto a second conceptual domain, the “target.”⁴⁷ These domains are not amorphous; rather, they have a particular shape or structure that plays an important role in mapping from one domain to another.⁴⁸ The narrative approach to metaphor proposed by this dissertation combines the claim that both domains are *structured* with the insight that understanding metaphor depends on understanding a particular *situation* or rudimentary *story*.⁴⁹ From a narrative perspective, then, **metaphor entails mapping from a *narrative structure* in the source domain to a *narrative structure* in the target domain.**

Actantial Models in Source and Target Domains

Greimas’ actantial model was used above to describe the very different narrative structures of sacrifice and shepherding. The narrative structure of the source domain in “I am Jesus’ little

neither unique to metaphor nor sufficient for describing the most important aspects of metaphor interpretation. Understanding metaphor as a kind of split *reference* leads to what Black called the “Comparison View” of metaphor. Again, this approach may be seen as superficially correct up to a point, but also inadequate. More helpful for the approach offered here is understanding the duality of metaphor at the level of *thought* (I. A. Richards, for example) or at the level of *implied situation* (Roger White is best classified here, though he himself labels his approach polarity at the level of *sentence*). For a more complete discussion and examples of these (and other) approaches, see appendix 1: Describing the Duality of Metaphor, below.

⁴⁷ The language of “source” and “target” domains is taken from the cognitive linguistic approach to metaphor characterized by the work of George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, and Mark Turner, described in appendix 1, below, as well as in chapter 5. Using these terms does not imply an uncritical acceptance of the entire Lakoff-Johnson-Turner position, nor does it suggest that other terms may not have as much or more theoretical value (I. A. Richards’ “tenor” and “vehicle,” for example). The terms “source” and “target” are chosen here because they are widely used and sufficiently descriptive.

⁴⁸ Though this claim is a prominent feature of the Lakoff-Johnson-Turner approach, it is not completely novel. Max Black, for example, was already dealing with metaphor in terms of a kind of structure, a “set of associated commonplaces,” though he unfortunately backed away from some of his original work: “*The secondary subject* [what we have here called the source domain] *is to be regarded as a system rather than an individual thing*. While Black considers his earlier view that this claim holds with equal force for the primary subject [our target domain] ‘not plainly mistaken,’ he apparently does no longer want to endorse it without qualification. This is an unfortunate lapse from the older, and highly correct, notion.” Charles Forceville, *Pictorial Metaphor in Advertising* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 7.

⁴⁹ Again, the narrative quality inherent in metaphor has been hinted at in works by Lakoff, Johnson, and Turner. I cited a few of these above (p. 36). Metaphor’s connection to narrative, however, is not unique to this particular strand of metaphor theory. See appendix 1: Describing the Duality of Metaphor, below.

lamb” was given in figure 2a. The significantly different structure of the source domain from “Behold, the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” was represented by figure 2b. Two very different narrative structures in the source domain lead to two very different lamb metaphors.

Figures 2a and 2b, however, describe only one of the domains involved in metaphor mapping. Because metaphor involves thinking about, speaking of, or experiencing *one thing* in terms of *something else*, metaphor mapping actually requires a narrative structure in the target domain as well. Placing an actantial model that accounts for key elements of the source next to an actantial model that describes key elements of the target helps to clarify how the two domains relate to each other. The first step in aligning two distinct narrative structures is to flatten the actantial model while preserving its slots and relationships (see figure 3a, below).

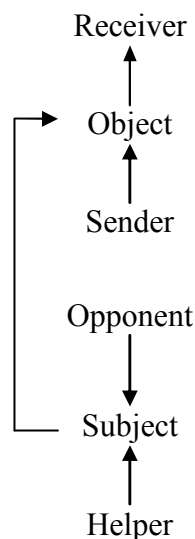


Figure 3a. A Vertical Actantial Model

None of the actantial relationships have changed on this model. The Helper is still the one who helps the Subject overcome the Opponent and deliver the Object from the Sender to the

Receiver. What has changed is the orientation: what was a primarily left-to-right orientation is now up-and-down. This minor change allows two actantial models to be placed side by side in a way that shows more clearly the relationship between the source and the target. Actors and actantial positions in one domain can line up with actors and actantial positions in the other. The result is figure 3b, below.

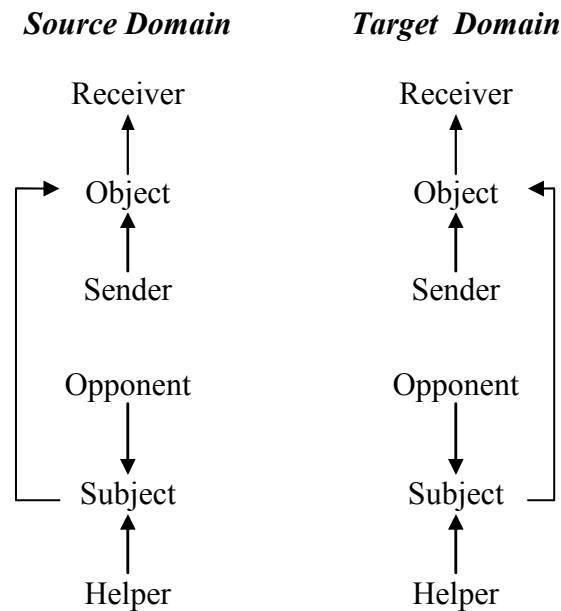


Figure 3b. Actantial Models in the Source and the Target

In metaphor, both source and target domains are structured in terms of narrative relationships. Moreover, relationships and outcomes assumed by the source are intended to correspond to relationships and outcomes in the target: Helpers align with Helpers, Opponents with Opponents, and so on. In the two lamb metaphors, for example, different knowledge and relationships expressed by the actantial model in the source will be mapped onto different knowledge or relationships in the target. Figures 4a and 5a, below, are fuller descriptions of the lamb metaphors discussed above.

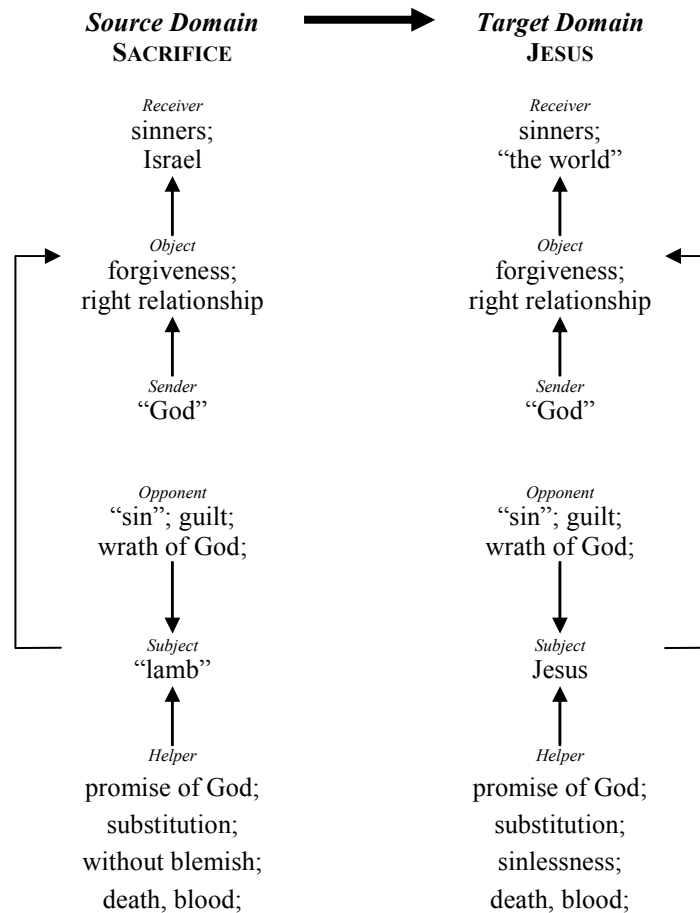


Figure 4a. The Lamb of God Actantial Models in Source and Target Domains

Figure 4a, above, represents the narrative structure of sacrifice for both the source and the target domains. Understanding Jesus as the Lamb of God means understanding a structure of narrative relationships. Reorganizing the narrative structure of the source domain would change the meaning of the metaphor. Using narrative relationships and expectations of an animal rights paradigm in the source, for example, would change what the metaphor is saying about the target. Likewise, changing the narrative setting of sacrifice to a narrative setting of sheep and shepherds also changes the expectations and inferences appropriate for the lamb.

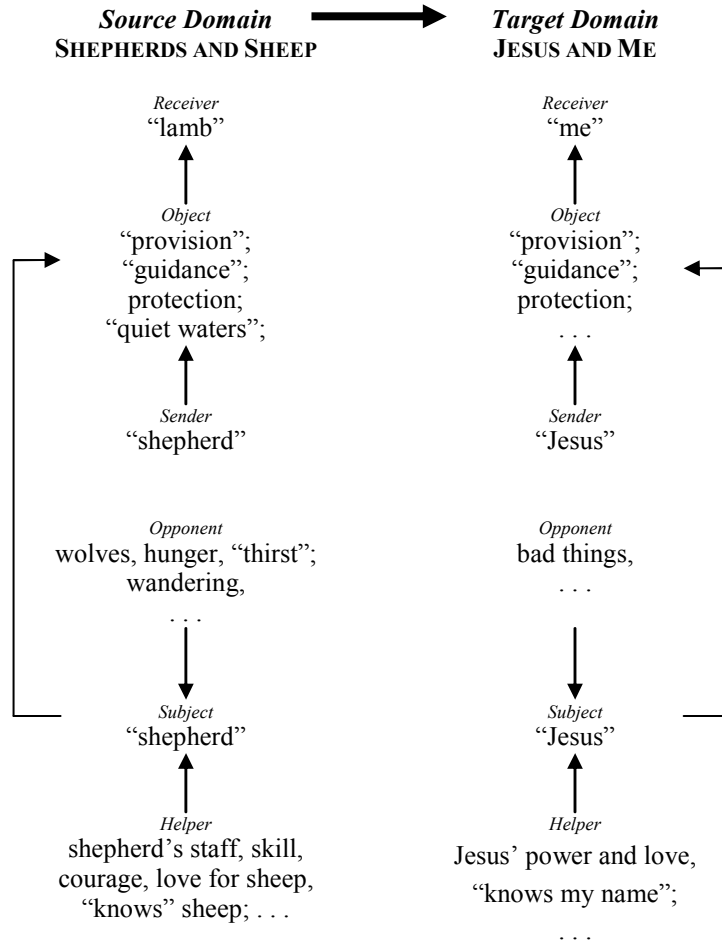


Figure 5a. Jesus' Little Lamb Actantial Models in Source and Target Domains

Specific narrative relationships in the source domain are also mirrored in the target domain in figure 5a, above. This time the narrative structure involves some of the same actors but some very different specifics. Just as wolves would be out of place in a sacrificial structure, blood and substitution are absent here. The meaning of the two lamb metaphors depends on the shape of the narrative structure given to both the source and the target domain in the process of interpreting the metaphor.

Though both the Lamb of God and Little Lamb metaphors are common, straightforward, and relatively easy to understand, the interpretive dynamics behind these metaphors are by no means simple or rudimentary. In fact, identifying a narrative structure in both the source and the

target domains is just a beginning. Recognizing two distinct domains and understanding their structure narratively are important insights moving in the right direction. Metaphor interpretation, however, hinges not only on the existence of two domains, but also on how these two domains relate to each other. Describing the structure of both the source and the target domains in terms of the actantial model is a point of departure; complexities of these cross-domain relationships will be treated in chapter 3.

Conclusion: Source and Target Domains in Php 3:20

Chapter 2 began by considering the kinds of homiletical questions raised with Paul's metaphor in Php 3:20: "but our citizenship is in heaven." What will come to mind for typical hearers in a particular congregation if the sermon focuses on heavenly citizenship? Which, if any, of the hearers' most typical or immediate associations should play an important role in the sermon? How much background information is relevant for this metaphor? Identifying two distinct domains is an important first step in giving a sufficient account of this metaphor.

Though it may seem obvious that Paul is speaking of one thing (the Church's ongoing existence in the world) in terms of something else (Roman citizens living in a foreign land), organizing and clarifying interpretive decisions in terms of two distinct domains is already a significant move. In fact, I. A. Richards, one of the most important 20th century figures in metaphor theory, regarded confusion between two distinct domains as one of the fundamental obstacles to a clearer understanding of how metaphor works.⁵⁰

Some of the questions raised of Php 3:20 at the beginning of the chapter are concerned with what should or should not be included in the *source* domain: is it significant that Roman citizens

⁵⁰ Richards introduces his famous terms "tenor" (our target domain) and "vehicle" (our source domain) for the express purpose of clearing up this confusion. See I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, "Lecture V: Metaphor," in *Philosophical Perspectives on Metaphor*, ed. Mark Johnson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), 52–55.

wore distinctive clothing, had distinctive speech, and were afforded legal rights? Is it significant that Americans vote and pay taxes? Some are focused on the *target* domain: what is a Christian's ultimate hope? Does being Christian make people good citizens? Many of the questions, however, have to do with how the source domain relates to the target domain: questions of how to preach law and gospel from this text or how unbelievers should be considered in the terms of this metaphor are questions of how the target domain of the Christian Church is to be understood in terms of the dynamics of earthly citizenship and struggle.

Questions about what is included or excluded from the source or the target and questions of how the two domains relate can be answered in terms of the shape of the narrative structure used to understand the metaphor. Just as *wolves* are not a part of the source domain in the Lamb of God metaphor because wolves find no place in the narrative structure of *sacrifice*, and *blood* is not a part of the source domain of the Little Lamb metaphor because blood is not relevant to the narrative structure of *shepherds and sheep*, determining what should or should not be a part of the source or target domains in Php 3:20 means asking about the narrative structure appropriate to this particular metaphor of citizenship.

Paul, however, does not give a narration on citizenship. An appropriate narrative structure must therefore be determined by the interpreter, even if unawares. The context of Php 3:20 gives some interpretive cues, just as a preacher may express specific details to help hearers understand a metaphor in a sermon. Many times, however, there is more to a metaphor than what is expressly made evident in the text or utterance. Establishing the shape of a metaphor's narrative structure often requires cultural or experiential knowledge outside of the utterance itself.

How should the metaphor of citizenship in Php 3:20 be understood? Answering that question involves describing the structure of the source domain, the structure of the target domain, and how the two domains relate, in part on the basis of textual and extra-textual

evidence. There is an important relationship between a metaphor and its surrounding context as well as between a metaphor's source and target domains. Chapter 3 considers these relationships that shape metaphor interpretation from a narrative perspective.

CHAPTER THREE

PREACHING AND THE COMPLEXITIES OF CROSS-DOMAIN MAPPING

Introduction

Chapter 2 began with a series of homiletical questions about how best to interpret and preach the metaphor of a heavenly commonwealth in Php 3:20. Though chapter 2 introduced Greimas' actantial model and applied this narrative method to the structure of both the source and the target domains in metaphor, it did not answer very many of these homiletical questions, and for good reason: most of the important questions related to metaphor in either the biblical text or the preaching event require more than identifying and describing two distinct conceptual domains. Metaphor happens between these domains, in the process of mapping narrative elements or inference across the domains, with an interpretive movement from the source story of sacrifice or shepherds or citizenship to the faith and lives of the hearers or readers in the target domain. Preachers concerned with the homiletical potential of metaphor in the text and in the sermon will be concerned with the ground rules of cross-domain mapping in metaphor theory.

An extensive and detailed theory of metaphor is beyond the scope of this study. Significant and contrary descriptions of the duality of metaphor assumed by the dissertation proper are described in some detail in appendix 1. A few fundamental dynamics of metaphor theory, however, are necessary for any approach to homiletics that hopes to give an adequate account of how metaphor works.

The complexities of metaphor considered in this chapter have to do with how the two conceptual domains of a metaphor, the source and the target, relate either to each other or to the

surrounding context of the metaphor. *Correspondence* describes the extent to which significant cross-domain mapping takes place in any given metaphor. Not all source and target domains are related to the same degree. *Development* describes the extent to which the actual metaphorical utterance provides direct cues to the elements or structure of the source or target. Some metaphors are more explicit than others. *Directionality* refers to the fact that cross-domain mapping is not a two-way street: metaphor maps *from* the source *to* the target and not vice versa. *Interaction*, however, admits that even though elements from the target do not map back onto the source, significant elements or structure in the target can, at times, alter the way the source domain is presented. Finally, *underdetermination* describes from a narrative perspective how and why metaphor interpretation can be open-ended without being random or arbitrary.

These dynamics of metaphor interpretation—correspondence, development, directionality, interaction, and underdetermination—are commonly if not universally recognized under different designations and to different degrees in the broader field of metaphor theory. Though these features are not unique to the narrative approach to metaphor for preaching offered by this dissertation, the narrative method outlined in chapter 2 is able to account for all of these dynamics in unique and significant ways. The intended result, however, remains not only a narrative contribution to the field of metaphor theory but a tool for preachers who by necessity deal with the complexities of metaphor interpretation in both text and sermon.

Correspondence and Development

Correspondence: What Maps and What Doesn't

Metaphor involves two conceptual domains: the source and the target. To understand Jesus as the Lamb of God is to map narrative relationships and expectations from the *source domain* of sheep and sacrifices onto the *target domain* of Jesus' person and work. Though this cross-domain mapping is an essential part of metaphor interpretation, *not everything in the source*

domain maps onto the target domain; “if all features were mappable, the result would be complete identity; and if none of the features were mappable, the result would be nonsense.”¹

In other words, not every detail of common knowledge about the source or target domains will find a place on an actantial model in narrative analysis. Though the Lamb of God mappings represented in chapter 2, figure 4, for example, may seem fairly straightforward, many—even most—of the things known of lambs—or of Jesus—do not find their way on to this model *and it seems natural to omit them*. Jesus walks on two legs, wears clothing, can speak, drinks wine, has disciples, can perform miracles, and so on, but none of these things are relevant to the metaphor. Likewise, sheep have characteristic size, physiognomy, eating habits, and so on that play no role in guiding the interpretation of this particular metaphor. The exclusion of a large number of elements in both the source and target domains is part of the automatic and unconscious activity of metaphor interpretation.²

Because not everything in the source domain corresponds to something in the target, interpreters have to make decisions about what they deem relevant to interpretation. Is Philippi’s history as a colony of Rome significant for understanding Php 3:20? Would legal rights and responsibilities be part of the implied narrative that shapes how contemporary American citizens understand this metaphor? Would Paul’s readers in Philippi have understood a similar narrative structure? Slowing down the interpretive process can help preachers describe how and why hearers will likely make decisions about what maps and what doesn’t, even at points where they are not usually aware that interpretive decisions are being made.

¹ Charles Forceville, *Pictorial Metaphor in Advertising* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 10.

² A large number of characteristics, relationships, implications or other elements in any particular source domain do not map onto elements in the target; in the same way, a large number of elements in any particular target domain find no counterpart in the source. Elements of the target domain that are either not compatible with or are contradicted by the source domain are treated in chapter 6, below, under the heading, “What Metaphor’s Narrative Structure Hides from View.”

Though Greimas' narrative model has only six specific actantial positions as a part of its basic structure, the number of elements involved in cross-domain mapping is not somehow limited to six: there may be fewer elements that map in a given metaphor, there may be many more.³ In fact, the number of mapping elements will change from metaphor to metaphor. Sometimes target and source domains share a large number of connections and sometimes the mappings are very marginal indeed. The number of elements that map from the source to the target can be described in terms of a degree of "correspondence."⁴ When many features map, the correspondence is said to be high; when few map, the correspondence is low.⁵ Correspondence is a way of designating how extensive the cross-domain mappings of any given metaphor are.⁶

³ The ability of the actantial model to account for fewer or more mappings than six stems from the relationship between the *limited* number of actantial positions (six) and the *unlimited* number of possible actors that may fill these positions singly or jointly. See the discussion of actantial positions and specific actors, below.

⁴ G. B. Caird, in *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1980), uses the term "correspondence" to denote *what actually maps* from the vehicle to the tenor (153–159). In his discussion, Caird clearly recognizes that some features may align without mapping, while other features fail to map because they do not align in any significant way. The features that could potentially *align* across domains comprise a broader category than the features that actually *map* in the interpretation of any given metaphor.

⁵ Even when the correspondence is high, what maps will always be only a small selection of possible elements in either the source or the target. Even though correspondence in both the Lamb of God and Little Lamb metaphors is relatively high, in each case, much—or even most—of what we know about lambs does not concern us for the purposes of these particular metaphors. Physical characteristics like wool or hooves, relationship to the flock, grazing patterns, variety of species, recipes for lamb chops, and a wide range of other things we know culturally or experientially about sheep and lambs—none of these details are relevant to the interpretation of either of these "lamb" metaphors.

⁶ Because correspondence or cross-domain mapping involves relating something in the source to something in the target, *similarity* is sometimes suggested as the basis for metaphor. In fact, one of the basic tenets of the traditional understanding of metaphor as described by both Bonnie Howe, *Because You Bear This Name: Conceptual Metaphor and the Meaning of 1 Peter* (Boston: Brill, 2006), and Mark Johnson, "Introduction: Metaphor in the Philosophical Tradition" in *Philosophical Perspectives on Metaphor*, ed. Mark Johnson, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981) is that metaphor is based on similarity. Max Black once famously commented that "it would be more illuminating in some of these cases to say that the metaphor creates the similarity." *Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1962), 37. Though much of contemporary theory rejects the notion that metaphor must always rely on some kind of objective similarity, A. Tversky's "Features of Similarity," *Psychological Review* 84 (1977): 327–352 distinguishes between two ways of understanding similarity itself. The first Tversky calls the "geometric view," which conceives of similar things as if they were in close physical proximity. In this way of thinking, two things are either close to each other ontologically or they are not; metaphor can at best be uncovering similarities that were already "there" between domains, even if previously unnoticed. The other option, according to Tversky, is viewing similarity as a kind of "feature mapping," where seeing things as similar involves making features of one thing seem to fit with another. There is no need for a preexisting, ontological similarity in this view, and metaphor is free to make us see

Different Combinations of Correspondence and Development

Just as correspondence may be high or low, “development” may also be high or low.

Development refers to how much of either the target or source domain is specifically presented in the utterance itself.⁷ Every utterance will leave some blanks; the lower a metaphor’s development, however, the more blanks an utterance leaves to be filled in by the act of interpretation.

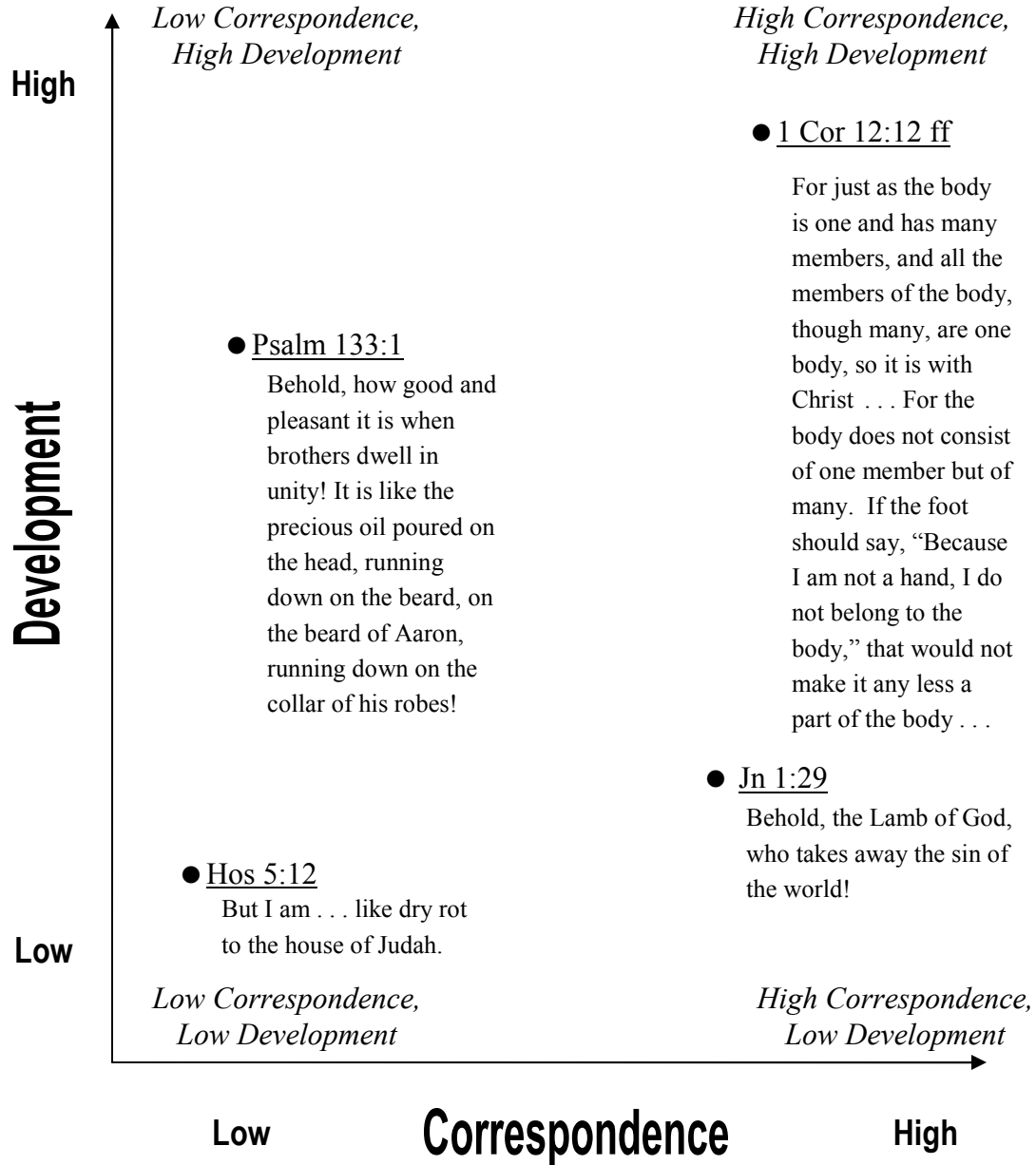
Though it is common to find low development where there is also low correspondence and high development where there is high correspondence, this need not necessarily be the case.⁸ In fact, correspondence and development can be found in any combination of degrees. Table 1, below, gives some biblical examples. Since every metaphor has the potential to include more mappings than are actually expressed and every metaphor has a large number of elements that do not correspond between the source and target domains, correspondence and development are always relative. Still, these designations are useful for describing when *relatively* few or many things map or are expressed compared to other metaphors.

things differently without necessarily having some similarity “out there” as its foundation. See the discussion of Tversky’s work in Eva Feder Kittay, *Metaphor: Its Cognitive Force and Linguistic Structure* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987) 187–188. This insight is significant for correspondence: two different domains *correspond* in the sense of feature mapping; there need be no ontological correspondence between domains in order for metaphor to function.

⁷ “The development of a simile or metaphor is the extent to which in any given instance elements of the vehicle [source domain] are exploited by the user.” Caird, *Language and Imagery*, 154.

⁸ To say, for instance, that when Paul applies the OT image of the place of atonement or ἱλαστήριον to Christ (Rom 3:25), he *could not have* anything more than “atonement for human sin” in mind *since he doesn’t make explicit reference to other details*, is to misconstrue how metaphor works. This is, however, the line of reasoning in Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey William Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 321. Perhaps Paul did intend very few mappings; perhaps he intended a wide range of mappings that he left unexpressed. The point here is simply that *low development does not invariably indicate low correspondence*.

Table 1: Correspondence and Development



Source: Adapted from G. B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980), 153–155.

The method of diagramming the structures of both the source and the target domain in terms of the actantial model naturally expresses correspondence as well as development. Returning for a moment to the Little Lamb metaphor discussed in chapter 2, *some* of the elements in both source and target actually appear explicitly in the development of the children’s hymn: “For my *shepherd* gently *guides me* / *knows my name* and well *provides* me. / When I *thirst* He bids me go / where the *quiet waters* flow.” Because these features appear explicitly in the development of the metaphor, they were set in quotes on the model in chapter 2, figure 5a. Leave off the features not explicitly presented in the text and the blanks left by the development of the metaphor become more apparent. See figure 5b, below.

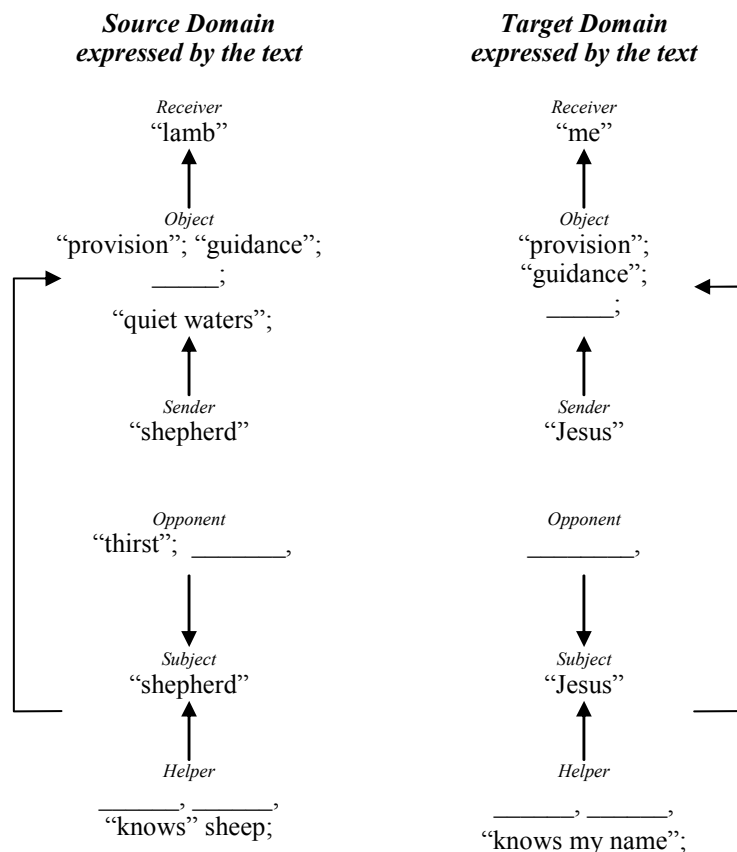


Figure 5b. Development in Jesus’ Little Lamb Actantial Model, Source and Target Domains

The children’s hymn “I Am Jesus’ Little Lamb” has relatively high degrees of both correspondence and development: there are many things that map and many mappings that are expressed. Nonetheless, there are still blanks left by the utterance, blanks that an interpreter will naturally fill in based in part on the basis of personal and/or cultural understandings of how sheep and shepherds relate in the particular situation or implied narrative assumed by the utterance. In this case, interpreters need to know something about how shepherds take care of sheep so that they can infer something about how Jesus as “my Shepherd” takes care of “me.” With that kind of knowledge in hand, interpreters are able to fill in the blanks of the Little Lamb to get something like figure 5a, reprinted here for convenient reference.

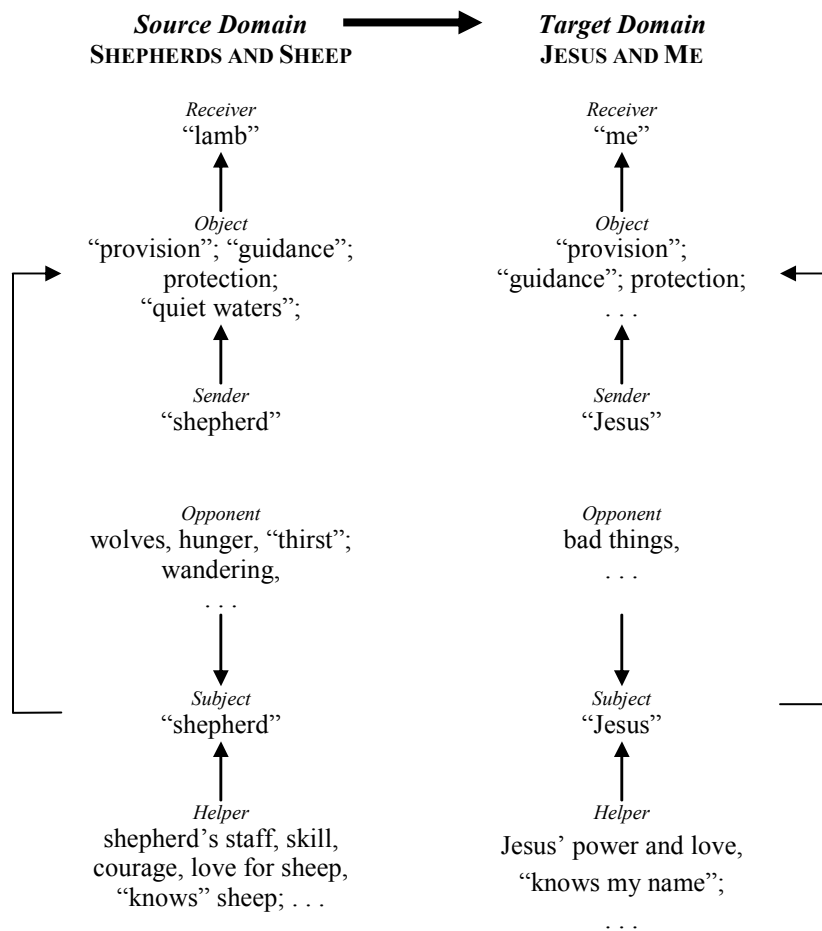


Figure 5a. Jesus’ Little Lamb Actantial Models in Source and Target Domains

In contrast to the relatively high development of the Little Lamb metaphor, the immediate context of the Lamb of God metaphor in John 1 doesn't provide any more development for the source or the target than the single sentence: "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" The *development* of this metaphor is therefore relatively low, though the *correspondence* is arguably high. Though the development leaves many blanks to be filled in, many mappings can still be readily understood. Figure 4b, below, has noticeably more blanks than figure 5b; the development of the Lamb of God metaphor is substantially lower than the development of the Little Lamb metaphor.

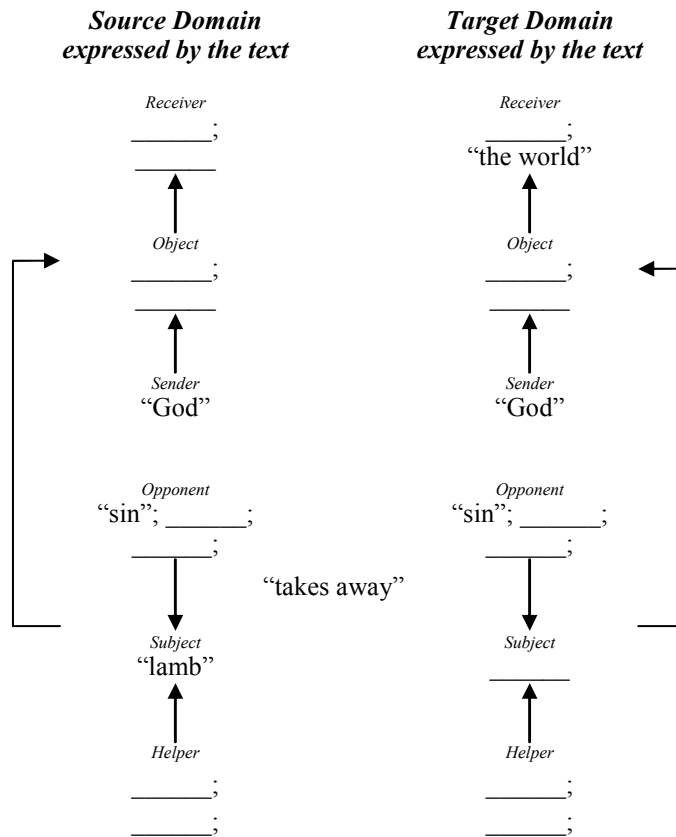


Figure 4b. Development of the Lamb of God Actantial Models, Source and Target Domains

Figure 5b left some peripheral (though typical) elements like wolves or a shepherd's staff unexpressed. Figure 4b, on the other hand, has blanks even at points on the model that are crucial to understanding what the metaphor is about. Central features like what "the world" receives on account of the lamb, what the lamb does to bring this about, or even that the lamb of God is *Jesus* (as opposed to someone else walking toward John the Baptist—Peter or Andrew, for example) are not a part of the development in figure 4b.⁹ When development is low but correspondence is high, more depends on the work of the interpreter than when much development is given.

Correspondence of Narrative Structures and Blanks Left by Development

Even when development is low, an interpreter is not left without any guidance or constraints. When filling in the blanks of a metaphorical utterance, interpretation is guided in part by the fact that correspondence includes not only discrete actors or characteristics, but actantial positions and relationships as well. The narrative structure in the source domain evoked by a metaphor relates to a narrative structure in the target domain in such a way that **certain elements and their actantial positions in the source correspond to certain elements and their actantial positions in the target.**

Returning to the Lamb of God model in figure 4, the lamb in the source domain is more than a lamb; it is a lamb *in the actantial position of Subject*. The lamb is in the Subject position in the source domain because, in the narrative situation of sacrifice implied by the metaphor, the

⁹ John says, "Behold, the Lamb of God," not, "Behold *Jesus*, the Lamb of God." Kittay notices this ability of the act of reference to signal metaphorical language. "Behold, the Lamb of God," is not a metaphor unless it is referring to something or someone besides a lamb. Kittay (*Metaphor*, 24) uses Michael J. Reddy's example, "The old rock is brittle with age," *said of a professor emeritus* to argue that metaphor need not be syntactically ill-formed or superficially false in order to be a metaphor. Reddy, "A Semantic Approach to Metaphor," in *Papers from the Fifth Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society*, eds. R. I. Binnick, et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 242. See also appendix 1, Describing the Duality of Metaphor, below.

lamb is the particular actor that fulfills the role of overcoming Opponents (like sin or the wrath of God) with the aid of Helpers (unblemished purity, the promise of God, substitution) in order to ensure the delivery of the Object (forgiveness) from the Sender (God) to the Receiver (sinners). In fact, though the development of the Lamb of God metaphor is low, it provides enough information to assign the Subject role to the lamb and the Opponent position to sin: “takes away” does not express an actor or actantial position, but it does describe a relationship of opposition and is therefore a part of the development of the metaphor.¹⁰ On the actantial model, the adversarial relationship is located between the Subject and the Opponent. The lamb is therefore understood as the Subject. No other actor in the implied narrative of sacrifice fills this narrative role.

Finding correspondence between the sacrificial lamb in the source and something or someone in the target is more than finding a list of necessary and sufficient attributes or features. *The narrative relationships* between actantial positions on the narrative model *map from the source domain to the target*. In other words, lamb *in the actantial position of Subject* in the source domain corresponds not just to *Jesus*, but to *Jesus in the Subject position* in the target domain. With very little specific development from John, Jesus, as the Lamb of God, is understood to be in the Subject position in the target domain in large part because the sacrificial lamb is already in the Subject position in the source domain.¹¹

Because the lamb *as Subject* maps on to Jesus, the correspondence here is not limited to lamb features or characteristics in isolation, but rather includes the whole network of narrative

¹⁰ Figure 4a in chapter 2, above, is more concerned with actors and actantial positions than with correspondence and development; the expression of the actantial relationship given by the verb “takes away” was therefore omitted from that original figure.

¹¹ Jesus, of course, is about the Father’s business of defeating the enemies of sin, death, and the devil before and apart from the Lamb of God metaphor. Still, the Lamb of God metaphor highlights Jesus’ role as Subject in ways that other metaphors may not. For a further discussion of how different metaphors highlight and hide important aspects of the target domain, see chapter 6, Metaphor in a Preaching Ministry, below.

relationships described by the actantial model. Besides possible descriptors like “innocent” or “blameless,” narrative relationships from the source domain are mapped onto the target: Jesus is understood in relationship to sin and the wrath of God and substitution and the promise of God and even forgiveness and sinners by virtue of the fact that a sacrificial lamb *in the Subject position* makes these relationships available for mapping.

All of these relationships would change if the lamb were no longer in the Subject position. Moving from the Lamb of God to the Little Lamb metaphor demonstrates what happens when the same actor changes actantial positions from one metaphor to the next. In figure 5a, the “little lamb” *in the Receiver slot* in the source domain corresponds to “me” *in the Receiver slot* in the target domain. Not only do the descriptors change—“blameless” and “innocent” no longer are in view, while “prone to wander” may be possible here but not for the Lamb of God—but the network of narrative relationships, expectations, and outcomes changes as well. An appropriate interpretation of the Little Lamb metaphor won’t expect a little lamb to find a way to conquer ferocious wolves or overcome lack of food and water. Why not? Because the *Subject’s* job is to overcome the Opponent, and in this case, the Subject is the *shepherd*, not the little lamb. The actantial position of *Receiver* carries with it a decidedly different function than that of the Subject (or Opponent, or Helper, or Sender, or Object). **What maps from the source domain to the target domain is therefore not limited to discrete individuals or characteristics, but individuals or characteristics *in relationship to other individuals or characteristics assumed or expressed by the metaphor.***¹²

This correspondence of narrative relationships helps make sense of a metaphor. Though the low development of the Lamb of God metaphor leaves many blanks (figure 4b, above),

¹² The cross-domain mapping of *relationships* as well as actors is the basis for the dynamic of narrative inference discussed under Reasoning within a Narrative Structure in chapter 5, 154–157, below.

making the important move of assigning the Subject position to the “lamb” shapes the kinds of things that could possibly fit these blanks left by the utterance.¹³ In other words, what interpreters know about the narrative structure of one domain helps them fill in the blanks left in the other. On its own, the source domain in the Lamb of God metaphor, given below as figure 4c, has many blanks because its development is low.

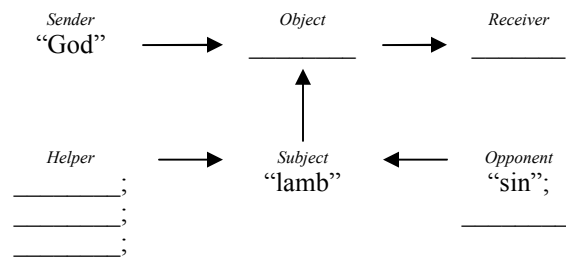


Figure 4c. The Lamb of God Source Domain Development

The implied narrative of sacrifice, however, is much more complete than the development of the Lamb of God overtly expresses, as figure 2a from chapter 2, reprinted below, demonstrates.

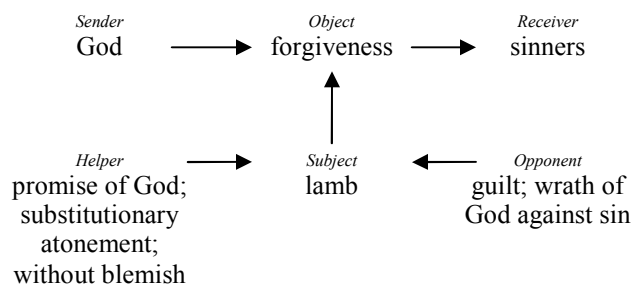


Figure 2a. The Lamb of God

¹³ This relationship between one actantial position and the rest of the model helps us manage the underdetermination of specific actors characteristic of metaphor. See pp. 91–101, below.

Because a hearer or reader can identify a sacrificial situation and therefore a narrative structure in the source domain, what the interpreter knows about sacrifice helps fill in blanks not only in the source domain but in the target as well (see figure 4d, below).

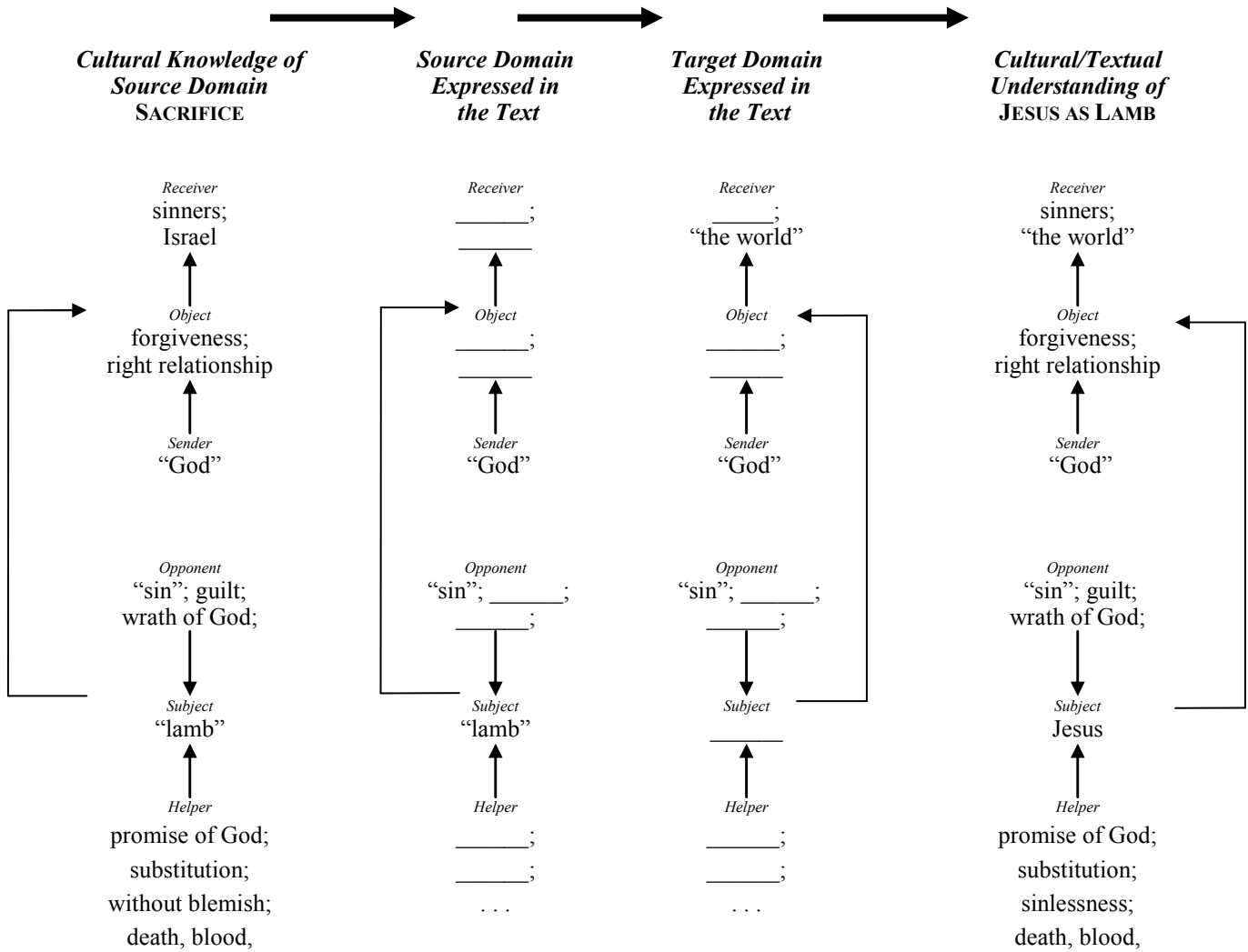


Figure 4d. How Knowledge of the Source Helps Guide Metaphor Mapping in the Lamb of God

The lamb's actantial position of Subject in the general knowledge of the sacrificial system, assumed but not expressed overtly in John 1, allows Jesus to be understood not only as a lamb,

but as a lamb *in relationship* to a range of other actors and actantial positions that belong to a broader narrative of sacrifice.¹⁴ **Correspondence includes actantial positions and relationships as well as discrete actors or characteristics.**

The way any interpreters understand the situation assumed by a metaphor, whether in the biblical text or in a sermon, will determine how they assign actantial functions to specific actors (or kinds of actors). Locating an actor like a lamb on an actantial model is tantamount to assigning that actor specific relationships and specific functions. Moving an actor into a different actantial position will change the function that actor plays in relationship to other actors on the model. As chapter 2 noted, an interpreter who places the Lamb of God in the Receiver slot of an animal rights paradigm will come to a significantly different understanding of the metaphor. In a time and culture where rescuing animals from a violent death is a more acceptable and familiar narrative than sacrifice, the limited development of “taking away sins” may not be enough to evoke the broader system of sacrifice. At the same time, a sacrifice narrative structure may be evoked but rejected as a viable way of understanding what is appropriate in relationship to animals or to God. A contemporary animal rights activist may unintentionally misunderstand the metaphor due to lack of sufficient knowledge of the domain of sacrifice. On the other hand, a contemporary animal rights activist may intentionally restructure the implied narrative of the Lamb of God metaphor in order to reach conclusions which are purposefully contrary to the text. Either way, John the Baptist might have added more development to his utterance in a contemporary American context just to make sure the correspondence he intended is the correspondence his hearers understand and accept as valid. In

¹⁴ Cultural (or experiential) knowledge of relationships in the source domain of an utterance allows hearers or readers to make meaning out of metaphor even when significant blanks are left in development. Chapter 4 will describe more fully how the narrative structure of a metaphor is shaped culturally.

fact, though some blanks will always be left blank (and, at times, may be intended to be left blank), **filling in more blanks in the development of a metaphor helps guide more carefully the interpreters' work.** In preaching no less than in the biblical text, *development* helps shape how *correspondence* is understood.¹⁵

Correspondence and Development in Php 3:20

Returning to the example of Php 3:20, correspondence and development can help express how interpretive decisions required by the metaphor are made. Chapter 2 already demonstrated that “our citizenship is in heaven” involves two distinct domains. Paul is speaking of Christians in the world in terms of Roman citizens in a foreign territory. What hearers or readers know about the political realm will map in some way onto the Church. This correspondence will be shaped by knowledge outside the text but also in important ways by the development of the text itself.

Considering again some of the questions raised at the beginning of chapter 2, it is now clear that decisions about what the metaphor conveys are in part decisions about which features of citizenship and of the Church should be included in mapping, even if some of these features are not present in the text itself. Describing a metaphor is more complex than listing what is or is not overtly expressed in the text because correspondence is not tied directly to development. Nonetheless, development does play an important role not only in identifying which features (or kinds of features) map across domains but also in establishing the shape of the implied narrative. How interpreters understand the shape of the implied narrative will in turn affect what is included or excluded from mapping. Deciding to include or exclude American voting rights,

¹⁵ Kittay (*Metaphor*, 32) makes the observation: “When a sentence is out of context we have only commonplace associations and background knowledge to rely on, while in metaphors lodged in rich contexts the linguistic and situational environs will supplement or override background assumptions.”

Roman dress, or the interim state of the soul (dying and going to heaven) in an interpretation of Php 3:20 is deciding about how—or if—these features outside the text relate the narrative situation understood on the basis of the development of the text. Different understandings of the implied narrative structure will cause different features of the text either to be highlighted or considered irrelevant for interpretation.

Many commentaries on Philippians relate cultural knowledge like Roman dress, Roman law, and the relationship of a colony to the Roman Empire and emperor to Paul's metaphor of heavenly citizenship.¹⁶ If these extra-textual features are relevant, then the way in which the rights and responsibilities of citizenship serve to identify citizens and keep them distinct from foreign people around them becomes key to interpreting the metaphor.¹⁷ These particular features relate narratively in a *source domain* (Roman citizenship) *situation* where unique dress, lifestyle, privilege, and responsibility are all Helpers that allow the citizen Subjects to overcome the threat of amalgamation into the lifestyle and culture of the foreigners among whom they live. The specific actors in the *target domain* (Christian Church), then, will find themselves in similar actantial relationships because correspondence includes both actors and actantial positions. Christians are therefore seen as overcoming the threat of amalgamation into a pagan culture by virtue of the distinct laws, ways of life, and privileges they have under the reign of their ultimate authority even though they are presently living among those who live by different rules. See figure 6a, below.

¹⁶ See Gordon D. Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995); Stephen E. Fowl, *Philippians*, The Two Horizons New Testament Commentary, eds. Joel B. Green and Max Turner (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005); Moisés Silva, *Philippians*, 2nd ed., Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, eds. Robert Yarborough and Robert H. Stein (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005) as examples.

¹⁷ See Fee, *Philippians*; David J. Williams, *Paul's Metaphors: Their Context and Character* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999); and F. F. Bruce, *Philippians*, Good News Commentaries, ed. W. Ward Gasque (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983); as well as appendix 1, below, pp. 253–255; 259–261; and 265–267.

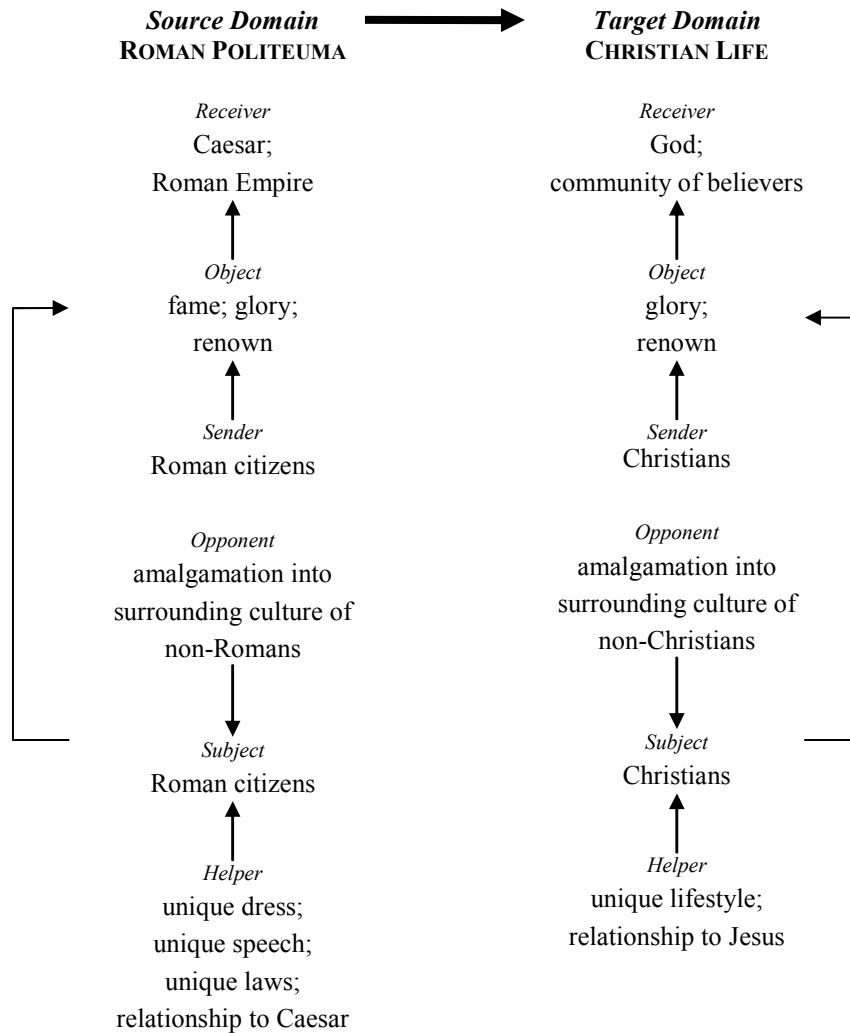


Figure 6a. Our Citizenship Is in Heaven (We Should Live Distinctive Lives)

Many of the features and relationships in figure 6a are not presented in the development of Php 3:20, but extra-textual knowledge often—most likely *always*—shapes the interpretation of metaphor. An implied narrative of *citizens demonstrating their unique status by their behavior* also accounts for some important features of the text. In the context of Php 3, Paul is certainly

contrasting two very different groups of people,¹⁸ a contrast highlighted by the unique laws and lifestyle of Roman citizens over and against those of other people living in the same city. In the letter as a whole, Paul is concerned that his readers live their lives in a distinctive fashion—indeed, in imitation of how Paul lives his life.¹⁹ These features of the text are appropriately highlighted if the implied narrative used to interpret the citizenship metaphor includes a *distinctive Roman lifestyle* in the source domain mapping onto a *distinctive lifestyle of Christians* in the target domain. In both domains, the purpose of this distinctive life style is to avoid amalgamation into the surrounding culture. Focusing on these kinds of features leads to a narrative structure something like figure 6a, above. Figure 6a intends to show the kinds of things under consideration if unique living is the focus of the metaphor.

Because a structure of implied narrative relationships helps shape interpretation, a different narrative situation in the source domain of citizenship will change how the metaphor is understood. Besides emphasizing the unique lifestyle of citizens in a foreign land, how else might a situation or setting related to citizenship account for the development evidenced in the text? Are there other actants, actantial positions, or narrative relationships expressed by the text that help establish a different implied narrative structure?

With these questions in mind, different features of the text come to the fore. Not only is “our citizenship” “in heaven,” for example, but Paul goes right on to say “we eagerly await a savior *from there*.”²⁰ The verb “eagerly awaiting” (ἀπεκδέχομαι, Php 3:20) expresses the relationship between the Receiver and the Subject on the actantial model: since the Subject

¹⁸ In Php 3:20, Paul uses the disjunctive γάρ and fronts the pronoun ἡμῶν for emphasis. The result is a strong contrast between those whose minds are on earthly things (v. 19) and *our* citizenship in heaven (v. 20).

¹⁹ In 3:17, for example, Paul says, “Join with others in following my example . . .”

²⁰ NIV, emphasis added. Silva (*Philippians*, 189) notes that the single relative pronoun “οὗ” agrees in gender and number with πολίτευμα, our commonwealth or place of citizenship, but “there can be no strong objection to seeing the plural οὐρανοῦς as the real antecedent; such *ad sensum* constructions are very common.”

procures and delivers the Object to the Receiver, the Receiver “eagerly awaits” the Subject. Since “we” are “eagerly awaiting” the return of Jesus as Savior, the text locates Christians in the Receiver slot, waiting for the Subject Jesus to bring about the Object of final victory. Reading the text this way, however, causes a significant change in the structure of the implied narrative. If the metaphor of citizenship is primarily about living distinctive lives, *Christians* are in the Subject position. If instead *Jesus* is the Subject, then other parts of the narrative structure will also change.

What functions as Helper if Jesus is the Subject? The text speaks of the “power” that allows Jesus to subject all things (v. 21). Who or what fills the Opponent slot? Not only the “enemies” mentioned in v. 18 but also the low estate of “our bodies” mentioned in v. 21 will explicitly be overcome by the return of the Subject Jesus. As for the “enemies,” their “end is destruction” (v. 19); as for the low estate of “our bodies,” it will be transformed by Jesus’ power over all things, including death (v. 21). In both cases, the Subject is able to overcome the Opponent and bring the Object to the Receiver.

Power, the destruction of enemies, the hope of salvation—these features belong to an implied citizenship situation much different from the situation faced by a citizen trying to avoid amalgamation in a foreign land. Is there any kind of situation in which citizens, by virtue of their citizenship, might long for a savior from their place of citizenship? Citizens paying taxes, voting, even living distinctive lives do not wait for salvation with eager expectation. On the other hand, a citizen of Rome threatened by foreign nationals in a Roman province could expect rescue to come in the form of Roman military intervention. In fact, because of his Roman citizenship, Paul experienced just such a rescue in Acts 22–23. Though it may be too much to suggest that Paul had this particular event in mind while composing Php 3, that kind of implied narrative would include citizens expecting rescue in light of their citizenship, a situation which in

turn accounts for important aspects of Php 3:17–4:1.²¹ Figure 6b, a reprint of figure A15 in appendix 1, below, shows another way of representing the metaphor of citizenship narratively. Figure 6b intends to show the kinds of things under consideration if eagerly waiting for salvation is the focus of the citizenship metaphor in Php 3:20.

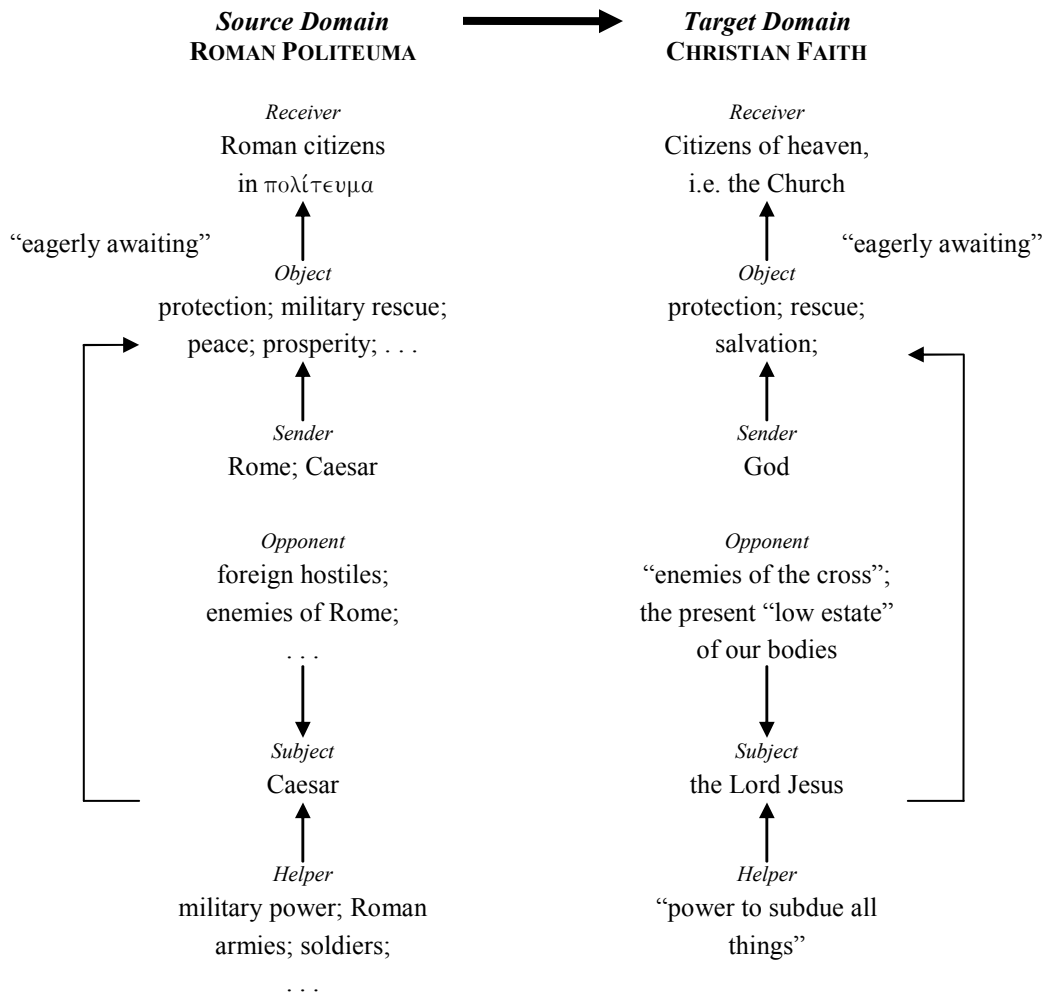


Figure 6b. Our Citizenship Is in Heaven (We Can Eagerly Await Salvation)

²¹ See also appendix 1, pp. 272–274 and 276–277, below.

Reading the metaphor this way locates Christians, by virtue their citizenship in heaven, in the Receiver slot while reading the same text primarily as a call for a unique way of living casts Christians, still by virtue of their citizenship in heaven, in the role of Subject. Though these two ways of describing this metaphor are not mutually exclusive, they are decidedly different in the kinds of things they would lead a preacher to highlight both in the text itself and in any sermon based on this text. Making interpretive decisions about a metaphor involves not only deciding which elements of the source and target domain are relevant, but also assigning narrative roles to relevant actors.

Considering how different narrative structures construe the same metaphor in different ways helps preachers see the text, and decisions they are making about the text, in ways that might otherwise go unnoticed. On the other end of the homiletic process, sermons are interpreted by hearers who make the same kinds of interpretive decisions. Identifying the questions at stake can lead to a fuller understanding of how metaphor interpretation works, both as preachers interpret particular biblical texts and as their hearers interpret particular sermons. Because a fuller understanding of metaphor informs the homiletic task, a hermeneutics of metaphor for preaching will consider not only correspondence and development, but directionality, interaction, and underdetermination as well, to see how these dynamics help clarify what is at stake when preachers and hearers interpret metaphors in the text or sermon.

Directionality and Interaction

Directionality: From the Source to the Target

Correspondence is another way of talking about what maps from the source to the target. Correspondence, however, is not a two-way street. **Cross-domain mapping only happens in one direction: *from the source domain to the target domain.*** In other words, “I am Jesus’ little lamb” is not intended as a statement about shepherds and sheep, nor is it about both a

shepherd's relationship to sheep *and* about Jesus' relationship to his followers at the same time. "I am Jesus' little lamb" uses language and assumes narrative relationships that belong to the domain of sheep and shepherds, but it is asserting something about Jesus and "me." Though metaphor is speaking about, thinking of, or experiencing *one thing* in terms of *another*, metaphor is still speaking about, thinking of, or experiencing only *one thing*.²² Consider figure 5c, below.

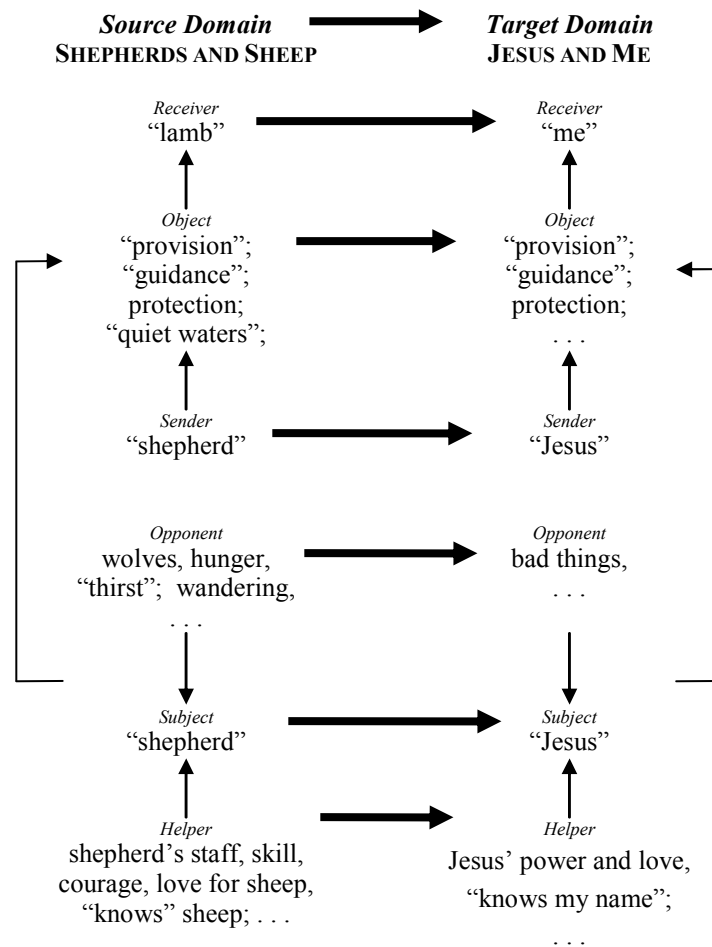


Figure 5c. Directionality in the Little Lamb Metaphor

²² Janet Martin Soskice is correct when she criticizes Max Black's terminology of primary and secondary subjects. Though I have argued for the importance of duality in metaphor interpretation, there are not two subjects or topics in metaphor, but only one. See Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 20.

Figure 5c highlights the fact that the correspondence in the Little Lamb metaphor works *from* the domain of shepherds and lambs *to* the domain of my relationship with Jesus, *and not the other way around*. Though this directionality may seem straightforward, it is easy to mistakenly run the metaphor in the wrong direction.²³ If the target domain is used to describe the source domain, a metaphor can be used to draw unwarranted and unintended conclusions. Paul is not, for example, asking the Philippians to behave as model Roman citizens because they belong to Christ; the behavior of Roman citizens is the source domain, not the target. In the same way, if calling God “our Father” results in deifying a male head of household, this is a misuse rather than a natural outcome of the metaphor; to make a father the *target* and God the *source* is to reverse the direction of father language for God.²⁴

Though the source sheds light on the target and not the other way around, *the fact that* an author or culture can use a particular source for a particular target does give an interpreter some information. Using citizenship as a source domain for the relationship between Christ and the Church, or fatherhood as an image of God, does say *something* about how citizenship or fathers are understood by the authors or cultures that employ such metaphors. The *something* that it says, however, is not directly related to how the metaphor itself is understood and, indeed, is not what the metaphor is actually *about*.²⁵ Cross-domain mapping happens in only one direction: *from* the source *to* the target.

²³ The direction of the metaphor may be unclear. Does the OT prophet Joel, for example, speak about *locusts* in terms of *armies*, or *armies* in terms of *locusts*? The text is not entirely conclusive. In cases like this, however, we are not invited to run the metaphor in *both* directions; we are simply not given enough development to make a definitive decision about *which* direction is intended.

²⁴ See Mary Therese DesCamp and Eve E. Sweetser, “Metaphors for God: Why and How Do Our Choices Matter for Humans? The Application of Contemporary Cognitive Linguistic Research to the Debate on God and Metaphor,” *Pastoral Psychology* 53 (January 2005) : 207–238 for a nuanced view of why father language for God is central to the biblical witness and cannot easily be replaced, even for those who would like to replace it.

²⁵ James W. Voelz (*What Does This Mean?: Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Post-modern World*, St. Louis: Concordia, 1995) correctly locates metaphor interpretation as a complexity on level one, that is, on the

Interaction: When Source and Target Collide

Though metaphor has only *one* subject and intends to convey something about the *target* as opposed to the source, cross-domain mapping is not necessarily simple or straightforward. Part of what makes metaphor *metaphor* is the fact that, while *lamb* language is used to speak about *Jesus* and not the other way around, the act of speaking about Jesus nonetheless also shapes or even modifies how lamb language is being used. This mutual modification of both domains in the process of understanding one thing in terms of something else can be called “interaction.”²⁶

An extreme and therefore clear example of interaction occurs when the act of referring to the target domain causes a change in the way the source domain is typically perceived or presented. Such modification often occurs in order to keep important and relevant characteristics of the target domain from being lost or confused in the mapping process. In Rom 11, for example, Paul is speaking to Gentile believers about their relationship to Jesus and the Church as well as their status vis-à-vis unbelieving Israel. Paul uses the language and narrative structure of olive grafting to get these Gentile believers to see their place in the salvation story and to think more carefully about the “severity and kindness of God” and its implications for them. Far from being proud over and against unbelieving Israel, they should fear lest their own unfaith lead to separation from Jesus and his Church.

In the course of making his argument, however, Paul uses a description of the olive grafting process that varies significantly from actual olive grafting as it was practiced in his

level of understanding the marks on the page (even though some of the “marks” being “read” are not actually “on the page” at all). Using a metaphor to comment on how an author or culture understands the *source* domain, however, would be reading on level three, that is, no longer interpreting the words on the page but deriving implications from *the fact that* the author used *these* words and not others.

²⁶ “In the simplest formation, when we use a metaphor we have two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word, or phrase, whose meaning is a resultant of their interaction.” I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, “Lecture V: Metaphor,” in *Philosophical Perspectives on Metaphor*, ed. Mark Johnson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), 51. For a more detailed account of the Interaction perspective on metaphor, see appendix 1, below.

culture and the culture of his hearers. The grafting process known to Paul and his hearers would have taken *cultivated* branches with better fruit potential and grafted them onto *wild* root systems, which would have been hardier and less susceptible to disease.²⁷ When Paul speaks of the *Gentiles* being grafted onto the stock that is *Jesus* (or perhaps Abraham),²⁸ he sets the process on its head and calls the *grafted* branches *wild* while the *root* is *natural*. See figure 7, below.

Paul goes on to make observations that are *applicable only in the target domain* of God and the Church and puts them *in terms of the source domain* of a gardener and olive trees: there's no way a gardener can re-graft branches that have withered and died,²⁹ yet Paul says if the faithless ones of Israel do not persist in unbelief, "God has the power to graft them in again" (Rom 11:23).³⁰

²⁷ Phillip Esler, "Ancient Oleiculture and Ethnic Differentiation: The Meaning of the Olive-Tree Image in Romans 11," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 26, no. 1 (2003): 103–124.

²⁸ Esler, "Ancient Oleiculture," takes the *root* in this metaphor to be the *patriarchs* and the *olive tree* to be *Israel*, which, without further development, is plausible. In Jer 11:16 and Hosea 14:6 we do find Israel described as an olive tree. On the other hand, the Messiah is called the "root of Jesse" in Is 11:10, a rather remote context brought nearer by the direct quote in Rom 15:12. See also Maria Neubrand and Johannes Seidel, "Eingepfropft in den edlen Ölbaum (Röm 11,24): Der Ölbaum ist *nicht* Israel," *BN* 105 (2000): 61–76.

²⁹ The theory of cognitive blending characterized by Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner notes that "blending" two "mental spaces" like a source and target domain often results in "emergent structure" that makes things possible in the blend that would be impossible in either of the input spaces independent of the blend. See appendix 1, below, for more on a blend theory's perspective on metaphor.

³⁰ Here I agree with Williams: "In terms of actual practice, this is nonsense" (*Paul's Metaphors*, 42). Though Williams correctly identifies the fact that this unnatural image highlights God's grace, he mistakenly identifies the Gentiles as the object of the re-grafting instead of (currently) apostate Israelites.

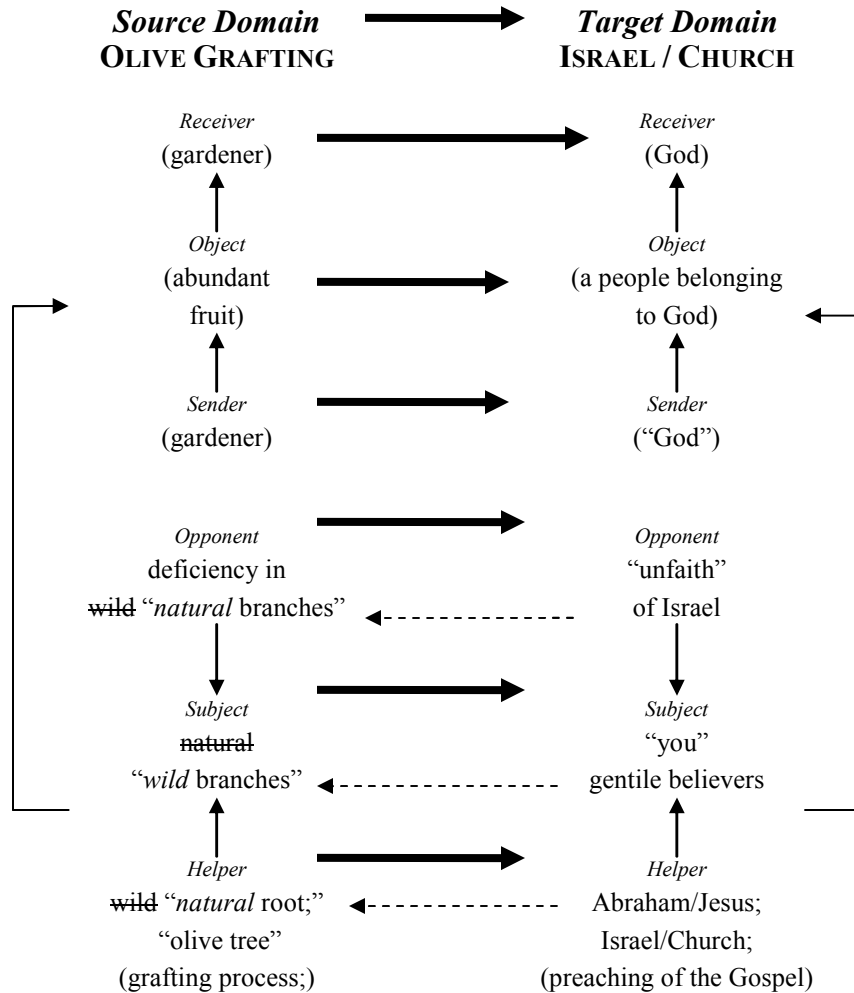


Figure 7. Accommodation in the Grafted Olive Branch Metaphor

So is Paul simply a bad olive farmer? Perhaps; but more likely, he is modifying source language to make it correspond more naturally to the target, something not at all uncommon in metaphor. Paul just can't bring himself to call Gentiles *natural* or Jesus *wild*, and rightly so.³¹

³¹ See for example the comment by Matthias Hartung: "[Paulus] würde Abraham ja wohl kaum als die wilde Wurzel Israels bezeichnen wollen. Paulus schreibt sein Gleichnis also exact gegen die Wirklichkeit. Die Funktionen des wilden Ölbaums übernimmt bei Paulus der edle." Hartung, "Die kultische bzw. agrartechnisch-biologische Logik der Gleichnisse von der Teighebe und vom Ölbaum in Röm 11.16-24 und die daraus ergebenden theologischen Konsequenzen," *NTS* 45 (1999): 138.

Though this kind of drastic modification is rare, it does occur.³² Even in less obvious or drastic cases, however, there is always some kind of interaction going on. Not only is a target domain (like the Church or Jesus' death on the cross) seen in light of a source domain (like olive tree grafting or a sacrificial lamb), but elements of the source, by virtue of their use in describing the target, are also seen differently; Jesus is not "innocent" in quite the same way a lamb is, even though the "innocence" of a lamb may well be one of the features that map from the source to the target in the lamb of God metaphor. "It is thus best to say that predicates, when transferred from the secondary subject [source domain—recall, there is only *one* subject in metaphor], always require some degree of 'adaptation' or 'transformation' before they are applicable to the primary subject [target domain]."³³

Interaction, however, does not negate directionality. Metaphor mapping still occurs only *from* the source *to* the target, even though the very act of referring to the target may modify the source domain *for the purposes of* mapping to this particular target. Even though hearers or readers may be willing to revise their understanding of "wild" and "natural" in an olive grafting setting as they comprehend Paul's metaphor, they would not carry that momentary and provisional reversal over into the actual practice of olive tree tending. Though some arrows

³² James W. Voelz (*What Does This Mean?*, 309) observes a similar phenomenon with parables when he notes, "lack of correlation can work in the 'reverse direction,' as it were. That is to say, items from the (real) 'tenor' story seem, at times, to intrude in an unnatural way into the 'vehicle' story." Voelz uses the example of Nathan's parable convicting David of his sin with Uriah's wife. The lamb in the parable does things that would be very uncharacteristic in the source domain (like drink from a cup or sleep in the farmer's arms), but that fit Bathsheba in the target domain. In this way, the characteristics of the woman in the target domain have impinged back on the lamb in source domain. (Incidentally, Nathan gives us a third implied narrative of sheep distinct from both the sacrifice narrative and the shepherding narrative we have used throughout. In fact, the lamb in this text is located in the Object position rather than the Subject or the Receiver slots, which helps account for the fact that Nathan's lamb metaphor is understood very differently from either the Little Lamb or Lamb of God metaphors.)

³³ Forceville, *Pictorial Metaphor*, 21. In any metaphor, relevant elements that seem to clash between the domains can still find a way of mapping. If they are to map, however, then either the conflicting elements in the *source's* structure must be modified or the *target's* structure must be modified to accommodate the structure of the source. Andrew Goatly, *The Language of Metaphor* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 28 notes these two possibilities and labels them "assimilation" and "accommodation" respectively. Goatly is borrowing terms Piaget used to describe how our mental world relates to our environment and applying them to metaphor interpretation.

point from the *target* toward the *source* in figure 7, archeologists should not expect to find evidence of first-century olive farmers changing their grafting methods after reading Paul's letter. Why not? Because Paul's readers know he is talking about *the Church* and decidedly *not* talking about olive trees. To understand interaction as a two-way street is to misunderstand what is intended by the concept of interaction.³⁴

Directionality, Interaction, and the Preacher

Directionality and Interaction are important aspects of metaphor mapping that help guide preachers in their interpretation of specific metaphors in particular biblical texts. At the same time, directionality and interaction help constrain the ways in which a preacher will see fit to use a biblical text in a sermon. Php 3:20, for example, would not be a good choice for a God and Country sermon if for no other reason than the fact that Paul's metaphor of citizenship isn't

³⁴ The theory characterized by George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, and Mark Turner, for example, works with an inferior description of interaction. Their definition of interaction portrays bi-directionality as one of its key features. They therefore reject interaction as an inadequate view of metaphor: "The Interaction Theory assumes that in saying that life is a journey, we are merely comparing the two domains in both directions and picking out similarities. If this were true, our language should go both ways as well." George Lakoff and Mark Turner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 132.

But bi-directionality is not what interaction is about. See Charles Forceville, "(A)symmetry in Metaphor: The Importance of Extended Context," *Poetics Today* 16:4 (Winter 1995): 677–708. In fact, a misunderstanding of interaction would be a good explanation for why Lakoff, Johnson, and Turner have so many different versions of what is called the Invariance Principle. In some of its forms, the Invariance Principle (or Hypothesis) claims that the structure of the *source* domain cannot be violated by the structure of the target—George Lakoff, "The Invariance Hypothesis: is abstract reason based on image-schemas?" *Cognitive Linguistics* 1 (1990): 54 and George Lakoff, "The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor," in *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd ed., ed. Andrew Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 215–216, for example. In other versions, the exact opposite is true: the *target* domain structure cannot be violated by the source—Mark Turner, "Aspects of the Invariance Hypothesis," *Cognitive Linguistics* 1 (1990): 252 and Mark Turner, *The Literary Mind* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 53–54, for example.

The Invariance Principle is a way of accounting for the fact that elements in the source can *modify* as well as *be modified* by elements in the target. This mutual modification of elements, however, is what interaction is all about. See Charles Forceville, *Pictorial Metaphor*, esp. chapter 2, "Max Black's interaction theory of metaphor." While the Lakoff, Johnson, and Turner approach has rejected interaction from the very beginning, it has more recently appropriated a theory of cognitive "blending" that claims that the "blended space" works backward to modify all of the "input spaces." See George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999). Ironically, this "blend theory," which Lakoff and Johnson accept, is much closer to viewing metaphor as a two-way street than the interaction theory of Black, which Lakoff and Johnson reject on the grounds that it makes metaphor mapping a two-way street.

about being a citizen; directionality guides what a preacher chooses to say about or on the basis of a particular metaphor in a particular text. In a similar way, a basic grasp of interaction can keep preachers from over-interpreting or over-developing unusual features of the text. The reversal of the designations “wild” and “natural” in the olive-grafting metaphor of Romans 11, for example, could be taken as a statement of God’s freedom over and against human activity. Though such an interpretation may fit theologically, it is also taking a rather common complexity of metaphor—the target impinging back on the source—as a significant meaning-producing feature with theological import.³⁵

In these and other complexities to come, the goal of a hermeneutics of metaphor for preaching is not to provide an *exhaustive* description or make a decision about each and *every possible* mapping. Rather, the goal of the preacher is to reach an *adequate* account of the complexities of metaphor in the biblical text and to handle the dynamics of metaphor adequately in the preaching event so that hearers are guided *sufficiently* but not overbearingly in their interpretation of the sermon. This goal of an adequate but not exhaustive treatment of metaphor has nothing to do with the time constraints faced by the typical pastor during the typical preaching week. Rather, an adequate but not exhaustive description is in line with the basic dynamics of metaphor itself. Though metaphor is not radically equivocal, important parts of any metaphor remain significantly underdetermined. This underdetermination is not random but constrained by the narrative structure of the metaphor as a whole. Having distinguished

³⁵ Hartung understands this “Verkehrung der Wirklichkeit” (“Ölbaum,” 127) to indicate not only something about God “dessen Handeln menschlichem Tun gegenüber entgegengesetzt, mächtig und frei ist” (138), but to possibly be an expression of Paul’s view of Christianity in general: “Ist dieses Vorgehen Ausdruck eines paulischen Stilmittels im Sinne seiner Auffassung vom Christentum als Religion der Umkehrung aller Werte?” (139). The point here is not to contend the validity of either of these assertions on their own merits but simply to suggest that, from a metaphor theory perspective, the argument is somewhat suspect. Hartung is reading a rather common occurrence in metaphor—modifying the source domain to fit more naturally with the target—as theologically significant. If the target impinging back on the source is simply part of how metaphor works, making such modifications the basis of a theological discussion of divine freedom or divine reversal becomes problematic.

metaphor's two distinct domains and considered how correspondence and development facilitate the unidirectional (if sometimes interactional) mapping from the source to the target, metaphor's characteristic underdetermination can now be related to the narrative perspective offered by this thesis.

Underdetermination and the Actantial Model

The task of interpreting biblical metaphors requires preachers to make decisions about the kinds of things intended by a metaphor, even if the metaphor appears at times vague or open-ended. Conversely, preparing a sermon requires preachers to make decisions about which blanks should be left for the hearers to fill in on their own and which mappings need more homiletical attention. From a narrative perspective, the relationship between specific *actors* and more general *actantial roles* or positions on the actantial model can help preachers manage these kinds of decisions in text interpretation and sermon preparation.

Underdetermination: Meaning that is neither Fixed nor Arbitrary

Metaphorical language often leaves significant blanks in the communication process.³⁶ Since correspondence may be high even when development is low, speakers or authors may intend specific mappings that are not overtly expressed in a metaphorical utterance. John likely had specific things like “the shedding of blood” or “death” in mind when he called Jesus “the Lamb of God,” even though neither “death” nor “blood” are found in the actual text; specific details intended to map from the source domain to the target may go unmentioned in the development of a metaphor.

³⁶ As we have seen, leaving lexical blanks is not unique to metaphor, but is still essential to the basic mechanics of how metaphor works. See p. 39, n. 17, above.

At the same time, authors or speakers may also intend certain *kinds of things* to map, or certain *kinds of conclusions* to be drawn, even if they are not committing themselves to any of the *specific* things or conclusions sanctioned by the text or utterance.³⁷ “Underdetermination” is simply one way of labeling the fact that cross-domain mapping in metaphor can function without the speaker or author enumerating an explicit list of specifics, indeed, without being tied down to a list of specifics at all.³⁸

The source domain of the Little Lamb metaphor, for example, includes some “bad things” from which Jesus as shepherd protects his lambs. Though the song doesn’t mention wolves or thieves or bears, these specific things fit a general class of “the kinds of things from which shepherds protect their sheep.” Ask the composer if “wolves” or “bears” in the source domain were intended and a typical response may well be, “Yes, *something like that.*”

In the target domain of the Christian life, the mappings become even less specifically determined. Should Christians understand Jesus to be protecting them from physical harm? Temptation? Financial worry? Terrorists? Given different life situations of different hearers, those *kinds of things* might well come into interpretive play, even though the author may well have had none of those things *specifically* in mind.

³⁷ A non-metaphorical example might be helpful. When Peter asks Mary, “Would you like a cup of coffee?” and Mary replies, “Coffee would keep me awake,” a similar kind of communication principle is at work. Mary’s response not only answers Peter’s question, it allows Peter to draw other kinds of conclusions. Assuming that Mary does not want to stay awake and therefore does not want coffee, Peter can conclude other relevant things about the evening in store: tonight would not be a good night for that deep philosophical discussion or game of chess he had been hoping for. Mary did not necessarily intend to convey those conclusions specifically, but she very likely does intend Peter to draw those *kinds of conclusions*. Adrian Pilkington, *Poetic Effects: A Relevance Theory Perspective* (Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2000) repeatedly uses this example (59, 71, 96) borrowed from Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1995). The implications that arise from such an utterance can be taken as intended but not as specifically determined.

³⁸ “Underdetermination” is Roger White’s word in *The Structure of Metaphor: The Way the Language of Metaphor Works* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996). Others have used the term “indeterminacy” (Pilkington, *Poetic Effects*) or called metaphor “fuzzy” (Murray Knowles and Rosamund Moon, *Introducing Metaphor* [New York: Routledge, 2006]) or “open” (Forceville, *Pictorial Metaphor*).

In other words, metaphor mappings, even when they are left underdetermined, are not random. Authorial intent is broad enough to include not only *specific things* that map onto the target, but also the *kinds of things* that are intended to map. Though underdetermination invites the interpreters to run with a metaphor, there are constraints that allow the intentions of the author to suggest the direction in which they run. Does Jesus provide for the physical needs of shelter and food as well as the spiritual needs of forgiveness and peace? Does Jesus protect his sheep from car accidents and cancer as well as from temptation and doubt? A healthy understanding of the complexity of human interpretation involved in metaphor can allow for the fact that the composer of the children's hymn intended *these kinds of things* without suggesting that the author has committed herself to any of these things *in particular*. Neither the intention of the author/speaker nor the interpretation of the reader/hearer is completely fixed or completely open. **What maps in metaphor can be open to a range of possibilities without becoming completely subjective or random:** "Although the list of mappable features is not a closed one, it is of course not arbitrary either."³⁹

This "not closed, not arbitrary" quality of metaphor mapping is important for preachers both in their role as author/speaker and in their role as reader/interpreter. What kinds of things are possible or probable when Paul uses a particular metaphor? What kinds of conclusions will hearers likely draw from the development of a particular metaphor in a sermon? The goal of the sermon is not necessarily to express all of the intended mappings specifically; even when many specific mappings are present in the development, others will still be underdetermined and therefore open to exploration. Nor is the sermon an open invitation to the hearers to come up with individual, subjective interpretations all on their own. Rather, preachers will help guide

³⁹ Forceville, *Pictorial Metaphor*, 98. "Not closed" here means "not fixed" or "not determined," as opposed to "having no limit." Forceville is not claiming that the list of mappable features is infinite.

their hearers as they make interpretive decisions about the implications of a metaphor, just as the implied narrative structure of metaphors in the biblical text helps to guide the preacher's own interpretive work.⁴⁰

Because dealing with underdeterminacy is such an important aspect both of the preacher's relationship to the text and the hearers' relationship to the sermon, a hermeneutics of metaphor for preaching will need to account for how both specific and underdetermined mappings take place from the source to the target in any given metaphor. The narrative approach suggested here is able to deal with both fixed and open-ended mappings in terms of the guiding structure of the implied narrative behind metaphor. Specific mapping will involve specific actors, expressed or implied, on an actantial model in either the source or the target. Underdetermined or open-ended mappings will not be limited to a set number of specific actors. At the same time, open-ended mappings will be constrained by the actantial model. Though any of a variety of actors may fill a particular actantial position on the model, the narrative requirements of a particular actantial role in relationship to the model as a whole will keep underdetermined mapping from becoming completely random.

Actors, Actantial Positions, and Metaphor Mapping

As chapter 2 indicated, the actantial model distinguishes between specific actors and the functions or actantial roles these actors play.⁴¹ A shepherd and a lamb are both specific *actors*

⁴⁰ Underdetermination—conveying meaning that is neither closed nor arbitrary—is one of the main reasons chapter 1 carved out a position between the extreme views of communication evidenced in contemporary homiletic thought. From the extreme objectivist perspective, underdetermination is a serious deficiency. In this view, language is meant to be precise, and only precise language is worthy of scientific or philosophical discourse. The fact that all language is underdetermined to a degree not only makes the objectivist extreme difficult to maintain, it can also lead to radical subjectivism in interpretation at the other extreme. If all communication is seen as radically underdetermined, then meaning, as a production of the receiver, is up for grabs. Preaching from between these extremes means understanding this open element of metaphor as useful and describable, as purposeful without being overly specific.

⁴¹ See pp. 46–49, above.

that function in different *actantial roles*. In the Little Lamb metaphor, the shepherd is in the actantial position of Subject while the lamb is the Receiver. These actors, however, are not limited to these roles; actors may change actantial positions in different narrative sequences.⁴² While the lamb in the Little Lamb metaphor is the Receiver, the lamb in the Lamb of God metaphor is in the actantial position of Subject, and the difference between these two metaphors hinges on this important fact.

Not only does the model express a relationship between specific actors and their actantial positions, but the actantial model also describes the important relationships between actantial positions. In fact, the main function of the model is to relate the actantial positions of Subject, Object, Receiver, Opponent, and so forth.

Because a single actor filling the role of an actantial position assumes narrative relationships with all of the other actantial positions, there is no need to supply a specific actor for each actantial position in every narrative sequence. Some blanks can be left blank because the structure of actantial relationships presupposes all of the actantial positions even in the absence of a specific actor fulfilling a particular role. In fact, interpreters should expect only part of the actantial model to be evident in any particular narrative sequence.⁴³ Specific Opponents in the target domain of the Little Lamb metaphor, for example, are given very little textual

⁴² See Daniel Patte's discussion of the parable of the Good Samaritan, for example. In Patte's analysis, the man is the Subject in the first narrative sequence (setting of for Jericho), the Opponent in the second sequence (the robbers acquiring his possessions), and the Receiver in the third (the Samaritan providing for his needs). Similarly, the robbers go from being the Opponent to the Subject and then back to the Opponent. Daniel Patte, *What is Structural Exegesis?* Guides to Biblical Scholarship New Testament Series, ed. Dan O. Via, Jr. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 42–50. See also Daniel Patte, "Structural Network in Narrative: The Good Samaritan," *Soundings* 58 (1975): 221–242.

⁴³ One of the inherent characteristics of the actantial model discussed in chapter 2 was that **any individual actantial position presupposes an entire actantial model**. Daniel Patte's comment quoted there bears repeating here: "A paradigmatic reading gathers together the elements which manifest in the text a given structure. Yet it should be kept in mind that *these elements manifest only a part of this structure*: they evoke, suggest, and presuppose the structure. Thus in the paradigmatic reading of any text one cannot expect to find the whole structure. The structure has to be reconstructed from the few of its elements which are manifested." Patte, *What is Structural Exegesis?*, 26.

development. This does not mean interpreters are suddenly left without any idea as to what the metaphor means; *some kind of* Opponent is assumed even if no specifics are given. In fact, the implied narrative structure *requires* an Opponent slot on the model, though it does not require the Opponent slot to be filled by any specific actor or actors.

Underdetermination can be found in either or both of the conceptual domains involved in metaphor mapping. As a result, mapping can take place not only between specific actors but between a specific actor and an actantial position; when an actantial position is not filled by any specific actors, the mapping is left underdetermined.⁴⁴

In the source domain of the Little Lamb metaphor, for example, “quiet waters,” is a specific actor in the Object position that the Subject delivers to the Receiver. What corresponds to the specific actor “quiet waters” in the target domain? Here the mapping takes place from a *specific actor* in the source domain to a class or range of possible actors, that is, to an *actantial position* in the target domain. Does Jesus as shepherd provide his followers with peace, forgiveness, health, daily bread? Yes, these and many more. “Quiet waters” doesn’t “stand for” peace or forgiveness; rather, “quiet waters” counts as a *specific actor* in the source domain that corresponds to the *actantial position* of Object in the target domain.

In this way, the Little Lamb metaphor evokes a range of possible manifestations of the Object in the target domain, a range of possibilities that is neither fixed nor arbitrary. It is perhaps easier to describe what would *not* fit the underdetermined list of “good things Jesus

⁴⁴ Different cross-domain mappings may move from *specific actors* in the source to *specific actors* in the target, from *specific actors* in the source to an *actantial position* in the target, from an *actantial position* in the source to a *specific actor* in the target, or even from an *actantial position* in the source to an *actantial position* in the target. The method proposed by this dissertation will be most useful in considering metaphors that have enough specific mappings (whether expressed in their development or not) to construct a fairly detailed actantial model (or models). The more ambiguous or underdetermined a metaphor is, the less useful this model will be. The thrust of this chapter, however, is that the general structure of actantial positions combined with the specifics of even a few particular actors can account for quite a bit of ambiguity and underdetermination.

provides for me as my shepherd” than it is to list *exhaustively* all of the possibilities, let alone listing which specific possibilities were intended by the composer. In this case, it might suffice to say that the composer intended *these kinds of things* without being able to—or required to—provide a comprehensive list of *which things* were intended. An adequate description of the mapping will not narrowly define what maps and what does not.

While metaphor interpretation may be open-ended at times, **underdetermination is not ineffability**. Metaphor interpretation is constrained by the narrative structure interpreters use to make meaning out of a metaphor. In the Little Lamb metaphor, for example, if hearers or readers understand (1) Jesus as the Subject in the target domain and (2) “me” as the Receiver and (3) good things along the lines of good shepherds providing quiet waters for their sheep as the Object in the source domain, then they will consider only certain *kinds of things* in the Object slot of the target domain, even though specific mappings from the Object in the source to the Object in the target will not be conclusively defined.⁴⁵ In other words, only things that could be understood as good gifts from a loving shepherd will be candidates for mapping *as Objects* in this metaphor. **The list of possible actors understood as mapping in a metaphor is constrained by the actantial position these actors will fill** and therefore *in relationship to* other actors/actantial positions on the actantial model.

The network of actantial relationships described by the actantial model is flexible enough to include actantial roles that are filled by single, multiple, or even no specific actors in any given narrative sequence. The actantial model therefore functions as a stabilizing force in metaphor interpretation: though some or even many of the narrative slots on the actantial model

⁴⁵ The kinds of things that fit this broad category do not necessarily share any particular objective attributes or sets of attributes. Rather, they share the ability to be seen *in a narrative relationship* as an Object provided for me as Receiver by Jesus as Subject. Possible actualizations of any actantial position are similar in *narrative function* rather than in any *ontological* sense.

may be left without specific actors, the basic shape of implied narrative relationships allows underdetermined actantial positions to function in light of the whole.

What maps from the source to the target at the Object position of the Little Lamb metaphor will be open to a wide variety of interpretations. These multiple interpretations, however, will not be arbitrary. Interpretation will still be constrained by the functions of the particular actantial role of Object in relationship to the other actors and actantial positions that give structure to the metaphor as a whole. For this reason, **different interpretations of the same metaphor will remain highly compatible as long as they share an understanding of the underlying structure of narrative relationships.** As long as Jesus is the Subject and the Christian is the Receiver, understanding Jesus as “my shepherd” to be providing “me” with “my *family*” is congruent with understanding Jesus as providing “me” with “my *job*.”⁴⁶

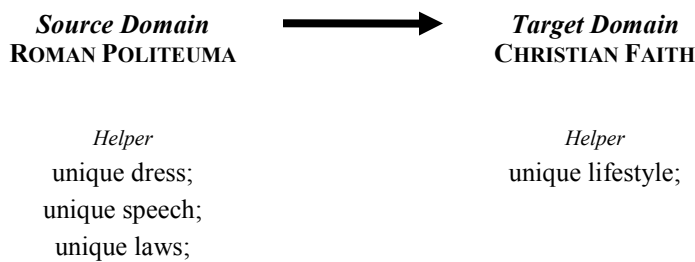
⁴⁶ This relationship between congruent metaphorical structure and divergent specific actors is similar to an observation made by White in his discussion of underdetermination (*Structure of Metaphor*, 86–96). White traces an argument about the following metaphor (spoken of a sword) from Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*: “Mark how the blood of Caesar follow’d it, / As rushing out of doors, to be resolv’d / If Brutus so unkindly knock’d or no” (III, ii, 178, quoted in White, *Structure of Metaphor*, 86). The target here is the blood of Caesar. But what is the source? A “rushing out of doors” something or someone would seem appropriate, though no explicit development is given. Applying I. A. Richards’ *Philosophy of Rhetoric* terminology, John Crowe Ransom identifies the vehicle (source domain) as a “‘page’ opening the door” (quoted by Monroe Beardsley in White, *Structure of Metaphor*, 86). This remark is viewed as highly idiosyncratic by Monroe Beardsley, who comments, “Now there is obviously no page in these lines, any more than there is a rudely awakened householder or soon-to-be-embattled farmer alarmed by Paul Revere. Where does the page come from? The tenor-vehicle terminology . . . tempts the explicator to invent, where he cannot discover it, a vehicle; and so we get the page” (quoted in White, *Structure of Metaphor*, 86).

White, however, correctly takes Beardsley to task for missing the point: Ransom’s “page” is not a page per se, but a “typical rusher-out-of-doors.” In fact, White goes so far as to say the real tenor of the metaphor is not a page or a householder or a farmer, but what all of these rushers-out-of-doors have in common. White understands metaphor as “a conflation of two implied sentences . . . simultaneously presenting the reader with two different *situations* in juxtaposition” (*Structure of Metaphor*, 168) and can therefore place the general situation of rushing out of doors above the specific question of who exactly is doing the rushing. As long as the situation is understood correctly, White argues, it makes no difference whatsoever whether you imagine a page or a householder doing the rushing.

I would contend that there are indeed subtle differences, but White is right on the whole: different interpreters may understand the specifics assumed by the situation implied by the metaphor differently while still understanding the situation itself (and therefore the metaphor) in fundamentally the same way. What is missing from White’s analysis, however, is the narrative inference that Brutus should not be held too accountable for Caesar’s inevitable death: if the householder/page/farmer was going to rush out of doors *anyway*, then it doesn’t much matter that Brutus knocked so rudely. For more on White’s theory of metaphor see appendix 1, below.

Underdetermination in Php 3:20

The different ways of construing the metaphor of belonging to a commonwealth in Php 3:20 discussed above reflect different decisions about underdetermination in the metaphor. In the first rendering of the metaphor (Christians should live distinctive lives), there were *specific actors* like unique dress or unique speech in the source domain of Roman citizenship that mapped onto an *actantial position* in the target domain:

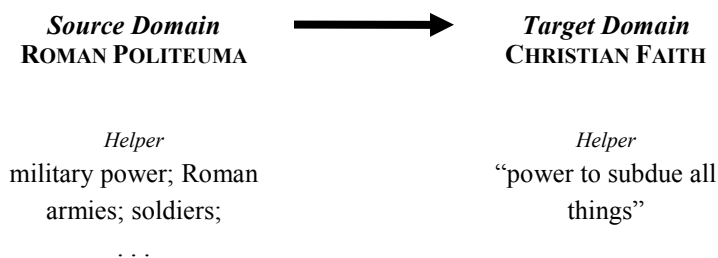


In this mapping, from figure 6a, above, the Helper in the target domain of the distinctive Christian life is left underdetermined. Roman dress or Roman speech or Roman laws do not necessarily map directly onto Christian dress, speech, or laws respectively. Rather, dress, speech, and conformity to different laws are all examples of the *kinds of things* that help Christians live distinctive lifestyles in the world. The list of possible actors that could actualize the actantial position of Helper in this narrative structure is not confined to clothing or speech or laws, but is exemplified by those kinds of things.

Deciding how to preach a metaphor involves in part deciding where to focus on the actantial model. A sermon that understands the metaphor in Php 3:20 to be primarily about how Christians live their lives could well focus on the role of Helper in an actantial model that places the Christian in the Subject slot facilitating the communication of glory to God by the way they live distinctive lives. The sermon would then help the hearers imagine what kinds of specific

things in their lives and contexts would fill this actantial role, even though the biblical metaphor leaves this slot underdetermined.⁴⁷

In the second rendering of Php 3:20, presented above in figure 6b. Our Citizenship Is in Heaven (We Can Eagerly Await Salvation), there is a mapping from the *actantial position* of Helper in the source domain of Roman citizenship to a *specific actor*, in the target domain:



In the target domain of Christian life and hope, Paul references Jesus’ “power to subdue all things.” This power, as the Helper, enables Jesus to overcome all Opponents and bring the Object of ultimate victory to the Receivers, citizens of heaven who, in light of the strength of their Subject, eagerly await his return.

Paul’s development of the source domain of Roman citizenship, however, does not list any specific things that would help a Subject like Caesar or some other Roman military leader deliver Roman citizens from a threatening situation. Certainly, soldiers or swords or horses or military skill are the *kinds of things* that could actualize the role of Helper in this kind of situation, but Paul’s readers are not asked to map soldiers onto angels or Roman horses onto the riders of the apocalypse.

⁴⁷ Of course, a preacher would never say things like “Helper” or “Subject” or—heaven forbid—“actantial model” from the pulpit, but narrative considerations can still guide the sermon.

The role of Helper in the source domain functions in the metaphor without having to be filled by a specific actor. A sermon preaching on eagerly awaiting Jesus as Savior would therefore most likely not spend time developing in detail the kinds of things that would fit the actantial position of Helper in the source domain of Roman military might from the culture of Paul's hearers. In fact, such development in the sermon could easily mislead the hearers into looking for ways Roman military regalia might possibly fit the return of Christ. Such musings miss the point. Because their Subject has the power to overcome all Opponents, Christians eagerly await his coming. Underdetermined features are at times better left underdetermined.

Conclusion

Chapter 1 located a hermeneutics of metaphor for preaching within the context of contemporary homiletic theory. Chapters 2 and 3 described both the basics and some of the complexities involved in a narrative approach to metaphor for preaching. The stability of actantial relationships combined with the flexibility of specific actors allows the narrative approach outlined in chapters 2 and 3 to describe a wide variety of metaphors with a wide range of correspondence, development, and underdetermination.⁴⁸

Especially when important mappings are not expressed by the development of a metaphor, or when significant mappings are left underdetermined, interpreters rely on knowledge from outside of the text or utterance to understand a metaphor. In a conceptual domain like

⁴⁸ At the same time, the usefulness of running actantial models in the source and target domains will diminish as correspondence and development dwindle from high to low. At the extreme end of the spectrum, almost no correspondence with little or no development, it becomes difficult to use the model effectively. In the same way, the model handles underdetermination well up to a point. When too many mappings become radically underdetermined, a narrative structure may no longer be descriptive.

I would contend that even metaphors in highly ambiguous or polysemous contexts are interpreted in light of *some* narrative structure or multiple structures, even if many of the slots are left blank. It is, however, beyond the scope of the current discussion to demonstrate conclusively that this is indeed the case. Though this dissertation uses examples which at times are underdeveloped to some degree or have some underdetermined mappings, the focus will continue to be on metaphors where at least some of the narrative structure is well developed and/or specific.

citizenship, however, the knowledge available to Paul's original audience may be very different from what would come to mind for typical hearers in a contemporary preaching situation.

Though textual development plays a key role in guiding metaphor interpretation, the narrative structures that help shape interpretation are themselves shaped culturally. Chapter 4 takes a narrative approach to the structure of conceptual metaphors that help interpreters make sense of a wide range of metaphorical utterances. Because preachers bring the biblical text and contemporary hearers together, a hermeneutics of metaphor for preaching must address both cross-cultural similarities and differences in metaphor interpretation.

CHAPTER FOUR

PREACHING METAPHOR CROSS-CULTURALLY

Introduction

Like all texts and utterances, metaphor in the biblical text or in the preaching event never occurs in a void. The interpretation of a metaphor is guided in part by the development given by the text or utterance in which the metaphor occurs. At the same time, every utterance and every text leaves important metaphorical blanks to be filled in, even when development is relatively high. Describing how interpreters fill in these blanks can help preachers read the scriptures more carefully and faithfully and prepare sermons with their hearers in mind. The narrative approach to metaphor outlined in chapters 2 and 3 argued that structured narrative relationships help interpreters make sense of metaphor by guiding not only how they fill in blanks but where they understand significant blanks to be. Distinguishing “I am Jesus’ Little Lamb” from “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world” means making a distinction between the narrative structures that stand behind these different lamb metaphors.

If interpreters employ a narrative structure to interpret metaphor, what establishes or constrains this narrative structure? Chapter 3 suggested that *development* in the biblical text or sermon helps guide both specific mappings and the general shape of a metaphor’s implied narrative structure. Because development can be either high or low, knowledge outside of the explicit development of the text or utterance is also important for understanding a metaphor. Though this knowledge may be drawn from personal experience, it is often shaped to a greater or lesser extent by the broader culture of the speaker or interpreter: first-hand experience of

shepherding is not necessary for understanding the Little Lamb metaphor as long as the interpreter has enough background information about the relationship between shepherds and sheep.¹ Building on chapters 2 and 3, the present chapter describes the narrative structure of *conceptual metaphors* in the culture of the text or the culture of the hearers because conceptual metaphor helps shape how both the biblical text and the sermon are understood.

A better awareness of conceptual metaphor facilitates the preaching task in several ways. First of all, since the important characters and basic structure of conceptual metaphors help shape how metaphorical utterances are understood, blanks left by the presentation of metaphors in both the biblical text and in sermons will be interpreted in light of conceptual metaphors known to the interpreters. How preachers understand the text and hearers understand the sermon is shaped culturally by conceptual metaphor.

Because the text, the preacher, the sermon, and the hearers are all culturally embedded, preachers must also consider how and why conceptual metaphors vary among cultures. This is a second way in which a more nuanced view of metaphor and culture helps at both the exegetical and homiletical ends of the preaching process. Being aware of cross-cultural variation in conceptual metaphor allows preachers to notice when and in what ways the structure of conceptual metaphors in the dominant culture of the hearers causes a misreading of the biblical text or leads hearers to draw unintended inferences from the sermon.

¹ Max Black, *Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1962) calls this outside knowledge a “set of associated commonplaces.” Though experience is an important contributor to our understanding of a source domain, John R. Searle notes that cultural knowledge not only augments personal experience, but can even override it: “Richard is a gorilla” will typically evoke violence and ferocity in a culture that “knows” gorillas are violent and fierce, even if in reality gorillas are quite docile. John R. Searle, “Metaphor,” in *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd ed., ed. Andrew Ortony (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 92. Personal experience or other knowledge of the fact that gorillas are actually gentle animals will not keep us from understanding (or even using) a gorilla metaphor in terms of an implied narrative appropriate to a broader cultural (mis)understanding.

While cross-cultural variation in conceptual metaphor can at times hinder the communication process, metaphorical structures that are common across cultures can also be helpful in bringing an ancient text to bear on the lives of contemporary listeners. This is a third way in which conceptual metaphor aids preaching. Finding similar metaphorical structure in the culture of the text and the culture of the hearers can help bring the two together.

The narrative approach to metaphor developed in chapters 2 and 3 also accounts for important dynamics of conceptual metaphor. Chapter 4 begins by describing conceptual metaphor in terms of narrative structure and then considers how cross-cultural variation in conceptual metaphor can both hinder and facilitate understanding the biblical text and the sermon. When cross-cultural variation includes significant differences in actantial structure, members of different cultures will understand the same metaphorical utterance quite differently. On the other hand, if the basic actantial structure of the narrative behind a metaphor remains largely congruent between cultures, variations in culture-specific actors will not change the meaning of the metaphor significantly. Preaching metaphor cross-culturally means managing the challenges of cultural variation and taking advantage of cultural similarity while considering both the biblical text and the contemporary hearers.

A Narrative Approach to Conceptual Metaphor

Conceptual Metaphor

The cognitive linguistic approach characterized by the work of Georg Lakoff, Mark Johnson, and Mark Turner is especially concerned with metaphors within the conceptual system shared by a culture.² Their approach to metaphor makes a careful distinction between *conceptual metaphors*, which structure thought or experience, and metaphors at the level of *utterance*, which

² For a more complete discussion of the contemporary cognitive linguistic approach to metaphor, see appendix 1: Describing the Duality of Metaphor.

themselves are linguistic manifestations of metaphors already present in a conceptual system. Lakoff and Johnson give a summary definition: “conceptual metaphors are mappings across conceptual domains that structure our reasoning, our experience, and our everyday language.”³ For this approach, metaphors manifested in *language* are seen as reflecting patterns of cross-domain mappings already present in *thought*.

In the prevalent culture, for example, people often think about, make decisions about, and experience the rather abstract concept of *life* in terms of physical travel or *journey*. This *thinking, reasoning, and experiencing* of life as a journey involves specific kinds of cross-domain mappings that are reflected in a wide range of linguistic *expressions*: “I took a wrong turn somewhere,” “She’s come a long way,” “We have a rough road ahead,” and so on. This thinking/reasoning/experiencing of one thing in terms of another is designated most often in the literature by all caps: LIFE IS A JOURNEY is a conceptual metaphor. Though someone might actually use the expression “Life is a journey,” the designation LIFE IS A JOURNEY is short-hand for a set of conceptual mappings that allow competent English speakers to understand this and a host of other related expressions naturally and immediately.

Conceptual metaphors by definition have very stable mappings.⁴ In fact, knowing a metaphor means knowing which mappings are sanctioned by it.⁵ Members of a language group will use expressions, even novel expressions, that fit within conventionally established

³ George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 47.

⁴ “Metaphorical mappings are fixed correspondences that can be activated.” George Lakoff, “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor,” in *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd ed., ed. Andrew Ortony (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 218.

⁵ “What does it mean to know a metaphor? It means to know the systematic mappings between a source and a target. It is not suggested that this happens in a conscious manner. This knowledge is largely unconscious, and it is only for the purposes of analysis that we bring the mappings to awareness.” Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 9.

mappings.⁶ Deviating from these conventional mappings is not impossible, but any deviation will be taken as intentional and significant for interpretation.⁷ Lakoff and Turner describe several of the mappings of LIFE IS A JOURNEY explicitly and it therefore serves well as an example:

Knowing the structure of this metaphor means knowing a number of correspondences between the two conceptual domains of life and journeys, such as these:

- The person leading a life is a traveler.
- His purposes are destinations.
- The means for achieving purposes are routes.
- Difficulties in life are impediments to travel.
- Counselors are guides.
- Progress is the distance traveled.
- Things you gauge your progress by are landmarks.
- Choices in life are crossroads.
- Material resources and talents are provisions.⁸

⁶ “When we know a conceptual metaphor, we use the linguistic expressions that reflect it in such a way that we do not violate the mappings that are conventionally fixed for the linguistic community. In other words, not any element of B can be mapped onto any element of A. The linguistic expressions used metaphorically must conform to established mappings, or correspondences, between the source and the target.” Ibid.

⁷ Mark Turner discusses how mapping from the source to the target is constrained by important structure in the source domain. His observation about one important constraint on cross-domain mapping, called the Invariance Hypothesis, is true of the constraints of conventional mappings as well: “The constraint is not inviolable; however, if it is violated, the violation is to be taken as a carrier of significance.” Mark Turner, “Aspects of the Invariance Hypothesis” *Cognitive Linguistics* 1–2 (1990): 252.

⁸ George Lakoff and Mark Turner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 3–4.

Zoltán Kövecses gives a similar list of these standard correspondences in a form that makes the movement from the source domain to the target domain more evident. Kövecses uses arrows to show mapping *from* the source of JOURNEY *to* the target of LIFE:

travelers → people leading a life

motion along the way → leading a life

destination(s) → purpose(s) of life

different paths to one's destination(s) → different means of achieving one's purpose(s)

distance covered along the way → progress made in life

locations along the way → stages in life

guides along the way → helpers or counselors in life⁹

Cognitive linguistics suggests that interpreters understand both common, everyday metaphorical utterances like “I don't know which path to take,” and unconventional, poetic utterances like Robert Frost's, “The Road Not Taken,” by drawing on the structured set of conventional mappings in LIFE IS A JOURNEY.¹⁰ A uniquely narrative approach to metaphor helps describe the important relationship between a culturally shaped *conceptual metaphor* and how a particular *metaphorical utterance* is understood.

⁹ Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor in Culture: Universality and Variation* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 123. Lakoff and Johnson also use this “equivalent arrow notation” to offer a simpler version: “Journey → Purposeful Life; Traveler → Person Living A Life; Destinations → Life Goals; Itinerary → Life Plan” (*Philosophy*, 62). Presenting a list of mappings in this way helps make the direction from the source domain to the target domain more evident. What is still lacking, however, is any representation of the structural relationships between elements within the same domain. How *destinations* relate to *purposes in life* is clear; but how do *destinations* relate to *travelers* or *guides*?

¹⁰ Lakoff and Turner, *More*, 3.

The Implied Narrative Structure of Conceptual Metaphors

From a narrative perspective, the kinds of mappings that constitute the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY suggested above fit well into an actantial model relating *a traveler* as Subject/Receiver to *a desired destination* as Object, with appropriate Opponents and Helpers in both the source and target domains (see figure 8, below). Filling out actantial models for both the source and the target requires decisions not only about how elements correspond across the domains, but how elements are related within each domain. Since the Lakoff-Johnson-Turner approach to metaphor understands mapping to include not only *features* or *characteristics* but *relationships* and *structure* as well,¹¹ figure 8, by providing a structure of relationships, is in some ways more descriptive of a cognitive linguistic approach to metaphor than either the list given by Lakoff and Turner or the mapping diagram offered by Kövecses. What is unique in figure 8, however, is that the structure of both domains is understood as a *narrative* structure.

¹¹ Lakoff and Turner, for example, work with a “skeletal form or ‘schema’” consisting of “slots,” “relations,” and “properties” (*More*, 61–63) that fit well with the narrative theory suggested here. One of the strengths of the current presentation is its ability to answer the question why *these* slots, relations, and properties as opposed to other plausible possibilities. Choosing elements from the source domain of JOURNEY is not arbitrary. Relevance to the culturally understood “story” of the prototypical journey will guide and constrain which actants, actors, and relationships are selected for possible mapping.

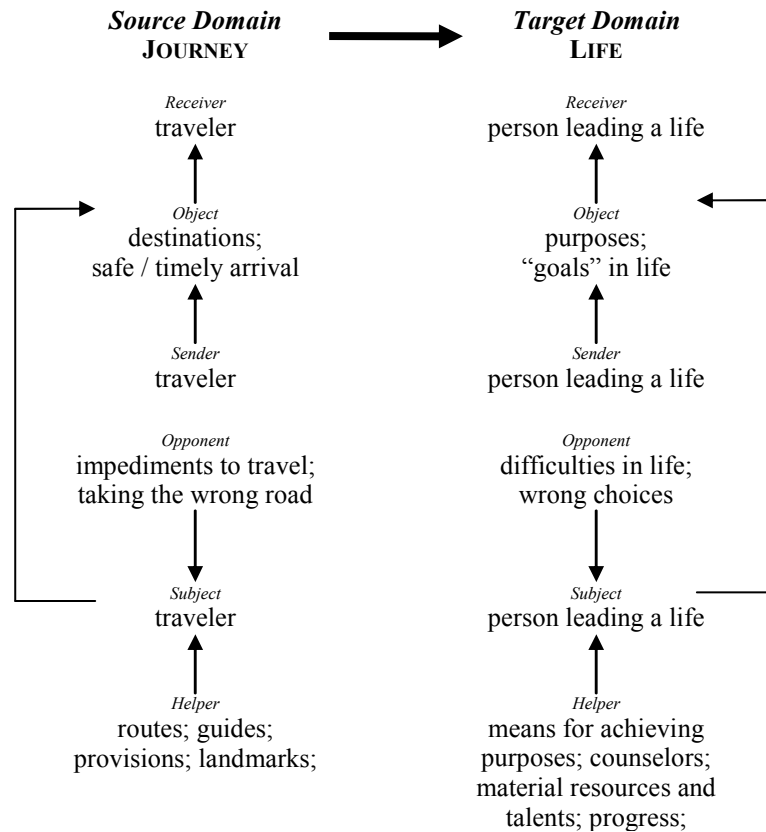


Figure 8. A Narrative Approach to LIFE IS A JOURNEY

The key components of the LIFE IS A JOURNEY conceptual metaphor noted by Lakoff and Johnson are related to each other narratively. Actantial models in the source and the target domains express these narrative relationships and how these relationships map across conceptual domains. Discrete elements in either domain that fulfill similar *functions* are grouped together under the *same actantial position*. Routes, guides, and landmarks, for example, are all Helpers; that is, they fulfill the same narrative function in the common understanding of how a journey works. Discrete elements in either domain that fulfill *contrary* functions are related as Opponents and Helpers. *Guides* help *travelers* avoid or overcome things like *wrong turns*. On the actantial model, a single actor has different kinds of relationships with other actors in

different actantial positions. The relationship between *guides* and *routes* is distinctly different than the relationship between *guides* and *wrong turns* or *guides* and *travelers*. These relationships are not random or haphazard. Rather, they are the result of cultural and experiential knowledge of the kinds of things travelers want to happen and the kinds of things that help or prevent these things from happening. By expressing the structure of the conceptual metaphor in narrative terms, the actantial model makes important relationships within that structure more evident.

Representing a metaphor with a list of unrelated mappings misses some of the most important aspects of interpretation. Understanding a metaphor includes not only knowing the significant entities or characteristics and their mappings, but what someone could reasonably expect from significant entities or characters as these actors fill different actantial positions that relate them all to each other and to the whole. Someone who knows, for example, that *wrong turns* and *guides* are both part of the metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY but thinks they are roughly equivalent in their function could not be said to have an adequate understanding of the metaphor. Understanding life as a journey entails knowing that *guides* function as Helpers, that *wrong turns* are Opponents, and that *guides* have a tacit relationship to *travelers* and *destinations* as well. The *structure* of metaphorical mappings evidenced both at the level of utterance and at the level of concept can be described effectively as a *narrative* structure.

The model used here to describe this narrative structure includes the important relationship between *specific actors* and the *actantial positions* or roles that these specific actors fill.¹² This relationship between actantial roles and specific actors helps explain why such a variety of linguistic expressions can be taken as instantiating a single set of conceptual mappings. The

¹² See the discussion of underdetermination in chapter 3, above.

conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY consists of a structured set of narrative relationships that map from the source domain to the target domain. These mappings evidence stable relationships between *actantial positions* yet are also underdetermined enough to allow a multitude of *specific actors* to fulfill these actantial roles. The specifics listed by Lakoff and Johnson as well as by Kövecses should not be taken as a closed list of necessary and sufficient elements of journeys that map onto the domain of life. Rather, these are the *kinds of things* that fulfill actantial roles in a common understanding of how a story of journey (and of life) works. The Helpers are not limited to, nor must they include, routes, guides, or landmarks. Routes, guides, and landmarks are *the kinds of things* that help travelers get to their destination and therefore are good examples of *the kinds of things* that will be found in the Helper position in the broader actantial model of the source domain JOURNEY.

This stability of actantial relationships and underdetermination of specific actors is evident in the variety of expressions that share the same basic narrative structure. Speakers may use a variety of different kinds of journeys as the source domain in specific metaphorical utterances, but interpreters will still understand these utterances in terms of the basic conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY. People can be said to experience rough seas or smooth sailing in their life journey. They can stumble, get sidetracked, or even be derailed. They can walk the extra mile, get left on the curb, or miss the boat. Yet there are not a multitude of discrete conceptual metaphors such as LIFE IS A SEA VOYAGE, LIFE IS A TRAIN TRIP, LIFE IS A DRIVE IN A CAR, LIFE IS A HIKE; there is one conceptual metaphor, LIFE IS A JOURNEY, instantiated by linguistic utterances that draw on a range of different kinds of journeys. The specific actors will vary from instance to instance, but the basic narrative structure remains the same. Stumbling, getting side tracked, and being derailed all count as Opponents in the basic actantial structure of JOURNEY. Their role of Opponent is in turn understood *in relationship* to a range of other *specific actors*

that could function *in other actantial positions*. Getting back on track or being sure-footed in life are Helpers not necessary to every instance of LIFE IS A JOURNEY but nonetheless understood in light of the narrative structure of this conceptual metaphor as a whole.

Conceptual Metaphor and Metaphorical Utterances

LIFE IS A JOURNEY is a conceptual metaphor. As such, it provides the basic structure needed for a competent interpretation of a wide range of metaphorical utterances. Knowing the basic correspondences between the domain of LIFE and the domain of JOURNEY described by the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY¹³ makes sense of utterances like “He got a head start in life. He’s without direction in his life. I’m where I want to be in life. I’m at a crossroads in my life. He’ll go places in life. He’s never let anyone get in his way. He’s gone through a lot in life,” to name just a few.¹⁴ Each of these specific instances of a metaphorical utterance leaves much unsaid. Since the development is low, the number of blanks to be filled in by the interpreter is relatively high. An interpreter, however, is not left to fill in all those blanks randomly or at whim. In the absence of specific development or context,¹⁵ the narrative structure of the appropriate conceptual metaphor, in this case, LIFE IS A JOURNEY, will guide and constrain the narrative structure—and therefore the interpretation—of these metaphorical utterances.

¹³ To be exact, the designation “LIFE IS A JOURNEY” names a source domain (JOURNEY) and a target domain (LIFE) and says they are related somehow (IS). This shorthand stands for a structure of conceptual mappings from the domain of JOURNEY onto the domain of LIFE.

¹⁴ Lakoff, “Contemporary Theory of Metaphor,” 223.

¹⁵ Though Black, for example, sees the importance of cultural knowledge for interpreting metaphor, he emphasizes the role of context, what he calls “ad hoc associated commonplaces” (*Models and Metaphors*, 43). Forceville, *Pictorial Advertising*, likewise understands both the broader culture and more discrete subcultures (“target audiences”) as significant to metaphor interpretation while focusing much of his discussion on the role of context, both textual and pictorial. The cognitive linguistic approach characterized by Lakoff, Johnson, and Turner show the opposite tendency. Though they acknowledge the role the context of an utterance can play in shaping metaphor mapping, they are much more interested in the way our conceptual system at a cultural level shapes the way we think and talk.

Any interpreter who knows the conventional mappings associated with LIFE IS A JOURNEY needs very little contextual development to understand an utterance like “I took a wrong turn somewhere.” Knowing about journeys means knowing about destinations and wrong turns and how they relate. Understanding life as a journey means knowing what is at stake in getting “back on track,” how to evaluate the situation, and what might be expected next. Understanding life as a journey means having some idea of the feelings involved in getting lost or sidetracked, what the options for the traveler look like, and more. Understanding life as a journey means knowing the conventional structure and mappings associated with LIFE IS A JOURNEY.

Figure 9, below, shows how the *narrative structure* of the *conceptual metaphor* LIFE IS A JOURNEY shapes the way an *utterance* like “I took a wrong turn somewhere” is understood. By itself, the utterance offers very little specific development. Nonetheless, knowing the structure of LIFE IS A JOURNEY enables an interpreter to locate the few specific actors explicit in the text at appropriate locations on an actantial model. An interpreter can therefore fill in the significant number of blanks left by the utterance in conformity with the broader cultural metaphor.

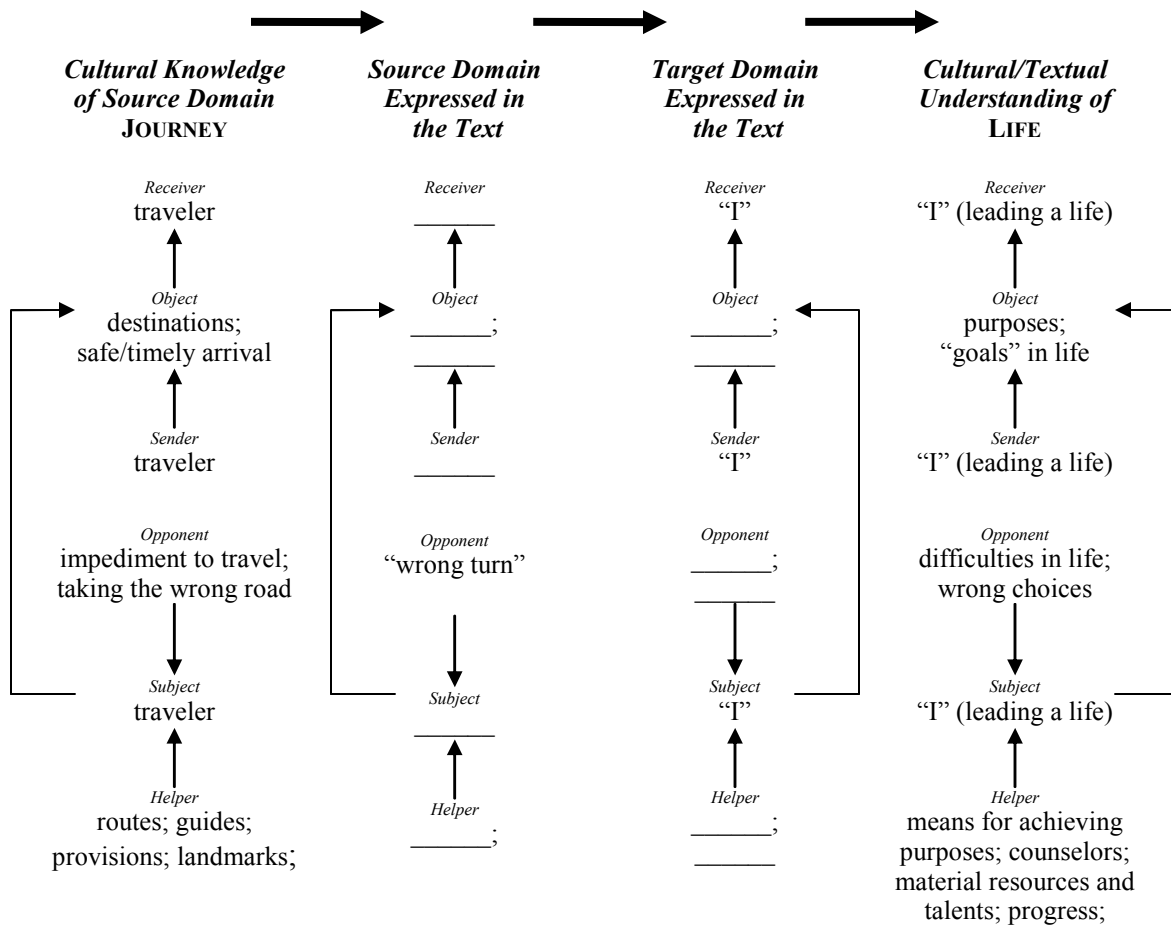


Figure 9. LIFE IS A JOURNEY and "I Took a Wrong Turn Somewhere"

The number of blanks left by the utterance is striking. If so much is left unsaid, how does anyone ever understand the rich implications of "I took a wrong turn somewhere?" The structure of the conventional mappings of LIFE IS A JOURNEY not only guide, they *enable* interpretation. Without the structure of relationships inherent in the culturally shaped conceptual metaphor, the

utterance would make no sense.¹⁶ With the knowledge that *wrong turns* are *actors* appropriate to the Opponent slot, interpreters can operate with a fairly complete actantial model, even if the remaining actors are left underdetermined.

Understanding wrong turns as an Opponent is a significant part of understanding the metaphor as a whole. Even this choice, however, is influenced culturally; there is no *necessary* reason why “taking a wrong turn” would have to be an *Opponent* instead of a *Helper*, for example. It would be possible to situate the utterance “I took a wrong turn somewhere” in a cultural or textual setting where deviation from an intended path typically leads to unexpected and favorable destinations. If the context of the utterance made clear that taking a wrong turn often leads to unexpected blessings, a boy who serendipitously meets a girl could say *as a compliment*, “I took a wrong turn somewhere!” Short of some kind of special development, however, competent members of the language group who understand LIFE IS A JOURNEY as Lakoff and Johnson have described it will understand “taking a wrong turn” as a negative situation that can be remedied by the right kind of help but which must be overcome if the good result of reaching purposes in life is to be achieved.

Because interpreters are able to draw these kinds of narrative inferences based on their knowledge of the structure of the source domain of JOURNEY, understanding of the utterance “I took a wrong turn somewhere” is not limited to the paraphrase “I made some bad career moves

¹⁶ In order to make sense at all, the utterance will be understood in terms of *some* structure of relationships. If these relationships do not share a basic shape with the LIFE IS A JOURNEY conceptual metaphor described here, the sense of the metaphor will be understood differently. In other words, the argument here is not that we need this particular narrative approach in order to interpret metaphor; rather, I am suggesting that a narrative approach describes in useful ways how people do interpret metaphor. Different implied narrative structures will lead to different understandings of a metaphor, but we all understand a metaphor in terms of *some* situation or seminal narrative, whether we know it or not. See David E. Rumelhart, “Some Problems with the Notion of Literal Meanings,” in *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd ed., ed. Andrew Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 71–82 and Mark Turner, *The Literary Mind: The Origins of Thought and Language* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996) for two others who connect metaphor interpretation with some kind of basic narrative or situation. If metaphor interpretation is shaped narratively, divergent understandings of the same metaphor can be traced back to divergent construals of that metaphor’s implied narrative structure. See the example of DEATH IS A SLEEP, below.

or decisions in life.”¹⁷ Rather, the narrative shape of LIFE IS A JOURNEY structures the interpreter’s thinking about the speaker’s situation. Besides the claim that the speaker has made some bad decisions regarding life goals, interpreters will also understand that the speaker is experiencing a time of difficulty in life, that the right kind of counselor or guide would be useful, that the speaker has little chance of achieving his or her purposes in life unless the situation changes, and a host of other inferences and implications related to the narrative structure of the cultural understanding of LIFE IS A JOURNEY.¹⁸

These kinds of conclusions seem natural and obvious only if an interpreter is familiar with the structure of LIFE IS A JOURNEY. A member of a culture that does not use the LIFE IS A JOURNEY conceptual metaphor would not be able to make sense out of the utterance, or, rather, would attempt to make sense out of it by finding a narrative structure that yields a possible interpretation. If a foreign interpreter understands deviation from an intended path as naturally leading to an unexpected and favorable destination, there will be a serious breakdown in communication. If a non-native speaker boy serendipitously meets a native-speaker girl, he might be surprised at the response to his compliment, “I took a wrong turn somewhere!” Members of cultures that have fundamentally different conceptual metaphors will understand the same utterance in very different ways.

The Culture of the Text and the Culture of the Hearers

Because preachers preach from an ancient text for the sake of contemporary hearers, potential differences in the structure of conceptual metaphors between cultures become critical to

¹⁷ Paul Ricoeur is but one of the theorists who argues for the irreducibility of metaphor: “Real metaphors are not translatable . . . because they create their meaning. This is not to say that they cannot be paraphrased, just that such a paraphrase is infinite and incapable of exhausting the innovative meaning.” *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Fort Worth, Tex.: Texas Christian University Press, 1976), 52.

¹⁸ Narrative inferences or implications are described more fully in chapter 5, “Preaching Metaphors We Live By,” below.

the homiletic task. Because *changing the implied narrative structure changes the metaphor*, cross-cultural differences in the narrative structure of conceptual metaphors can lead to significantly divergent interpretations of similar or even identical utterances. Cross-cultural similarity in narrative structure, however, will make culture-specific details less of a disruptive force in the communication process. A narrative approach to conceptual metaphor helps preachers manage cultural differences and take advantage of similar conceptual structures in the culture of the text and the culture of the hearers.

Cross-Cultural Variation and Metaphor Interpretation

Culture Dependence and Conceptual Metaphor. A basic assumption in much of contemporary metaphor theory is that *metaphor at the level of thought is a product of human culture*, at least in significant measure. As Kövecses puts it, “Metaphors are just as much cultural as they are cognitive entities and processes.”¹⁹ Culturally agreed upon structures allow communication to take place. As members of a linguistic community, speakers are free to leave blanks in an utterance if they know other members of their same linguistic community will fill in these blanks in certain kinds of ways. This cultural convention enables the metaphorical thinking and speaking encountered both in daily living and in more specialized contexts like literature or scripture:

General conceptual metaphors are thus not the unique creation of individual poets but are rather part of the way members of a culture have of conceptualizing their experiences. Poets [no less than biblical authors or preachers], as members of their cultures, naturally make use of these basic conceptual metaphors to communicate to other members, their audience.²⁰

¹⁹ Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 11. See also Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh*. The claim that the structure of conceptual systems is *produced* by human individuals in a society and at the same time *encountered* by human individuals as part of the external word is consistent with Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967).

²⁰ Lakoff and Turner, *More*, 9.

Both speakers and hearers, as members of a culture, draw on the conventional structure of conceptual metaphors to facilitate communication. If communication had to start from scratch every time anyone spoke, nothing would ever get communicated! These conceptual metaphors that enable communication are culture-dependent; cultural differences will therefore affect interpretation. The location of the preacher between the culture(s) of the text and the culture(s) of the hearers makes the question of cross-cultural similarity and difference especially relevant.

Differences across Cultures. A single conceptual metaphor can have a wide variety of specific instantiations that conform to a general narrative structure of relationships: “I took a wrong turn somewhere,” “life in the fast lane,” and “I have finally arrived” are all understood in terms of LIFE IS A JOURNEY. In each of these and a host of other related utterances, a wide variety of specific actors are understood in terms of the same actantial structure of LIFE IS A JOURNEY.

What happens, however, when the *specifics* are the same, but the *structure* changes? What if the *actors* evidenced in an utterance are similar or even identical but the *narrative relationships* assumed by the utterance are diverse? Because metaphorical utterances are interpreted in light of related conceptual metaphors, interpreters using two different conceptual metaphors with *similar specifics* but *different narrative structures* will understand even the same utterance in very different ways. Changing the narrative structure of a conceptual metaphor changes how utterances interpreted in terms of that conceptual metaphor will be understood.

Kövecses notes exactly this phenomenon in the American conceptual metaphor SOCIETY IS A FAMILY. Kövecses cites work by Lakoff that demonstrates two very different “construals” of the source domain FAMILY, one called by Lakoff a “strict father” model, the other a “nurturing family” model. These two different construals of how a family works include very different

expectations and relationships—that is, very different *narrative structures*—that influence how people think about social issues and politics. Kövecses writes:

Some source domains have [two or more] clearly distinct construals, and these differences in the way we think about the source may be responsible for creating *alternative conceptual metaphors*. Importantly, this can happen in cases, such as the source domain of family, in which the source is a seemingly straightforward and unproblematic concept. We have an apparently single source domain, but the source has two construals. As a result, the distinct construals yield in fact *two conceptual metaphors for the same target*.²¹

In effect, “SOCIETY IS A FAMILY” and “SOCIETY IS A FAMILY” are conceptual metaphor homonyms: two distinct structures of cross-domain mappings that could both be designated by the same shorthand “SOCIETY IS A FAMILY” but that in fact have two very different sets of mappings and relationships. Metaphorical utterances that use language from the domain of FAMILY for the domain of SOCIETY can therefore sound very similar, or even use the exact same vocabulary, yet still be very different metaphors because they are structured by different narrative relationships at the conceptual level: both liberals and conservatives use family language to describe citizens of the United States, but their divergent understandings of how families typically or ideally function lead to very different conclusions on a wide range of social and political issues.²² Though Kövecses is right in identifying this particular case of metaphor and American politics as “a case of within-culture variation,”²³ preachers should expect the same kind of nuance in cross-cultural metaphor analysis as well.

Because metaphorical utterances in the text or in the sermon will tend to be interpreted in terms of broader conceptual metaphors in the interpreter’s culture, the preacher’s task of

²¹ Kövecses, *Metaphor in Culture*, 119, emphasis added.

²² See George Lakoff, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

²³ Kövecses, *Metaphor in Culture*, 119.

knowing the people, understanding the text, and preaching the Word of God in a particular context means asking how metaphor interpretation is being influenced at a cultural level. Which narrative relationships and outcomes are being evoked by the language of metaphors in the text or sermon by virtue of the conceptual metaphors common to the culture of the hearers? Even when there seems to be obvious overlap between the language or provenance of the biblical text and the hearer's own human social and bodily experience and ways of talking, similar language or experience does not necessarily mean that the underlying metaphorical structures are the same.²⁴ A more in-depth look at an example metaphor shared by biblical texts and contemporary American culture will help demonstrate how the narrative method proposed here can help preachers be aware of and manage these kinds of complexities when considering both the biblical text and contemporary hearers.

Cross-Cultural Variation in the Conceptual Metaphor DEATH IS A SLEEP

Everyone, everywhere, at every time, in every culture, as a human being with a human body, has some first-hand experience with sleep. Sleeping is a universal, daily part of what it means to be human. Death is similarly a universal part of human experience. In cultural terms, not even taxes are as certain. If any kind of cross-cultural similarities in metaphorical speech or thought might reasonably be expected, the overlap of two such universal parts of the common experience of humanity would be a likely place to look.

²⁴ “The universal bodily basis on which universal metaphors *could* be built is *not* utilized in the same way or to the same extent in different languages and [subcultures].” Kövecses, *Metaphor in Culture*, 246. Kövecses admits universal bodily experience but is cautious to claim universality or near-universality for conceptual metaphor based on universal bodily experience because he emphasizes the role culture plays in shaping common experiences. Mieke Bal, on the other hand, is skeptical of universal bodily experience. For Bal, the Lakoff-Johnson approach “de-historicizes and universalizes white male identity when taking bodily experience as a starting point.” Mieke Bal, “Metaphors He Lives By,” in *Women, War, and Metaphor: Language and Society in the Study of the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Claudia V. Camp and Carole R. Fontaine, Semeia, no. 61 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 189.

Because the conceptual domains of SLEEP and DEATH are such a part of life no matter what the culture, it is not surprising to find conceptual mappings that relate SLEEP as a source domain to DEATH as a target domain. As Kövecses points out, however, “the prototypical concepts that we use in conceptual metaphors are based on our experiences *in the culture in which we live*.”²⁵ Though all people share some common human bodily experiences with the biblical writers’ original audiences and cultures, different cultures can and do focus on different aspects of the same or similar experiences.²⁶ Focusing on different aspects of a common human experience, however, leads to very different narrative structures at the level of conceptual metaphor, even if the utterances sanctioned by these different mappings sound similar or identical. Understanding a metaphor in different cultural contexts means noticing not only the similarities in *patterns of speech*, but looking for the *conceptual structure* that helps shape how specific utterances are understood. The conceptual metaphor DEATH IS A SLEEP proves to be a good example.

DEATH IS A SLEEP in Contemporary Culture. DEATH IS A SLEEP is a common conceptual metaphor that finds expression in utterances both in contemporary American culture and in the NT text. Lakoff and Turner express the conventional mappings of this metaphor in their cultural context:

In this metaphor, the corpse corresponds to the body of a sleeper, and the appearance of the corpse—inactive and inattentive—to the appearance of the sleeper. Optionally, the experiences of the soul after death correspond to our mental experiences during sleep, namely dreaming. And just as death is a particular sort of departure, a one-way departure with no return, so death is a particular sort of sleep, an eternal sleep from which we never waken.²⁷

²⁵ Kövecses, *Metaphor in Culture*, 254, emphasis added.

²⁶ Kövecses calls this “differential experiential focus” and sees it as one of the primary reasons we find such variation in metaphor cross-culturally (*Metaphor in Culture*, 246).

²⁷ Lakoff and Turner, *More*, 18–19.

The focus of this description is on the corpse in perpetuity. The implied narrative could be described as placing sleep in the Subject slot, bringing benefits like rest or pleasant dreams to the Receiver, the individual sleeper. The Helpers on this model are the identifying characteristics of a sleeper: inactivity, inattention, closed eyes, lying down, head on a pillow, and those *kinds of things*. In everyday experience, the kinds of things which map onto the appearance of a corpse *help sleepers stay asleep* (see figure 10a, below).

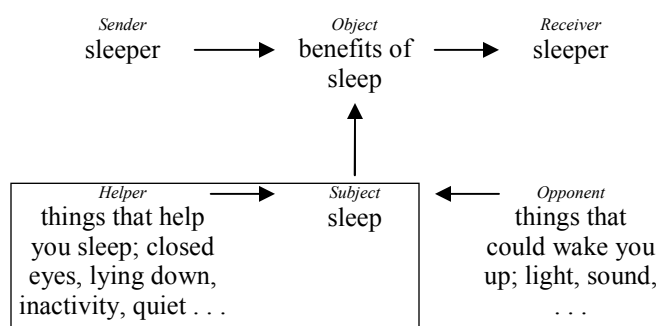


Figure 10a. DEATH IS A SLEEP Source Domain, Contemporary American Culture

Death is a Sleep in the NT. In some cases, the Bible can use a sleep metaphor for death that seems to conform generally to Lakoff and Johnson’s description of contemporary American culture.²⁸ Especially in the Gospels and Paul, however, when death is spoken of in terms of

²⁸ The OT in particular evidences a DEATH IS A SLEEP metaphor that highlights the inactivity of the corpse and sleep in perpetuity (Dan 12:2 is an exception). Often the verb שכב (to lie down, to sleep) is used. This appears to be first a metonymy (lying down for sleeping) and then a metaphor (sleeping for being dead), especially since the sense of lying down can also be used as a metaphor for death in contexts where sleep is not in view (see Is 14:8; 43:17). The same verb is used in reference to the death of a patriarch, king, or prophet, “and he lay down/slept/rested with his fathers” (see Gen 47:30, Dt 31:16, and 1 Kings 11:21, as examples). The NT employs this OT formula twice: in Paul’s speech in Acts 13:36 and in the mouths of “scoffers” in 2 Peter 3:4. In these two cases, the strong implication of resurrection found in other places in the NT is not present.

The disparity between the different narrative structures of DEATH IS A SLEEP in the two testaments serves as a reminder that there is no unified “biblical culture” or “way of talking” and therefore no unified biblical system of metaphors. Still, there is a distinct NT way of speaking about death as a sleep that is very different from the common metaphorical structure in contemporary American culture.

sleep, a very different narrative is evidenced in the development of the metaphor.²⁹ Whether Jesus is speaking of Lazarus or the ruler's daughter as being "asleep" (John 11:11; Matt 9:23 and parallels), or Paul is referring to those "asleep in Christ," (1 Cor 15 and 1 Thess 4), the emphasis is not on the *activity* of sleep or the appearance of the sleeper, but rather on a *result*.³⁰

Significantly, the result of the sleep narrative in these texts is not that a sleeper *receives benefits from resting*; rather, the end result for Lazarus, the ruler's daughter, and believers who

²⁹ The only way to get at the structure of a *conceptual metaphor* either in our culture or in the cultural setting of a particular biblical text is through the evidence of *specific utterances*. This is the method of the Lakoff-Johnson-Turner approach: they examine a wide range of utterances and take them as evidence of conceptual structures that sanction these ways of speaking. Though they claim specific utterances are dependant on conceptual mappings, these conceptual mappings can only be described by treating actual utterances. This is not necessarily self-contradictory. In fact, the relationship between conceptual metaphors and metaphorical utterances is much like the relationship between our linguistic system of English as a whole and specific English utterances. Any specific utterance depends on a whole system of grammar, syntax, and word meanings. At the same time, a language system does not exist independently of actual people actually using language. Though we as human beings in human cultures produce things like language systems and conceptual metaphors, we also encounter these human cultural productions as if they were independently existing structures "out there in the world." See Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*.

³⁰ G. B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980), 145–149, suggests that metaphors will focus on different "classes" of comparison (though he is definitely not an advocate of the Comparison View of metaphor). Modifying Caird slightly, we can suggest that metaphor mapping tends to focus primarily on activity, result, description, or affective response. "I am Jesus' little lamb," for example, focuses primarily on *result*, filtering out other kinds of mappings: in this metaphor, I am guided, protected, cared for, nurtured but not necessarily wandering (*activity*), adorable (*affective response*), or woolly (*description*). "We all like sheep have gone astray," on the other hand, focuses primarily on *activity*: we wander perpetually. By focusing on the activity of the sheep, however, other aspects of the sheep-shepherd-wolf-green pasture complex are less developed or even removed from view.

In terms of a narrative approach to metaphor, different kinds of mappings highlight different locations on the actantial model. A focus on *activity*, as in the first construal of DEATH IS A SLEEP (figure 10a, above) highlights one end of the lower section of the actantial model (called the "axis of power"), concentrating on the relationship between the Subject and the Opponent. A focus on *result*, like the second construal of DEATH IS A SLEEP (figure 10b, below), centers the metaphor on the "axis of communication," that is, on the relationship between the Object and the Receiver. A focus on *description* highlights the Helper-Subject relationship while *affective response* is evoked by developing the "axis of volition," the Subject-Object relationship.

While establishing a hard and fast rule would take more evidence than the current project can take time to present, keeping Caird's general observation in mind serves metaphor interpretation. A metaphor that focuses on result, and therefore the axis of communication, will have less need for specific or concrete actors in actantial positions outside of the Object and the Receiver. The gospel metaphor "you were bought at a price" (1 Cor 6:20), for example, focuses on the result of the payment but leaves the Opponent slot empty. Interpreters are not asked to fill this actantial position with a specific actor—is Christ's death a payment to God? Satan?—because the focus of the metaphor is on a result rather than on an activity: "You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body" (1 Cor 5b–6). A discussion of actantial axes can be found in Daniel Patte, *What is Structural Exegesis?*, Guides to Biblical Scholarship New Testament Series, ed. Dan O. Via, Jr. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 42–43. For more on the purchase metaphor, see David J. Williams, *Paul's Metaphors: Their Context and Character* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999), 115–116.

are asleep in Christ is *being awake and active*. The NT often talks about death as a sleep in order to proclaim that sleepers are going to wake up and get out of bed and get on with life! In fact, though sleep is not bad of and by itself, in the implied narrative structure of the death-as-sleep metaphor in the Gospels and Paul, sleep is the Opponent, not the Subject. The Subject wakes the sleeper up, the Opponents are things that keep the sleeper asleep, the Object is a state of being awake and active, and the Receiver is the sleeping/dead person (see figure 10b, below).

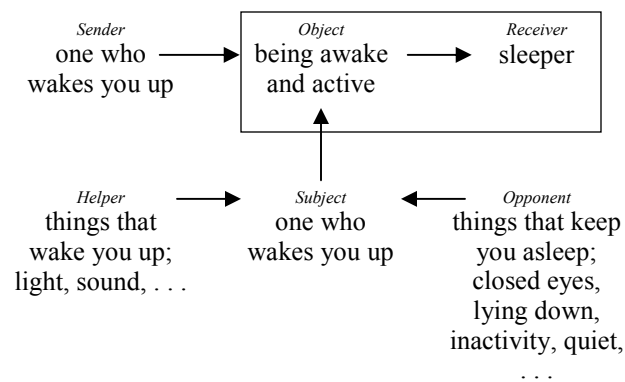


Figure 10b. DEATH IS A SLEEP Source Domain, Gospels and Paul

Though this second narrative structure stands behind many different biblical texts, often with explicit reference to the rising/waking of the sleepers, the metaphor of death-as-sleep in the NT will tend to be understood by people in an American context in terms of the more culturally common metaphorical mappings described by Lakoff and Turner.³¹ Recalling that the culturally

³¹ As Gerald Zaltman points out in *How Customers Think: Essential Insights into the Mind of the Market* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2003), 69, our brains are good at ignoring things we don't see as "obviously relevant." Zaltman describes an experiment, presented in Daniel Simons and Christopher Chabris, "Gorillas in Our Midst: Sustained Inattention Blindness for Dynamic Events," *Perception* 28 (1999):1059–1074, where volunteers were asked to count the number of times a basketball was passed from one player to another on a video tape. Focused on the task at hand, none of the viewers even mentioned the gorilla that walked through the picture. When viewers were not asked to count passes, the gorilla became the most obvious feature. In other words, if our culture has focused our attention on a particular way of interpreting a metaphor, it might not matter how much

shaped structure of conceptual metaphors helps guide and constrain the blanks left by a metaphorical utterance, preachers might well ask how their hearers will interpret the language of sleep used for death in light of the culture in which they find themselves. Understanding the shape of conceptual metaphors in terms of narrative structure gives preachers a way to describe how hearers are guided in their interpretation of any metaphor by their particular cultural and linguistic setting.

Same Utterance, Different Narrative Structures. In light of the conceptual metaphor DEATH IS A SLEEP, preachers could ask how their hearers would likely make sense out of the Sunday morning announcement, “Our friend Tom fell asleep in Jesus yesterday.” Both context and convention help hearers understand that this particular utterance is referring to Tom’s death. The meaning effect of this metaphor, however, is not limited to the proposition that Tom died. Though there are many blanks left by this utterance, the metaphor assumes a structure of narrative relationships and outcomes. How people understand this simple announcement will be shaped, at least in part,³² by the structure of the conceptual metaphor that stands behind this specific utterance. Without changing the utterance itself, the understanding of the utterance will change dramatically based on whether the interpretation is shaped by the structure of DEATH IS A SLEEP described by Lakoff and Johnson or by the structure of DEATH IS A SLEEP broadly evidenced by the NT text.³³

development the biblical text provides. The resurrection can run through a pericope like a gorilla through a basketball game and we will still be bent on understanding death as a sleep from which we never awake.

³² Along with variation from culture to culture, variation in metaphorical understanding also occurs within a culture and even from person to person. Kövecses (*Metaphor in Culture*, 242–44), for example, includes “personal history” and “personal concerns and interests” as reasons for metaphor variation along with differences at a broader, cultural level. As long as the variation has to do more with specific details or *actors* rather than with *actants* or the narrative structure as a whole, different understandings will be largely congruent.

³³ Though the Bible as a whole often evidences certain assumptions or cultural conventions that are substantially different from our culture as a whole, we must be careful not to treat either the scriptures or our contemporary culture as discrete, monolithic cultural artifacts. It may be, for example, that different groups within

How will the average 21st century American understand, “Our friend Tom fell asleep in Jesus yesterday”? Though the kind of hearer depiction made available by a narrative approach to metaphor will neither exhaustively describe how communication takes place nor account for every possible nuance of individual interpretation, it can give a good idea how most hearers will tend to draw conclusions from this death-as-sleep metaphor. Though the utterance itself leaves many blanks to be filled in, the structure of the prevalent conceptual metaphor in the culture of the hearers will guide and constrain the shape of these blanks and the interpretive decisions about how these blanks should be filled in. Without further development or guidance, preachers can expect most of their hearers to be shaped by the cultural metaphor DEATH IS A SLEEP as Lakoff and Johnson described it. Figure 11a, below, shows the blanks left by the utterance “Our friend John fell asleep in Jesus yesterday,” and how these blanks are structured and filled in by the conceptual metaphor DEATH IS A SLEEP.

our culture will share significant variations in the structure of their conceptual systems that contradict the structure of the culture at large. It may also be that similar metaphorical utterances taken from widely divergent places in the Bible have significantly different implied narrative structures, not only between the testaments but from different cultural situations within the same testament. To call God a rock, for example, may be understood quite differently depending on whether the assumed cultural provenance is wilderness wandering, where rocks are experienced as unchanging and permanent, or city dwelling, where the implied narrative structure of warfare or architecture may be in view. In other words, Dt 32:4—“He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.”—may well assume a different set of narrative relationships at a cultural or conceptual level than does Ps 18:2—“The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock . . . my stronghold.”—even though both are OT metaphors that use rock language for God.

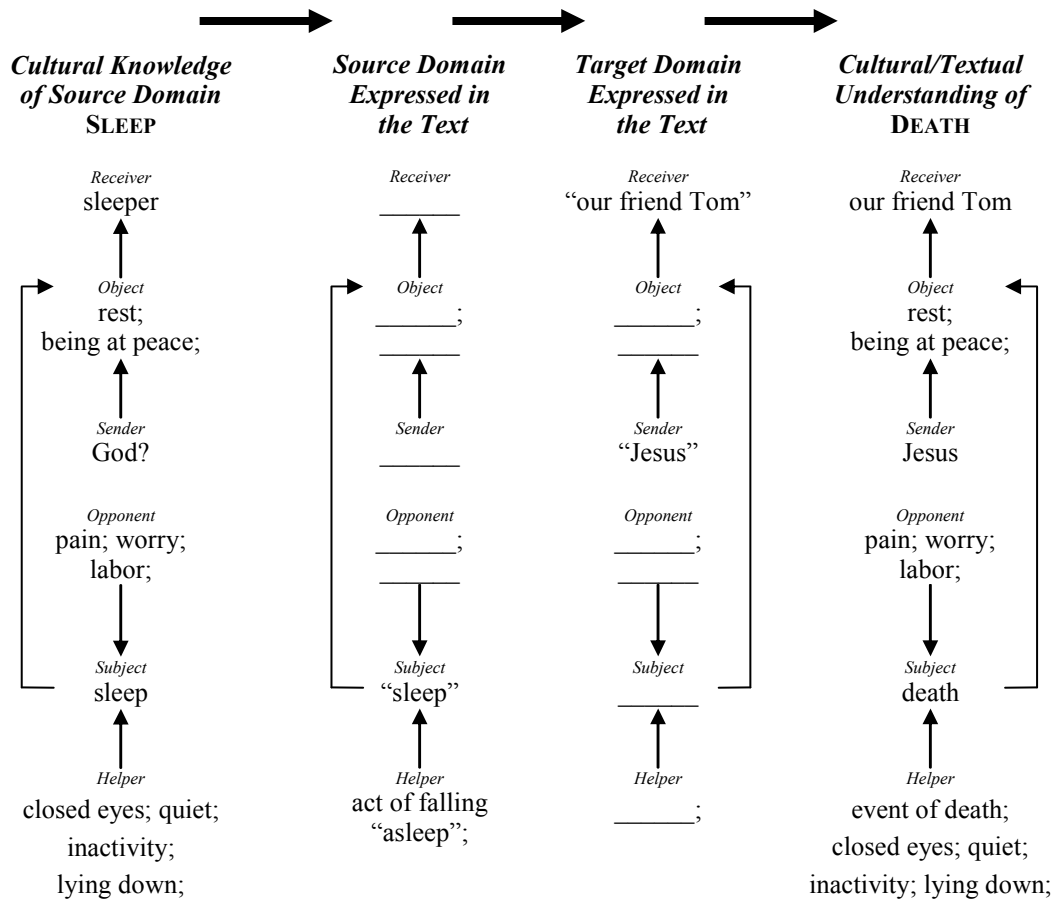


Figure 11a. DEATH IS A SLEEP and “Our Friend Tom Fell Asleep in Jesus Yesterday.”

Because the utterance itself leaves so many blanks, the cultural knowledge of the conceptual metaphor provides important narrative structure that shapes interpretation. Because sleep is in the Subject slot in the narrative structure of the conceptual metaphor DEATH IS A SLEEP, interpreters will locate sleep in the Subject slot in their understanding of the narrative structure assumed by “our friend Tom fell asleep in Jesus yesterday,” *even though the utterance itself does not specify any of the relationships between elements in either the source or the target domains.*

Besides locating sleep, the act of falling asleep, and “our friend Tom” on the actantial model, the conceptual metaphor DEATH IS A SLEEP also serves to help fill in the blanks left by the utterance. Though the announcement makes no reference to the state of Tom’s body, typical interpreters would probably expect to find Tom lying down with his eyes closed, not only because they commonly see dead bodies this way, but also because they experience *sleeping* bodies this way. In other words, interpreters would likely be able to draw an inference as to the kind of death Tom experienced, based on the narrative structure of the metaphor used to describe that death: interpreters would not ordinarily expect Tom in this case to have been the victim of some violent crime. Rather, they would expect him to have died fairly peacefully and possibly in bed because these assumptions fit their experience of sleep.³⁴

The important role that culturally shaped conceptual metaphors play in interpretation, however, does not override the specifics of the utterance itself. Lakoff and Johnson do not list the action of falling asleep, for example, as one of the important aspects of the source domain of sleep typically used in this culture (see figure 10a, above). Since the *utterance* includes the action of *falling asleep*, interpreters will naturally map the *action* of falling asleep onto the *event* of dying, even though these specifics are not typically part of the conceptual metaphor.³⁵

Nevertheless, the narrative structure of DEATH IS A SLEEP still shapes how these utterance-

³⁴ The way we commonly use language helps make this point. Intuitively, members of our culture would not typically use “to fall asleep” as a metaphor for dying if the death were particularly violent or contradicted our standard image of a sleeper. As a member of this language group, my own sense is that we would not say a person who was blown up or mutilated in a fire or shot in the face had “fallen asleep.” We could verify this kind of personal language intuition by taking a broad sampling of obituaries or newspaper reports to show which metaphors tend to be used in which kind of situations related to death and dying. Based on the analysis provided by Lakoff and Johnson, we could hypothesize that any kind of death that contradicted the peaceful nature of sleep or made lying down with closed eyes impossible for the corpse would only rarely be spoken of in terms of the metaphor DEATH IS A SLEEP.

³⁵ This mapping is facilitated in part by a more general mapping Lakoff and Johnson identify in our conceptual system: we commonly understand events (like death) as actions (like harvesting, or departing, or falling asleep). For more on the EVENTS ARE ACTIONS metaphor, see Lakoff and Turner, *More*, 75–82.

specific details are related; the event of dying is understood as a *Helper* because of the structure of the conceptual metaphor common to the broader culture.

What if the comment “our friend Tom fell asleep in Jesus yesterday” were made in a context where the structure of the biblical metaphor of death-as-sleep played an important role in shaping interpretation? How would the blanks themselves as well as how hearers fill in the blanks look different than the implication complex described in figure 11a? If hearers used the structure of the source domain from figure 10b, they would interpret the same metaphorical utterance differently because the structure of the implied narrative is different. The result would be something like figure 11b, below.

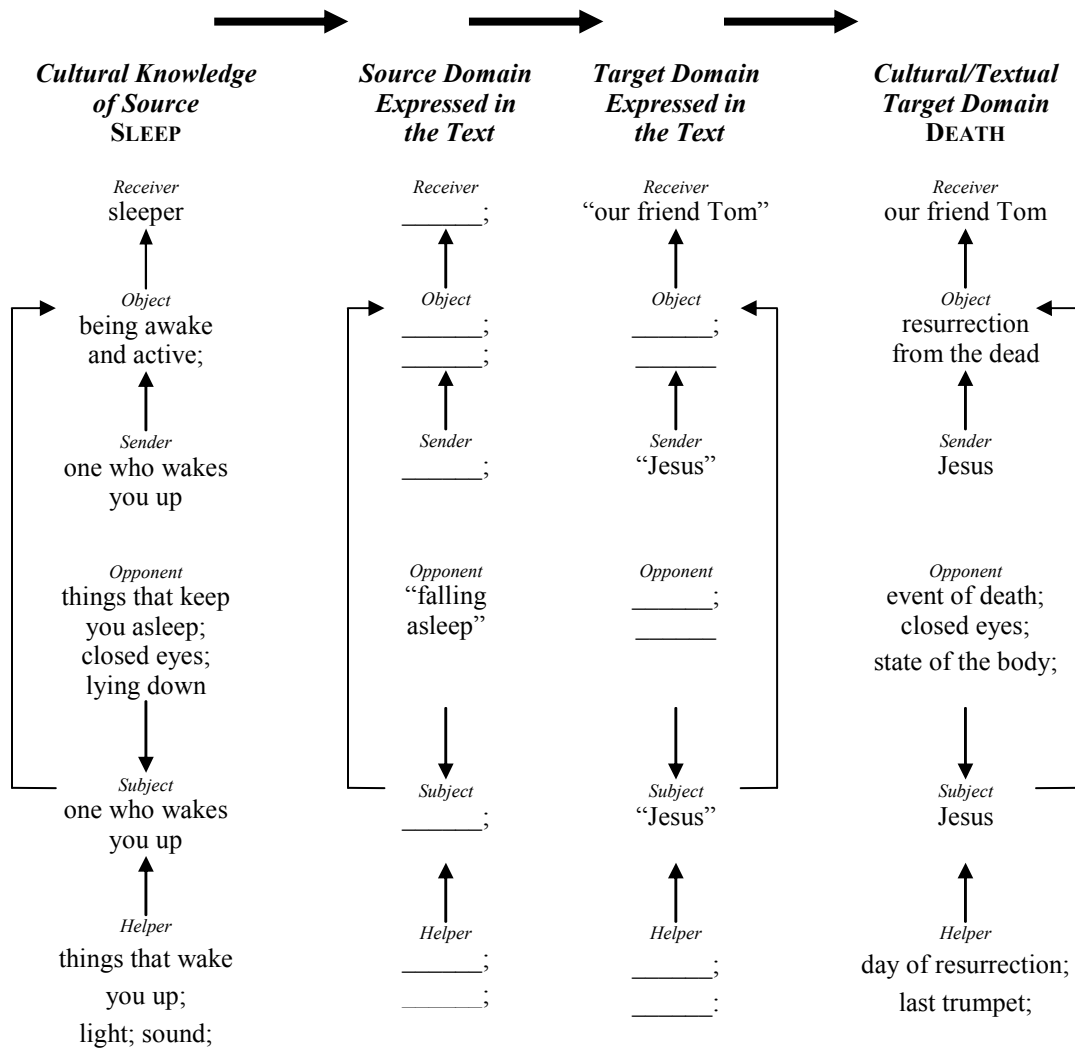


Figure 11b. DEATH IS A SLEEP and "Our friend Tom Fell Asleep in Jesus Yesterday," Revised

The contrast between figures 11a and 11b is more than a matter of cultural variations in the specific kinds of actors understood as relevant to the metaphor. If the differences were merely a matter of an *alarm clock* being typical of something that wakes people up in a contemporary setting as opposed to *sunlight* in a non-electric society, the general shape of the actantial model would render those cultural variations all but moot. Instead, figures 11a and 11b evidence what

Kövecses labeled a “differential experiential focus.”³⁶ Very similar experiences of sleep can yield very different narrative shapes depending on whether the focus is on sleeping bodies or on waking up. Significantly, the meaning of the metaphor in figure 11b no longer focuses on the kind of death experienced³⁷ or even the state of the dead body, but rather on the future of the deceased. Sleep, and therefore death, no longer plays the role of Helper: rather, death is an Opponent that will be overcome. Jesus is no longer seen as sending blessed, peaceful sleep. Rather, Jesus is the one who is disruptive to sleep, the one who wakes people up.

Admittedly, it is likely that most members of contemporary American society—including both preachers and hearers—would not focus immediately on the promise of resurrection if a preacher announced, “Our friend Tom fell asleep in Jesus yesterday.” In some ways, however, this omission is exactly the point. There is nothing inherent in the utterance itself that makes interpreters focus on *resting in peace* rather than on *imminent waking and rising*. Interpretation is shaped in part by the culture in which interpreters live, and the present culture shapes the implied narrative of death as sleep differently than do the biblical texts. To be sure, the Bible can speak of death as “rest from labor” (Rev 14:13), but the most significant instances of sleep language for death in the NT unequivocally and emphatically call on Christians to look for the waking and rising of those who have fallen asleep.³⁸

The narrative structure of sleep and waking evidenced by Paul and the Gospels is decidedly different from the narrative structure described by Lakoff and Johnson as common in American culture. Since these kinds of differences in narrative structure at the level of conceptual

³⁶ Kövecses, *Metaphor in Culture*, 246.

³⁷ Though it would be difficult to prove conclusively, the focus on future rising as opposed to present, peaceful slumber may be why something as violent as the death of Stephen by stoning can be referred to as “falling asleep” in Acts.

³⁸ See also Jeffrey A. Gibbs, “Regaining Biblical Hope: Restoring the Prominence of the Parousia,” *Concordia Journal* 27 (October 2001): 310–322.

metaphor can be both significant and hard to detect, *preaching from a particular text* involves asking about the specific shape of the narrative structure assumed by biblical metaphors. The significant but automatic moves interpreters make means *preaching for particular hearers* also involves asking about the specific shape of the narrative structure hearers in their culture will most naturally use to shape their understanding of the text. Preachers will not only ask, for example, what the sleep metaphors in the biblical text convey, but how their hearers will automatically understand those metaphors without further development. Preachers can then consider how best to help guide their hearers in the interpretive process. What would preachers have to do, how would they have to speak, what kind of development would they have to provide in order for their hearers to understand the clear implication of the biblical metaphor that those who are sleeping are indeed going to wake up and arise? In what kind of Church would the announcement that Tom has fallen asleep naturally convey the strong implication that Tom is certainly going to rise? Knowing the hearers and being faithful to the text means preaching in such a way that not only biblical metaphors but also the implied narrative structures inherent in biblical metaphors begin to shape hearts and minds.

Bringing Text and Hearers Together

Fundamental Similarities in Metaphors across Cultures. Chapter 4 has thus far focused on important *differences* in metaphor interpretation across cultures. In contrast, much of the cognitive linguistic literature that follows the Lakoff-Johnson-Turner theory of metaphor tends to emphasize the ways in which conceptual metaphors can be seen as *universal* or *nearly universal* across cultures.³⁹ This approach to metaphor understands the building blocks of conceptual

³⁹ This tendency arises in part from some of the basic premises of the Lakoff-Johnson-Turner approach. As a reaction against a theory of disembodied ideas, these authors emphasize that human thought occurs in human brains that are completely dependent upon their relationship to human bodies. So we get titles like *The Embodied Mind*, or

metaphors to be *grounded*, that is, to have an experiential basis in human bodily experience with the world.⁴⁰ Basic mappings or inferences found in a wide range of conceptual metaphors are viewed as evidence for this claim. The conceptual metaphors HAPPY IS UP, AFFECTION IS WARMTH, and IMPORTANT IS BIG, for example, can be explained in terms of basic human experience.⁴¹ In fact, one of the “fundamental claims” of this general approach to metaphor is that “in many cases human beings share a great deal of bodily experience on the basis of which they can build universal metaphors.”⁴²

Focusing on the embodied mind and the role human bodily experience plays in grounding conceptual systems leads naturally to the hypothesis that many of the most basic metaphors are shared across cultures. Regardless of other societal factors, all human beings share some basic experiences by virtue of having human brains and bodies that encounter the environment in similar ways. Though often qualified to some degree, the basic claim of this branch of cognitive linguistics is that most primary conceptual metaphors are nearly universal. From a perspective that emphasizes the mind in the body, “if metaphor is based on the way the human body and brain function and we as human beings are alike at the level of this functioning, then most of the metaphors people use must be fairly similar, that is, universal—at least on the conceptual level.”⁴³

Philosophy in the Flesh that understand our fundamental human bodily experience as significant to our conceptual systems.

⁴⁰ “Grounding” is discussed in George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 56–60 and Kövecses, *Metaphor*, 69–76, for example.

⁴¹ Jerome A. Feldman, *From Molecule to Metaphor: A Neural Theory of Language* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2008), 200, gives summary examples of how these and other metaphors can be seen as arising from a conflation of subjective and bodily experience.

⁴² Kövecses, *Metaphor in Culture*, 246.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 34. Because of the centrality of concepts like embodiment and grounding to the approach characterized by Lakoff, Johnson, and Turner, it makes sense for these authors to show a preference for metaphor’s universality over a concern for cultural variation. Lakoff, Johnson, and Turner, for example, all admit that LIFE IS A

Cross-Cultural Differences and Similarities in Metaphors for Anger. Though

Kövecses accepts the basic premises that lead up to the claim that many of the most fundamental metaphors will be based on universal human experience, his assessment of evidence for metaphorical variation both within and across cultures raises the question of how far and in what ways conceptual metaphor can or cannot be taken as universal. In spite of his concern for how metaphorical structure varies cross-culturally, the research Kövecses cites suggests that some basic metaphorical structures are indeed shared across a wide range of cultural and linguistic communities, at least if viewed at a general enough level.⁴⁴ Though the basic structure of a conceptual metaphor like THE ANGRY PERSON IS A PRESSURIZED CONTAINER, for example, can be found across language groups—Kövecses finds examples of this conceptual metaphor in English, Chinese, Japanese, Hungarian, Wolof, Zulu, and Polish, for starters⁴⁵—different cultures also have unique ways of fleshing out the details. In English, the pressurized container is filled

JOURNEY is shaped culturally—indeed, that not every culture conceives of LIFE in terms of a JOURNEY (*More*, 9; *Philosophy in the Flesh*, 63). When Lakoff and Turner demonstrate the conceptual mappings that comprise LIFE IS A JOURNEY, however, their method shows little regard for differences between cultures: quotes from Robert Frost, Dante, Shakespeare, the Gospel of Matthew, John Bunyan, and the Old Testament wisdom book of Proverbs are all used along side Emily Dickinson to demonstrate a unified structure of the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY with no reference to the complexities of time period, language, culture, or genre (*More*, 3–10). In some ways, Lakoff and Turner offer more of a study in how the conceptual structure common in 21st century America will uncritically interpret excerpts lifted out of a text than a study of what these utterances mean.

The Lakoff-Johnson-Turner method, however, is not concerned with interpreting specific texts and utterances. Rather, their approach seeks to describe the conceptual structures evidenced by a broad corpus of utterances (see appendix 1, below). While Kövecses sees himself as building on and refining the work of Lakoff, Turner, and others, his concern for *variation* rather than *continuity* between cultures is especially helpful from a homiletics perspective. His discussion of differences in thought structure as well as expression between cultures cautions us not to move too easily from a metaphor in a biblical text to our most automatic and natural understanding of that metaphor. If the text and our interpretation of the text are both shaped culturally, we will want to consider carefully the structure of the blanks left by the biblical utterance and how we have been trained culturally to fill these lexical and conceptual gaps.

⁴⁴ Kövecses notes: “Universal experience can only be an explanation of the emergence of generic-level metaphors, such as THE ANGRY PERSON IS A PRESSURIZED CONTAINER. The generic schemas are filled out in specific ways in every culture” (*Metaphor in Culture*, 69–70).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 39.

with a hot liquid.⁴⁶ In Chinese, however, the pressurized container is filled with a gas that is not necessarily hot.⁴⁷ In Zulu, the container is specified as the heart (where English would normally locate positive emotions like love) and the pressure results in part because the container of the heart is not large enough to contain all the variety of emotions being experienced by the person, including anger.⁴⁸ In each of these cases, a general conceptual structure (arguably related to the simultaneous emotional experience of anger with bodily experience of increased blood pressure⁴⁹) is found at a generic level across many cultures while still being shaped in specific and unique ways from culture to culture.

Cultures can share basic metaphorical structure at a generic level while specific utterance patterns within those cultures demonstrate diversity in specific details. From a narrative perspective, this should not be surprising at all, because the narrative structure of metaphor includes both *actantial relationships* at a fairly general level and *specific actors* at a much more concrete and detailed level. As long as the actantial structure of narrative relationships is highly congruent in two different cultures, the basic understanding of metaphorical utterances guided by

⁴⁶ George Lakoff and Zoltán Kövecses, “The Cognitive Model of Anger Inherent in American English,” in *Cultural Models in Language and Thought*, D. Holland and N. Quinn, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 195–221 demonstrate that the conceptual metaphor ANGER IS A HOT FLUID IN A CONTAINER is central to the way Americans speak and think.

⁴⁷ Kövecses, *Metaphor in Culture*, 69. Kövecses cites the work of Ning Yu, *The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor: A Perspective from Chinese* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1998).

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ “As studies of the physiological process of anger across several unrelated cultures show, increases in skin temperature and blood pressure are universal physiological correlates of anger” (Kövecses, *Metaphor in Culture*, 247). From a cognitive linguistic perspective, these fundamentally universal human body experiences ground conceptual metaphors like ANGER IS HEAT and AN ANGRY PERSON IS A PRESSURIZED CONTAINER. As Kövecses notes, however, the Chinese culture exhibits the pressurized container without the element of heat. In fact, heat has not consistently been a part of the conceptual structure for anger even in the history of the English language, as studies have shown: Kövecses cites the work of Caroline Gevaert, “Anger in Old and Middle English: A ‘hot’ topic?” *Belgian Essays on Language and Literature* (2001), 89–101. So while human physical experience may be taken as grounding our conceptual system in significant ways, “in many cases the universality of the experiential basis does not necessarily lead to universally equivalent conceptualization,” though Kövecses is quick to point out that “at a generic level near-universality does occur” (*Metaphor in Culture*, 247).

these conceptual metaphors will be largely congruent even if specific actors are given different concrete expression. Just as “I took a wrong turn,” and “I got off track,” share the basic structure of LIFE IS A JOURNEY, so “I blew my top” and “harawata ga niekurikaeru” (Japanese for “one’s intestines are boiled”⁵⁰) share a basic structure, THE ANGRY PERSON IS A PRESSURIZED CONTAINER, even though they come from different languages and cultures and express different details.

The Bible and the Hearers. Emphasizing the continuity of basic conceptual metaphors is one way of making the biblical text a dialogue partner that preachers and hearers can hope to understand rather than a foreign-sounding document from a foreign culture:

We share so many core metaphors with the biblical cultural contexts—and we are linguistic heirs of the Hellenized Greek conceptual system—that although the discourse is strained at points, we yet can navigate with remarkable ease through their context. Conceptual metaphors allow cross- and transcultural understanding to flow . . . There are nodes of cultural clash, to be sure. But these, too, can be identified and parsed in more detail via conceptual metaphor analysis. Both understanding and misunderstanding can be partly accounted for via conceptual metaphor.⁵¹

Where cross-cultural similarities in the structure of conceptual metaphors are present, contemporary hearers and the biblical text are more likely to find common ground. For example, dealing with a set of mappings that relate ACCOUNTING and MORALITY, Bonnie Howe writes:

Accounting practices in the 1st century were not, of course, identical to those used today, and the *details of the mappings* will potentially vary accordingly. But at the generic level—where most metaphorical work happens—*the basic features* are not that different; even in computerized spreadsheet software, records are kept (now more

⁵⁰ Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor and Emotion: Language, Culture, and Body in Human Feeling*, Studies in Emotion and Social Interaction (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 152.

⁵¹ Bonnie Howe, *Because You Bear This Name: Conceptual Metaphor and the Meaning of 1 Peter* (Boston: Brill, 2006), 352–353. Howe definitely has a high view of the importance of culture, context, and the original languages when it comes to interpreting the biblical texts. Like Lakoff, Johnson, and Turner, Howe also tends to emphasize *similarities* between metaphor systems in divergent cultures rather than *differences*.

meticulously than ever), debits and credits are recorded, and someone audits the “books.”⁵²

In this case, differences at the level of *specific actors* like computer programs or currency types are overcome by similarities in the structure of more general⁵³ *actantial relationships*: the same *kinds of things* count as Helpers and Opponents and Receivers and Objects in the basic structures of Moral Accounting metaphors in both the biblical text and in contemporary culture.

Different cultures evidence metaphorical mappings that share a common structure even if the details are significantly different: “blowing your top” in English and “getting your intestines boiling” in Japanese share a general structure relating anger to common experiences with pressurized liquids in a container. Similarity in structure can handle a wide range of differences

⁵² Howe, *Because*, 197, note 25, emphasis added.

⁵³The specific/general dichotomy has more than one application in our current discussion as well as in the broader literature of metaphor theory. Here, Howe is contrasting what we have called specific actors or details in the conceptual structure with more general contours of the structure itself, what we have called actantial positions. There can also be a specific/general distinction between conceptual metaphors. LIFE IS A JOURNEY, for example, is more general or abstract than PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS, but less abstract than something like GOOD IS UP. According to the theory of primary and complex metaphors put forward by Joseph E. Grady, “Foundations of Meaning: Primary Metaphors and Primary Scenes,” (Ph. D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1997) and adopted by Lakoff and Johnson (*Philosophy in the Flesh*), the more general or abstract conceptual metaphors are the basic building blocks most directly motivated by our bodily and social experience. Such a claim fits well with the evolution metaphor common in cognitive linguistics for the development of language and thought. From within the lens of an evolutionary metaphor, the simple must precede the complex. I take the contrary view that the “primary” metaphors described by Grady are best explained as inferences or mappings from more complex metaphors. GOOD IS UP except in the context of some structure of relationships that make it seem to be so.

Kövecses also notes that the near-universality claimed of metaphor is found at the rather abstract level of these primary metaphors. The more abstract we get, however, the less helpful these conceptual metaphors are for helping us understand how interpretation is actually taking place. Not every culture has a metaphorical structure that relates lambs and sacrifice and sin, for example. If we get to an abstract enough level, we can find some similarities across cultures. It is difficult to see, however, how PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS helps us understand “Behold, the lamb of God!” If Kövecses is right, if “complex metaphors are more important to cultural considerations,” if “it is complex metaphors—not primary metaphors—with which people actually engage in their thought in real cultural context” (*Metaphor in Culture*, 11), then these so called “complex” metaphors will be more helpful for our biblical exegesis and preaching.

This does not contradict Howe’s claim that similarities at the generic level of structure can help us understand differences in detailed specifics. Instead, I am claiming that the generic level of “primary” metaphors is not rich enough to help guide our actual language use (or thought). Grady’s view may well hold if we are considering language development or etymology. In terms of kinds of real-time interpretative questions involved in the preaching task, however, I agree with Kövecses: the “complex” metaphors are more fundamental to interpretation than “primary” ones.

in specifics. Differences in *basic actantial structure*, on the other hand, such as the cross-cultural differences evidenced by DEATH IS A SLEEP, will result in very different understandings, even if many of the specific details are substantially the same.

Finding Common Ground. The differences between common contemporary and NT interpretations of DEATH IS A SLEEP helped demonstrate that changing the narrative structure interpreters use to understand a metaphor also changes how a metaphor is understood, even if some of the vocabulary remains constant. On the other hand, cross-cultural work with Moral Accounting or ANGER IS A FLUID IN A PRESSURIZED CONTAINER seems to suggest that significant differences in vocabulary can be understood in terms of the same narrative structure. Because the narrative approach to metaphor presented here includes both specific actors and more general actantial positions, preachers can use this narrative method to consider how text and people can be brought together.

Php 3:20, as a preaching text, helped shape the discussion of chapters 2 and 3. In light of the dynamics of preaching metaphor cross-culturally, some of the homiletic questions raised of the heavenly citizenship metaphor can now be recast. How will a metaphor of Christian citizenship in heaven in the context of Paul's culture be understood or misunderstood in the context of contemporary American hearers? Differences in *specific actors* will not override similarities in *narrative structure*, while differences in *narrative structure* will lead to divergent or even contradictory *interpretations*.

Culturally and historically, Paul could not have intended some of the most immediate associations common to contemporary American citizenship. Things like voting or paying taxes or baseball or apple pie would be anachronistic in an interpretation of Php 3:20. More importantly, the cultural knowledge that shapes the expectations and outcomes of things like paying taxes or playing baseball *do not fit with the implied narrative of the metaphor as it is*

expressed in this text. In other words, the issue isn't merely that voting rights or apple pie are anachronistic: many parts of the experience of contemporary American hearers will not align with the cultural experience of Paul or his audience. Rather, what is at stake is the implied narrative structure and therefore the narrative implications drawn from the metaphor. Voting rights belong to a set of narrative relationships in which citizens find themselves in a situation that does not fit the context of the utterance.

Appendix 1, below, considers details of the context of Php 3:20 that suggest a narrative structure for citizenship in line with Paul's assertion that Christians eagerly await a savior from their heavenly commonwealth. Following the narrative suggestions of Roger White, appendix 1 asks in what kind of situation citizens might eagerly await a savior. The narrative of Acts 23, in which Paul is rescued from hostile forces because of his status as a Roman citizen, can be seen as an example of the kind of situation that fits the actants explicit in the Php 3 text. It is not necessary to imagine that Paul had Acts 23 in mind when he dictated Php 3:20. Rather, Acts 23 evidences the kind of narrative structure that relates citizenship to enemies, a savior, the savior's power, and rescue: all significant actors in the Php 3 text.

If a preacher decides that this narrative structure of rescue accounts for important aspects of the development of the citizenship metaphor in Php 3:20, the next step is to ask how a similar structure of citizenship and rescue plays out in the culture of the hearers. The same *actantial structure* can be expressed with cultural variation in *specific actors*. What kind of narrative relates citizenship to foreign enemies, rescue, and the power of a savior? What kinds of stories common to American history or culture place these kinds of actors in narrative relationships appropriate to citizenship and rescue?

Looking for a situation known to contemporary American hearers that relates citizens to foreign enemies and the hope of rescue may well lead to a description of American citizens in

trouble in a foreign territory. If their status as American citizens leads to the expected results of rescue by American military power, then the basic narrative structure will be largely congruent with the development of Php 3:20.⁵⁴

The significant differences between the cultural knowledge of contemporary hearers and Paul's original audience will be manageable if the basic narrative structure remains the same. From a structuralist perspective, it makes little difference whether the Subject in actantial model of citizenship and rescue is the Army, the Marine Corp, the Roman military, or the Savior Jesus. In Grenada, WWII, Acts 23, and Php 3:20, these very different *actors* all fulfill the same *function*: they bring rescue to citizens by using their power to overcome enemies. Though American hearers may not immediately jump to this kind of narrative structure when they think of citizenship, cultural knowledge of citizens held captive in foreign lands helps contemporary hearers take the perspective of the text.

A prison camp in WWII is no less anachronistic than baseball or voting when it comes to the source domain of citizenship understood by Paul. The difference, however, is that the WWII prison camp shares *a basic narrative structure* with Paul's use of citizenship in the context of Php 3:20 in ways that baseball or voting decidedly do not.⁵⁵ Preaching not only the specific actors but the actantial structure evidenced in Php 3:20 can help the preacher remain faithful to the text in ways that also connect to the lives and imaginations of the hearers.

⁵⁴ I asked some of my own hearers how they might relate citizenship to enemies and the expectation of rescue. Their responses (Americans in an embassy in Grenada, American soldiers in WWII prison camps) brought together significant actors in ways very similar to the structure of narrative relationships that relate citizenship to rescue in our analysis of Paul. One of the best ways to find a narrative structure familiar to particular hearers may be simply to ask.

⁵⁵ Whether a metaphor can be translated and if so, how, are questions beyond the scope of the current discussion. The short answer from a narrative perspective is that different metaphors that share a basic actantial structure will allow many of the same kinds of narrative inferences. Though no translation will be without remainder, changing a metaphor for cultural or translation purposes will be most effective when the shape of the narrative structure is preserved.

Conclusion

Because metaphor in every biblical text and every sermon leaves important blanks to be filled in by the interpreter, the question of how culture helps shape interpretation is vital to preachers working with the cultures of the text and their hearers. The study of conceptual metaphor and cross-cultural difference and similarity can help preachers at both the exegetical and homiletical ends of the preaching process. Describing these dynamics in the narrative terms of *actantial positions* and *specific actors* helps account for how the structure of *conceptual metaphors* can shape a variety of *specific utterances*. The same actantial structure can accommodate a multiplicity of specific actors.

This relationship of specific actors to the actantial model as a whole also helps describe when cross-cultural differences will lead to very different understandings and when cross-cultural differences are alternative instantiations of the same basic narrative structure. Differences in narrative structure will lead to very different metaphorical understandings even if the same vocabulary is used. Similarity in narrative structure, however, will allow a broad range of cross-cultural differences in specific actors.

Chapter 4 has primarily been concerned with how narrative structure at the level of conceptual metaphor shapes how interpreters understand specific metaphorical utterances in a cross-cultural setting. Conceptual metaphor, however, structures more than the interpretation of linguistic utterances: metaphor at the level of thought shapes not only how people talk, but how they reason, how they make decisions, how they imagine themselves and the world around them. Chapter 5 considers how a narrative approach to metaphor helps preachers recognize and manage the power of metaphor to shape Christian faith and life.

CHAPTER FIVE

PREACHING METAPHORS WE LIVE BY

Introduction

Chapter 4 presented a narrative approach to “conceptual metaphors” in order to describe how and why cross-cultural differences and similarities affect metaphor interpretation.¹ Though two metaphors may sound similar—NT and contemporary American expressions relating death and sleep, for example—when the *narrative structures* used to interpret these similar utterances differ, the resulting interpretations will also differ, at times dramatically. Paul labeling death as a kind of sleep in order to promise a *waking* and *rising* is significantly different from a typical American calling death a kind of sleep in order to indicate a loved one is *lying down, at rest*, and *unavailable*.

While similarity in vocabulary may mask significant differences in meaning, congruent *narrative structures* will produce similar meanings even if the *specific vocabulary* used in the metaphorical utterance changes significantly. The expectations and inferences that arise from narrative relationships between Roman citizens, the Roman military, and foreign oppressors, for example, are similar to the expectations and inferences that arise from narrative relationships between American citizens, the American military, and foreign oppressors, even though many of the specific details in the Roman and American contexts would diverge greatly.

¹ For more on conceptual metaphor and other approaches that locate metaphor’s basic duality at the level of thought, see appendix I, below.

In both the sleep and the citizenship metaphors, interpretation depends not only on mapping specific actors or actions from the source to the target, but on *mapping the appropriate inferences and implications*. While the two sleep metaphors share common linguistic expressions, they lead to different inference patterns and conclusions. While the specifics of Roman and American citizenship differ significantly, a similar implied narrative of foreign captivity and rescue leads to similar expectations and implications. These inferences are just as much a part of the process of cross-domain mapping as any other aspect of the metaphor: “Conceptual metaphors map patterns of inference from the source domain to the target domain.”² Understanding the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY, for example, involves more than recognizing possible correspondences. *Destinations* in a journey may correspond with *purposes* in life and *guides* on a journey may correspond with *counselors*, but more than that, “this way of conceptualizing life brings with it a *complex structure of inferences* that do not exist independent of the metaphor.”³

The observation that metaphor interpretation includes inferences or implications is widely accepted in metaphor theory. Max Black, for example, suggests that we can “take the metaphor’s author to be committed to its implications.”⁴ Along similar lines, Janet Martin Soskice points out the “relational irreducibility” of metaphor: “in so far as a metaphor suggests a community of relations (and all active metaphors do), its significance is not reducible to a single atomistic predicate.”⁵ This “internal logic”⁶ of metaphor has been variously called “inference

² George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 263.

³ George Lakoff and Mark Turner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 120, emphasis added.

⁴ Max Black, “How Metaphor Works: A Reply to Donald Davidson,” in *On Metaphor*, ed. Sheldon Sacks (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 184, n. 15.

⁵ Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 95.

patterns,”⁷ “inferential structure,”⁸ an “implication complex,”⁹ “implicatures,”¹⁰ and “entailments”¹¹ to name a few.

Lakoff and Johnson even go so far as to say, “Perhaps the most important thing to understand about conceptual metaphors is that *they are used to reason with*.”¹² Since these inference structures provide the basis for evaluating, drawing conclusions, and responding accordingly, *reasoning* in terms of metaphor translates into actually experiencing everyday life, indeed *living* in terms of metaphor: “the full import of [LIFE IS A JOURNEY] *for our lives* arises through its entailments. Those entailments are consequences of our commonplace cultural knowledge about journeys.”¹³ These inferences or entailments shape experience and actions just as conceptual metaphors shape how specific metaphorical utterances are understood. Lakoff and Johnson exhort their readers:

If you have any doubt that you think metaphorically or that a culture’s metaphors affect your life, take a good look at the details of [LIFE IS A JOURNEY] and at how your life and the lives of those around you are affected by it every day. As you do so, recall that there are cultures around the world in which this metaphor does not exist; in those cultures people just live their lives, and the very idea of being without direction or missing the boat, of being held back or getting bogged down in life, would make no sense.¹⁴

⁶ Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy*, 62.

⁷ Lakoff and Turner, *More*, 120.

⁸ Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy*, 57.

⁹ Max Black, *Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1962).

¹⁰ Adrian Pilkington, *Poetic Effects: A Relevance Theory Perspective* (Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2000).

¹¹ Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy*, 62.

¹² *Ibid.*, 65, emphasis added.

¹³ Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy*, 62, emphasis added.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 63.

If “metaphor resides in thought, not just in words,”¹⁵ if “*the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another*,”¹⁶ then metaphor has the power to shape impressions, actions, and the perception of reality. Metaphorical inferences can influence how decisions are made, which options are considered, what will seem plausible or probable. If metaphor is more than a textual device, if metaphor shapes the way people think and act as well as the way people speak, then “metaphor is a primary tool for understanding our world and our selves.”¹⁷

This power of metaphor to shape the way hearers view themselves and their lives is part of the broader discussion of metaphor in preaching literature. David Buttrick, for example, says that “metaphors are much more important than we know; they orient our ethical behavior. Behind our behavioral selves are systems of related metaphors, or, better, models made from congruent metaphors.”¹⁸ Buttrick contrasts this view of metaphor with the view that metaphor is primarily a nice way of making a propositional point: “The rather frightening fact is that social metaphor systems are not mere rhetorical ornamentation, they disclose the models that shape our minds, and set our behavioral patterns with terrifying power. We live our lives *in* metaphor.”¹⁹

¹⁵ Lakoff and Turner, *More*, 2. This link between linguistic expression and cognition is central to Lakoff and Johnson’s methodology. They state explicitly: “We can use metaphorical linguistic expressions to study the nature of metaphorical concepts and to gain an understanding of the metaphorical nature of our activities.” George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 7.

¹⁶ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 5, italics original, bold added. The link between linguistic expression, cognition, and action is central to Lakoff and Johnson’s methodology. They state explicitly: “We can use metaphorical linguistic expressions to study the nature of metaphorical concepts and to gain an understanding of the metaphorical nature of our activities” (Ibid., 7).

¹⁷ Lakoff and Johnson, *More*, xii.

¹⁸ David Buttrick, *Homiletic: Moves and Structures* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 123.

¹⁹ Buttrick, *Homiletic*, 123.

Richard Eslinger picks up a similar theme. Eslinger notes that image²⁰ and narrative are intimately linked at the foundation of human perception and action:

Narrative ethicists among others have noted that the view of self and world becomes framed by certain images that provide a hermeneutic function. So [David] Harned insists that the images of self-recognition play a dominant role in shaping our actions in the world and our beliefs and feelings about the ‘world’ within which we live. . . . Like polarized sunglasses, these master images themselves may remain unnoticed, yet all the while they are acting to filter and color our experiences.²¹

With these descriptions, Buttrick and Eslinger have both made an important move away from metaphor merely as a rhetorical feature of a text or sermon to metaphor as a part of how people think. Since the inferences and implications that arise from metaphors help shape Christian faith and life, for good or for ill, preachers will ask how their hearers are being shaped by metaphors in the biblical text as well as by metaphors in the broader culture.

Building on the observation that metaphor can shape Christian faith and life, the narrative approach to metaphor unique to this dissertation begins to account for how that shaping takes place. Understanding metaphor narratively helps describe how interpreters will likely draw inferences from different metaphors and how these inferences will shape their experience and action. Because **the metaphorical inferences that shape perception and action arise from the narrative structure assumed in metaphor interpretation**, an implied narrative structure shapes not only how people interpret metaphors, but also how metaphor leads people to interpret their lives.

²⁰ Recall that metaphor is often treated under the broader category of image in contemporary homiletics (see chapter 1, pp. 9–11 above). The way Eslinger uses “image” and “metaphor” seems to indicate that he would definitely include metaphor in his discussion of image, though he would not confine his claims to metaphor alone.

²¹ Richard Eslinger, *Narrative and Imagination: Preaching the Worlds That Shape Us* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 87, emphasis added. Eslinger is citing David Bailey Harned, *Images for Self-Recognition: The Christian as Player, Sufferer, and Vandal* (New York: Seabury Press, 1977). Elsewhere, Eslinger also identifies James McClendon and Stanley Hauerwas as writers who relate narrative to ethics (*A New Hearing: Living Options in Homiletic Method* [Nashville: Abingdon, 1987], 173).

Metaphors We Live By

From a narrative perspective, the inferences sanctioned by a metaphor arise from narrative relationships in the source domain and how they map onto the target domain. The narrative structure of conceptual metaphor presented in chapter 4 is therefore directly related to the way in which metaphor at the level of thought shapes how people understand themselves, their situation, and their actions. Examining more closely the claim that conceptual metaphor shapes perception and action will lead to a clearer understanding of how the narrative structure of conceptual metaphor can help shape the faith and lives of those who encounter metaphor in the biblical text and the preaching event.

ARGUMENT IS WAR

Lakoff and Johnson use the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR to demonstrate that metaphor is more than a matter of words. Just as the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY structures the mappings of a wide variety of specific utterances, the structure of ARGUMENT IS WAR allows many different expressions to be used and understood. In an American context, it is common to say things like, “Your claims are *indefensible*,” “He *attacked every weak point* in my argument,” or “I’ve never *won* an argument with him.”²²

This common way of speaking, however, belies a more fundamental perception of what is actually happening during an argument. Contemporary Americans not only talk about arguing in terms of warfare, they also perceive, understand, and experience verbal arguments in terms of war. They therefore act in ways appropriate to that metaphor. Conceptual metaphor does more than shape utterances; the narrative structure of conceptual metaphors can shape experience and actions as well.

²² Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 4.

Just as the basic mappings of LIFE IS A JOURNEY can be expressed in list form (Traveler → Person Living A Life; Destinations → Life Goals; and so on²³), the basic features of ARGUMENT IS WAR could be *listed* for both the source and the target domains. When the primary actors are placed in *narrative relationship* to each other, however, the expectations, hoped for outcomes, inferences, and actions appropriate to understanding and experiencing ARGUMENT as WAR become more readily apparent. See figure 12, below.

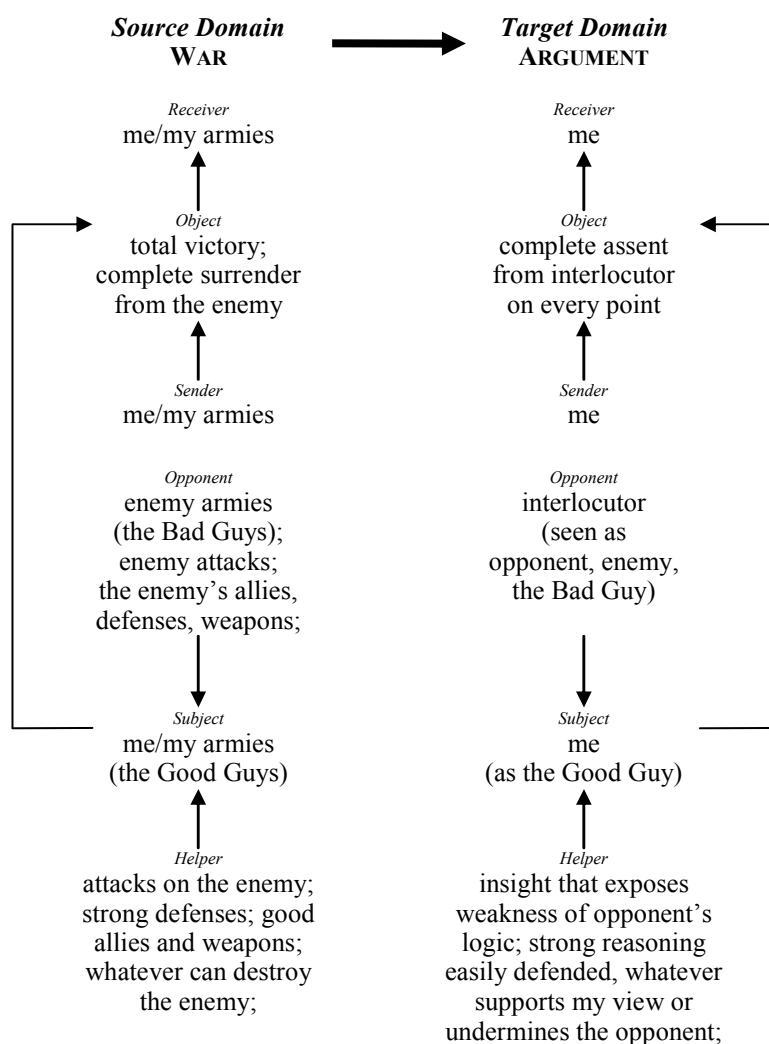


Figure 12. The Narrative Structure of ARGUMENT IS WAR

²³ See chapter 4, p. 108, above.

The narrative structure needed to understand any of the typical *utterances* relating argument to warfare in an American context also provides a framework for the *experience* of arguing. People engaged in debate in a culture where ARGUMENT IS WAR will understand aspects of their experience—their words, the words of their interlocutor, the anticipated or hoped for outcome of the conversation, and so on—in narrative relationship to one another, assuming basic actantial roles and outcomes. Figure 12 not only describes how the interpretation of an utterance takes place; it describes an understanding of the real world situation of arguing. As Lakoff and Johnson point out, “We can actually win or lose arguments. We see the person we are arguing with as an opponent. We attack his positions and defend our own. We gain and lose ground.”²⁴

These perceptions of what is actually going on in an argument lead to behavior in the real world that is appropriate to the kinds of narrative relationships found in the source domain of warfare. Actions no less than words are shaped by the narrative structure of prevalent conceptual metaphors: “Many of the things we *do* in arguing are partially structured by the concept of war . . . It is in this sense that the ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphor is one that we live by in this culture; it structures the actions we perform in arguing.”²⁵

Conceptual metaphors affect not only how people talk, but how they experience life and therefore how they act in ways appropriate to the narrative structure of dominant conceptual

²⁴ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 4. On a surface level, such a claim to the primacy of metaphor at the level of thought seems directly to contradict the work of someone like Soskice (*Metaphor*) who strongly makes the point: “It should not be thought that metaphor is primarily a process or mental act, and only secondarily its manifestation in language” (16). Or again: “metaphor, as a figure of speech, is a form of language use” (15). To make sure we haven’t missed her point, she titles this sub-section, “METAPHORS ARE NOT MENTAL EVENTS” (16). But even Soskice admits a process at the level of thought and perception. In an attempt to show the weakness of an overly simplistic substitution view of metaphor, Soskice argues that we do not in reality move from a (primary) literal understanding to a (secondary) metaphor, but that “the very thinking is undertaken in terms of the metaphor” (25). If thinking can happen in terms of a metaphor, so can perception, evaluation, and action.

²⁵ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 4.

metaphors within their culture or subculture. At the same time, people do not typically walk around consciously and intentionally acting and experiencing life in metaphor. Instead, the structuring function of metaphor normally remains hidden because it is naturalized, pervasive, and automatic. “Our conceptual system is not something we are normally aware of,” Lakoff and Johnson note.²⁶ People don’t normally say, “I think I’ll imagine this argument as warfare today!” Without extra effort at thinking about how they think, they simply jump right into the fray. What is true about the epistemic power of ARGUMENT IS WAR is true of other conceptual metaphors as well: “Our conventional ways of talking about arguments presuppose a metaphor we are hardly ever conscious of.”²⁷

ARGUMENT IS DANCE

To get into an argument in a cultural setting where ARGUMENT IS WAR is to identify the speakers, the words used, the goals of the interaction, and the parameters of success or failure in terms of the narrative relationships appropriate for armed conflict. Though the power of ARGUMENT IS WAR to shape the experience and actions of an argument is easily hidden because the broader culture reinforces the metaphor, imagining a different structure for argumentation helps make the point that the way people act and the way they perceive their actions can be shaped by metaphor. An argument would look, sound, and *be experienced* differently if the predominant metaphor for arguing in the broader culture were *dance* instead of *war*.²⁸ Not only would the *language* change, but the *perception, evaluation, and activity* of an argument would also change. The narrative roles and relationships appropriate for dance are decidedly different

²⁶ Ibid., 3.

²⁷ Ibid., 5.

²⁸ Lakoff and Johnson suggest this possibility.

than the actors and actantial positions inherent in the cultural understanding of war. See figure 13, below.

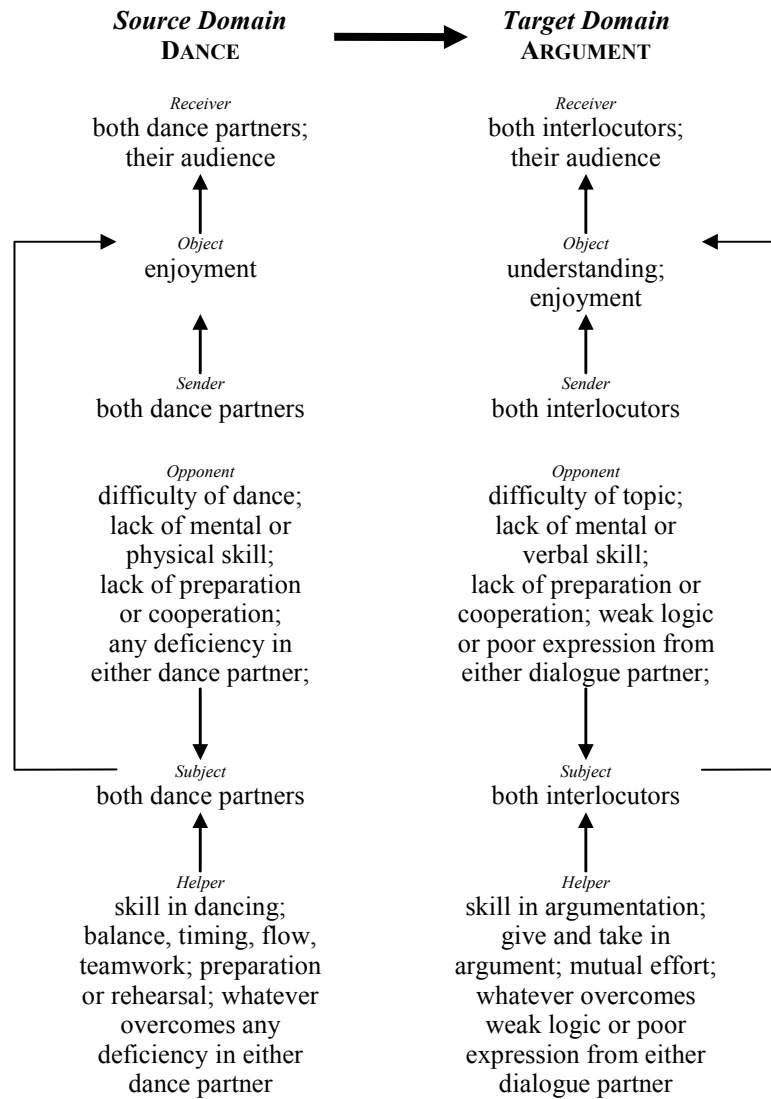


Figure 13. The Narrative Structure of ARGUMENT IS DANCE

If an argument is thought of or experienced as a kind of dance as opposed to a kind of armed conflict, the expectations, hoped-for outcomes, important players, and activities of the argument are redefined. Some features that were positive in the narrative structure of warfare

become undesirable in dance. On an actantial model of *warfare*, Helpers are designed to expose and exploit weakness in the logic or eloquence of the opponent. On an actantial model of *dance*, the exact opposite is true: Helpers in the dance structure are designed to cover or compensate for the same kinds of weaknesses that Opponents seek to exploit in the narrative structure of war.

Because the rules of dance are different from the rules of war, actions and the perception of actions change. People who understand verbal interplay in terms of war would see a strong verbal attack as appropriate and perhaps even commendable. People who understand verbal debate in terms of dance would see the same strong verbal attack as inappropriate and disruptive. Just as a physical attack would be out of place in a dance, verbal aggression would be unexpected and taken as a betrayal of trust if ARGUMENT IS DANCE. If ARGUMENT IS WAR, however, aggressive speech is both anticipated and appreciated. In other words, changing the metaphor for argument would involve much more than changing a list of corresponding features. Changing WAR to DANCE would change the way people understand, experience, and act in the world around them.

ARGUMENT IS WAR is but one example of a broader phenomenon. As Lakoff and Johnson put it, “If we are right in suggesting that our conceptual system is largely metaphorical, then the way we think, what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor.”²⁹ If metaphor plays a role in shaping not only the language people use, but how they act, how they think about their actions, and how they understand their world, then metaphor in the biblical text and in the preaching event becomes an integral part of shaping Christian faith and life.³⁰

²⁹ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 3.

³⁰ Because the structure of conceptual metaphors shapes how we experience our lives, it is not surprising to find that, apart from any particular Sunday or sermon, the activity of preaching itself—how preachers talk and how hearers listen—is shaped in important ways by metaphor. As Thomas Long points out: “We do not just go out and

Reasoning within a Narrative Structure

Speakers who understand themselves as taking part in a kind of verbal battle will draw conclusions, evaluate situations, and make decisions that are decidedly different from the conclusions, evaluations, or decisions made by speakers who understand themselves as part of a verbal dance. From a narrative perspective, these conclusions, evaluations, and decisions flow directly from the narrative shape of relationships within the structure of conceptual metaphor. Cross-domain mapping includes more than mapping specific actors or characteristics from the source to the target. Narrative relationships, expected or hoped-for outcomes, and conclusions based on the characteristics of specific actors in relationship to other actors and to the model as a whole are all inherent in the narrative structure of a metaphor.

The narrative relationships expressed by the actantial model lead to narrative inferences. Since interpreters map narrative relationships from the source domain to the target domain, interpreters also map the inferences that flow from the narrative structure of the source onto the target. In the narrative structure of warfare, a strong or fierce Opponent is difficult to overcome and perhaps even frightening to face. This conclusion can be mapped from warfare onto argument: no one wants to have an argument with someone who is smarter, more eloquent, or more aggressive because they would be afraid of losing a battle of wits. In the narrative structure

do ministry. We carry with us, as we go, pictures of what we think ministers ought to be and do, pictures of who we believe ourselves to be as ministers. . . . The same is true, in a more particular sense, about preaching. When a preacher delivers a sermon, that act is embedded in some larger framework of ministerial self-understanding. In other words, preachers have at least tacit images of the preacher's role, primary metaphors that not only describe the nature of a preacher but also embrace by implication all the other crucial aspects of the preaching event." Thomas G. Long, *The Witness of Preaching* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1989), 23–24. Long goes on to describe some of these metaphors for preaching (Herald, Pastor, Storyteller, Witness), each of which assumes different narrative relationships and therefore highlights and hides different aspects of the homiletic task. The expectations and actions of both preachers and hearers will be shaped differently depending on which conceptual metaphors are shaping the experience: preaching as a herald is different than preaching as a care-giver; listening to a storyteller is different than listening to an eyewitness. Different metaphorical understanding of the sermon at the level of the preaching event will lead to different actions and expectations on the part of the preacher and the hearers.

of dance, however, it would be a pleasure to interact with someone more experienced or talented and learn from the new dialogue partner. Aggressive partners would still be avoided, but not out of a fear of defeat. Rather, aggressive dance partners are simply no fun to dance with; too many toes get stepped on.

The ability to draw narrative inferences drives even the most seemingly straightforward metaphors. “I am Jesus’ little lamb,” one of the opening examples from chapter 2, makes the implications of narrative inference more apparent. Because narrative inferences are derived from the narrative structure of a metaphor, figure 5a is reprinted below.

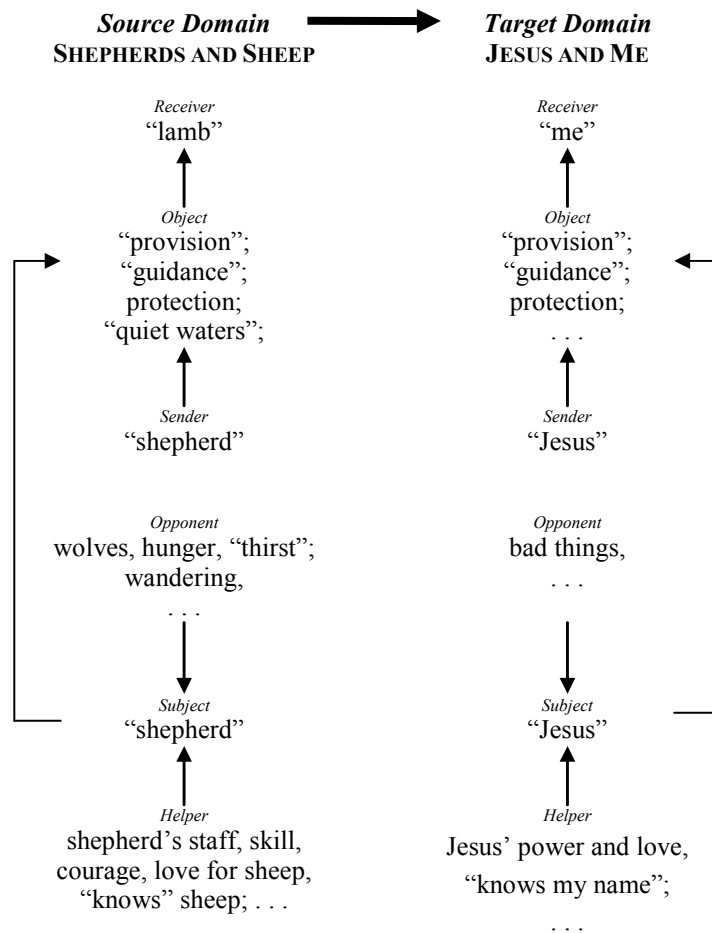


Figure 5a. Jesus’ Little Lamb Actantial Models in Source and Target Domains

Listing the actors in the source and target domains of this children's hymn is not enough for an adequate description of even this deceptively simple metaphor. Relating actors to other actors and actantial positions and then mapping these narrative relationships from the source to the target is still not the end of the interpretive task: knowing that "Jesus" is the "shepherd" in the Subject slot and "we" as "little lambs" are Receivers has not exhausted the meaning of the Little Lamb metaphor. Rather, the metaphor invites Christians to expect certain kinds of things from Jesus in relationship to other kinds of things in their personal experience: they can *expect* Jesus to provide them with good things they need and keep them from things that are harmful, whatever they perceive those good or harmful things to be. Interpreters can also *evaluate* Opponents in their experience in terms of the Opponents' relationship to Jesus as Subject: is Jesus able to overcome an individual Christian's sense of a lack of direction? Is Jesus able to overcome the things that threaten a Christian's security? Can Jesus bring lost sheep back into the fold? Interpreters know enough about the strength of Jesus and about how Helpers relate to Opponents to *draw the conclusion* that Jesus will be able to overcome all of these Opponents and more.

In addition to sanctioning certain evaluations or expectations, the Little Lamb metaphor may also evoke trust, hope, or love, all of which flow from the metaphor's narrative structure. If the strength of the Subject (and Helpers) greatly surpasses the strength of the Opponents, interpreters can draw the inference that the Receiver will most certainly receive the Object. Receivers can place their trust and hope in Subjects whose strength surpasses the strength of the Opponents. Since Jesus is this kind of Subject compared to the Opponents evoked by the metaphor, Christians who identify themselves as the "little lamb" Receivers are invited to trust that Jesus will deliver Objects like safety, provision, or life, and, as sheep affectionately follow their providing shepherd, to lovingly follow where Jesus leads. The narrative inferences drawn

from a metaphor shape not only how the metaphor is understood, but how the metaphor helps hearers interpret relevant aspects of their lives.

Putting Theory into Practice: A Sermon on Heavenly Citizenship

Chapter 2 raised homiletic questions of a particular text and presented a narrative approach to metaphor as a method for addressing the kinds of decisions and conclusions both preachers and hearers will make in the interpretation of metaphor. That text—“But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ . . .” (Php 3:20, ESV)—in its context has continued to guide the discussion as the dissertation progressed from basic considerations to more complex aspects of a narrative theory of metaphor for preaching.

Putting the theory of the previous chapters into practice, how might a narrative understanding of metaphor shape how preachers consider a text, their hearers, and the sermon? What does a narrative approach to metaphor for preaching look like in real life? Before considering a particular sermon as an example of the kinds of things a narrative approach to metaphor might lead a preacher to do with a specific text, recall the shape of the homiletic process thus far. A narrative approach to metaphor for preaching helps preachers consider the text and its cultural setting, the hearers and their cultural setting, the way in which the text invites the hearers to interpret their lives, and the kinds of things a preacher might say to get all of this across. While these hermeneutic and homiletic moves have been presented on the basis of a particular text and sermon, they are intended to be applied to a variety of texts and sermons. The example that helps define the method should not obscure the fact that the method itself has broad application.

A narrative approach to metaphor for preaching helps preachers consider *the text*. With the basic structure of the actantial model in mind for both the source and the target domains, preachers can ask which details of a specific text in its context express actors, actantial positions,

narrative relationships or outcomes. In fact, preachers can make decisions about the primary thrust of a particular pericope based on how different actantial models account for different aspects of the text. The different construals of citizenship presented in chapter 3 are an example of this kind of work with the text. Having a general idea of the meaning or implications of the metaphor of heavenly citizenship,³¹ preachers are able to go back and look at the text in new ways. If Paul's primary concern is with *citizens living distinct lives in a foreign culture*, specific things in the development of the text will take on more significance. If on the other hand Paul's primary concern is with *citizens in a hostile environment waiting for rescue*, other aspects of the text come to the fore. Asking after the shape of the implied narrative drives preachers back to the text with fresh eyes.

Understanding a text, however, also requires some knowledge of the culture of its original audience. Because correspondence is not tied directly to development, preachers can expect important things to be left unsaid. At the same time, not everything a preacher can possibly learn about a text or about the culture of a text's original audience will be relevant to a particular

³¹ We assume that Paul is intentional in his writing, that Paul is trying to do something; that *something* can be cast in metaphorical terms even by Paul himself. Paul's letter to the Philippians, for example, uses some of the same language a commander would use in addressing the troops before a battle. This choice of language has led some commentators to suggest that Paul was deliberately using a style recognizably taken from the setting of a military speech to frame his relationship with the Philippians church. Joseph A. Marchal, *Hierarchy, Unity, and Imitation: A Feminist Rhetorical Analysis of Power Dynamics in Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, Academia Biblica, no. 24 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 30–34 offers this possibility, in part based on work by Craig S. de Vos, *Church and Community Conflicts: The Relationship of the Thessalonian, Corinthian, and Philippian Churches with Their Wider Civic Communities*, Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series, 168 (Atlanta: Scholar's Press, 1999), 277–287; Raymond Hubert Reimer, "Our Citizenship Is in Heaven': Philippians 1:27–30 and 3:20–21 As Part of the Apostle Paul's Political Theology," (Ph.D. diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1997); and John Paul Schuster, "Rhetorical Situation and Historical Reconstruction in Philippians," (Ph.D. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1997).

If Paul's letter to the Philippians is presented as a military speech, then the heavenly citizenship metaphor in Php 3:20 is one small part of an implied narrative setting that casts Paul as a general, the church as faithful troops, and Christian life as both honorable conduct and bravery in battle appropriate for soldiers faithful to their emperor. If these words from Paul are understood in terms of a general exhorting his troops before battle, then preachers may also wish to use these words to exhort, embolden, encourage, and fortify their troops/hearers. We not only preach from metaphors in the biblical text, we undertake the task of preaching and reading from within a metaphorical structure.

metaphor. Again, the shape of the narrative structure helps provide a guideline. Aspects of Roman dress or lifestyle will be seen as significant if the metaphor of citizenship is primarily construed as *a call to unique living*. If the emphasis is on *citizens waiting for rescue*, however, Roman dress will be less significant than understanding the rights and expectations of Roman citizens in a potentially dangerous situation. Producing multiple actantial models for the same text helps preachers distinguish and ultimately decide between what kinds of things in the text and in the cultural knowledge surrounding a text are relevant to a particular text and sermon.

Throughout this process of work with the text, preachers will also have their hearers in mind. Noticing the blanks left by a metaphor in the text, preachers will consider how their hearers will tend to fill in those blanks. Here the discussion of cross-cultural variation and similarity in chapter 4 becomes helpful. Having a narrative structure in mind, preachers can ask if and how similarities in expression between the text and the culture of the hearers may be concealing differences in understanding and inference. Common American associations with citizenship, for example, like voting or paying taxes, will not serve the proclamation of Php 3:20 because the implied narrative structure—the assumed actors, relationships, and outcomes—associated with voting or paying taxes do not fit the implied narrative structure of the text. Identifying the contours of the narrative structure of citizenship in Php 3:20 helps identify what kinds of things in the culture or experience of the hearers will serve the preaching task. Any narrative structure that places citizens in a position of longing for and expecting rescue will capture important dynamics of the text, even if the details diverge significantly from what could have possibly been intended by Paul or understood by his hearers. A narrative approach to metaphor helps take a metaphor from one cultural setting to another while preserving important inferences and expectations.

Being aware of the way in which these metaphorical inferences and expectations can shape how people experience and live out their daily lives opens the door for preachers not only to explain a metaphor or teach from a metaphor, but use a metaphor to help hearers evaluate and respond to aspects of their daily lives. Though Paul could have anticipated very few of the specific details of contemporary American life, Paul's metaphor of citizens eagerly awaiting rescue provides a narrative structure from within which contemporary American hearers can evaluate their own situations, draw conclusions about the future, and act out their faith in light of the promise presented in Php 3:20.

While these narrative considerations help shape the kinds of things a preacher might say on the basis of this text, what actually gets said is also guided by a fuller understanding of metaphor and how metaphor works. Because metaphor always leaves important things left unsaid, preachers will consider which aspects and relationships on the actantial model will naturally be assumed by the hearers and which cross-domain mappings will prove especially problematic. This kind of analysis is intimately tied to how well preachers are able to anticipate how their hearers are likely to make interpretive decisions. When there is potential for the wrong kinds of inferences or when an important narrative relationship in one particular metaphor seems to clash with what the hearers likely know from other well known texts or metaphor, preachers will take time to develop these aspects of the metaphor carefully. When the right kinds of inferences will naturally be drawn by a particular group of hearers, less homiletic work is required.

In these ways, the narrative method presented in this dissertation serves to raise questions of the text, helps manage cross-cultural differences between the text and hearers, and provides a tool for thinking about the implications of a particular metaphor for the ongoing faith and life of

the hearers. Putting the theory presented thus far into practice, the following sermon shows the kind of preaching a narrative approach to metaphor is likely to produce.³²

The following is a slightly adapted verbatim of a sermon preached at Salem Lutheran Church and School in Affton, MO on March 3/4, 2007. The readings for the worship service included Php 3:17–4:1, the assigned text for the second Sunday of Lent, and Acts 23:23–27, 30–31, chosen specifically for the purposes of this sermon. That weekend in 2007 was also the start of National Lutheran Schools Week, a detail of the specific setting of the hearers that finds its way into the application of the sermon.

This sermon seeks to locate hearers within the narrative structure of citizenship reflected by Paul’s metaphor in Php 3:20 and the surrounding context. From within this narrative structure, hearers are then able to draw narrative inferences about their own faith and future. The running commentary that accompanies the sermon is designed to make the application of the narrative theory of metaphor described in chapters 2, 3, and 4 more evident.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

Jesus once asked his disciples, “How do you interpret the present time?” That’s a good question for us today as we look at the reading from Paul’s letter to the Philippians. As a way of interpreting our present time, Paul tells us our citizenship is in heaven. Now what could Paul possibly have meant by that?

I asked a few people before worship what comes to mind when they think of citizenship. You can probably guess what some of their answers were. When we hear the word “citizenship,” we often think of things like voting or paying taxes or the 4th of July. We think of baseball, hotdogs, and apple pie. When I asked about citizenship, some of you mentioned freedom, responsibility, and the American flag.

³² For another description of how the narrative structure of metaphor can drive the preacher back to the text with new kinds of questions, see the discussion of Mark 16:1–8 in Justin Rossow, “Preaching the Story Behind the Image: The Homiletical Fruit of a Narrative Approach to Metaphor,” *Concordia Journal* 34 (January–April 2008): 9–21.

The experience of the hearers is one possible place to begin the work of unpacking a metaphor in the text. Patricia Wilson-Kastner, for example, suggests that the first interpretive question a preacher asks “in discerning the contemporary helpfulness of images [metaphors]” is “*What is the root of this image in common human experience?*”³³ The tacit implication here is that the experience of the hearers as human beings will provide insight into the meaning of the metaphor. Kövecses’ work on differential experience and metaphorical variation across cultures, however, suggests that the typical experience of the contemporary hearer may not be congruent with the way the metaphor is structured in the culture of the text. Bringing up typical responses of contemporary Americans serves in this sermon to underline the fact that the most natural or automatic understanding of citizenship is not what is intended by the text. This disruption of the automatic and natural paves the way for a different perspective yet to come.

When we think of citizenship here in America, we come up with some things (like voting or apple pie) that would not have been a part of what citizenship meant for Paul. When Paul says our citizenship is in heaven, he’s not suggesting we have to pay taxes to God. Paul doesn’t mean that we get to take a vote to determine what God should do next. Jesus is not our president. So what is Paul talking about when he says our citizenship is in heaven?

At this point, the sermon is trying to establish at least the broad contours of the source domain of citizenship. The different implied narratives that go along with voting or taxes or the presidency do not fit the text. As chapter 4 suggested, this is more than merely a matter of anachronism. Baseball does not help interpret citizenship in Php 3:20, not just because it wasn’t invented yet, but also because the narrative structure of baseball does not account for important aspects of the text like eagerly awaiting rescue.

³³ Patricia Wilson-Kastner, *Imagery for Preaching* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 41. As we saw in chapter 1, the tendency in contemporary homiletics is to treat metaphor as a subset of image. In practice, almost all of Wilson-Kastner’s examples are metaphors or similes.

To hear what Paul has to say to us today, we need to look at Paul's life and ask what citizenship would have meant for him. Paul was a Roman citizen and, as we saw in the book of Acts, being a Roman citizen saved Paul's life on occasion. Paul was caught in the middle of a riot. An angry crowd wanted to beat him to death. The Romans had to go in and bodily pick Paul up and take him into protective custody. A couple of days later, the commander of all the Roman armies in Jerusalem finds out there is a plot against Paul's life, that some of Paul's enemies were planning on asking to see the prisoner Paul for questioning, all the while lurking in a dark alley with dagger in hand.

The commander of the Roman armies in Jerusalem—Claudius is his name—General Claudius finds out about this threat to the life of the prisoner Paul, and what does he do? Did you hear it in the Acts lesson? Does he ask a couple of guys with swords to see to Paul's safety? Oh, no. Claudius sends in the marines: 200 foot soldiers, 70 men on horseback, and 200 spearmen put Paul on a horse and give him an armed escort out of town in the middle of the night to make absolutely sure that he is safe.

Now just two days before, this same Roman commander was ready to beat the truth out of Paul. Claudius had told his soldiers, "You go flog that guy until he confesses to something!" And now General Claudius is willing to put his troops in harm's way to save Paul's life. What has changed in two short days? Claudius found out that Paul is a Roman citizen. You can't flog Roman citizens if they haven't had a fair trial and been convicted. In fact, you have to put Roman soldiers at risk to protect Roman citizens if they are in a hostile situation. When Paul talks about citizenship, he's not talking about apple pie or paying taxes.

The homiletic move here does not follow the original movement of interpretation. In appendix 1, where this metaphor in Php 3:20 receives more developed analysis, the first step is to consider more carefully the details of the text. Noticing specific actors expressed in the development of the metaphor leads to suggesting a narrative structure for citizenship that makes sense of Paul saying that, by virtue of their heavenly citizenship, Christians eagerly await a savior from there. Following the narrative suggestions of Roger White, appendix 1 asks what kind of situation a citizen needs to be in to eagerly await a savior. Only at that point in the work with the text does appendix 1 turn to Acts 23 as an example of the kind of situation that fits the actors explicit in the text. The situation overtly expressed in Acts 23 seems to fit the situation implicit in Php 3:20, a situation that relates citizenship to enemies, a coming savior, the savior's power, and rescue. Since the narrative of Acts 23 helps flesh out the narrative structure of Php

3:20, it is used here in the sermon as an entrance into the metaphor of the text. Such a homiletic move does not assume that Php 3:20 explicitly draws on Acts 23.

The purpose of using the explicit narrative in Acts 23 is to make the implied narrative behind citizenship more apparent in Php 3. The fact that the author of Php 3 is one of the actors in Acts 23 helps this move seem reasonable. The key factor, however, is the shape of the narrative structure. Most of the situations in Paul's life would not fit the narrative structure of citizenship in Php 3:20, nor does a situation have to be from Paul's life to make this homiletic and interpretive move. In fact, phrases like, "send in the Marines," and "put troops in harm's way" are designed to prepare the hearer for a narrative situation far removed from Paul yet still evidencing the same basic narrative structure.

What happened to Paul in Acts 23 doesn't normally happen to us around here, right? I mean, when was the last time an angry mob dragged you out of Salem's parking lot and these Afftonites are going to beat you to death and the Missouri State Police have to come in and rescue you? Has that happened to you lately? No? Me neither. So do we know anything—is there anything in our culture, or our history, or the stories we tell, the movies we watch—is there any situation that you can think of when citizenship means for us something like it meant for Paul? Is there any scenario you can imagine where being a citizen means this: your government has committed itself to use all the power under its control to rescue you from a foreign and hostile situation? Can you think of anything?

I put that question to some of our Salem members last night. Maybe you came up with some of the same answers. When does being an American citizen mean that all the military power of the United States is committed to rescuing you from a foreign and hostile situation? Someone mentioned the American students stuck in an embassy in Grenada while a mob rioted outside. Someone else thought of World War II, when General Patton sent in troops to rescue American soldiers from enemy prison camps. When Americans are in danger on foreign soil, what do we do? Send in the Marines! Get those American citizens out of harm's way! There are times when your citizenship means all the power of the United States of America will be brought to bear to get you out of a hostile situation.

The move made from the structure of the implied narrative in Php 3:20 to the narrative of Acts 23 is repeated, this time drawing on the cultural knowledge of the hearers. Though the situation of Acts 23 is not common in Affton, MO, the same actantial structure is expressed in a

different situation with different specific actors more familiar to the hearers. The basic narrative structure, however, remains constant. Paul is not talking about Grenada or WWII prison camps, yet the situation of American citizens held against their will in a foreign territory waiting for and expecting rescue does fit important narrative relationships described by Paul in Php 3.

You may have never lived in a prison camp, but can you imagine what that would be like? You're in a foreign land. You're in enemy-occupied territory. The people around you—what are they like? They speak a foreign language. They're enemies. They're out to get you. They keep you down. What's your life like? Not the same as your life at home. It's a hard life. What's your future like? What do you hope for? When you imagine your future as a foreign captive, you may actually be thinking of your citizenship. Why? Because day after day, as you experience life in this prison camp, day after day, you are hoping. You're waiting. You know you are an American citizen, and any minute now you expect to hear—the helicopters, the sound of tanks, something, anything—when are they going to come in and get me out of here?

That's closer to what Paul is thinking about in our Epistle lesson for today. Why? Because Paul says, "Our citizenship is in heaven, AND . . ." Our citizenship is in heaven, and what? We get to vote? We have to pay heavenly taxes? No! Our citizenship is in heaven and we eagerly await a savior from there." Paul says, look around. It's like we're living in a prison camp in enemy-occupied territory, BUT your citizenship is in heaven. That means the cavalry has already mounted up, the spearmen are ready and waiting, the Apache helicopters have taken off, and any minute now you are going to be saved. How do we interpret the present time? Paul says one way to interpret our present time right here, right now, is this: our citizenship is in heaven, and we eagerly await a savior from there.

Here the sermon draws on some of the basic mechanics of metaphor theory. Imagining life in a prison camp is exploring the source domain of the metaphor. Because mapping from the source to the target is guided by a narrative structure, time is spent describing a situation with specific actors and a hoped-for outcome. Locating the hearers in the story of the source domain is very different from listing the things that map onto the target domain. Here the concern is as much for the narrative inferences being mapped as it is for specific characters or features. In fact, the narrative inferences are *more important* than the specific actors. Whether the cavalry has mounted up or the Apache helicopters have taken off, the narrative inference remains the

same: help is on the way! Helpers stronger than the Opponents are about to bring the Object to the Receiver.

Living in enemy-occupied territory is not how we usually imagine ourselves or the world around us, and I have to tell you, the whole Bible doesn't talk this way. Think about the people around us. They're not just enemies, soldiers of a foreign government. God wants everyone to be saved, right? God so loved the . . . world that he gave his one and only Son. Jesus' last words to his disciples: Go and make disciples of . . . all nations. Paul himself went on world-wide missionary journeys to preach the Gospel to people who had no relationship to God in Jesus Christ.

So as Christians, we have a heart for mission, for telling others about Jesus. But today Paul is saying, there are times when we experience unbelievers not just as people who need to hear the Gospel but as enemies, as people who are occupying a land to which we do not belong, as soldiers on the watchtowers of a prison camp. So today we are not talking about "those people out there" as people whom we love and people to whom we want to take the Gospel. Today we are viewing our world this way: we are living in a prison camp, and we are eagerly awaiting salvation.

Within the narrative structure of prison camps—indeed, in the context of Php 3—unbelievers are described as enemies. Because the hearers are more familiar with a different way of conceptualizing unbelievers, and because this inference is strong enough to be fairly obvious in the metaphor, the mapping of enemies in the source domain to unbelievers in the target domain must be done with care. Like all metaphors, this metaphor of citizenship both highlights and hides important aspects of the target domain.³⁴

Chapter 6 will deal with the relationship between the unique perspective of a single metaphor in a particular text and Christian witness as a whole. Moving too quickly to theological concerns outside of the metaphor of the text can stifle the unique perspective of *this particular* metaphor in *this particular* text. For the purposes of the citizenship metaphor, Php 3 casts unbelievers as enemies. This is not the final word on unbelievers. Abram was blessed to

³⁴ Peter Macky's discussion of metaphor and perspective in *The Centrality of Metaphors to Biblical Thought: A Method for Interpreting the Bible* (Lewiston, N.Y.: E. Mellen Press, 1990) as well as Lakoff and Johnson's description of metaphor's ability to highlight and to hide will be covered in chapter 6, below.

be a blessing to the nations; Israel was to be a light to the Gentiles; the prophetic word of restoration includes foreigners streaming to Zion to worship Yahweh. Jesus calls on his followers to love their enemies; Jesus commissions the Church to make disciples of all nations; Jesus says the Good Shepherd leaves the ninety-nine to go and find the one. The same Paul who wrote Php 3 went on three missionary journeys for the express purpose of bringing the gospel to unbelievers by whatever means necessary. Still, the metaphor of citizenship in Php 3 casts unbelievers in the role of enemies. Though not the final word on the subject, this metaphor has important things to say about the way Christians at times experience their lives in a hostile world.

When is that true of us? When does that picture describe our lives? Maybe you have experienced times in your life when at work or in the neighborhood people have kind of laughed off your faith. Or a bunch of your friends get together to do something you know is dead set against the way you have been called to live and you can feel your faith under attack. Here in America, citizenship means religious freedom, so we aren't persecuted the way some Christians in other countries are, but I have to tell you, American culture is not here to strengthen your faith. In fact, so often it seems like the culture around us is there to drag your faith down.

Now the sermon moves from understanding the narrative of the source domain to understanding the target domain of Christian faith and life in terms of the same narrative structure. The focus at this point in the sermon is the Opponents. In other cultures or times, the persecution of the Church would make for a more direct connection to unbelievers as enemies. The sermon is not looking for which specific things Paul intended to map. Rather, the move is being made from the actantial position of Opponent in the source to different actors in the target domain that could fulfill the function of Opponent in the target. Though Paul did not intend—and could not have intended—*specific* elements of contemporary American culture, the question is which *kinds of things* in the contemporary culture fit the narrative structure of the metaphor in the text.

Here's one brief example, one small case in point: tonight, on the Discovery Channel—have you heard about this?—they are airing a documentary called “The Lost Tomb of Jesus.” In this documentary the Discovery Channel is going to bring together some experts, and interpret some findings, and examine some archeological evidence, and connect a couple of dots, and they are going to suggest that just maybe, by a freak accident of history, we have been able to establish that these bones right here actually belong to Jesus. And those bones over there belong to his wife Mary Magdalene, and, by the way, the other bones we found belong to their kid.

I'm not saying the Discovery Channel is evil; I'm not saying the media is all out to get Christians. But to hear this kind of stuff again and again and again—every year right around Easter it seems—to see people kind of taking pot shots at the foundation of our faith, to know that the talk around the cooler this week is going to be, Oh, yeah, those silly Christians—it makes me realize that we are living in enemy-occupied territory.

The Discovery Channel is not a very strong Opponent. Notice that the provisional aspect of this mapping is also made explicit in the sermon: the Discovery Channel is an enemy only for the purposes of this metaphor. Though the sermon could have found a stronger Opponent to use as an example, choosing the Discovery Channel documentary has two distinct advantages. First, it is timely. Because it is part of the present experience of the hearers, using a TV show everyone knows is scheduled for later that same evening models using a biblical metaphor to understand daily—even *this* day's—experience. Second, it actually picks up some of the specific concerns of the text. A narrative analysis of citizenship in Php 3 casts not only unbelievers but also the low estate of mortal bodies as Opponents. Choosing this particular example allows the sermon to touch on both of these.

Now, the Discovery Channel knows that some Christians might take some offense at their documentary, so they even put out “Theological Considerations” about the lost tomb of Jesus. (You can get these off the internet.) And they close these theological considerations by saying, “If Jesus' mortal remains have been found,” which is what they are claiming in the documentary, “if Jesus' mortal remains have been found,” if these are indeed Jesus' bones, “this would contradict the idea of a physical

ascension.”³⁵ *Well, I should say so! It would also contradict the idea of a physical resurrection!*

But they say here, the Discovery Channel, they say, “But this does not contradict the idea of a spiritual ascension. The latter is consistent with Christian theology.” In other words, even if these bones are Jesus’ bones, you Christians out there, don’t think we’re out to get you. If Jesus didn’t rise physically, maybe he ascended spiritually. That’s good Christian theology, right?

Brothers and sisters in Christ, do not get your Christian theology from the Discovery Channel! You see, a spiritual resurrection and ascension is not enough. Why not? Because God is not content with taking your souls to heaven. God is not satisfied so long as there are Christian bodies in the ground. When God looks at our prayer list here at Salem, his heart aches, because on that prayer list he sees names of people he loves who are recovering from surgery, who are fighting Alzheimer’s disease. He sees names of people he loves who are dying from cancer and he’s not content with that. God created your body. God loves your body. Jesus died and rose again for your body. Life in a prison camp is not good enough for citizens of heaven. God is not content with your souls, he loves you, body and soul together.

So next time you feel your faith under attack, when the people or events around you seem to be pulling you away from your Lord, when your own body lets you know you are living in a broken and sinful world, when people you love get sick, when they age, when they die, remember, our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a savior from there.

The Opponents in the target domain of Christian faith and life are twofold. The first kind of Opponent includes specific actors: people who keep Christians away from a closer relationship with God in Jesus Christ. The second kind of Opponent in this narrative structure is more abstract: the mortal state of the bodies of Christians who in this present time still get sick, age, and die. The promise of rescue entails the final victory of the Subject Jesus over both of these Opponents. Such a strong proclamation of victory over death is important in this context not only because it is a part of the content of Php 3, but because it explicitly maps what may otherwise be misunderstood by the hearers. As the suggestion of “I’m but a Stranger Here” as

³⁵ Discovery Channel, “Lost Tomb of Jesus: Theological Considerations,” <http://dsc.discovery.com/convergence/tomb/theology/theology.html> (accessed 1 March 2007).

the hymn of the day indicates,³⁶ the narrative of citizenship in Php 3 is often understood as entailing a return to the homeland, that is, dying and going to heaven.³⁷ This construal of the source and mapping to the target, however, goes against Paul's explicit development of the metaphor: Paul is not talking about the interim state of the soul; he is talking about the resurrection of the flesh at the return of Christ. The sermon provides more development for the bodily resurrection of believers because of the tendency to fill in the blanks at this particular part of the actantial structure in ways that are not congruent with the text. Higher development helps guide the interpretation of the hearers. Notice that the identification of Jesus as the Subject/Savior is not given as much development. Most likely, mapping the Savior of the *politeuma* in the source domain onto Jesus in the target domain will happen naturally and automatically in the interpretation of the hearers. This mapping can therefore be assumed rather than made explicit.

Today begins National Lutheran Schools week. We would like to invite you to stop by and join us this week for some of the special activities you see listed in our worship folder. For today, we want to ask, how does our heavenly citizenship help us understand what Lutheran schools are all about? I think the way to answer that question is to put ourselves in a situation where being a citizen means longing for rescue. How would you treat children growing up in a prison camp in enemy-occupied territory? What would you tell them? How would you act? Wouldn't you take them on your lap and tell them stories about home? Wouldn't you teach them their history and their national anthem and give them a sense of pride and of hope?

³⁶ See appendix 1, n. 88, p. 259, below.

³⁷ Further analysis of why dying and going to heaven seems to fit the metaphor of citizenship for many contemporary Americans would probably need to consider how the structure of the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY helps shape the metaphorical mappings of citizens as strangers, aliens, wanderers, pilgrims. According to Lakoff and Turner, LIFE IS A JOURNEY includes the mapping—what I would call a narrative inference—that DEATH IS GOING TO A FINAL DESTINATION (see the discussion of LIFE IS A JOURNEY in appendix 1, p. 259, below). Just as the entailments of DEATH IS A SLEEP in our contemporary culture can misshape our understanding of sleep metaphors in the biblical text, LIFE IS A JOURNEY can cut Christian witness short by focusing on the death of the individual Christian as a heavenly homecoming of the soul. The Gospel is much more than dying and going to heaven. The hope and promise of the Christian Church is the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. For a discussion of how other basic conceptual metaphors in our culture like GOOD IS UP can weaken the proclamation of the hope for the return of Christ and the resurrection of the dead, see Justin Rossow, "If Jesus 'Came Down from Heaven,' Where Does that Leave Me?" *Concordia Journal* 32 (October 2006): 388–395.

It wouldn't matter whether they were your kids or not, or whether you had kids or not, you would want these children to know who they are. You would want them to know help is on the way.

I can just imagine sitting outside at sunset, there in the prison camp, and playing the same game with the children every night. Sitting there, at dusk and listening, straining to hear: was that an American tank in the distance? Did you just hear an Apache helicopter? Was that . . . ?! No, I guess not, but any minute now. It could be any minute now. Can you hear it, in the distance?

That's how we are called to treat our children, these young citizens of heaven. We are called to teach them the stories and songs of their homeland. They need to know this isn't as good as it gets, there is something more, something better, the way it's supposed to be. We need to train our ears and theirs to listen, listen carefully, can you hear it? There, in the distance, is that the sound of helicopters? Is today the Day?

Paul says, "We eagerly await a savior from there who by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control will transform our lowly bodies to be like his glorious body." Our children need to know that a spiritual resurrection isn't good enough for a God who created them to be body and soul together, forever. Our children need to know that Jesus died on the cross to undo their death, that he rose again bodily on the third day, because he loves them body and soul. Our children need to know that our Savior is coming, and if our Savior is stronger even than death, he will be able to rescue us from each and every one of our enemies!

Brothers and sisters in Christ, it may sometimes seem like we are in a prison camp together, surrounded by enemies on every side. But don't forget, our Savior is coming! Make sure our children know. Amen.

This final move may seem exegetically out of place at first. Paul is definitely not talking about Lutheran Schools Week in Php 3. What Paul is doing, however, is asking his hearers to understand important aspects of their lives and experience in terms of a narrative structure that relates citizens to enemies, rescue, and a savior. In so doing, Paul is committing himself to the kinds of narrative inference that flow from this structure even if he could not have had all the specifics of the Philippian congregation or of Salem Lutheran Church in Affton, MO in mind. Asking about how this metaphor interprets Lutheran Schools Week is consistent with the role metaphor plays in shaping experience and action as well as language use. Just as people in a culture shaped by ARGUMENT IS WAR will experience life, evaluate situations, and act in certain

ways in light of the narrative relationships and expectations entailed in war, the sermon above invites hearers to experience life, evaluate situations, and act in certain ways in light of the narrative relationships expressed by Paul in the metaphor of citizenship in Php 3:20.

No exhaustive list of cross-domain mappings has been presented. Instead, a narrative approach to metaphor has shaped how the sermon described both the text and the life of the hearers. Looking at the Opponents and the Subject and the narrative inferences about expected outcomes within the structure of citizenship and rescue shaped the way the sermon invited faith and provided hope. A different sermon on this same text could certainly focus on the ways in which Christians live distinct lives in order to give God glory and avoid amalgamation into the surrounding culture. The focus of this sermon, however, was the dynamic of rescue, both in the text and in the lives of the hearers. More needs to be said about Christian faith and life than can be said on the basis of this metaphor or this text. The particular shape of the metaphor in this particular text provides an important way of understanding the relationship between Christians, unbelievers, mortality, and the coming of Jesus in power. Other texts will provide other unique perspectives on these or other aspects of Christian life and theology. How these different metaphorical perspectives relate to each other and to Christian proclamation as a whole is the topic of chapter 6, “Metaphor in a Preaching Ministry.”

CHAPTER SIX

METAPHOR IN A PREACHING MINISTRY

Introduction

The sermon on heavenly citizenship at the end of chapter 5 essentially completes the basic contours of a hermeneutics of metaphor for preaching. A narrative approach to metaphor describes the structured relationships mapped from one conceptual domain, the source, onto another conceptual domain, the target, and the kinds of inferences drawn as a result of this mapping. Recall the differences in the narrative structure of *Shepherding* and *Sacrifice* and the very different inferences that arise as a result in “I am Jesus’ little lamb,” and “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”¹

Explicit development of a metaphor in a text or sermon helps guide and constrain how interpreters map narrative structure and inference from the source domain to the target.² Conceptual metaphors in the culture of the interpreter help fill in the narrative blanks left by development—recall the narrative structure of *LIFE IS A JOURNEY* or *DEATH IS A SLEEP* and how these conceptual metaphors help shape interpretation of the biblical text.³ Since conceptual metaphors help shape how people understand themselves and the world they live in,⁴ a metaphor’s implied narrative structure can be preached in such a way that hearers are invited to

¹ See especially chapter 2, above, for a discussion of narrative structure in both the source and the target domains.

² Development was discussed in chapter 3, above.

³ The narrative structure of conceptual metaphors was described in chapter 4, above.

⁴ See the first half of chapter 5, above.

reconceive how they make decisions, how they imagine their future, even how they experience their normal, everyday lives.

The sermon on heavenly citizenship at the end of chapter 5 brought all of these considerations together by focusing on a single metaphor in a single text and preaching event. As a sermon preached in a congregational setting, however, the verbatim at the end of the last chapter does not stand alone. It was preached within the ebb and flow of a liturgical as well as secular calendar year, amongst the songs and responsive readings and prayers of a particular worship service at a particular congregation. A different sermon was preached the week before; yet another, the week after. Hearers of this particular sermon on heavenly citizenship also went to bible class, confessed the creed, received the sacrament. In all of these ways, any single sermon is never a solitary sermon. One important aspect of preaching, naturally omitted when the discussion focuses on a single metaphor in a single text, is the question of how metaphors relate to each other in a preaching ministry over time.

Thomas Long identifies the necessary limits placed on any sermon: “The preacher . . . shifts from what the biblical text says to what the sermon will say, and since texts are larger than any single sermon, choices must be made. . . . how do we decide what to bring to the sermon from the text and what to leave behind?”⁵ The sermon at the end of chapter 5, for example, chose to focus on citizens eagerly awaiting a Savior. As a result, the specific features of uniquely Christian living that might be central in a sermon on citizens avoiding amalgamation into a foreign culture—specific details like unique ways of talking, or dressing, or acting—were not part of that particular sermon. The text will always have more to say than can be said effectively in the confines of a single sermon.

⁵ Thomas G. Long, *The Witness of Preaching* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1989), 79.

In a similar way, different metaphors in different texts and sermons will focus on different aspects of subject matters like human sinfulness, God’s work in Christ, or the responsive life of faith. Since every metaphor highlights as well as hides important aspects of any target domain, no single metaphor in a single text or sermon will be able to account for all of the important features of Christian theology or proclamation. Preaching from a variety of metaphorical perspectives allows a fuller picture to emerge over the course of multiple sermons from multiple texts.

What Metaphor’s Narrative Structure Hides from View

Like all metaphors, the metaphors used throughout this dissertation both highlight and hide important aspects of their respective target domains.⁶ In the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR, for example, armed conflict provides narrative structure to the experience of verbal disagreement.⁷ The same structuring move that *highlights* relevant parts of the experience of arguing, however, also *hides* important aspects of arguing from view:

In allowing us to focus on one aspect of a concept (e.g., the battling aspects of argument), a metaphorical concept can keep us from focusing on other aspects of the concept that are inconsistent with that metaphor. For example, in the midst of a heated argument, when we are intent on attacking our opponent’s position and defending our own, we may lose sight of the cooperative aspects of arguing.⁸

ARGUMENT IS WAR in fact strongly suppresses the “cooperative aspects of arguing” because cooperation and warfare are contradictory.⁹ Other metaphors for argument may focus on

⁶ See George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), especially chapter 3, “Metaphorical Systematicity: Highlighting and Hiding.”

⁷ See chapter 5, pp. 148–151, above.

⁸ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 10.

⁹ Every target domain will contain knowledge, attitudes, or inferences that find no correspondence in the source. According to Charles Forceville, these aspects of the target domain will be suppressed by the metaphor, either *strongly* or *weakly*. Knowledge, attitudes, or inferences that could apply to a target domain (like Jesus’ person and work) but do not apply to the source domain (like a lamb in the narrative structure of sacrifice) will be *weakly* suppressed if they are at least *compatible* with the source. Elements in the target that are *contradicted* by elements

other aspects of the same domain, simultaneously removing something else from view. The alternative example ARGUMENT IS DANCE¹⁰ *highlights* cooperative aspects of arguing while at the same time *downplaying* the significance of a final result or outcome: dancers are necessarily cooperative, but dancing, unlike warfare, has no clear or necessary ending point or outcome; dances, unlike battles, are not typically won or lost.

How Heavenly Citizenship Fits in a Preaching Ministry

Because metaphor both highlights and hides important aspects of any target domain, any single metaphor for the gospel will leave important things unsaid. The sermon at the end of chapter 5 focuses on the metaphor of heavenly citizenship in Php 3:20. Though *citizens longing for rescue* provides an important way of presenting the gospel, much of Christian proclamation is outside the purview of this particular metaphor. In fact, parts of the implied narrative structure of citizenship in the sermon even conflict to some extent with other important ways of portraying God's work in Christ. Heavenly citizenship is not for this reason a *bad* metaphor, it is simply a *metaphor*, and metaphors both highlight and hide important aspects of any target domain. The

in the source will be *strongly* suppressed.

Forceville uses the rather tired but oft-cited metaphor, "Man is a wolf," to make his point. According to Forceville, "the feature 'cruelty' is emphasized, whereas numerous other features of 'man' are, by default, 'suppressed.' Thus, man's (alleged or potential) stupidity is suppressed, though in a rather passive way: stupidity is one of the numerous features that do not—barring exceptional ad hoc contexts—figure in the implicative complex of 'wolf.' . . . It is worth pointing out, however, that among the numerous features of man that are suppressed by [Man is a wolf], that of cruelty's antonym—say, compassion—is not merely suppressed by default, but is suppressed very strongly. That is, the transferred predicate '. . . is cruel' entails no information about many other predicates about man that are compatible with it (for instance '. . . is stupid', '. . . is beautiful', '. . . is cowardly', '. . . is humorous'), but it is incompatible with the predicate '. . . is compassionate.'" Charles Forceville, *Pictorial Metaphor in Advertising* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 10.

In terms of the narrative approach advocated by this dissertation, aspects of the target domain that are not relevant to the implied narrative assumed by the metaphor will be suppressed. In other words, actors that do not fill an actantial position in the source or target will not be considered in the interpretation of the metaphor.

¹⁰ See chapter 5, pp. 151–153, above.

politeuma metaphor in Php 3:20 is only one metaphor in the biblical witness and therefore omits—and even clashes with—parts of Christian proclamation as a whole.

What the Citizenship Metaphor Fails to Say. One of the interpretive decisions involved in preaching Php 3:20 is the choice between focusing primarily on the narrative relationships involved in *citizens living unique lives in order to avoid amalgamation into the surrounding foreign culture* and the implied narrative of *rescue* that places citizens in an *enemy occupied territory eagerly awaiting a Savior*.¹¹ Choosing *for* an emphasis on eagerly awaiting a Savior amounts to deciding *against* an emphasis on living distinctive lives, and this choice of narrative structures in the *source domain* of citizenship greatly influences which aspects of the *target domain* of Christian faith and life the sermon highlights and which it does not. Though *living distinctive lives* does not contradict *waiting for rescue*, the sermon focuses more on the latter and therefore has more to say about the return of Christ in power than about how exactly Christians should live in order to avoid being assimilated into an unbelieving culture. Not able to say everything all at once, the sermon chooses to focus primarily on how the narrative relationships involved in *waiting for rescue* shape the way the hearers will encounter everyday experiences, experiences like a *Discovery Channel* special on the bones of Jesus or the annual celebration of Lutheran Schools Week.¹²

Recall the narrative structure of *citizens waiting for rescue* used in chapter 5 to account for important aspects of the text and to shape how the sermon on Php 3:20 preaches the gospel (figure 6b from chapter 3, reprinted below). Focusing on *rescue* in the source domain of citizenship leads to emphasizing the promised return of the Savior Jesus at the *parousia*. In this narrative structure, Christian believers are not in the actantial role of Subject. Rather, *Jesus* fills

¹¹ See appendix 1, below, 272–274.

¹² See especially pp. 168–171, above.

the role of Subject while Christian believers are the Receiver, a narrative structure that results in specific features of Christian living having no significant place on the actantial model. Focusing on waiting for rescue does not *contradict* the call for Christians to live distinct lives. In fact, waiting in eager expectation may indeed entail very specific kinds of actions, but the focus on the hoped-for activity of Christ naturally downplays the specifics of how Christians should be living in ways different from their surrounding culture.

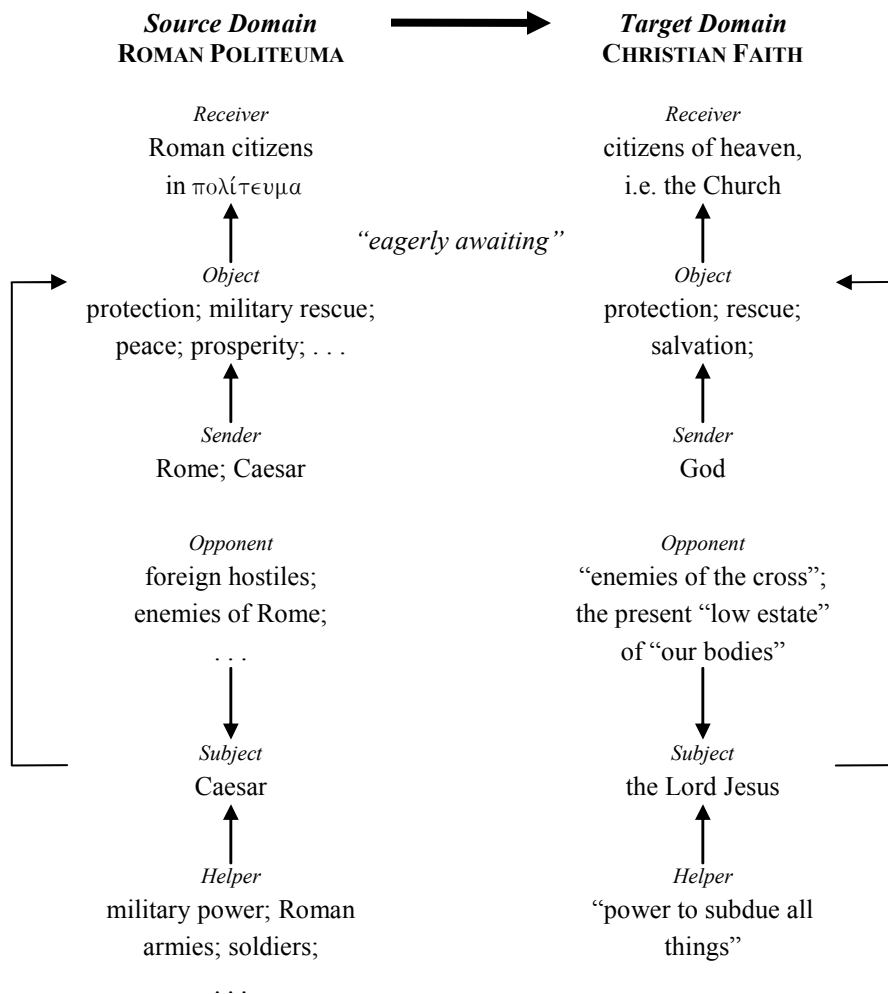


Figure 6b. Our Citizenship is in Heaven (We Can Eagerly Await Salvation)

Just as *citizens waiting for rescue* has more to say about how Christians hope than how they live, this distinct metaphor also highlights—and therefore hides—important aspects of

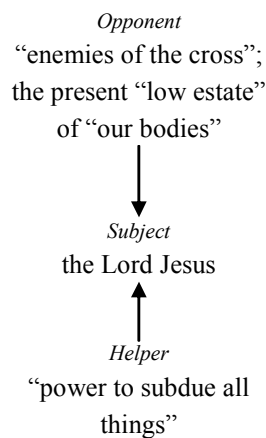
Christ's person and work. The actantial models in figure 6b, above, show that the primary activity of Christ in the metaphor is his second coming: the Lord Jesus will return to bring safety and rescue to heavenly citizens by defeating their enemies with his all-subduing power. Though eschatological victory is an important aspect of the gospel, it is not the only important thing to say about the person and work of Christ. In the narrative structure of citizens waiting for rescue at the *parousia*, there is no obvious place for the incarnation; Php 3:20 focuses on Christ's second Advent, not his first. In similar fashion, the citizenship metaphor does immediately invoke the teaching and healing ministry of Jesus: the Lord Jesus is coming to conquer, not to heal, at least not in this text or sermon. The ascension is perhaps implied by the return of Christ—what comes down must first have gone up—but the ascension is not central to the inferences drawn by the metaphor of heavenly citizenship. Even the death and resurrection of Jesus, though alluded to in the text and included in the sermon, are not the central aspects of the work of Christ highlighted in Php 3:20.

Such an emphasis on Christ's return does not lessen the significance of any other aspect of Christ's work. Rather, a metaphor that highlights the promised return of Christ—something that cannot be understood apart from Jesus' death and resurrection—also downplays important aspects of the story of Jesus. Without negating the importance of the cross and resurrection or any other aspect of Christ's person and work, pointing the hearers primarily to the return of Christ in power allows this text to say something that would otherwise be left unsaid.¹³

Though the cross and empty tomb are not highlighted by the narrative structure of *citizens waiting for rescue*, the sermon in chapter 5 includes Jesus' death and resurrection. At the same time, the sermon presents these key events *in light of the narrative relationships of a specific*

¹³ "There is more to the Christian gospel than Christ's resurrection but the Gospel is nothing without the resurrection," Francis C. Rossow, *Gospel Handles* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2001), 97.

metaphor in this specific text. The narrative structure of *citizens waiting for rescue* casts the Subject Jesus over and against Opponents that include not only “enemies of the cross,” but also the mortal state of believers’ bodies and even death itself. In the text of Php 3, Paul refers implicitly to Jesus’ resurrection while focusing on his return: when the Lord Jesus returns, he will make the lowly, mortal bodies of heavenly citizens to be like his glorious, resurrected body. In the narrative structure of the metaphor, Jesus’ “power to subject all things to himself” (Php 3:21) is the Helper that will enable the Subject Jesus to overcome all Opponents, so that mortality, Jesus, and Jesus’ power are related narratively:



Based on these narrative relationships, the sermon at the end of chapter 5 uses the death and resurrection of Christ as evidence that the Receivers can have confident hope in the future because their Subject and his Helpers have already proven stronger than their Opponents:

Paul says, “We eagerly await a savior from there who by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control will transform our lowly bodies to be like his glorious body.” Our children need to know that a spiritual resurrection isn’t good enough for a God who created them to be body and soul together, forever. Our children need to know that Jesus died on the cross to undo their death, that he rose again bodily on the third day, because he loves them body and soul. Our children

*need to know that our Savior is coming, and if our Savior is stronger even than death, he will be able to rescue us from each and every one of our enemies!*¹⁴

Of course, in the broader theological confession of the Church, Jesus' resurrection is more than proof of his power over death. Jesus' resurrection causes Christians to do more than have confidence in his promised return. There is more to say about the cross and empty tomb than can be said on the basis of Php 3:20 or said within the narrative framework of citizens eagerly awaiting rescue. Without a narrative role to play, some important aspects of Christian faith and the work of Christ remain outside the focus of this particular metaphor.¹⁵

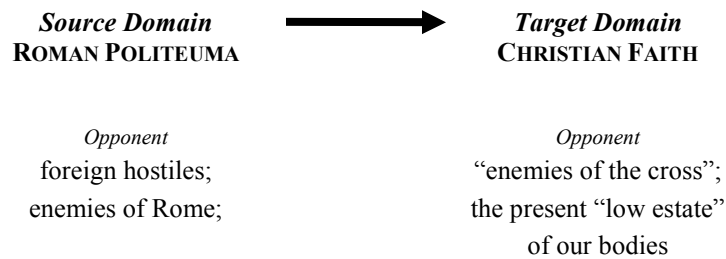
What the Citizenship Metaphor Contradicts. Though aspects of Christian faith and life that find no place on the narrative structure of a given metaphor will naturally be *deemphasized*, a particular text can also *contradict*, for the purposes of the metaphor at hand, some important aspects of Christian witness as a whole. In other words, the tension, mystery, and paradox inherent in Christian proclamation will never be fully explored in the confines of a single text or sermon. What may be appropriate for Paul to say to particular readers in a particular situation or for a preacher to say to a particular congregation with a particular text in hand may not reflect the entire witness of scripture or even the ultimate perspective offered more fully at a different time or in a different text.

Like all metaphors, the metaphor of heavenly citizenship does not treat all aspects of the target domain comprehensively. One of the widest gaps between the unique perspective of the

¹⁴ Chapter 5, p. 171, above.

¹⁵ Focusing on the return of Christ deemphasizes other parts of the story of Jesus, like his incarnation or his death; emphasizing victory over enemies and the resurrection of the flesh deemphasizes other gospel events, like the forgiveness of sins; focusing on living in enemy-occupied territory and feeling the effects of sin and death in the body deemphasizes other aspects of the law, like guilt, disobedience, or rebellion; focusing on waiting in eager expectation downplays other aspects of the Christian life, like sharing the gospel or tending to the sick. "Gospel," "Christian proclamation," "God's work in Christ," and other similar phrases in this chapter all designate broad categories that may or may not include all of the different aspects of law and gospel, scriptural content, or Christian kerygma. The goal is not to differentiate too finely between these different categories or to suggest one may be affected by metaphor more than others. Rather, metaphors will highlight and hide different aspects of each of these.

politeuma metaphor and what most Christian hearers could be expected to know about the target domain of God’s work in Christ relates to the depiction of unbelievers in Paul’s metaphor. A narrative structure that relates *citizens* to “eagerly awaiting” a Savior also casts *unbelievers* as “enemies of the cross,” filling the actantial position of Opponent. Recall the mapping from figure 6b, above:



Such a move helps hearers draw the right kinds of narrative inferences from the unique perspective of this particular metaphor. Still, *highlighting* the ultimate victory of Christ and the transitory state of persecution and suffering for believers also *hides* important aspects of God’s work in Christ. As chapter 5 noted, the status of “enemy” is not the final word on unbelievers. Other metaphors for the target domain of God’s work in Christ include the reconciliation of the *whole world* to God, the Lamb of God bearing the sins of the *world*, an open invitation to *all* to come to Jesus and find rest. For Php 3:20, the designation of unbelievers as *enemies* fits the narrative dynamics of the particular perspective of heavenly citizenship and rescue, but it is only a *provisional* designation, important for this text and sermon, not the *ultimate* description of God’s attitude toward unbelievers.¹⁶

¹⁶ We could think of provisional and ultimate descriptions of God or of God’s attitude toward unbelievers in terms of God’s alien and proper work. While the alien work of God—hating and punishing sinners, for example—is still true and still God working, the proper work of God—loving sinners and forgiving them for Jesus’ sake—is who God really is and what God really is like.

Because the Christian attitude toward unbelievers most familiar to the hearers from other biblical metaphors sounds so different from the language of enemy opposition, the sermon in chapter 5 describes this part of the actantial model with homiletic care. Acknowledging this incongruity between perspectives makes room for considering the particular metaphor of citizenship on its own terms:

Living in enemy-occupied territory is not how we usually imagine ourselves or the world around us, and I have to tell you, the whole Bible doesn't talk this way. Think about the people around us. They're not just enemies, soldiers of a foreign government. God wants everyone to be saved, right? God so loved the . . . world that he gave his one and only Son. Jesus' last words to his disciples: Go and make disciples of . . . all nations. Paul himself went on world-wide missionary journeys to preach the gospel to people who had no relationship to God in Jesus Christ.

So as Christians, we have a heart for mission, for telling others about Jesus. But today Paul is saying, there are times when we experience unbelievers not just as people who need to hear the gospel but as enemies, as people who are occupying a land to which we do not belong, as soldiers on the watchtowers of a prison camp. So today we are not talking about "those people out there" as people whom we love and people to whom we want to take the gospel. Today we are viewing our world this way: we are living in a prison camp, and we are eagerly awaiting salvation.¹⁷

In effect, the preacher is asking the hearers to set aside momentarily something they already know about God's love for the whole world in order that they might hear something new about God's love for them in Jesus Christ. If the hearers are not surrounded by enemies, the promise of a coming Savior is hardly cause for much rejoicing. The gospel proclamation of ultimate victory and rescue from captivity assumes a proclamation of the law that includes hostile enemies. Other texts and sermons will focus on God's universal love for sinners and the role of believers in bringing God's message of reconciliation to a fallen world. The purpose of this particular sermon, however, which flows from the unique narrative perspective of an important metaphor in this particular text, is to speak words of promise and hope into the lives of

¹⁷ Chapter 5, p. 166, above.

hearers who can at times experience their existence in the world as living in enemy-occupied territory. In this way, the citizenship metaphor in Php 3:20 relates to the broader witness of scripture without losing its place as a unique and important contributor to the whole.

Snapshots and Collages: Metaphor and Theological Confession

Because every metaphor both reveals and conceals important aspects of any target domain, presenting a robust understanding of Christian faith and life over the course of a preaching ministry requires relating multiple metaphors with multiple narrative perspectives. Important aspects of Christian faith and life deemphasized or contradicted by a sermon on heavenly citizenship, for example, will be expressed by other narrative structures found in other texts and sermons. Peter Macky, in *The Centrality of Metaphors to Biblical Thought*, captures both the intrinsically perspectival quality of metaphor and the practice of holding together multiple, distinct metaphors. Macky begins with a photograph of the Colorado River and Grand Canyon:

A great deal of the reality that an observer would take in is not represented in the photo: all the surroundings that the eyes see (perhaps 180 degrees with peripheral vision) but the narrow angle of the camera lens leaves out; the depth dimension, because the photo is two-dimensional; all the non-visual phenomena that observers take in with their other senses . . . By leaving all that out, stopping a single moment's view on film, the photo gives viewers a somewhat distorted impression . . . Those viewers who know nothing of the subject but what is given in the photo will misunderstand a great deal. For example, they will have a distorted understanding of heights and distances and surfaces. But those who have climbed all over the Grand Canyon and know it thoroughly, will distort far less.¹⁸

Macky uses this snapshot as a metaphor for metaphor. In terms more germane to the present discussion, Macky argues that the structure of the source domain hides important aspects of the target domain from view.¹⁹ Just as a single snapshot can focus from only one perspective,

¹⁸ Peter W. Macky, *The Centrality of Metaphors to Biblical Thought: A Method for Interpreting the Bible*, (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 1990), 103.

¹⁹ Macky's photographic metaphor as well as phrases like "metaphorical perspective" or "hides from view" rely on a conceptual metaphor Lakoff and Johnson label UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING (*Metaphors We Live By*, 48).

any metaphor presents only a part of the complexity of any target domain.²⁰ Multiple metaphors from diverse perspectives are therefore needed for a more complete understanding of the whole. Staying with the source domain of photography, Macky talks about one specific location in the Grand Canyon, “a suspension bridge crossing the Colorado River at the bottom of the Kaibab trail.” Macky writes:

In front of me, on the wall, is a collage of photos, of which five focus on that bridge. At one extreme is a picture taken from the rim, five miles away and 5000 feet above. At the other extreme is a photo taken near the river, looking up at the bridge a few hundred yards away. Each photo provides a very narrow angle of vision, a unique perspective that makes its own contribution.

Each photo substantially distorts the reality because of its particular distance and angle. The view from the rim makes the bridge look like a solid object, a pipe, and something far too small for anyone to cross. The view from underneath shows cliffs only a few hundred feet high, totally missing the grandeur of the setting amidst mile-high cliffs and hundreds of square miles of canyon.

Taking the photos together enables a viewer to gain a somewhat fuller knowledge of the bridge. We can integrate the pictures in our imaginations, allowing our images to interact with each other to produce a less misleading description than any single perspective can offer.²¹

²⁰ Both David Buttrick, *Homiletic: Moves and Structures* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 55–68 and Richard L. Eslinger, *Narrative and Imagination: Preaching the Worlds That Shape Us* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 146–151 use metaphors with source domains similar to Macky’s and apply them to a related, but distinct, target domain. Like Macky, Buttrick uses the source domain of still photography: terms like “focal field,” “lens depth,” and “focal depth” describe different ways a preacher might present the same image or idea. Eslinger also focuses on different ways a preacher might present the same material, but he expands the source domain to include not only Buttrick’s “camera model,” but a “video camera” and “flight simulator” model as well. For these homileticians, taking a different point of view means presenting essentially the same material in a different format with a different kind of effect. A preacher might describe a lost sheep caught in a thorn bush as it bleats for help. This description could be done at a detached distance or from up close, including even some of the imagined thoughts or feelings of the sheep. Instead of a still shot, the preacher could present a moving picture of the sheep wandering off, at first oblivious and gradually more and more aware of danger and fear. The hearers could even be placed inside the situation of the sheep and made to feel the biting thorns, the falling darkness, and a rising sense of panic. These variations of focal depth and changes from a camera to a video camera to a simulator model, however, are all different presentations of the same metaphor. For Macky, different perspectives or snapshots are *different* metaphors—like lost sheep, heavy burdens, and physical disease—that say different things about the gospel.

²¹ Macky, *Centrality of Metaphors*, 107–108. Macky numbers each of these paragraphs describing the source domain of photography in order to show how they correspond to later paragraphs describing the target domain of metaphor theory. (Macky calls the source domain the “Symbol” and the correspondence with the target domain the “Positive Analogy.”) The Roman numerals have been omitted here for clarity.

Macky is talking about photographs of the Grand Canyon in order to talk about metaphor. Since metaphors both highlight and hide, multiple metaphors are necessary to get a more complete picture of any target domain. Macky entertains three metaphors for the sinful state of humanity: carrying a heavy burden (Matt 11:28); physical illness (Matt 9:12); and sheep gone astray (Matt 18:12).²² Though they all have the same target domain, “each metaphor provides a narrow vision, a unique perspective that contributes something valuable to our understanding of what it is like to be separated from God.”²³ This highlighting function is coupled with hiding: “As individual photos can mislead viewers, so also each metaphor, taken by itself, can evoke a quite distorted understanding in a hearer’s mind.”²⁴

Because of this potential for any single metaphor to distort the target domain, Macky sees the need to read multiple metaphors together. In narrative terms, the actantial models behind Heavy Burdens and Lost Sheep both have Subjects that provide immediate relief to the Receivers; a heavy burden is lifted, a lost sheep is found, end of story. The narrative structure of Physical Illness, however, highlights the fact that “curing” sin and the effects of sin is not necessarily immediate but involves ongoing treatment and an extended relationship between the Subject physician and the Receiver patients. In the same way, the source domain structure of Physical Illness has little place for the sinner’s culpability on its actantial model: most diseases are not brought on by the willful activity of the diseased. This leads to the narrative inference that sinners are victims of sin rather than responsible for their sinfulness. Though the perspective that sinners are victims of a fallen creation reveals part of the truth, Macky suggests that the

²² Macky, *Centrality of Metaphors*, 108.

²³ *Ibid.*, 109.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

image of sheep who have wandered off on their own balances the victim status of those innocently suffering from disease.²⁵

Reading these three metaphors for the fallen state of humanity together allows a fuller description of the target domain to emerge. This more complete understanding does not replace any or all of the individual metaphorical perspectives, but it does help guide and constrain which narrative inferences are accepted and which are accepted only provisionally or rejected outright in each of the metaphors separately. In Macky's words, "The more complete understanding that we gain from integrating the three metaphors is very useful: it provides us with a standard by which to decide which details of the individual metaphors are to be rejected as negative analogies (inapplicable points)."²⁶

Macky is fundamentally right on this point: the fuller understanding gained from reading multiple metaphors together (the collage) does help interpreters make decisions about the validity and value of narrative inferences drawn from any single metaphor (snapshot) on its own. The result is a better understanding of the target domain (the Grand Canyon) these different metaphors share. Particular sermons from specific texts will therefore be concerned not only with the unique dynamics of the metaphors presented in the text at hand, but with the way in

²⁵ Macky, of course, does not use the narrative language of this dissertation. Still, his observations are consistent with the concern for implied narrative relationships and narrative inferences described here. In Macky's words (*Centrality of Metaphors*, 109): "The hundred-pound-load symbol [source domain] and the lost sheep symbol [source domain] both imply that our problems will be easily solved if the right person comes along; the sadder truth is that our sin is in some ways like a disease that takes even God a long time to cure. The disease symbol [source domain] also misleads us, however, by implying that we are almost entirely victims, as we are when most devastating diseases strike. The unpleasant truth is that we are the agents of our sinful condition, even though, to some extent, we are victimized by our environment."

²⁶ Macky, *Centrality of Metaphors*, 109. Of course, from a narrative perspective, when Macky says "details" or "points," he must mean something like "narrative inferences." *Details* that map from the source to the target will be constrained in terms of the shape of the narrative structure; details like wool or hooves or wet, black noses will not map in the wandering sheep metaphor because they are not relevant to the implied narrative structure of wandering sheep and shepherds, not because the metaphors of disease and burden somehow constrain their mapping. On the other hand, the *narrative inference* that sick people are not culpable in their illness *is* balanced by the narrative structure of lost sheep. Though *guilt* is not an Opponent on the actantial model of illness, the *wandering nature of the sheep* is one of the Opponents that the Subject shepherd must overcome.

which these particular metaphors fit the broader matrix of biblical metaphors and Christian proclamation as a whole. Without stifling the unique voice of a particular text, preachers will help their hearers draw narrative inferences in light of what they already know about Christian faith and life from the broader theological confession of the Church.

To say a robust understanding of Christian faith and life requires preaching from multiple metaphorical perspectives, however, is not to say that all biblical metaphors are equally important. Some photographs of the Grand Canyon will prove more valuable and representative than others. Though all metaphors for God, God's work in Christ, or Christian faith and life provide something unique to the whole, some metaphors will be more significant for Christian theology and proclamation than others.

Anatomy of a Central Metaphor: The Courtroom/Sacrifice Blend

The narrative structure of every metaphor both highlights and hides important aspects of the target domain. For this reason, a preaching ministry over time will mirror the variety and diversity of scripture in its use of multiple metaphors with a range of implied narrative structures. For a photographer, both individual snapshots and the overall collage help express the grandeur of the Grand Canyon; in the same way, a preaching ministry draws both on individual metaphors in specific texts and on a broader theological collage of Christian witness to proclaim the grandeur of the reality that is God's work in Christ.²⁷ How that broader Christian witness is understood, however, is already a matter of metaphor.²⁸ Various metaphors held as central by

²⁷ The central argument of Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), is that theological metaphors, no less than metaphors in science, can refer to something both real and true without being literal. Though an individual metaphor may provide a unique perspective on God's work in Christ or on Christian faith and life, a metaphor still provides a perspective on a historical reality outside or beyond the metaphor itself. Metaphors are not self-referential.

²⁸ The hermeneutical principle that *obscure* passages of Scripture are interpreted in terms of *plain* passages should not be misunderstood to mean that *metaphors* for the gospel (characterized as *obscure*) must be interpreted in light of *literal* (and therefore *plain*) presentations of the gospel. The gospel itself, even when presented most clearly,

any individual preacher or denomination will shape what kinds of things a preacher might say based on metaphors considered more peripheral.

Central and Peripheral Metaphors

Multiple metaphors for the gospel as varied as enlightenment, new birth, adoption, redemption, marriage, and rescue share as their target domain God's work in Christ on behalf of fallen humanity. In the same way, different metaphors for Christian living, though taken from source domains as divergent as warfare, plant life, athletic competition, family, journey, and metallurgy, have aspects of the same target domain in view. This diversity in scripture helps add to an understanding of the whole just as an understanding of the whole helps interpret individual metaphors in their diversity.

At times, however, it is painfully obvious that all metaphors are not created equal. In the scriptures, God can refer to himself as Israel's father;²⁹ on the other hand, God can also refer to himself as dry rot to the people of Judah.³⁰ Metaphor theory suggests that both ways of talking about God add a unique perspective to the whole. The implied narrative structures of Fatherhood and Dry Rot are quite distinct, as are the narrative inferences that arise from these structures. Christian theology does not require these two different metaphors to be harmonized—God is not

is often presented in metaphor. The rather Modern tendency to equate metaphor with obscure language and literal with clear is exemplified by a basic interpretive principle like: "figurative passages or metaphorical expressions touching upon a certain matter must be expounded in the light of such passages as speak of the same matter plainly and in proper terms." Ludwig Fuerbringer, *Theological Hermeneutics* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1924), 16, quoted in Ralph A. Bohlmann, "Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Lutheran Confessions," in *Aspects of Biblical Hermeneutics: Confessional Principles and Practical Applications*, Concordia Theological Monthly, Occasional Papers no. 1 (St. Louis: Concordia, 1966), 34. The fundamental problem with this view is pointed out already by Abraham Calov, *Socinismus Profligatus, hoc est, Errorum Luculenta Confutatio*, 2nd ed. (Wittenberg, 1668), 98, quoted in Robert D. Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism: A Study of Theological Prolegomena*, Vol. I (St. Louis: Concordia, 1970), 325: "If all those passages that contain figurative expressions are uncertain and cannot prove anything, what then, I ask, will be considered certain in Scripture, since well-nigh all things in Scripture are stated figuratively[?]"

²⁹ Isaiah 64:8, Jeremiah 31:9, Psalm 103:13, and Malachi 2:10 are examples.

³⁰ Hosea 5:12.

seen as father and as dry rot at the same time—but both unique perspectives add to a fuller understanding of God’s character and work in relationship to human beings.

Though both unique perspectives are important, they are not equally important. Perhaps better said, Fatherhood and Dry Rot as *source domains* are not equally central to Christian theology and proclamation. Certainly, Fatherhood is a richer source domain that maps more features and relationships than Dry Rot, but there is more at stake than correspondence and development. Father language for God is more central to Christian proclamation not only because there are many mappings and narrative inferences between the source domain of Fatherhood and the target of God’s relationship to humanity, but because the kinds of things that this metaphor maps are fundamental to understanding who God really is and what he really is like.³¹ The metaphor of Dry Rot says something important about God, but not something that is at the core of who God is or what he is about. Like the designation of unbelievers as enemies in the implied narrative structure of citizens eagerly awaiting rescue, God as Dry Rot is a provisional and therefore more peripheral way of thinking about, speaking of, and experiencing God.³²

Because of the vast number of significant theological metaphors throughout the Bible,³³ and because every metaphor adds a unique perspective to the whole, it is necessary for a few theologically central metaphors to help establish what is at the heart and what is on the periphery

³¹ See Mary Therese DesCamp and Eve E. Sweetser, “Metaphors for God: Why and How Do Our Choices Matter for Humans? The Application of Contemporary Cognitive Linguistic Research to the Debate on God and Metaphor,” *Pastoral Psychology* 53 (January 2005): 207–238.

³² The distinction between more central and more peripheral metaphors is not necessarily tied to high or low correspondence and development (discussed in chapter 3, above). The ἰλαστήριον metaphor in Romans 3, for example, is quite central, with a high degree of correspondence, but very low development. Like “development” and “correspondence,” the designations “central” and “peripheral” are relative and a matter of degrees.

³³ Chapter 1 pointed to the wide variety of metaphors not only in prophetic visions or apocalyptic literature, but also in the most tightly argued sections of Pauline epistles. See “The Image-Rich Text,” pp. 4–6, above.

of Christian theology and witness. But how do preachers decide which metaphors are more central and which are more peripheral? No single verse relates Fatherhood and Dry Rot in a way that clearly says which is more central. Instead, *reading the scriptures as a whole*,³⁴ the *basic message of Christian proclamation* fits better with Fatherhood language than with Dry Rot.

Since how the central message of scripture is understood helps determine which metaphors will be seen as central, it is not surprising to find that Christian groups who read the scriptures differently have different metaphors at the center of their theology. J. A. O. Preus suggests that different denominations have different central metaphors:

Roman Catholics have tended to focus on the sacrificial and creation metaphors . . . Methodists and Holiness groups, with their emphasis on the importance of leading a holy life, tend to rely on the sacrificial language of sanctifying and hallowing . . . Baptists and many Pentecostal groups, for whom conversion is the defining moment of faith, draw on the *birth* metaphor . . . Eastern Orthodox Christians, like Roman Catholics, focus more on the transformational metaphors . . . For classical Reformation theology, the emphasis is on the courtroom declaration of the judge.³⁵

Central metaphors will appropriately help determine how mappings or inferences in more peripheral metaphors are understood: though Dry Rot places God in the Opponent position over and against his people, the more theologically central metaphor of Fatherhood helps constrain how far the inferences from this narrative structure are taken. The narrative inferences of God as Dry Rot will not be allowed to trump the narrative inferences of God as Father, because the Fatherhood metaphor is more theologically central. In this way, metaphors that are more

³⁴ C. F. W. Walther, for example, says that “the Evangelical Lutheran Church assigns to every doctrine of Scripture the rank and significance which it is given in God’s Word itself.” C. F. W. Walther, *Theses from The Evangelical Lutheran Church, the True Visible Church of God on Earth (1866)* in *Walther on the Church: Selected Writings of C. F. W. Walther*, trans. John M. Drickamer (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1981), 156–192. In the same way, it would be nice to claim that the rank and significance of every central and peripheral metaphor is inherent in the biblical witness itself. Scripture indeed indicates which metaphors are central; the metaphors we hold to be central, however, also shape how we read scripture. The question of which metaphors are central and which are peripheral is therefore neither arbitrary nor unproblematic. See the discussion of different denominations and central metaphors, below.

³⁵ Jacob A. O. Preus, *Just Words: Understanding the Fullness of the Gospel* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2000), 216–217.

theologically central perform a *normative* function, guiding and constraining what can ultimately be said on the basis of more peripheral metaphors.³⁶

The normative function of central metaphors serves the preaching task. Theologically central metaphors help preachers make interpretive decisions about how far a narrative inference should be taken or what parts of the implied narrative structure assumed by a particular metaphor are only valid within the context of a specific metaphor. Portraying the mapping of unbelievers onto enemies as provisional, important for the purposes of the citizenship metaphor but not God's final word on unbelievers, is a homiletic move guided by the understanding that more theologically central metaphors have something different to say about the reality of God's attitude toward unbelievers. In the same way, preachers bringing the metaphor of Dry Rot to bear on the lives of their hearers will have important things to say about God relentlessly destroying his people, but only within a larger theological context that acknowledges that God's destruction is not the final word for those who have faith in Christ.

Though theologically central metaphors serve the preaching task, they remain only single snapshots in a larger collage. Not everything that is important to say about God or his work in Christ or the life of Christian response will be contained within a single or even a few central metaphors. In fact, when preachers resort to using only language or narrative structures from their most central theological metaphors, important aspects of Christian witness never get preached. If God is almost exclusively Father and never Dry Rot, an important part of the biblical witness is eclipsed. If the most theologically central snapshots stop being *one* way of

³⁶ Since different denominations hold to different central metaphors, there will be some disagreement on how more peripheral metaphors should be understood. We might expect the greatest theological differences between denominations at the points where the narrative structures of their different central metaphors diverge most significantly from each other. Understanding how and why the narrative inferences drawn from courtroom, birth, creation, and hallowing metaphors are different would potentially help understand some of the theological differences between groups who hold these different metaphors as central.

speaking the gospel—albeit central, normative, and foundational—and instead become more or less the *only* way of speaking the gospel, much in Christian proclamation will be lost.

The narrative approach to metaphor offered by this dissertation helps explain how and why a snapshot becomes a cookie cutter, how and why a theologically central metaphor can stifle other ways of speaking the gospel. Because different denominations and individuals will hold different central metaphors, the dissertation will focus on one important metaphor as an example. In the quote above, Preus suggests that “for classical Reformation theology, the emphasis is on the courtroom declaration of the judge.” Further analysis reveals that Lutheran theology, following Paul’s lead, *blends* courtroom language in important ways, and for good reason, with the language of atonement or sacrifice.

From a Lutheran confessional perspective, the inferences and expectations that arise from courtroom and sacrifice metaphors are central to understanding God’s work in Christ. This understanding of the gospel, in turn, shapes how the rest of scripture is understood.³⁷ Other ways of expressing the gospel (adoption, enlightenment) as well as other aspects of Christian faith and life not narrowly defined as gospel (fighting the good fight, running the race) will not ultimately contradict the central message of God’s verdict of innocence rendered over sinners for the sake of the substitutionary death of Christ.

As Preus points out, however, other denominations will tend toward other central metaphors. The concern of this chapter is not to defend a Lutheran understanding of the gospel. Rather, this chapter is concerned with how the narrative structure of central metaphors influences

³⁷ The gospel in the narrow sense, that is, the doctrine of justification by grace through faith, functions as the material principle in Lutheran theology. See “Gospel and Scripture: The Interrelationship of the Material and Formal Principles in Lutheran Theology,” A Report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (November 1972). Not interpreting the Scriptures contrary to the *doctrine* of justification by grace through faith becomes functionally equivalent to not interpreting any scriptural metaphors contrary to the blended metaphor of courtroom/sacrifice.

the ways in which more peripheral metaphors are presented and understood. While preachers from different confessional backgrounds may emphasize different metaphors or clusters of metaphors, examining the courtroom/sacrifice blend can serve as a case study for how central metaphors aid and hinder faithful and effective preaching, no matter which metaphors are seen as theologically central. The courtroom/sacrifice blend therefore serves as an illustration of a broader phenomenon.

The Blending of Courtroom and Sacrifice

Blending Metaphors. Blending narrative structures in the source domain and then mapping the blend onto the target is a complex but common phenomenon.³⁸ Such blends³⁹ are purposeful; they intentionally eliminate or replace part of a narrative structure that would otherwise lead to a cognitive clash or to unintended narrative inferences. The specific blend of

³⁸ Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), use the term “conceptual integration” or “blending” to refer to any time that structure, relationships, or inferences from multiple conceptual domains are brought together. For Fauconnier and Turner, any metaphor is a kind of “blend” that brings two “in-put spaces,” the source and target domain, together (see appendix 1, below, for a fuller description and critique). What I am calling “blended metaphor” is a combination of multiple source domains that in turn map onto a target domain. Describing this blending of multiple in-put spaces can, at times, lose the basic directionality inherent in cross-domain mapping. Bonnie Howe, for example, in analyzing the blend of a roaring lion with a courtroom scene to produce a legal accuser that is violent and aggressive in 1 Peter 5:8, fails to discuss how this leonine prosecutor maps onto the target domain of the relationship between Satan, Christians, Jesus, and God. Bonnie Howe, *Because You Bear This Name* (Boston: Brill, 2006), 84–87. It is this cross-domain mapping from a blended source to a target, not the blend itself, that makes 1 Peter 5:8 a metaphor.

³⁹ *Blending* multiple narrative structures is different than *mixing* metaphors. A *mixed metaphor* is an unwarranted or unintentional combination of two or more source domains that often leads to absurd or problematic inferences in the target domain. Mixing metaphors can lead to different degrees of problems, from relatively mild rhetorical absurdity to more serious theological misunderstandings. To call the Church the “ship whose foundation stone is the Lamb of God,” for example, gets the theology right but conjures up an absurd image of a boat resting on a rather square and rocky lamb. Combining source domains of fatherhood and sacrifice, however, makes the more serious mistake of turning the cross into a form of divine parental abuse. In this mixed metaphor, “the patriarchal father-god fosters dependence of the child and is punitive. Within the framework of original sin, ‘the punishment of the one perfect child has to occur before the father can forgive the rest of his children and love them.’” Tyron Inbody, *The Many Faces of Christology* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 154, quoting Rita Nakashima Brock, *Journeys By Heart: A Christology of Erotic Power* (New York: Crossroad, 1988), 55. This combination of domains is not warranted by the text and leads to inferences not consistent with the witness of Scripture. *Blended metaphors*, as opposed to mixed metaphors, are intentional, purposeful, and scriptural. Blended metaphors are therefore both helpful and necessary to the preaching task. With mixed metaphors, on the other hand, it is perhaps better to follow the dictum, “What God has put asunder, let no preacher bring together.”

courtroom and sacrifice is one important way the scriptures themselves preach the gospel. In the same breath, Paul can use both sacrificial language—Jesus was “put to death for our trespasses”—*and* courtroom language—he was “raised for our justification” (Rom 4:25). In 1 John 2:1–2, John calls Jesus both the “advocate” who pleads “our case” (overtly courtroom language) *and* the “atoning sacrifice for our sins.” In light of Rom 3:23–25 where all have sinned yet are *declared not guilty* in Jesus, whom God publicly displayed as a *propitiation by his blood*, God is declared to be both “just” (vis-à-vis the sacrificial system where sin does not go unpunished) and as “the justifier” (vis-à-vis the courtroom verdict of acquittal) at the same time (Rom 3:25). These and other passages use both courtroom and sacrifice to talk about sinners’ new relationship to God in Christ.⁴⁰

Various confessional documents echo this blend of courtroom and sacrifice,⁴¹ suggesting

⁴⁰ Because any metaphorical utterance by itself will only manifest part of an implied narrative structure, it can at times be helpful to examine several texts or utterances together for evidence of a common underlying structure. This is the method of the Lakoff, Johnson, Turner approach: they examine multiple utterances in order to establish a common conceptual framework. Taking multiple utterances out of their context in order to establish a conceptual structure, however, can easily marginalize or misrepresent the specific meanings of each unique utterance, especially when the examples are drawn from different time periods, languages, and cultures, as is sometimes the case in the work done by Lakoff, Johnson, and Turner (see chapter 4, n. 43, pp. 134–135, above, for a more detailed discussion). The examples of courtroom/sacrifice, here, are all taken from the New Testament and most of them are Pauline. Fundamental similarities in the conceptual domain of courtroom and sacrifice can reasonably be assumed. Still, development in any specific text can modify specific actors as well as actantial relationships even in well-defined conceptual domains. While a general structure of both courtroom and sacrifice can be recognized, specific texts will modify or concretize these structures in different ways. Jesus is not always the Advocate, for example, and God himself can be the Accuser or one of the witnesses as well as Judge. This description of the narrative structure of courtroom/sacrifice is therefore not intended to be exhaustive or applicable to every text; still, a general structure can be identified and described.

⁴¹ Paul E. Kretzmann, *For Us: The Mystery of the Vicarious Atonement* (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary Mimeograph Company, 1943), gives examples from an assortment of post-Reformation confessions. Though a wide variety of source domains are in evidence—accounting, warfare, redemption, imputation, clothing, adoption, and mediation are a few—both courtroom and sacrifice language are consistently present.

The central confessional documents of my own denomination clearly bring courtroom and sacrifice together. Article IV of the Augsburg Confession, for example, states: “Likewise, they [the churches] teach that human beings cannot be *justified before God* [courtroom language] by their own powers, merits, or works. But they are justified as a gift on account of Christ through faith when they believe that they are received into grace and that their *sins are forgiven* for the sake of Christ, who *by his death made satisfaction for our sins* [sacrifice language].” Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, trans. Charles Arand, et al. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 38–39, Latin text. The German text, though slightly different in its wording, also employs both courtroom and sacrifice language. Even this brief encapsulation of the gospel uses

this particular way of proclaiming the gospel is theologically central. For preachers or churches that function with courtroom/sacrifice as their central metaphor, other metaphors will not ultimately be made to say things that contradict the basic mappings and narrative inferences of the courtroom/sacrifice blend. Courtroom and sacrifice, however, are unique conceptual domains, brought together in particular ways for particular reasons. The narrative method used throughout this dissertation makes the dynamics of blending these distinct domains available for further analysis.

Justification as Courtroom Metaphor. The source domain of a legal court proceeding provides part of the structure for the courtroom/sacrifice blend. In a narrow sense, “justification” is distinctly legal language: to “justify” means to render the verdict, “Not guilty!”⁴² Of all the many and various ways to communicate the gospel, one and only one speaks in terms of a courtly verdict: families are not founded on verdicts; light shining in darkness doesn’t need a verdict; a mighty warrior defeating foes does not wield a verdict; only in a courtroom setting does a verdict make any sense.

At the same time, the term “justification” also serves as a broad heading in systematic theology that includes all formulations of the gospel, no matter what kind of specific language is used. Adoption, illumination, military victory, redemption, betrothal, birth, and the *courtroom*

more metaphors than courtroom and sacrifice: the language of gift, reception, and moral accounting is also present. Though AC IV doesn’t use courtroom and sacrifice language exclusively, the Lutheran Confessions consistently and naturally bring courtroom and sacrifice together.

The wide range of source domains found in different confessional documents is consistent with the biblical witness. In five verses at the end of Rom 8, for example, Paul uses Sacrifice, Courtroom, Gift-giving, Priesthood, Warfare, and Physical Proximity as source domains for the gospel. Though not the only way multiple domains are combined to proclaim God’s work for us in Christ, the courtroom/sacrifice blend is still a prominent way of presenting this core Christian teaching.

⁴² David J. Williams, *Paul’s Metaphors: Their Context and Character* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999). See especially pages 140–148 for his discussion of courtroom characters and terms. Martin Chemnitz notes that the Greeks used the term “to justify” both for acquitting the innocent and for punishing the guilty, though the NT only uses it in this first sense. Martin Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, vol. 2, trans. J. A. O. Preus (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989), 476–477.

language of justification all fit the *theological category* of justification. The relationship between these two different ways of using “justification” can be described as synecdoche: the *part* (the metaphor of justification,⁴³ one of many metaphors for the gospel) is used to label the *whole* (the doctrine of justification, which includes all the specific instances of metaphors for the gospel, including courtroom language).⁴⁴

Another way of relating the two is to consider the broader term a label for a single target domain shared by a breadth of metaphors with different source domains, including the source domain of a legal court. “Justification” labels the target domain of God’s work in Christ to save sinners, while justification, salvation, redemption, enlightenment, marriage, citizenship, and other ways of speaking the gospel link this target domain of God working in Jesus to different source domains. Both of these descriptions of the relationship between the broad and narrow senses of justification suggest that their uses are distinct but related: justification in the broad sense refers to the collage, or perhaps the Grand Canyon; justification in the narrow sense is one of the snapshots.

Describing the blended metaphor of courtroom and sacrifice requires giving special attention to the narrow sense of the term. As a source domain, justification includes a legal proceeding with particular roles, actions, and expectations. The accused stands charged with some crime. The charges are brought by an accuser on the basis of the law. The advocate,

⁴³ Calling the language of justification or vicarious atonement “metaphorical” is not to suggest that this language is somehow imaginary or fictitious. The person who says, “The atonement is *not* a metaphor! Jesus *really* was a sacrifice for our sins!” is confused linguistically, not theologically. Jesus was indeed really, truly, and actually a sacrifice for our sins; to call sacrificial language “metaphorical” is simply to note that, though Jesus was truly the Lamb of God, he did not have wool, hooves, or a wet, black nose. Recall the G. B. Caird quote cited in chapter 1, pp. 8–9, above: “Any statement, literal or metaphorical, may be true or false, and its referent may be real or unreal . . . literal and metaphorical are terms that describe types of language, and the type of language we use has very little to do with the truth or falsity of what we say and the existence or non-existence of the things we refer to.” Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1980), 131.

⁴⁴ Preus, *Just Words*, 23.

skilled in rhetoric, speaks on behalf of the defendant. Witnesses may be called to testify and be cross-examined. The final goal of the courtroom scene is to decide the guilt or innocence of the defendant. The judge renders a verdict based on the law, the evidence, and arguments presented. Condemnation is followed by imprisonment or other punishment, perhaps even death, while a verdict of acquittal restores prisoners to their rightful station in society.⁴⁵

In summary, the important actors in the source domain of a legal court are: an accused, an accuser, the law, an advocate, a judge, guilt or innocence, evidence, and a verdict. The work with implied narrative structure in the previous chapters suggests that analysis should move beyond a simple list of characters or characteristics to ask how these actors are related within a structured set of narrative relationships. In this case, because there are multiple outcomes possible in the source domain of courtroom proceedings, more than one narrative structure is available for mapping from the source to the target. In one possible narrative structure, a just judge sends a verdict of acquittal to an innocent defendant (figure 14a, below). In this case, evidence for

⁴⁵ These are fundamentals of the courtroom scene according to Williams, *Paul's Metaphors*. For the purpose of describing the basic actors and narrative relationships in the courtroom scene, it is not necessary to determine conclusively whether Paul is using the OT juridical system or Roman law as his primary source. Markus Barth, *Justification: Pauline Texts Interpreted in the Light of the Old and New Testaments*, trans. A. M. Woodruff III (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 15–21, highlights fundamentally the same dynamics in the OT legal system that John W. Mauck describes in the Roman court in *Paul on Trial: The Book of Acts as a Defense of Christianity* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2001), 14–17. Though there may be texts which require an interpreter to distinguish between OT and Roman court dynamics, the source domain here is closer to what all courtrooms have in common rather than any culturally-distinct court system on its own (see the discussion in chapter 3, n. 46, p. 98 above).

Disparity in specific courtroom details will not change interpretation dramatically because the target domain (God's work in Christ) shapes what interpreters select as relevant from the source domain of the court system: bystanders, officers of the court, prominent furniture and dress, and many other details are not relevant for the purposes of mapping a typical courtroom scene onto the work of Christ. This way in which the target domain of Christ's person and work limits what is considered in the source domain of a typical court of law is the phenomenon Max Black refers to as "interaction." Black, *Models and Metaphors* (London: Cornell University Press, 1962), 38. Though the important features of the target domain will influence what gets mapped from the source, metaphor does not work in both directions, as if God's work for us in Christ, for example, intended to tell us more about the court system. See Charles Forceville, "(A)symmetry in Metaphor," *Poetics Today* 16 (winter 1995): 677–708, for a lucid discussion of Black's interaction theory. See also chapter 3 on interaction, above, and appendix 1 on interaction, below.

innocence helps the advocate overcome any evidence for guilt and procure the verdict of not guilty for the defendant.

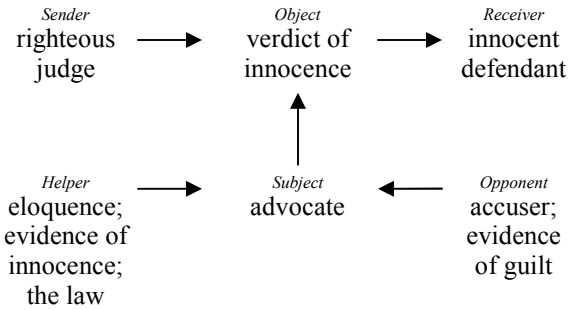


Figure 14a. Courtroom Source Domain, Innocent Defendant

But not all defendants are innocent. Part of what it means to be a just or righteous judge is not only to acquit the innocent but to convict the guilty. Therefore a second construal of the implied narrative of courtroom is necessary. If the defendant is guilty as charged, then a righteous judge returns a guilty verdict. In this case, evidence for guilt becomes a Helper while the Accuser and Advocate switch roles in order ensure that justice is done (figure 14b, below).

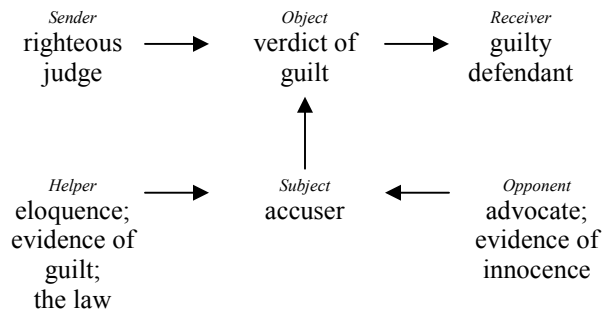


Figure 14b. Courtroom Source Domain, Guilty Defendant

The source domain is further complicated by the possibility that not all verdicts of acquittal go to innocent defendants.⁴⁶ Though even the best judges can make a poor decision, judges who consistently or obviously give a verdict of innocence to a guilty defendant (or vice versa) are prototypically either inept or crooked.⁴⁷ The courtroom source domain includes the possibility of incompetent or unrighteous judges. A third actantial model for the source domain of the legal court is therefore necessary (figure 14c, below).

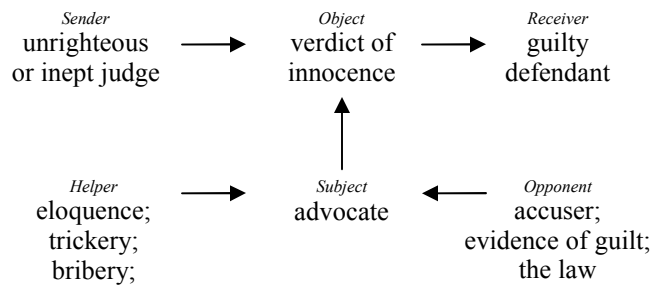


Figure 14c. Courtroom Source Domain, Unrighteous Judge

These potential narrative structures, available in the source domain of a legal proceeding, help describe how and why courtroom language is helpful—and problematic—when mapped onto the target domain of God’s work in Christ.

Why the Courtroom Needs Some Backup. Justification (rendering a verdict of innocence) maps well onto the reality of what Jesus accomplished for fallen humanity. Sinners

⁴⁶ The fact that conceptual domains are rich enough to include possible outcomes or even non-typical events is discussed by George Lakoff in *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal about the Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

⁴⁷ Williams (*Paul’s Metaphors*, 145) notes that this is the very definition of a wicked judge and suggests that the original interpreters of Paul’s courtroom metaphors would have known their Scripture: “‘He who pronounces the unrighteous righteous and the righteous unrighteous is unclean and an abomination before God’ [Prov 17:15] . . . The Lord himself declares, ‘I will not acquit the guilty’ [Exod 23:7].”

find themselves on trial before God, the judge. The accuser⁴⁸ brings before the court evidence that sinners deserve the ultimate punishment. Jesus is the advocate⁴⁹ who speaks on their behalf. The judge renders the verdict, “Not guilty!” The central message of the gospel is that, because of Jesus Christ, sinners now stand justified, declared righteous, restored to their rightful place in relationship to God and other people.

“Justification” as a gospel metaphor (rather than a theological category) acts much the same way any metaphor does: it provides a snapshot of the gospel story that helps proclaim that story in important ways. At the same time, pushing any metaphor too far will cause it to break down. In fact, some elements inherent in the courtroom metaphor will actually *subvert* rather than *clarify* the gospel; a snapshot taken even from the best vantage point both reveals and distorts.

Though accidentally *mixing* metaphors is a rhetorical taboo, there are important reasons for *blending* courtroom and sacrifice, bringing two narrative structures together to avoid misrepresenting the target domain. Of the potential disconnects between the acts of God in Jesus Christ and the typical legal proceeding, two in particular are significant:⁵⁰ the character of the

⁴⁸ Note that the present discussion is intentionally limited to how the courtroom scene functions as *gospel*. The Bible can also use the courtroom scene as *law*, in which case the dynamics of the metaphor change. For example, the prophets can depict themselves as lawyers of the covenant, God can act as both judge and prosecuting attorney, and the whole of creation can bear witness to the criminal activity of God’s people. In the gospel metaphor, however, Satan is the accuser who is silenced by the defense.

⁴⁹ The Holy Spirit is also portrayed in Scripture as our advocate, but here we are focused on the person and work of Christ. The possibility of different actors filling the same role in different contexts—like the accuser being God in one place and Satan in another or the advocate being Jesus in some texts and the Holy Spirit in others—is precisely why we must “look for the narrative location of the image [or metaphor] *in its specific presentation*, recalling that images [and metaphors] are not only slippery but itinerant. They migrate quite easily from one narrative context to another.” Richard L. Eslinger, *The Web of Preaching: New Options in Homiletic Method* (Nashville, Abingdon: 2002), 263, emphasis added.

⁵⁰ By definition, metaphor involves an almost innumerable list of discontinuities, but very few of these points of divergence will be of any significance. It matters little, for example, that God as judge does not literally sit on a bench, wear a robe, or wield a gavel. See the discussion of correspondence in chapter 3, above.

judge and the work of the advocate. These disconnects become more evident in the cross-domain mappings of the metaphor, given in figure 15, below.

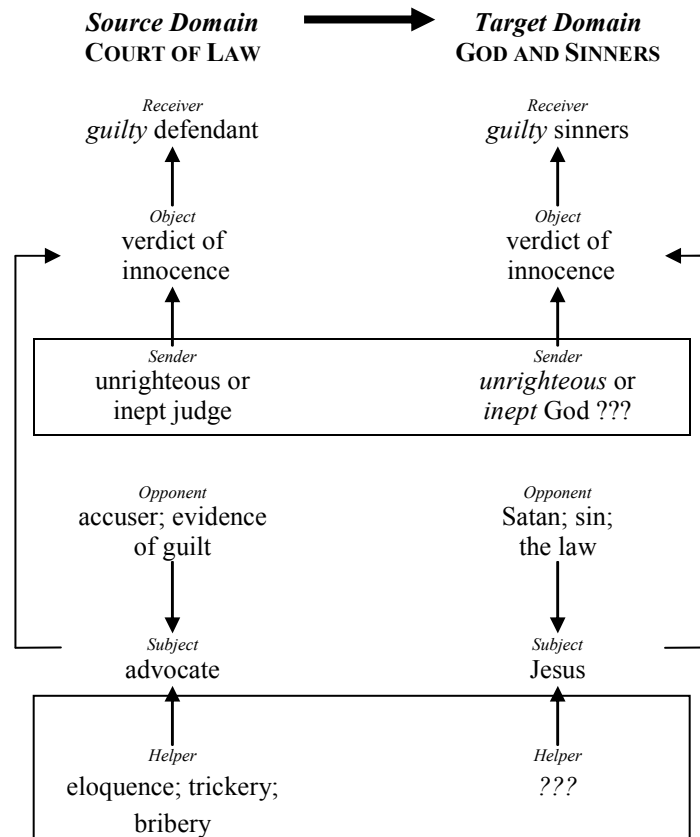


Figure15. Mapping the Courtroom from the Source to the Target

Since the defendant is obviously guilty as charged, the implied narrative structure of the courtroom naturally puts the character of the judge into serious question.⁵¹ Either the judge

⁵¹ Francis Pieper, in his discussion of the terms used in the doctrine of justification in *Christian Dogmatics*, vol. II (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1951), 524, notes the disjunction between earthly courts and the divine judgment: “Justification is purely a judicial act. But it differs essentially from the declarations which are handed down in human courts. There the judge pronounces the righteous man righteous and the guilty man guilty. If he pronounces the guilty man righteous, he is an abomination to God (Prov. 17:15). But this very thing which the judge may not do God does when He justifies a man through the Gospel and faith. God pronounces the ‘ungodly’

knows the accused is guilty, and acquits the law-breaker regardless (perhaps for a bribe), or the judge has been fooled by the advocate into thinking the defendant is innocent. According to the prototypical scenario of innocent verdicts and guilty defendants (see figure 14c, above), God becomes by implication either an unjust or very gullible judge.

For the same reason that the character of the judge is questioned, the work of Jesus in the target domain is also obscured. Since the defendant is obviously guilty as charged, the life, passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus corresponds to the means a defense attorney employs to get a guilty criminal off the hook, making the cross either a rhetorical flourish or a bribe. Though Jesus' death can at times be spoken of as a payment, considering it a bribe makes justification a shady deal worked out behind the scenes by a crooked judge and a low-life attorney. The associations that fit rhetorical deception or bribery do not fit the gospel as the scriptures present it.

These implications of the courtroom metaphor on its own simply do not align with the story of the gospel and are significant enough to cause a potential distortion of the Good News. Courtroom language can call into question the character of the judge while failing to highlight adequately (or even favorably) the work of Christ. Precisely these two elements—the justice of the Father and the work of the Son—come to the fore when the death of Jesus is described in terms of sacrifice.

What Sacrifice Has to Offer. Like the language of the courtroom, the language of sacrifice entails a web of characters, actions, artifacts, and relationships.⁵² In the narrative

righteous (Rom. 4:5).” In the language of metaphor theory, Pieper is pointing out the cognitive clash between the source domain of jurisprudence and the target domain of God’s work in Christ. Because of this disparity, the courtroom is augmented by a different conceptual domain in which God forgives sins based on the innocent death of a substitute.

⁵² As we do with the courtroom scene, we naturally notice aspects of sacrifice that seem most relevant, something strongly determined by the fact that we are applying the relationships and outcomes of sacrifice to Jesus.

structure of sacrifice, there is no question of guilt or innocence; the sinner has become defiled, unfit for the presence of God. Such an unclean person needs a substitute, a pure and unblemished sacrifice. There is an identification of sinner with substitute, and the animal takes the guilt of the sinner to its death. Sin demands punishment, and a just God sees justice done. Blood is shed and, in accordance with the promises of God, the blood of an innocent animal brings forgiveness of sins.

Sin does not go unpunished in the sacrificial system; a just but merciful God finds a way of treating sin seriously without letting the final judgment fall on the sinner. Jesus becomes the ultimate sacrifice, who is capable of taking on the sin of the whole world and receiving the just punishment for that sin. Jesus stands in the place of the sinner, and his blood brings cleansing⁵³ from sins. The Lamb of God metaphor is one example of the kind of narrative relationships in the source domain of sacrifice. Figure 4a from chapter 2 (reprinted below) describes the Lamb of God metaphor and therefore summarizes the key relationships in the narrative of sacrifice.

We might therefore consider the detail that sacrificial animals were without blemish as important without naturally considering a wide range of other details (eye color, relationship to flock, etc.).

⁵³ “Cleansing” here is not part of a metaphor that describes removing dirt or literal stains but rather belongs to the sacrificial concepts of clean and unclean. In Lev and Num, the unclean are exiled outside the camp; only the clean, by the sprinkling of sacrificial blood, are fit for the presence of God. Something sprinkled with blood would not be “clean” in the sense of “not dirty” while a person or object might be “not dirty” but still ceremonially “unclean.”

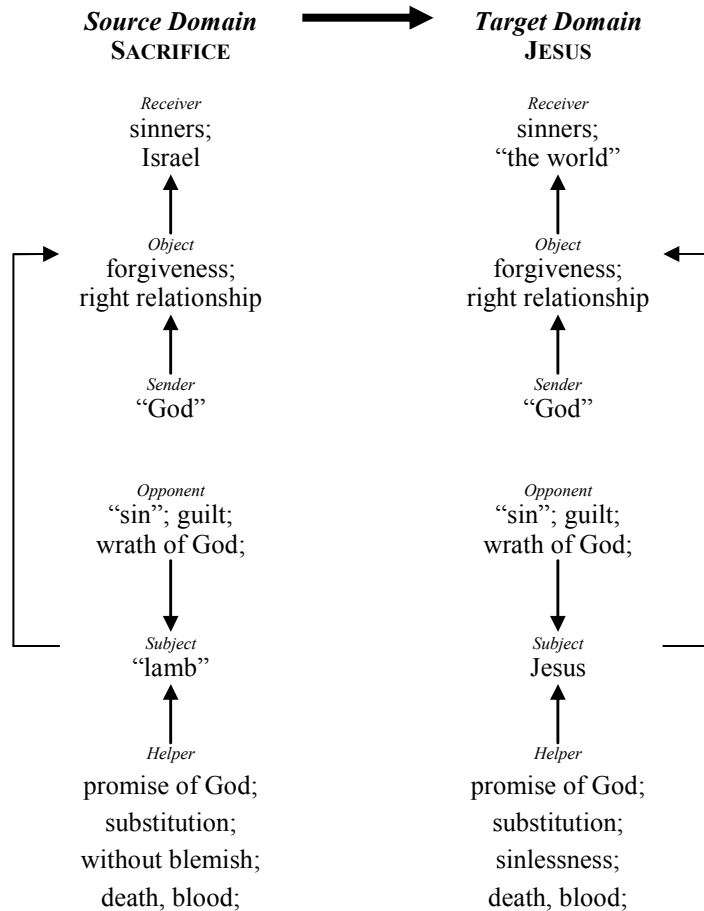


Figure 4a. The Lamb of God Actantial Models in Source and Target Domains

The paradox at the heart of gospel expressed in Rom 3:25 is that God is at the same time *just* and *the justifier of the ungodly*. The justice of God and the work of Christ in his substitutionary death on the cross belong to the domain of sacrifice; God's role as justifier belongs to the courtroom scene. Without resolving the paradox—in fact, as a way of holding this paradox in tension—these two distinct domains are brought together to produce a blend.

The Courtroom/Sacrifice Blend. The narrative structure of the sacrificial system highlights the just-but-merciful nature of God and the terrible/wonderful work of Christ on the cross. By combining sacrificial language with the courtroom scene at precisely these points, the nature of God and the work of Christ, the blend highlights both God's justice and his mercy

while eliminating structure in the courtroom scene that could lead to unintended narrative implications.⁵⁴ Because only an unjust or gullible God could acquit the guilty, sacrifice takes away guilt and places it on the substitute. This substitution, unavailable in the domain of a court of law on its own, becomes a defining feature of the blend.⁵⁵ By virtue of atonement, a just God can justify sinners. The two distinct metaphors of courtroom and sacrifice flow naturally together: “the [sacrificial] death of Christ is the grounds for our acquittal at the tribunal of God.”⁵⁶ The death of a substitute would not be grounds for acquittal in a legal court unless the narrative logic of the court were augmented with the narrative logic of sacrifice. This blended narrative structure is subsequently⁵⁷ mapped onto the target domain of Christ’s person and work (see figure 16, below).

⁵⁴ The courtroom scene in return also acts to guide and constrain our interpretation of sacrifice. In the sacrificial system, for example, people can become unclean through no fault of their own. The courtroom, however, makes it clear that sinners are held individually responsible for their sin.

⁵⁵ Stephen Finlan, *The Background and Content of Paul’s Cultic Atonement Metaphors*, Academia Biblica, ed. Saul M. Olyan and Mark Allen Powell, no. 19 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004) identifies the ancient Greek concept of a “heroic death” (dying in someone else’s place) as another part of the background of Paul’s atonement language. Though Paul may well have intended to connect with literature known by his original hearers where a hero died on behalf of someone else, the dynamic of *substitution* is already present in the OT sacrificial system where the sinner identified with the sacrificial animal by a laying on of the hands. In the present discussion, therefore, adding another input space to the blend would be possible but unnecessary; the narrative structure of heroic death would clutter the presentation without adding anything fundamentally new.

⁵⁶ Williams, *Paul’s Metaphors*, 146.

⁵⁷ “Subsequently” here denotes a logical order, not necessarily a conscious or intentional order in composition or interpretation. Most of the processing of the courtroom/sacrifice blend described here is done automatically and unconsciously; an interpreter will not likely take time to carefully construct a blend and then meticulously map from the source to the target domain. On the contrary, competent interpreters will likely understand the metaphor with hardly a second thought. They are, however, still making a very complex interpretive move that the diagrams here are meant to elucidate. In fact, some theorists would say these kinds of interpretive moves are too complex to be located in conscious thought. See Mark Turner, *The Literary Mind* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996) and Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*, as examples.

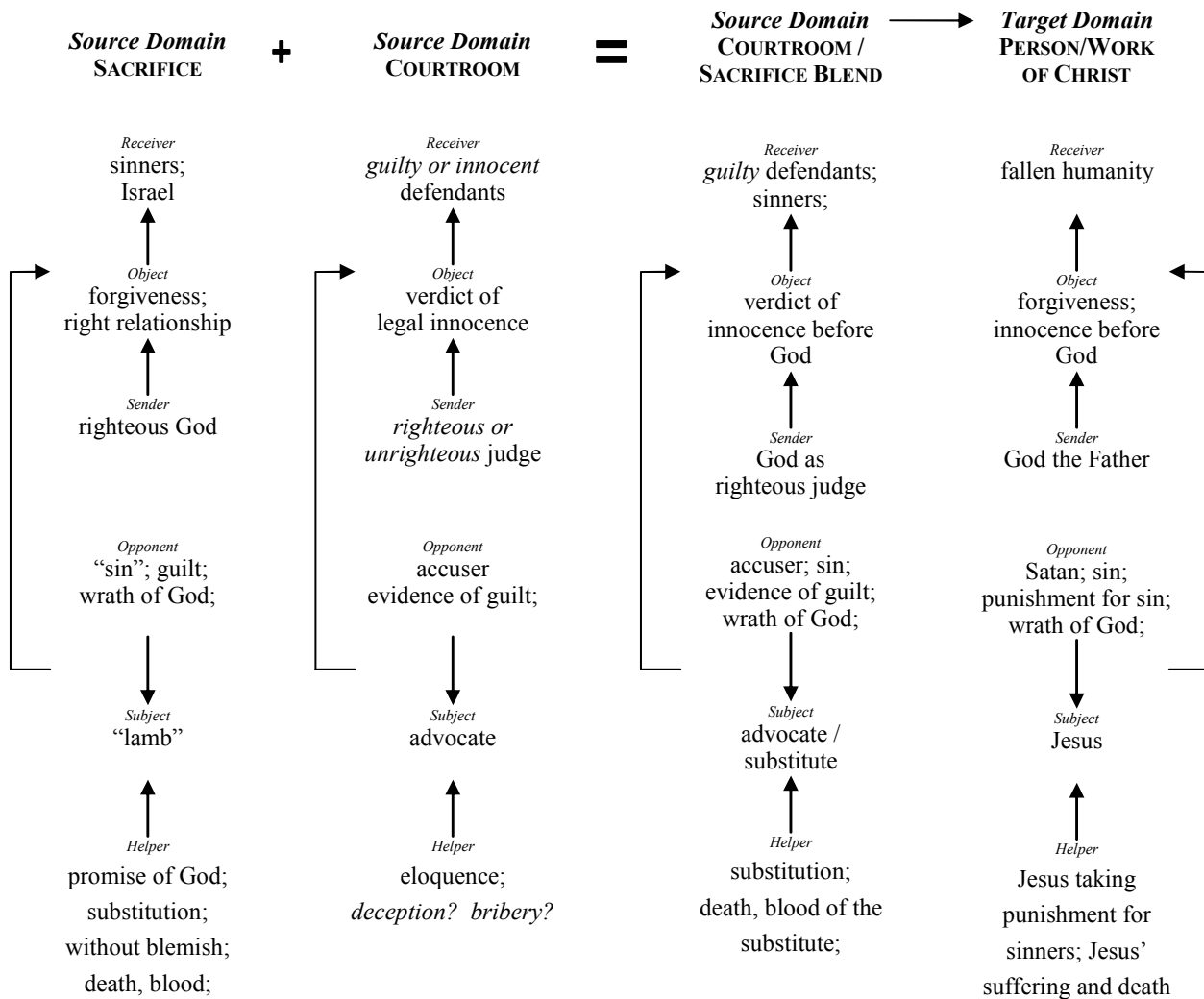


Figure 16. The Courtroom/Sacrifice Blend

Not everything in each separate domain shows up in the blend. However, the blend preserves the important outcome of a declaration of innocence while accounting for the guilt of the accused; since the substitute takes away the sins of the defendants, God can declare them to be what, by virtue of sacrifice, they now are: innocent of all guilt. This blended source domain maps onto the work of Christ in ways that seem quite natural for those familiar with the biblical witness, but which would be absurd if the narrative structure of a court of law stood alone:

The Gospel-truth communicated, our Jesus-given new status with God, is hard, tangible fact, but that fact is conveyed to us through courtroom imagery. We are the prisoner before the bar. We have committed heinous crimes. We are guilty, guilty as sin, and we can enter no other plea. God, the righteous judge, is about to declare us guilty and sentence us to eternal death. But Jesus is our lawyer, our advocate (1 John 2:1), who pleads for us. He breaks precedent and goes farther in His effort to save us than any lawyer has ever been known to do. He not only takes our part—He takes our place. He assumes our guilt and shoulders our sentence. He wins acquittal for us. God declares us righteous—and our lawyer guilty. God sets us free—and bundles our lawyer off to the place of execution.⁵⁸

Notice how this description of the gospel must go beyond the confines of the courtroom⁵⁹ in order to be complete. If the courtroom scene were not blended with sacrifice, a lawyer going to the block in the place of a criminal *bearing the guilt of that criminal's sin* would make no sense. In the blended narrative structure, however, the guilt of the Receiver, the righteousness of the judge, the verdict of innocence, and the substitutionary death of the Subject are all available for mapping onto God's work in Christ. Courtroom/sacrifice, in its blended form, says more about the gospel than either courtroom or sacrifice will on their own.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Francis C. Rossow, *Preaching the Creative Gospel Creatively* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1983), 41.

⁵⁹ Sometimes the move beyond strictly courtroom accoutrements is acknowledged as part of the presentation of the blend. This is true of the Rossow quote, above, as well as of other descriptions of the legal language of justification, like the discussion in *The Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, s. v. "Letter to the Romans": "The divine verdict of the final judgment has already been rendered over sinners whose guilt has been exposed. But in a stunning transaction that has taken place outside the court, the guilt of sinners has been absolved as God, through the death of his faithful Son, has taken care of the dire consequences of that sin and guilt in a unique 'sacrifice of atonement' (Rom 3:25)." This sacrificial transaction must take place "*outside the court*" because there is no place for it within the narrative structure of legal verdicts on its own.

⁶⁰ The courtroom/sacrifice blend is explicit in its blended form in various biblical texts: Rom 4:25, 1 John 2:1–2, and Rom 3:23–35 were given as examples, above. If a preacher blends multiple metaphors in ways that are not directly warranted by the development of a text, the new blend of implied narrative relationships should be careful not to contradict the text itself. For example, a sermon that blends the Race metaphor in Php 3:12–14 with the Citizenship metaphor in 3:20 can easily make the heavenly πολίτευμα the *goal* reached at the end of the race; Marvin F. Hinrichs, "Always Striving Heavenward," in *The Concordia Pulpit for 1987* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1986), 203–207 and Dean W. Nadasdy, "Saints Are Citizens of Heaven," *Concordia Pulpit Resources* 6, no. 4 (1996): 27–29 both make this move. Paul's argument, however, is that Christians are *already* citizens of the heavenly πολίτευμα eagerly awaiting the return of their σωτήρ *from* there; making heavenly citizenship the goal of the race gets both the timing (not yet vs. already) and the direction (*up* to heaven vs. *down* from heaven) wrong from the perspective in this particular text.

The narrative structure of the courtroom/sacrifice blend, as an example of a central Christian metaphor, highlights important aspects of God's work in Christ. As a metaphor, however, this combination of justification and atonement language also omits or deemphasizes aspects of the gospel. If this *central* way of presenting the Good News becomes the *only* way of presenting the Good News, the preaching ministry of the Church suffers. Because other central metaphors can evidence the same tendency to overshadow more peripheral metaphors, the courtroom/sacrifice blend serves as an example of how any metaphor central to understanding the gospel can both help and hinder gospel proclamation.

Central Metaphors in a Preaching Ministry

What Courtroom/Sacrifice Highlights and Hides

Highlighting Aspects of the Gospel. By combining narrative structure and inferences from two distinct domains, the courtroom/sacrifice blend highlights more significant aspects of the gospel than either domain would be able to highlight separately. Mapping the narrative structure of courtroom/sacrifice onto the target domain of the person and work of Christ (see figure 15, above) allows important narrative inferences. Because Jesus is in the Subject position in this metaphor's narrative structure, emphasis is placed on the work of Christ, highlighting the Christocentric nature of the gospel. Similarly, Christians are located in the Receiver position, underlining their essentially passive or receptive role in salvation. The Helpers in the blend, taken primarily from the domain of sacrifice, place an emphasis on the suffering and death of Christ. The dynamic of substitution borrowed from the sacrificial system and combined with the courtroom allows the paradoxical inference that God is simultaneously righteous and merciful: righteous in condemning sin in Jesus on the cross; merciful in granting forgiveness to sinners and declaring them not guilty. The verdict of innocence, as the Object in the implied narrative

structure of the court, further serves to underline the passive reception of faith. The Opponents overcome by the Subject Jesus highlight the seriousness of sin and the deserved wrath of God.⁶¹

All of these inferences are important to a biblical understanding of the gospel. Indeed, the courtroom/sacrifice blend is a *central* Christian metaphor *because* it highlights important aspects of the target domain of God’s work in Christ. Any preacher or confession that holds these aspects of the gospel to be central will naturally treat the courtroom/sacrifice blend as a norming metaphor.⁶² In other words, inferences legitimately drawn from other, more peripheral metaphors will not ultimately be allowed to contradict elements highlighted by the courtroom/sacrifice blend. Though Christians may be told to “fight the good fight” (1 Tim 6:12) or to “run in such a way as to get the prize” (1 Cor 9:24), the narrative structure of these metaphors for Christian living, with believers in the *Subject* position, will not set aside the passive nature of salvation highlighted in the more central metaphorical blend of

⁶¹ These elements are especially highlighted in the construal of the courtroom/sacrifice blend common to confessional Lutheranism.

Even among those who tend to hold courtroom language as theologically central, there is some disagreement on how far the structure of sacrifice should be understood as replacing the inferences related to the relationship between a righteous judge and the verdict of innocence. From a Lutheran perspective, Franz Pieper, for example, argues against those who preserve the narrative inference of the courtroom that makes the *verdict* based on the *actions* (or at least intentions) of the *accused*. For Pieper, “some Catholic and some modern theologians are ready to grant that Scripture uses the term ‘to justify’ in the declaratory sense, presupposing, however, as self-evident that God declares him to be just who has achieved more or less of righteousness by himself, inasmuch as otherwise God would pronounce an unjust judgment” (*Christian Dogmatics*, 525). God’s righteousness as judge can be preserved if something in the defendant merits a verdict of innocence. Preserving God’s justice in this way also effectively resolves the paradox that a just God justifies sinners.

The alternative is to allow the structure of sacrifice and substitution to replace the relationship between the actions of the accused and the verdict of innocence in the courtroom scene. In this construal, nothing of their own is credited to individual believers/defendants. Instead, in conformity with the dynamic of substitution from the domain of sacrifice, guilt and sin are placed on the substitute while the innocence of the sacrifice is credited to the sinner according to the promise of God. God remains both just and the justifier of the ungodly.

These contradictory readings of the courtroom/sacrifice blend differ on how far sacrifice should be seen as replacing or augmenting the relationship between the righteous judge and the guilty defendant in the domain of legal verdicts. Since development helps shape correspondence (see chapter 3, above), deciding between these two approaches means going back to specific texts in their contexts.

⁶² Those who do not hold these aspects of the gospel to be central will use other metaphors to constrain the inferences drawn from courtroom/sacrifice.

courtroom/sacrifice, where believers are clearly placed in the *Receiver* slot. Similarly, the citizenship metaphor may place unbelievers in the role of *Opponent*, but the Lamb of God bears the sins of the *whole world* in the narrative structure of sacrifice, making even unbelievers *Receivers*. Though important for the dynamics of citizens living in a hostile environment, mapping non-believers onto enemies will only be a provisional mapping for those who hold the mappings of the courtroom/sacrifice blend to be normative. The narrative structure and inferences highlighted by a preacher's most central metaphor will tend to shape how other, more peripheral metaphors are understood and proclaimed.

What Courtroom/Sacrifice Removes from View. While the blend of a courtroom scene with the narrative structure of sacrifice highlights important aspects of the gospel, no single metaphor, even if it draws on multiple source domains, can highlight all important aspects of Christian faith and life. The courtroom/sacrifice blend highlights the suffering and death of the Subject Jesus as well as the passive role of Christians in the receiver position. Though from a Lutheran perspective these aspects are *central* not only to the gospel in the narrow sense but to the entire witness of scripture, God's work in Christ and the response of faith are not *limited to* the features highlighted by courtroom or sacrifice. In fact, Jesus did more than suffer and die; Christians, likewise, are given more to do than passively receive the verdict of innocence. Because the blend of courtroom/sacrifice emphasizes aspects central to the gospel, the blend simultaneously de-emphasizes other aspects of Christian faith and life. The resurrection of Christ, the return of Christ, and the shape of Christian living are examples of important aspects of Christian theology that the narrative structures of courtroom or sacrifice tend to omit.

First, the narrative structure of sacrifice highlights the death of the sacrificial animal in the source domain. Jesus' death is therefore highlighted in the target domain of Christ's person and work. In the logic of the sacrificial system, dead animals stay dead; the substitute's job

description of bearing guilt is completed with the shedding of its blood. The target domain, however, is more complex. Though the suffering and death of Jesus are presented as central—“I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified” (1 Cor 2:2)—the story of Jesus does not end at the cross—“If Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith” (1 Cor 15:14). The resurrection of Jesus is a fundamental aspect of the Christian faith as confessed in the Church’s creeds but not naturally highlighted by the courtroom/sacrifice blend.⁶³ Other ways of speaking the gospel will need to augment the language of courtroom and sacrifice if the resurrection of Jesus is to find a prominent place in the preaching ministry of the Church.⁶⁴

In much the same way that the *resurrection* is downplayed, the *return* of Christ finds no natural place on the actantial model of the courtroom/sacrifice blend. Just as focusing on the return of Christ in the citizenship metaphor means de-emphasizing the death of Christ on the cross, emphasizing the death of Christ simultaneously de-emphasizes his return. The kinds of Opponents in the courtroom/sacrifice blend are all overcome by the sacrificial death of Jesus and

⁶³ David Maxwell, “The Resurrection of Christ: Its Importance in the History of the Church” *Concordia Journal* 34 (January–April 2008): 22–37, shows convincingly how the hermeneutical lens he calls the “Day of Atonement narrative” tends to relegate the resurrection of Jesus to the status of *proof* that Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross was accepted by God. One of Maxwell’s examples is a question and answer from the Lutheran catechism: “Why is Christ’s resurrection so important and comforting? Christ’s resurrection *proves that* A. Christ is the Son of God; B. His doctrine is the truth; C. *God the Father accepted Christ’s sacrifice* for the reconciliation of the world; D. All believers in Christ will rise to eternal life.” “Explanation of the Small Catechism” in *Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanation* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1991), 136–137, emphasis added. Maxwell goes on to comment: “By default, the resurrection finds its primary significance in what it says about the cross” (24).

⁶⁴ Maxwell, “The Resurrection of Christ,” 27–31, points to the “Passover narrative” in John and the early church in which the blood of the lamb corresponds to the *death* of Jesus while the Exodus out of slavery corresponds to his *resurrection*. In this narrative structure, *both* events, the cross and the open tomb, are taken as equal victories over death.

Even more striking is the “stomping narrative,” taken from Gen 3:15 understood in terms of Jesus stomping the serpent’s head and Satan striking Jesus’ heel (Ibid., 31–32). In this way of viewing the gospel, the death of Jesus is *not* a victory for God or for us, but a victory for Satan! Only the *resurrection* of Jesus is Satan’s ultimate defeat; the resurrection becomes the ultimate moment of victory rather than mere proof that Jesus’ sacrifice was accepted.

Both of these narrative structures highlight the importance of Jesus’ resurrection in ways that the courtroom/sacrifice blend cannot. In a preaching ministry over time, a preacher will want to use metaphors that highlight more than the death of Jesus even if the death of Jesus is theologically central.

the divine verdict of innocence declared over sinners. While other Opponents, like the mortal state of believers' bodies, may be highlighted in other metaphors, they are not significant in the courtroom or sacrifice domains. The biblical witness, however, proclaims what Jesus *will do* as well as what Jesus *did*. Christian proclamation over time needs ways of speaking not only about Jesus' death, but also about his return in power.

Though the list could go on, a third example will suffice. Besides de-emphasizing important aspects of the work of *Jesus* (like his resurrection and return), the courtroom/sacrifice blend also downplays important experiences in the life of *believers*.⁶⁵ The narrative structure of a legal verdict, for example, is not concerned about what happens next for the defendant: once the verdict has been rendered, the source domain of a legal court has nothing else to say. In the lives of Christians, however, more needs to be said. While metaphors of Warfare (“fight the good fight”) and Athletic Competition (“run in such a way as to win the prize”) should not be understood as contradicting the central inferences in the courtroom/sacrifice structure,⁶⁶ Warfare and Athletic Competition nevertheless provide important ways of structuring the Christian life unavailable in the sacrificial system or a court of law. In these metaphors, Christians are in the *Subject* rather than the *Receiver* position; as source domains, Warfare and Athletic Competition therefore have more to say about how Christians should actively live their lives.

⁶⁵ Highlighting and hiding can happen in terms of law, gospel, the story of Christ, the life of the believer, and so forth (see footnote 15, above). Christ's resurrection and return are both aspects of *the story of Jesus* that are downplayed if we focus primarily on his death. Other ways of speaking *the law*, like being dead in sin, are deemphasized if we focus on courtroom/sacrifice because they don't fit the implied narrative of the blend. Likewise, other ways of speaking *the gospel* are also removed from view: it doesn't do a corpse much good to be declared not guilty in a court of law; those dead in sin need to be raised to new life. The shape of the *Christian life* in response to a verdict is not in view at all. The highlighting and hiding dynamic of metaphor affects a variety of aspects of the biblical text and the homiletic task.

⁶⁶ Since believers are in the Subject position in these metaphors, inferences that flow from the relationship of Christ as Subject and Christians as Receivers in the courtroom/sacrifice blend could be distorted. Keeping courtroom/sacrifice central means preaching Warfare and Athletic Competition metaphors in ways that do not undermine inferences like salvation is *for Christ's sake* or salvation is *received passively* by believers through faith alone.

Because all metaphors both highlight and hide important aspects of any target domain, it is not surprising to discover that the courtroom/sacrifice—or any central metaphor—fails to highlight some important parts of the Christian witness. The observation that courtroom/sacrifice language is not complete, however, should not lead to the rejection of this blended metaphor as somehow inadequate for the preaching task. The mappings and inferences highlighted by the courtroom/sacrifice blend are theologically central and, from a confessional perspective, *should* constrain inferences from other ways of talking about Christian faith or life. At the same time, a preaching ministry will have more to say about Jesus and about Christian living than can be said in terms of the courtroom/sacrifice blend or any metaphor taken on its own. The real threat to Christian proclamation is not that the courtroom/sacrifice blend deemphasizes important aspects of the biblical witness; the variety of metaphors in the biblical text helps balance what any individual metaphor highlights and hides.⁶⁷ The true threat to preaching is that a central metaphor will become not only the *normative* way of speaking the gospel, but functionally the *only* way of describing Christian faith and life. When this happens, important elements of the Christian kerygma deemphasized by this central metaphor will have trouble ever finding their way into the preaching life of a congregation.

⁶⁷ As Maxwell puts it: “It is understandable that Lutherans gravitate towards the Day of Atonement narrative because it is associated with such key texts as Romans 3. Furthermore, it is deeper than the other narratives in the sense that it addresses our problem with God, not merely our problem with Satan. Therefore, I think it would be a mistake to insist that we need to abandon this approach as if it were invented by Anselm in the 11th century. Instead, I think the way forward is to admit to ourselves that we can have—and in fact do have—multiple narratives which describe the role of the cross and resurrection in various ways. What we need to abandon is not the Day of Atonement narrative, but the zero-sum mindset that assumes that if the cross saves us then nothing else that Christ does can” (“Resurrection of Christ,” 35–36).

When a Central Snapshot Becomes a Cookie Cutter

As a metaphor central to Christian proclamation from a Lutheran perspective, the courtroom/sacrifice blend helps keep a preaching ministry over time focused on important elements of the gospel while preventing narrative inferences from other, more peripheral metaphors from distorting the good news. Because of its centrality, however, the courtroom/sacrifice blend can also become a prefabbed way of speaking the gospel regardless of any unique perspectives offered by any other metaphor in the biblical text.

Returning to the metaphorical relationship between individual snapshots and a collage, Macky describes how one important metaphor can, over time, take the place of the whole:

I can take one of my photos of the Grand Canyon bridge . . . and have it enlarged to 24" x 36" and put alone on the wall. Gradually, as my memory of the other pictures fades, that one picture could come to be definitive for me. Then it will be very easy for me to draw false conclusions from just considering that picture.⁶⁸

For denominations or preachers who tend toward the courtroom/sacrifice blend, it can become almost second nature to interpret and proclaim any metaphor in the biblical text in terms of Jesus' sacrificial death and God declaring sinners to be not guilty. A preacher can imitate the vocabulary of a particular text while importing narrative relationships and conclusions from the structure of courtroom/sacrifice. The most important snapshot in a preacher's theological collage can become a kind of cookie cutter: language and structure taken from one central way of speaking the gospel can come to replace the narrative structure of every metaphor in every biblical text.

The result is not heresy. In fact, preaching that relies on the narrative structure of a central metaphor, regardless of the text at hand, will sound very orthodox. It will also sound much the same every week. Consider the following sermon excerpt:

⁶⁸ Macky, *Centrality of Metaphors*, 137.

“We eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ” (v. 20). The Savior is coming. He came the first time so that we can eagerly await His coming from heaven. Without Him we could not have any such eager expectation . . . Our sin cuts us off from that. Our sins would condemn us to hell forever. That’s the way it would be for every human being. But Jesus came! And look what He did for us! He took our place under the Law of God. He lived the perfect life in obedience to God’s will for us. He lived the obedient life for us that God demands of us. And our good and gracious God has counted His perfect obedience to our credit as if we had done it ourselves. He declares us holy in His sight.

Jesus took our sins to the cross. There on the cross He suffered the damnation that we should have suffered and would have suffered because of our sin. He paid the total price. He suffered all the fury of God’s wrath for every sin against every sinner. He completed the suffering. He overcame sin. He died on the cross for us. There He completely fulfilled everything God required for our redemption. There He completed the sacrifice for the sins of all people—including you and me. We are redeemed!⁶⁹

There is no heresy in these two paragraphs. Though it sounds perhaps a bit tired, all the right theological relationships are expressed. As a sermon on Php 3, however, this presentation of the gospel fails to highlight the unique perspective of Paul’s citizenship metaphor in the text. Why? A narrative approach to metaphor for preaching helps describe the disconnect between Paul’s presentation of the gospel and the theologically correct presentation of the gospel in this particular sermon.

In the narrative structure of the citizenship metaphor used to interpret Phil 3:20 in chapter 5, *eagerly awaiting a savior* flows from understanding that the Subject (Jesus, the Savior) and his Helper (power to subdue all things) will be able to overcome the Opponents (enemies of the cross, lowly state of mortal bodies) at his return. In contrast, the sermon excerpt, above, casts *eagerly awaiting a savior* as the Object that the Subject (Jesus) delivers to the Receivers (“us”): “He came the first time so that we can eagerly await His coming from heaven. Without Him we could not have any such eager expectation.” The Opponents and Helpers in this narrative

⁶⁹ Hinrichs, “Always Striving Heavenward,” 206–207.

structure are inherited from the narrative structure of courtroom and sacrifice. Just as in the actantial model of sacrifice, the Opponents are sin and God's wrath: "Our sin cuts us off from that . . . He suffered all the fury of God's wrath for every sin against every sinner . . . He overcame sin." The Helpers are Jesus' perfection, substitution, suffering, and death—all elements of the domain of sacrifice that do not belong to the domain of citizens in a foreign land longing for rescue.

Though this excerpt starts with language from the domain of citizens longing for rescue ("The Savior is coming"), the primary language of the gospel is borrowed either from courtroom or sacrifice, at times even in blended form: "He declares us [courtroom language] holy in His sight [sacrificial language]."⁷⁰ The language and implied narrative structure of courtroom/sacrifice have replaced the language and narrative structure of the text, so that citizens waiting for rescue in Php 3:20 sounds like a sermon on the courtroom/sacrifice blend (see figure 17, below).

⁷⁰ The language here comes primarily from courtroom or sacrifice: condemnation, declaration, law, requirement, and obedience are borrowed from the legal system while sins, holy, sacrifice, God's wrath, and the dynamic of substitution are borrowed from the sacrificial system. There is a third, primary source domain evidenced here, the domain of Redemption or buying back, evidenced by the language of credit, paying the price, counted, and redeemed. Some parts of this last domain (credit, counted) along with the emphasis on suffering could also be construed as the MORAL ACCOUNTING metaphor (see George Lakoff, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*, 2nd ed. [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002] for a damning description of how most North American Christians understand MORAL ACCOUNTING). I am not suggesting courtroom/sacrifice is the only metaphor that can become default for a preacher, but it is a common one precisely because it is so central for many denominations.

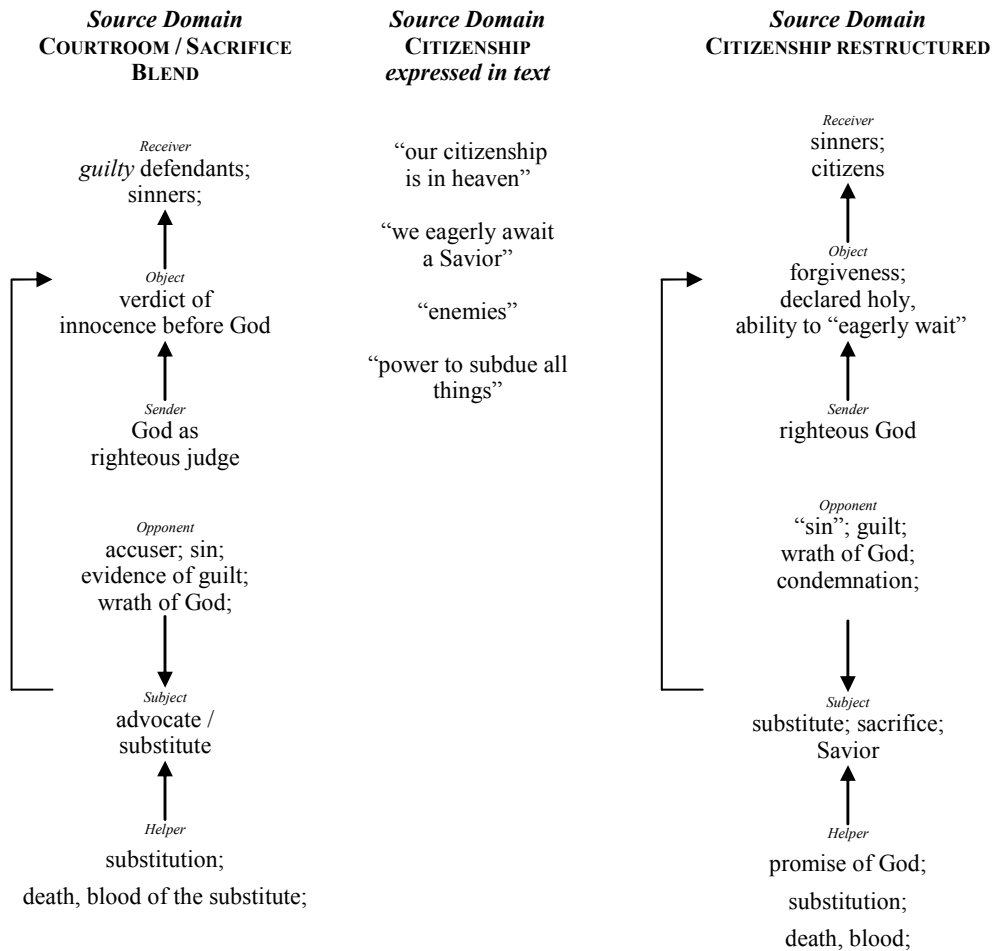


Figure 17. The Courtroom/Sacrifice Blend Providing Structure to the Language of Citizenship

Just as narrative structure from a culturally embedded conceptual metaphor like DEATH IS A SLEEP can guide how a metaphorical utterance like, “Our friend Tom fell asleep yesterday,” is understood,⁷¹ the narrative structure of courtroom/sacrifice provides not only specific *actors* but specific *structure*, determining where each actor expressed in the text is located on the actantial model. Reorganizing narrative relationships, however, changes the meaning of the metaphor.⁷²

⁷¹ See figures 10a and 10b, from chapter 4, above.

⁷² This is one of the conclusions of the discussion of the different structures of DEATH IS A SLEEP in American culture and in representative Pauline texts in chapter 4, above.

Because the Opponents and Helpers in the citizenship metaphor have shifted, the narrative structure as a whole has changed, therefore changing the narrative inferences drawn from the sermon. If the Opponents are primarily sin, guilt, and the wrath of God, and these Opponents are overcome by Jesus' substitutionary life and sacrificial death, then the hearers can *take comfort* in their status as forgiven, declared not guilty. What the hearers won't do is *wait eagerly* for the return of a Savior who will overcome both "enemies of the cross" and the "low estate" of their bodies. The hope and comfort of a central biblical metaphor, courtroom/sacrifice, has replaced the hope and comfort of a more peripheral, but nonetheless important, perspective on the gospel, the promise of rescue for citizens of heaven who find themselves in a hostile territory. In effect, another blend has taken place. The actantial structure along with specific actors from the courtroom/sacrifice blend has been blended again with the language of citizenship to produce a way of talking that is foreign to the context of Php 3.

In figure 18, below, the proclamation of the law has changed: the Opponents from the narrative structure of citizens waiting for rescue have been replaced by the Opponents in the narrative structure of courtroom/sacrifice language. Since the presentation of the law has changed, the presentation of the gospel changes as well. The sermon excerpt on heavenly citizenship, above, spoke the gospel in ways that are theologically central but not warranted by this text: the promise of rescue in Php 3 has been replaced by the promise of forgiven sins and a declaration of innocence. The original blend of courtroom and sacrifice eliminates narrative structure that could lead to inappropriate inferences and focuses Christian reflection on the paradox of a just God who forgives sinners. The blend of courtroom/sacrifice with citizenship, in contrast, eliminates narrative structure essential to the citizenship metaphor in its context and shuts down the dynamics of the text.

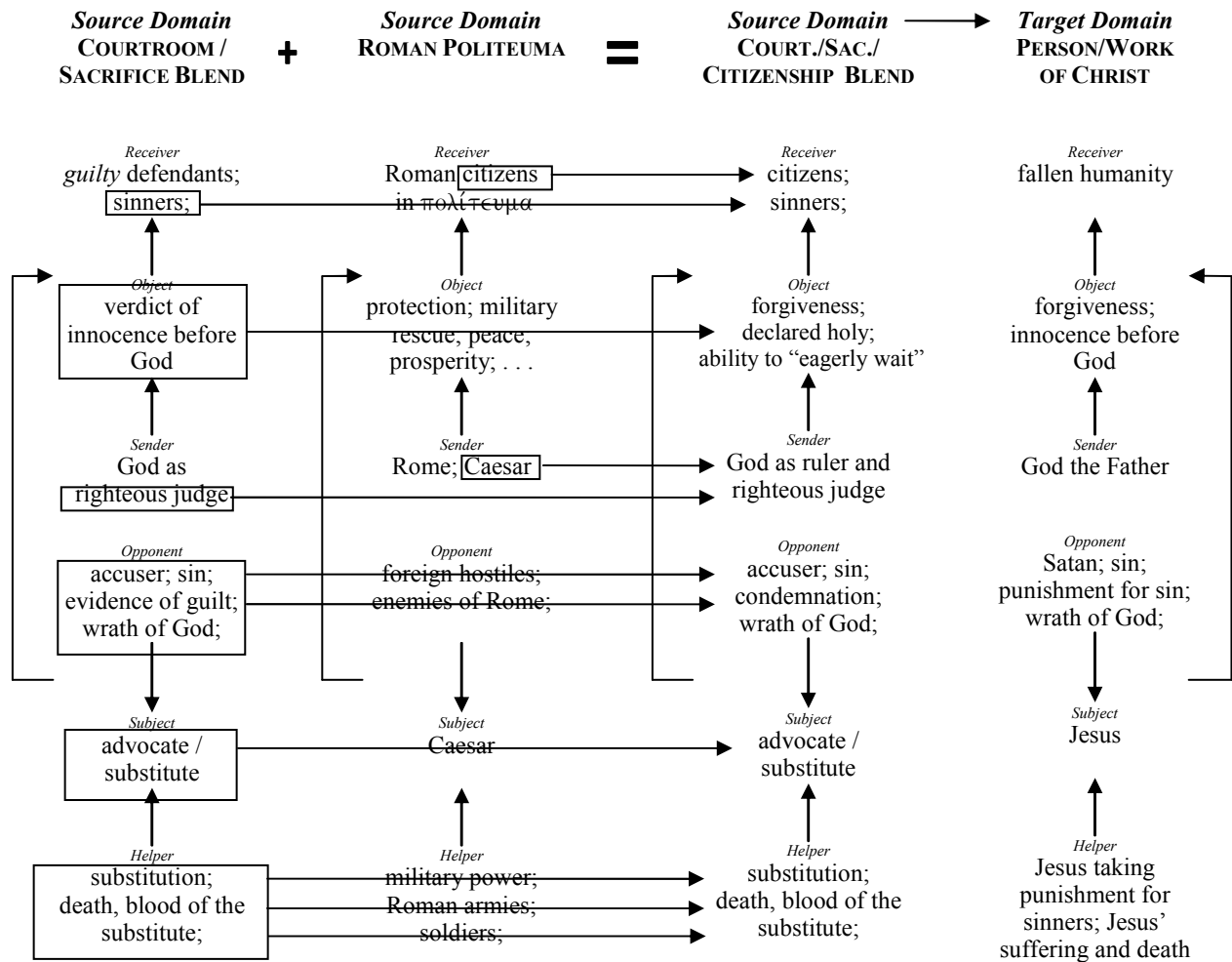


Figure 18. The Courtroom/Sacrifice/Citizenship Blend

Describing heavenly citizenship in terms of the courtroom/sacrifice blend misses the unique presentation of both law and gospel in Php 3:20, essentially boiling down a less familiar biblical metaphor to a more natural way of speaking. This metaphorical reductionism is not limited to bad or inexperienced preaching; even the experts show this tendency. Paul Maier, for example, in an excellent and eloquent sermon on Php 3:20, when he gets to speaking the gospel, suddenly moves away from the dynamics of the text he has so carefully described and instead inserts courtroom/sacrifice language:

Paul made his faith contagious and told everyone who would listen about the celestial commonwealth to which he was going, and of the passport to paradise awaiting all who accepted Christ and his salvation. From heaven, Paul says, we “await a Savior.” He does not mean One who *will* save us in the nebulous future, but One who has *already* saved us in April of 33 A.D., when He was crucified at Golgotha to atone for our sins and win our salvation, paying the penalty that would have faced us all. Now, by faith in His innocent suffering and death for us, God awards us His innocence and makes us righteous in His sight. Saved by divine grace, we can already live as citizens of heaven before we ever get there, leading the sort of transformed lives that reflect our higher loyalties.⁷³

In this homiletic move, the death and resurrection of Jesus are connected to the theological truth that Christians are forgiven by grace through faith for Christ’s sake. The focus of the citizenship metaphor in the text of Php 3, however, is the *future* import of Jesus’ death and resurrection, not the past: “we *eagerly await* a Savior from there, who will make our lowly bodies to be like his glorious body.” Maier’s sermon exploits the source domain of citizenship in the text—“celestial commonwealth,” “citizens of heaven,” even “passport to paradise”—but when the gospel is proclaimed, the narrative structure of citizens waiting for rescue gives way to more familiar language of courtroom and sacrifice (among other, central ways of proclaiming the gospel). The less familiar metaphor of heavenly citizenship has not had free rein; courtroom/sacrifice not only *norms*, it *replaces* the dynamics of the text. Followed consistently, this cookie-cutter approach to preaching, even if done eloquently, will leave a preaching ministry bereft of one of its most important tools, the wide variety of presentation evidenced in the biblical text itself. When the narrative structure of a preacher’s most central metaphors overrides the narrative structure of any metaphor in any text, even the best preachers will sound the same every week. Though central metaphors perform an important normative function, a preaching

⁷³ Paul L. Maier, “Dual Citizenship,” in *The Concordia Pulpit for 1980* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1979), 68.

ministry will become more diverse when peripheral metaphors are allowed to complement more central ways of speaking the gospel.

Preaching Within a Narrative Structure

The two sermons quoted above keep the death and resurrection of Jesus central to the proclamation of the gospel (which is good!) at the expense of the actual gospel dynamics of the text at hand (which is bad!). Peripheral metaphors are important to a preaching ministry because they highlight aspects of Christian theology often hidden by more central metaphors. The reverse, however, is also true: peripheral metaphors tend to hide aspects of the gospel highlighted by more central metaphors. Jesus' death and resurrection, for example, are central to the proclamation of the gospel, but not highlighted by every biblical metaphor for Christian faith or life. Preachers will therefore find themselves importing features of their most central metaphors into sermons that focus on less central aspects of the biblical witness, and rightly so: central metaphors are central precisely because they highlight some of the most important aspects of the gospel. A preacher may well talk about the cross and empty tomb even if a specific pericope does not.

The preacher's challenge is to bring together the specific dynamics of a particular metaphor in a particular text with the broader witness of scripture and the contours of more central gospel metaphors. The cookie-cutter approach, described above, gets the gospel right but truncates the fullness of the biblical witness. The alternative to replacing the narrative dynamics of peripheral metaphors with the narrative dynamics of more central metaphors is to preserve the narrative relationships in the text while importing actors or inferences from a more central metaphor. Preaching cross and resurrection in the context of the narrative structure of citizens awaiting rescue, for example, can be done in terms more appropriate to the Php 3 text than the structure of the central blend of courtroom/sacrifice allows.

The Opponents of citizens in a hostile environment are different from the Opponents overcome in the structure of courtroom/sacrifice. Instead of sinfulness or temptation or guilt, *enemies of the cross* and *the low estate of believers' bodies* are the Opponents in Php 3. Relating Jesus' death and resurrection—central elements of the gospel not highlighted by the citizenship metaphor—to *these kinds of Opponents* is much more in line with the text than declaring citizens to be not guilty. The following sermon excerpt adds actors not found in the development of the citizenship metaphor, like Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension, without violating the narrative structure evidenced by the text:

All that we have ahead of us in heaven is ours because of Christ. Only because he conquered death, only because he is now seated at the right hand of the Father, can we expect the transformation of our bodies on the Last Day. He rose triumphantly, with his body glorified. So will we. Heaven is the promise and fulfillment of the Christian Gospel.⁷⁴

In this paragraph, Jesus is still in the actantial position of Subject. Instead of overcoming sin or guilt by his substitutionary death, however, Jesus is the kingly Savior who by his power wins victory over death.⁷⁵ Though Paul is specifically focused on the return of Christ, this sermon brings in other parts of the story. Instead of placing Jesus in the narrative relationships appropriate to sacrifice, however, the sermon highlights Jesus' power and lordship by bringing in

⁷⁴ Nadasdy, "Saints Are Citizens of Heaven," 29.

⁷⁵ As a stand-alone paragraph, it seems odd to focus on "heaven" in the last sentence rather than on the return of Christ, since Paul's emphasis is the *parousia* and the sermon explicitly references the Last Day. The sermon as a whole, however, begins with Paul's metaphor of running a race ("I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" Php 3:14) and then goes on to talk about Christian citizenship. By means of the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY, which includes the mapping DEATH IS GOING TO A FINAL DESTINATION (see George Lakoff and Mark Turner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989], 1–15), the goal or destination of the race of life becomes heaven, or the interim state of the soul. This narrative structure is then blended with citizenship in Nadasdy's sermon, so that the goal of the race becomes the place of citizenship. In the context of the whole sermon, then, it makes sense to talk about "heaven" as the fulfillment of the Christian gospel, even if "heaven" is understood as the interim state of the soul. This blended metaphor of Race and Citizenship, however, draws a faulty inference: the ultimate fulfillment of the Gospel is not the interim state of the soul but the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. See n. 60, above, and Jeffrey A. Gibbs, "Regaining Biblical Hope: Restoring the Prominence of the Parousia," *Concordia Journal* 27 (October 2001): 310–322.

his resurrection and his session at the right hand of God. Like the sermon on heavenly citizenship at the end of chapter 5, this sermon includes Jesus' death and resurrection as evidence of his power. Such a move is appropriate in the context of Php 3, but still leaves out other important aspects of the gospel that belong to the more central courtroom/sacrifice blend like the Opponents of sin and guilt. For this reason, hearers whose central metaphor is courtroom/sacrifice may feel as if something important was left out of the sermon. Indeed, something important was! But every metaphor and every sermon will leave out some important aspect of the gospel. For this reason, theologically central metaphors need to norm the proclamation of the gospel in a preaching ministry over time. Keeping central elements of the gospel central, however, does not mean stifling the witness of the wide variety of metaphors presented in the biblical text.

At times, aspects of the gospel more at home in a central metaphor will find their way into a sermon based on a more peripheral metaphor in a particular text. A narrative approach to metaphor for preaching suggests that if these more central elements are introduced into the sermon within the narrative structure of the text at hand, the result will be more natural and easier to follow. The following selection, while taking advantage of the source domain of citizenship, weaves important aspects of the courtroom/sacrifice blend into the sermon without losing the dynamic of citizens awaiting a Savior.

This, then, is the picture the Epistle paints. This life is living in a little outlying colony on the far-off edge of Christ's great empire, ringed about by wide-stretching hosts of aliens and barbarians, a constant battle against mighty forces who seek to invade the Kingdom and have, in fact, alienated many within the gates. This life becomes most trying over the years. A pronounced nostalgia creeps into the hearts of the colonists, they become homesick. They long to have the constant warfare come to an end. Eagerly they look forward to the time when their King shall come to take them home.

As far as the eye can reach, barbarians and traitors cover the land. But we know that the King will come to His sorely beset outpost. Our eyes are fixed on the pass in the hills through which we expect His waving banners and gleaming spears to appear.

“Our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.” Soon we shall hear the music and the shouts which tell of His coming. When He comes, He will raise the siege and scatter all enemies as chaff before the wind. Then the colonists, who held the post against seemingly overwhelming odds, will go with Him to the land they have never seen but which is their home.⁷⁶

The Opponents of the citizen colonists in this sermon remain enemies appropriate to the source domain of citizens in a foreign, hostile environment. Jesus as Subject remains King and Savior rather than sacrifice. As a result, the hope and promise proclaimed in this sermon center on the return of Christ rather than on his sacrificial death. Without denying the importance of the cross, the sermon focuses the hearers on another important part of the Christian witness. When the language of sin, an essential element in the domain of sacrifice, does show up in this sermon, it is situated squarely within the narrative structure of the source domain of citizens waiting for rescue:

Of course, we are not fit to enter the home city as we are, with our earthly bodies, flesh and blood stained by inherited and actual sin, bodies weakened and corrupted by the disease from which all suffer in this barbarous land. But our King will make us fit for the homeland. “Who will change our lowly bodies to be like His glorious body, by the power which enables Him even to subject all things to Himself.”⁷⁷

Opponents in the text, like enemies of the cross and the lowly estate of believers’ bodies, have remained Opponents in the sermon. Sin—that which the blood of the sacrifice covers and removes in the central metaphorical structure of sacrifice—is cast as a disease native to the foreign territory in which the citizens of heaven find themselves living and, as such, one of the Opponents from which the coming Savior will bring deliverance. In this way, one of the important concerns in the normative blend of courtroom and sacrifice has been taken up by the metaphor of heavenly citizenship. In this case, however, the structure of the metaphor of

⁷⁶ Fred H. Lindemann, *The Sermon and the Propers*, vol. 4, *Trinity Season, Second Half* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959; third reprint, 1970, quotations are from the third reprint), 164–165.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 165.

citizenship has restructured part of the metaphor of atonement for the purposes of this sermon; the domain of courtroom/sacrifice complements rather than overshadows the narrative structure of the text.

In a preaching ministry, the actors and narrative relationships highlighted by theologically central metaphors will continue to shape how both preachers and hearers fill in the blanks left by other biblical, but more peripheral, ways of talking about Christian faith and life. When more peripheral snapshots of the gospel are allowed to offer their own unique contributions without overriding important features of more central metaphors, a preaching ministry will be both rich and faithful, both orthodox and diverse. A narrative hermeneutics of metaphor for preaching serves this homiletic goal.

Conclusion: Preaching the Story Behind the Image

Like all metaphors, the metaphor of snapshots and collages both highlights and hides important aspects of the target domain. Macky's description of the relationship between individual pictures and a collage of the Kaibab bridge in the Grand Canyon captures the essentially perspectival nature of metaphor: multiple metaphors for the same target domain will both reveal and distort, and even the best perspective will not be exhaustive.⁷⁸ A snapshot or even a collage of a landscape, however, is essentially static; a bridge in a canyon does not immediately evoke an implied narrative. This static aspect of a Grand Canyon photograph goes against the central thrust of this dissertation, that metaphor interpretation is guided in fundamentally narrative ways.

⁷⁸ See Millard J. Erickson, *Postmodernizing the Faith: Evangelical Responses to the Challenge of Postmodernism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998) for a helpful discussion on the difference between soft and hard post-modernism. There is indeed a reality we call the Grand Canyon; but the way cameras work means we can choose *which* perspective we want to shoot, but not *whether* to take a snapshot from a particular perspective. *There are no perspective-free snapshots of the Grand Canyon.*

Macky's snapshots of a static landscape could be modified to a series of cinematic advertising posters. Movie posters are themselves snapshots, or collages of snapshots, but they also evidence basic narrative relationships. Details of the plot will not necessarily be obvious; still, movie posters often depict the good guys, the bad guys, even Helpers and Receivers.

On a movie poster, the purpose of the snapshots is to evoke a story behind the image. In much the same way, metaphors tend to highlight a few important characters without expressing all of the narrative relationships or outcomes inherent in a given target or source domain. The narrative approach to metaphor interpretation offered by this dissertation is therefore meant to help preachers see the story behind the image, the narrative relationships assumed by a metaphor. Using A. J. Greimas' actantial model to describe both source and target domains in a metaphor raises narrative questions that preachers and hearers tend to answer automatically and unconsciously in the act of interpretation. Slowing this interpretive process down allows preachers to consider how they and their hearers are likely to construct the storyline of the movie from the snapshots on the poster.

While this ongoing analytical task can be difficult at times, it is also a joy. The more preachers become aware of the complex dynamics of metaphor evidenced in every text, every pericope, and every sermon, the more the rich diversity of scripture will find expression in the pulpit from week to week. Holding the Grand Canyon firmly in view, preachers are freed to consider the unique contributions of individual snapshots with their congregations; with multiple movie posters in hand, preachers can give their hearers front row seats in the show. As the epigraph of the dissertation put it,

Once God in His wisdom committed Himself to language as a means to communicate His saving love, He simultaneously committed Himself to the use of metaphor. When words are used, metaphor is inevitable. I hasten to add that this outcome is not

at all unfortunate. It is a cause for rejoicing. Our language is the richer for it. Metaphor helps rather than hinders communication. In brief, metaphor is a necessary good.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ Francis C. Rossow, *Preaching the Creative Gospel Creatively* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1983), 34.

APPENDIX ONE

DESCRIBING THE DUALITY OF METAPHOR

Introduction

The purpose of this appendix is to relate the basic understanding of metaphor assumed in the body of the dissertation to other significant ways of describing how metaphor works. The first challenge for such an overview of different perspectives is the lack of unified language in the broad field of metaphor theory: different descriptions of metaphor often use quite different technical terms.¹ In order to relate different ways of talking about metaphor, the appendix will use a common vocabulary to describe different theories characterized by different technical jargon.²

Definition of Terms

As a way of furnishing a touchstone for different descriptions of metaphor, the appendix borrows terms from general linguistics and uses them to describe metaphor theory. Figure A1, below, is a reproduction of the “semiotic triangle,” giving both basic semiotic terms and their relationships.

¹ Even before the explosive proliferation of writings on metaphor theory began in the late 1970’s, Max Black noted that “there is probably no hope of getting an accepted terminology so long as writers upon the subject are still so much at variance with one another.” Max Black, *Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1962), 47.

² Although choosing technical terms to use as a baseline is not intended to be tantamount to choosing a communications model in general, the two are certainly related. Rather than offering a comprehensive theory of communication, however, this appendix limits itself to describing and relating different perspectives on metaphor to each other and to the narrative approach offered in the body of the dissertation.

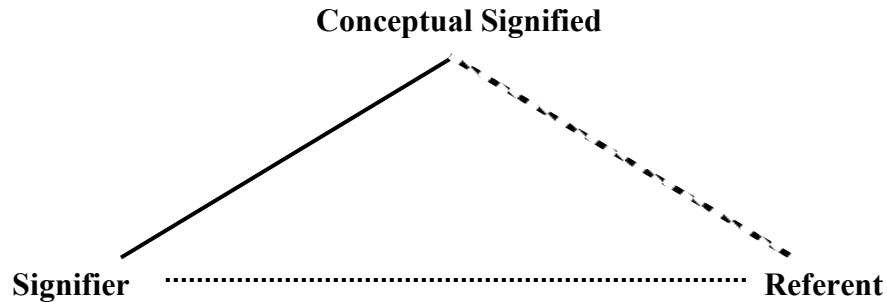


Figure A1. The Semiotic Triangle³

The three terms that this semiotic triangle relates—Signifier, Conceptual Signified, and Referent—are central to the linguistic approach characterized by Ferdinand de Saussure’s seminal work, *Cours de Linguistique Générale*.⁴ These three terms are defined in relationship to one another: in a text or utterance, the *Signifier* is any signal or sign that evokes a *Conceptual Signified*, that is, a complex of characteristics “in the mental world of the receptor”; the *Referent* is what the utterance is about.⁵ A Signifier is used to label a Referent, applying the Conceptual Signified, or complex of characteristics, evoked by the Signifier to that Referent. A brief example will serve to demonstrate the relationships between these terms.

³ Source: James W. Voelz, *What Does This Mean?: Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Post-modern World*, 2nd ed. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1995), 96. Umberto Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics*, *Advances in Semiotics*, gen. ed. Thomas A. Sebeok (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1976), 59–60, suggests that the “most common form” of the semiotic triangle is the one suggested by Ogden and Richards in 1932 which relates Symbol, Reference, and Referent. Eco takes this as a translation of Pierce’s triangle Representamen, Interpretant, and Object which itself “is often considered to be equivalent to” Frege’s 1892 triangle relating Zeichen, Sinn, and Bedeutung. In his discussion of the semiotic triangle, Eco rightly notes that “Objects [real world entities] are not considered within Saussure’s linguistics” (60); in other words, the Saussurian “Referent” in the semiotic triangle reproduced in figure A1 is the referent of an utterance, not a real-world referent. Footnote 7, below, describes this distinction more fully, while n. 9 suggests the significance of this distinction from a metaphor theory perspective.

⁴ Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course on General Linguistics*, ed. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, trans. Wade Baskin (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959).

⁵ See Voelz, *What Does This Mean?*, chapter 4.

The word “dog” can be used in an utterance (spoken or written) to evoke a complex of characteristics related to an animal that has four legs and a tail, and barks. The word “dog” (Signifier) is not a dog (Referent); it is a word. The complex of characteristics evoked by the word “dog” in the mind of the hearer or reader (Conceptual Signified) is also not a dog. Figure A2, below, makes this distinction.⁶

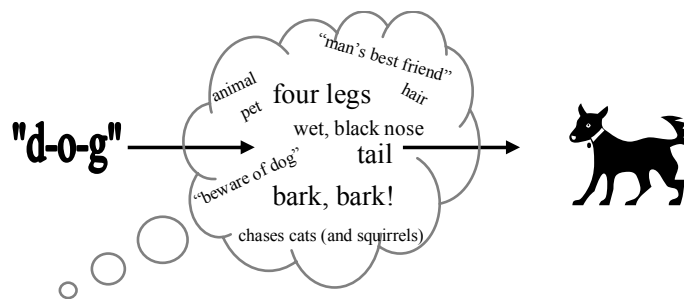



Figure A2. The Signifier, Conceptual Signified, and Referent of “D-O-G”

A simpler, “shorthand” version of the semiotic triangle in figure A1 above can reproduce the basic relationship in an utterance between (1) the marks “d-o-g” on the page, (2) the complex of characteristics evoked by the word “dog,” and (3) a dog (see figure A3, below).



Figure A3. Signifier, Conceptual Signified, Referent

⁶ Signifiers are not limited to single words; groups of words or sentences—even entire utterances like a sermon or an epistle—can be described as Signifiers that evoke a complex of characteristics (Conceptual Signifieds) and are about something (Referent). In fact, Signifiers don’t have to be words at all. Although we are working primarily with spoken or written communication here, almost anything can be “read” as a Signifier, including things like images, body language, or inflection. In figure A2, for example, the marks on the page, “d-o-g,” intend to convey specifically the written word “dog,” while the “thought cloud” around the complex of characteristics evoked by the word intends to convey the thought-world nature of the Conceptual Signified. Likewise, the pictogram  signifies a real-world animal we call “dog” and is not intended to mean “an image of a dog.”

This simplified version of the semiotic triangle will be useful for describing where different metaphor theories focus their attention. Before the discussion moves on to metaphor, however, two important features of this simplified diagram need a few words of clarification. First of all, the dotted line between the Signifier and the Referent in figure A1, above, has been omitted in figure A3 for more than just simplicity's sake: the relationship between Signifiers and Referents is in fact only an arbitrary one.⁷ In other words, there is no reason why “d-o-g” should mean dog (🐶) and not *cat* or *fox* or *a box of chocolates* except for cultural convention.

Second, the directionality indicated by the arrows in figure A3—as well as in A2—is appropriate only because these figures assume the perspective of a hearer or reader. For the receiver⁸ of a communication, a Signifier evokes a complex of characteristics. The interpreter then searches for an appropriate referent. If one is found, the hearer knows what the speaker is talking about. This movement from Signifier to Conceptual Signified to Referent, however, only holds from the perspective of the interpreter. As the producer of an utterance, a speaker might

⁷ “The **relationship between words and meanings is a product of convention** and is not intrinsic.” Voelz, *What Does this Mean?*, 91, emphasis original. Furthermore, according to Bernard C. Lategan, “Reference: Reception, Redescription, and Reality” in *Text and Reality: Aspects of Reference in Biblical Texts*, Bernard C. Lategan and Willem S. Vorster, Semeia Studies, ed. Lou H. Silberman (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), 83 the *dotted* line between the Signifier and the Referent, shown in figure A1 but omitted in figure A3, indicates the potential problem of a Referent “being absent or even non-existent in ‘reality.’” Lategan’s example is a “unicorn,” which we can talk about even though it doesn’t exist. The unicorn question, however, is not properly concerned with the relationship between the Signifier and the Referent, but between the Referent of an utterance and an entity in the real world. If someone says, “unicorn,” a one-horned equine *is the referent of the utterance*, i.e., what the speaker is talking about, even if such a mythical creature does not exist *in the real world*. We can perhaps see this more clearly in a case of mistaken identity, as when a dog in the real world is misperceived and therefore mislabeled as a “fox.” A dog in the real world is not a fox, but a dog can still be the referent of “f-o-x” in the sentence, “Which way did that fox go?” if a farmer mistakes the animal out by the chicken coop at twilight.

⁸ Terms like “receiver,” “receptor,” or “sender” tend to fit within the broader (metaphorical) way of understanding communication as a kind of packaging–transmission–unpackaging process. See Michael J. Reddy, “The Conduit Metaphor: A Case of Frame Conflict in Our Language about Language,” in *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd ed., ed. Andrew Ortony (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 164–201. This metaphor for communication, like all metaphors, both highlights and hides important aspects of the target domain. Using language that draws on this basic way of imagining the communication process is not an unqualified endorsement. Basic assumptions inherent in the model are not addressed here because this presentation intends to provide a way of comparing and contrasting different approaches to metaphor (which themselves may presuppose different communications models) rather than demonstrating a comprehensive theory of human communication in general.

well see a particular dog in the real world (referent), recognize enough of its characteristics as corresponding to characteristics stored in her mental world⁹ (conceptual signified) to identify it, and then ask, “Is this your *dog*?” (signifier) as opposed to, for example, “Is this your *box of chocolates*?”

Though the relationships between signifier, conceptual signified, and referent work in both directions, as it were, much of metaphor theory takes the perspective of the interpreter. The arrows in figure A3 and subsequent diagrams will therefore seem natural and unproblematic. This directionality, however, is not inherent in the relationship between signifier, conceptual signified, and referent: the directional arrows in A3 assume an act of interpretation as opposed to production.¹⁰

⁹ Perceiving a complex of characteristics and labeling the thing in the real world that evidences these perceived characteristics again brings up the distinction between a “real world referent” and the referent of an utterance. If we ask the question, “‘Where are the referents of signifiers in a discourse actually located?’” then “it is tempting to simply to say ‘in the real world outside’ . . . It is probable, however, that all referents are, actually, in the mental world of the communicator, in the perceptions of the world outside, or in the conceptions of the mind drawn from experience with the perceived world outside” (Voelz, *What Does This Mean?*, 96–07, n. 22).

The argument is not that reality “out there” doesn’t exist independent of our perceptions, but rather, that we have no unmediated access to reality. We perceive through our bodily senses a complex of characteristics and retrieve from our memory world a set of more or less congruent characteristics that allow us to label what we perceive. This distinction between our perceptions of reality and the complex of characteristics from our memory world we use to label the perceived reality around us can be related to metaphor: “The fact that we see relations between conceptual signifieds and referents which are not exactly congruent is itself a manifestation of what has been termed ‘metaphoric process’ . . . It is closely related to the ‘seeing as’ process by which we label referents with signifiers in literal usage—finding some characteristics to be congruent with those of certain conceptual signifieds . . . This fact has led many, including this author, to see metaphor as the basic medium by which one deals with reality” (Voelz, *What Does This Mean?*, 170, n. 4).

To understand metaphor this way, however, is to define metaphor primarily in terms of the relationship between the complex of characteristics evoked by a signifier and the complex of characteristics perceived to be true of its referent. Such an understanding of metaphor does not see a basic duality of domains as the defining feature of metaphor. We must therefore distinguish between (1) the suggestion that all language may be metaphorical based on the fact that no conceptual signifieds correspond perfectly to referents, and (2) the suggestion that all language is metaphorical because we never conceive of anything completely on its own terms. The second presupposes duality as the defining characteristic of metaphor while the first decidedly does not. George Lakoff and Mark Turner treat the second but not the first under the heading, “*The It’s All Metaphor Position*,” in *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 133–35.

¹⁰ For a more complex diagram that relates Signifier, Conceptual Signified, and Referent from the perspectives of both the speaker and the interpreter, see Voelz, *What Does This Mean?*, 95. The diagram offered here assumes the fuller description presented there. Figure A3 is less descriptive but easier to work with for our present purposes.

Admittedly, the language of signifier, conceptual signified, and referent is not widely used in metaphor theory.¹¹ Part of the challenge of describing different perspectives on the mechanics of metaphor, however, is the fact that there is *no* unified language widely used by contrasting theorists. Saussure's terminology will therefore function as a kind of common denominator for understanding and relating different views on the workings of metaphor.

Linear Descriptions of Metaphor

The narrative approach to metaphor advocated in this dissertation assumes that the interpretation of metaphor depends on a basic duality. This appendix therefore describes different approaches to this duality, locating a narrative approach among other significant perspectives. At the same time, not all metaphor theories consider some kind of duality to be metaphor's defining feature. For some, the defining factor in metaphor is that metaphors are patently false when considered literally. This understanding of metaphor entails a particular view of the literal. In fact, figure A3, above, sums up one basic way of describing literal language: "when a signifier [S.] is used literally, **all characteristics of the conceptual signified [C.S.] it evokes correspond to those of the referent [R.]**."¹² Literal language, as it is often experienced or conceived, exhibits a fairly straightforward relationship between CS and R, indicated by the solid line in figure A3. This straightforward relationship between CS and R is disrupted by non-literal language in general and by metaphor in particular. If literal language has a solid line connecting the conceptual signified to the referent, metaphor can have only a broken line. CS and R are still somehow connected, but "*all* the characteristics of the conceptual

¹¹ Eva Feder Kittay, for example, uses concepts from Saussure, though not his technical terms in *Metaphor: Its Cognitive Force and Linguistic Structure* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987). I have chosen Saussure as a basic framework mostly because his work is well known in the fields of hermeneutics and exegesis. Saussure's approach also forms the basis for the hermeneutics text used in training pastors and preachers in my own denomination and will therefore be familiar to many in my readership.

¹² Voelz, *What Does This Mean?*, 169, emphasis original.

signified” evoked by a signifier *decidedly do not* “correspond to those of the referent.”¹³ When Jesus labels Herod, “that fox” in Luke 13:32, for example, there are many things evoked by the signifier “fox” that do not correspond to the person Herod. (The name “Herod” is a different way of labeling the same person.) Considering metaphor primarily along the single axis of the relationship between signifier, conceptual signified, and referent, metaphor as a breakdown of the literal can be expressed by figure A3', below.



Figure A3'. Metaphor as a Breakdown of the Literal

In the “*emotivist*” and “*intentionalist*” approaches to metaphor described by Eva Feder Kittay, for example, metaphor use eliminates the literal, cognitive elements of an utterance while highlighting other, non-cognitive elements evoked by the utterance, like emotion or connotation.¹⁴ Proponents of what Kittay calls the “feature addition/deletion thesis” also explain metaphor without reference to duality.¹⁵ An utterance like “Man is a wolf,” can be described in terms of the semantic features which are added or deleted in order to make sense out of the metaphorical utterance: “We note that selections which *wolf* imposes upon the feature system of *man* have been violated: a member of the class having the feature [+ human] is being asserted to

¹³ Because it follows directly on the heels of the definition of literal language cited above, it is easy to read Voelz’s definition of metaphor in line with this linear model: “When language employs **metaphor, the referent [R] is labeled by using a signifier [S] which evokes a complex of characteristics [CS] only some of which correspond to the characteristics of the referent**” (169). In light of other parts of *What Does This Mean?*, however, I read Voelz as more complex than this (see figure A8 and n. 67, below).

¹⁴ Kittay, *Metaphor*, 178–79. Kittay is using terminology from I. Scheffler, *Beyond the Letter: A Philosophical Inquiry into Ambiguity, Vagueness, and Metaphor in Language* (London: Routledge, 1979).

¹⁵ *Metaphor*, 196. Kittay uses “componential semantics,” based in the theory presented in J. J. Katz and J. A. Fodor, “The Structure of a Semantic Theory,” *Language* 39 (1963): 170–210, as her prime example of this approach. For a brief overview of componential semantics, see Kittay, *Metaphor*, 52, n. 10.

be a member of the class having the feature [+canine (- human)].”¹⁶ Metaphor is therefore a “deviant but interpreted linguistic structure.”¹⁷ Like the emotivist and intentionalist approaches mentioned above, the feature addition/deletion approach remains on a single plane of S–CS–R relationships. Together, these kinds of metaphor theories can be designated “linear” approaches. From a linear perspective, the duality of domains central to other approaches is not considered a primary factor in the dynamics of metaphor.

Linear approaches often assume that metaphor involves a breakdown of the literal communication process.¹⁸ Though an obvious falsity or breakdown of the literal indeed seems to be evidenced by many metaphors (man is *not* a wolf, Herod is *not* a fox), this is not true of all metaphors,¹⁹ nor does metaphor interpretation begin after a failed attempt at a literal reading, as is often supposed. Taking a failure of—or deviance from—the literal as metaphor’s defining feature is therefore problematic.

Not all linear approaches to metaphor, however, assume literal falsity as a prerequisite. If metaphor is seen as a linear relationship between CS and R in which *not all* of the characteristics

¹⁶ Robert J. Matthews, “Concerning a ‘Linguistic Theory’ of Metaphor,” *Foundations of Language* 7 (1971), 421–422.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 418.

¹⁸ The fact that a metaphor is ostensibly false if taken literally is seen as a defining feature not only by many linear approaches, but also by some approaches that see metaphor’s duality as highly significant. Paul Ricoeur, for example, writes: “Metaphorical reference, it will be recalled, consists in the fact that the effacement of descriptive reference . . . is revealed to be . . . the negative condition for freeing a more radical power of reference to those aspects of our being-in-the-world that cannot be talked about directly. These aspects are intended, in an indirect but positively assertive way, by means of the new pertinence that the metaphorical utterance establishes at the level of sense, on the ruins of the literal sense abolished by its impertinence.” Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, vol. 1, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990). Ricoeur does not leave his analysis at this level of surface falsity, but this basically linear description does form an important foundation for the rest of his discussion.

¹⁹ Kittay, for example, shows clearly that metaphors need not be semantically impertinent in order to be metaphors. She borrows an example from Michael Reddy, “The rock is getting brittle with age,” to show that, even though this sentence is not semantically ill-formed in any way, when it is said *of a professor emeritus*, it is nonetheless a metaphor (*Metaphor*, 24, 42–76). By considering the sentence both as it would apply to a rock and as it would apply to a professor, Kittay is already on the way to highlighting the duality inherent in metaphor.

evoked are true of the referent, it is a small step to suggest there are relatively few cases in which *absolutely everything* in CS can be applied to R. If this is the case, then the literal usage from which metaphor is said to deviate, that is, a language usage where *all* characteristics in CS apply to R, becomes a myth. Metaphor is no longer viewed as *deviant* because metaphorical and literal become ends of a spectrum rather than opposites: as more and more characteristics in CS apply to R, a statement will be perceived as more and more literal; the fewer the characteristics that apply to R, the more a statement will be seen as metaphorical. From this perspective, it makes sense to say that “the statement *An ostrich is a kind of bird*, though not a metaphor, would be closer to a metaphor than *A Robin is a kind of bird*.”²⁰ If the focus is only on the relationship between CS and R, it may even make sense to say that almost everything is a metaphor, since it is almost always the case that, even in literal language, some discontinuity exists between the complex of characteristics evoked by an utterance and the utterance’s referent.²¹

At the other end of the communication process, if *all language* is taken to be only an *approximation* of a speaker’s thoughts intended to evoke by approximation similar thoughts in the mind of the hearer, then metaphor becomes a good example of “loose talk” in general rather than a unique cognitive or linguistic phenomenon.²² From this perspective, speakers are specific enough to be relevant for the context of the utterance without ever expecting *all* of the complex of characteristics evoked by a signifier to correspond to any given referent. In the same way, the

²⁰ Andrew Goatly, *The Language of Metaphors* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 19. This evaluation is based on the fact that a robin has more characteristics of a prototypical bird than an ostrich does, since ostriches can’t fly. In other words, the complex of characteristics evoked by the signifier “bird” will correspond more completely to a robin referent than to an ostrich.

²¹ See n. 9, above.

²² This is the line of reasoning in Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*. 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1995). Metaphor is not particularly unique and therefore does not receive detailed description in their work, though Adrian Pilkington, *Poetic Effects: A Relevance Theory Perspective* (Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2000) elaborates the relevance theory approach in relationship to metaphor.

characteristics evoked by an utterance are not necessarily exact representations of the thoughts that led the speaker to use a particular signifier in the first place.²³

Descriptions of metaphor that remain in some fashion on a single linear plane of relationships—relationships between thoughts in the mind of a speaker, a signifier used by a speaker to express those thoughts, the complex of characteristics evoked by the signifier in the mind of a hearer (which may include inferences, implications, or emotive elements), and the referent of an utterance—these linear descriptions of metaphor are not necessarily ignorant of some kind of duality in metaphor. Rather, the duality of different domains of knowledge or experience is simply not a foundational part of their description of metaphor. Adrian Pilkington, for example, comments on *Juliet is the sun*: “The fact that we focus upon particular properties of ‘sun’ may be because we are constrained to look for properties of human beings and this narrows down and makes salient a narrow range of possibilities.”²⁴ The relationship between “sun” and “Juliet” in this utterance, which Pilkington mentions only in passing, is central to approaches that, like this dissertation, understand a basic duality as the defining feature of metaphor.

On the whole, some of the more complex linear perspectives on metaphor can describe in helpful ways how metaphorical inferences are made and how metaphors function pragmatically. The more complex linear perspectives tend to be more descriptive than some of the simpler perspectives that see metaphor as involving a duality. However, because the narrative approach

²³At this point we have moved beyond the fairly simple diagram in figure A3'. A more complete diagram could show a broken line (1) between the referent of an utterance and a referent in the real world, (2) between a referent in the real world and our perceptions of reality, and (3) between the thoughts in our conceptual world and the signifiers we use to approximate them. Though all of these insights may be valid, describing any of these disjunctions as “metaphor” is, to my way of thinking, making metaphor too broad a category to be useful. If everything is metaphor, as we could claim from the perspective of (1), (2), or (3), then a descriptive model for how metaphor works becomes too general to be useful in actual interpretation.

²⁴ Pilkington, *Poetic Effects*, 94.

suggested in this dissertation assumes a basic duality to be central in metaphor, the remainder of this appendix will focus on the range of ways in which this duality can be described.

Duality at the Level of Word or Reference

The language of Saussure is helpful as a way of categorizing different approaches to metaphor's inherent duality. Some descriptions of metaphor focus on a duality between *signifiers*, some on a duality between *referents*, and still others on a duality between *conceptual signifieds*. Describing these perspectives in more detail will clarify how the narrative approach advocated here relates to the broader field of metaphor theory.

Aristotle's Basic Definition: The Centrality of Duality

Aristotle gives perhaps the earliest definition of metaphor when he says “metaphor consists in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else.”²⁵ Though Aristotle is writing for poets, not metaphor theorists,²⁶ his remarks already assume a basic duality represented by figure A5, below: metaphor consists in giving one *thing*—that is, a referent in one particular domain—a *name*—that is, a signifier in a different domain—that belongs to *something else*—that is, the referent in the domain to which the signifier is typically applied.²⁷ Following later convention, the typical domain of the signifier can be called the “source domain” while the domain to which the signifier gets applied can be called the “target domain.”²⁸ When Jesus labels Herod, “that

²⁵ Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1457b, quoted in George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 384.

²⁶ Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 9.

²⁷ As Kittay notes, for Aristotle these relationships were ontological rather than linguistic (as they would be following Saussure). Nonetheless, Kittay can give Aristotle pride of place for being the first to “recognize the cognitive function of metaphor” (*Metaphor*, 3).

²⁸ “Target domain” and “source domain” are designations in the Lakoff, Johnson, and Turner approach to metaphor, treated in more detail in chapters 4 and 5, above. I have settled on these terms (as opposed to I. A. Richards’ “tenor” and “vehicle,” for example) to describe the two parts of metaphor’s duality for two reasons. First, the language of source and target makes the directionality of metaphor clear: we map in one direction, *from* the source *to* the target (see the discussion of directionality and interaction in chapter 3). Second, there is no other

fox” in Luke 13:32, for example, he is using a “name” (or signifier) that “belongs to”²⁹ (or is typically used to refer to) a class of animals in the source domain. Jesus is using the word “fox” however, to describe something besides a fox, in this case, a man named Herod in the target domain. Aristotle’s basic definition already gives a sense of the duality inherent in metaphor production and interpretation. See figure A4, below.

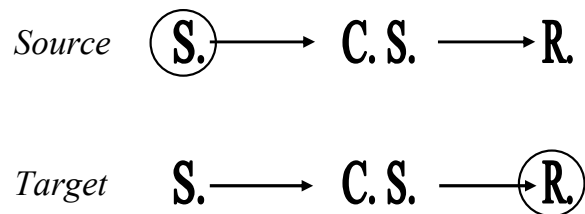


Figure A4. A Signifier in the Source Labeling a Referent in the Target

For the purposes of identifying metaphor, Aristotle’s definition works well. From the perspective of an individual word, metaphor does indeed involve using one signifier in a place where another might have been expected.³⁰ While not all the complex of characteristics evoked

terminology as widely used—or at least recognized—in contemporary metaphor theory. The use of these terms is not a wholesale endorsement of the Lakoff-Johnson-Turner position nor does it intend to convey that other terms may not have as much or more theoretical value. Source and target, however, remain widely used and sufficiently descriptive.

²⁹ A name “belonging to” a thing is a metaphor and, like all metaphors, it highlights as well as hides. See chapter 6, above. Suggesting a natural and straightforward relationship of ownership or “belonging” between literal language and reference tends to make the literal seem unproblematic. Describing the relationship between a name and a thing as “belonging to” is fine as far as it goes, but it also covers up complexities that often go unnoticed because they seem so natural or obvious. For a good description of the (often hidden) problem of the literal see Brian Cummings, “Literally Speaking, or, the Literal Sense from Augustine to Lacan,” *Paragraph* 21 (2001): 200–227.

³⁰ Ricoeur notes that a definition for metaphor at the level of word, which can be effectively used to *identify* metaphor (“giving an unaccustomed name to some other thing, which thereby is not being given its proper name”—a substantially substitution perspective), is not superseded by a definition that helps explain *how metaphor works*. Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: Multidisciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language*, trans. Robert Czerny (London: Routledge, 1978), 65.

by the signifier in a metaphor correspond to the referent—recall figure A3', above—this says nothing about the fact that the referent in question is being labeled with a signifier literally used to label a completely different referent (or kind of referent). When Jesus says of Herod, “Go tell that fox, . . .” what makes this utterance a metaphor is not the fact that only *some* of the characteristics evoked by “fox” can be applied to Herod (which is true), but rather, that Herod is being labeled with a referent that literally labels foxes. From this perspective, metaphor is no longer defined negatively as a breakdown or rule violation. Instead, metaphor is defined in more positive terms as thinking about, experiencing, or speaking of *one thing* (like Herod) in terms of *something else* (like a fox). The unique element of metaphor is the fact that a signifier in one domain (like “fox”), which we could call the Signifier^{Source Domain} or S^S, is labeling a referent in a different domain (like Herod), the Referent^{Target Domain} or R^T.

The Substitution Theory: Duality at the Level of Signifier

Based on this description of how to *identify* metaphor, however, Aristotle is often seen as the origin of a “substitution” theory of *how metaphor works*. According to a substitution view, metaphor is defined as one signifier simply “standing in” for another. Max Black puts it this way: “Any view which holds that a metaphorical expression is used in place of some equivalent *literal* expression, I shall call a *substitution view of metaphor*.”³¹ In other words, S^S replaces S^T (Signifier^{Target Domain}) for aesthetic or didactic reasons.

From a substitution perspective, metaphor interpretation involves finding the correct S^T and reversing the substitution, as it were. Though Jesus may *say* that Herod is a *fox*, what he *means* is that Herod is *clever*.³² In this description, often attributed to Classical rhetoric, metaphor

³¹ Max Black, *Models and Metaphors*, 31, emphasis original.

³² The fact that “clever” was very likely not what Jesus had in mind at all better fits a discussion of metaphor’s culture-dependence than whether or not a straightforward substitution is taking place. In other words, what is at

involves replacing one S with another S for stylistic or rhetorical purposes. The duality of metaphor is therefore focused on an exchange of signifiers, as indicated by figure A5, below.

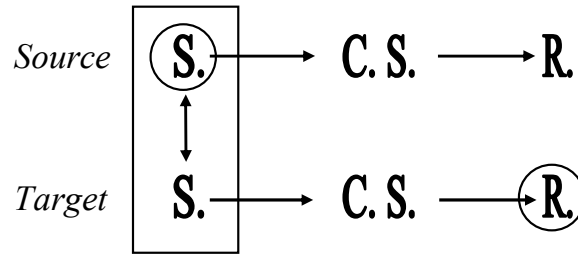


Figure A5. A Substitution Theory of Metaphor

Classical writers like Aristotle or Quintilian did indeed treat metaphor under a discussion of rhetoric. To say that either of these viewed metaphor as *merely* a substitution of names or as a *merely* rhetorical device, however, is to denigrate both their perception of metaphor and their understanding of rhetoric.³³ For these Classical thinkers, rhetoric involved good thinking as well as good speaking: metaphor was a function of both together.³⁴ A division between eloquent speech and rigorous thought is foreign to these authors and is instead characteristic of a later, rationalistic age.³⁵ In fact, “the crude substitution view of metaphor is not so much that of the

stake here is the mechanics of metaphor, not what *this* metaphor actually means or doesn't mean. See Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 536 for the cultural considerations involved in “Go tell that fox . . .”

³³ “The case for attributing to Aristotle and Quintilian a facile substitution or ornamentalist view of metaphor seems strong, but we suggest that to do so is to underestimate Aristotle and Quintilian and to misrepresent the nature of their accounts . . . Aristotle by no means considered metaphor as simply a substituted name” (Soskice, *Metaphor*, 8).

³⁴ Soskice, *Metaphor*, 11–12.

³⁵ “The notion that an interest in style and ornamentation diminishes or even precludes an interest in sound argument is distinctly modern. The object of rhetoric was to move the will, but to move the will by good reasoning well presented, and not by verbal trickery” (Soskice, *Metaphor*, 12).

rhetoricians as of their empiricist critics,³⁶ a straw man set up by those “philosophers of the seventeenth century who chose as their model the arguments of mathematics and the new sciences.”³⁷ It is perhaps more proper therefore to trace a substitution theory of metaphor back to thinkers like Hobbes and Locke rather than Aristotle and Quintilian. Whereas the Enlightenment philosophers viewed both rhetoric and metaphor as serious threats to serious thinking,³⁸ the Classical rhetoricians described not the mechanics of metaphor, but how metaphor can be useful for eloquence in speech *and* thought together.³⁹

Because of its status as a kind of historical fiction or rhetorical straw man for the opponents of rhetoric, it is somewhat surprising to find various forms of the substitution view alive and well today. Nonetheless, Murray Knowles and Rosamund Moon suggest that most modern dictionaries work with a basically substitution view of metaphor.⁴⁰ Bonne Howe makes a similar claim about much of contemporary biblical commentary and exegesis.⁴¹ This tendency to treat

³⁶ Soskice, *Metaphor*, 11.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

³⁸ The extreme objectivist position regarding language and metaphor exemplified by Hobbes and Locke was treated in chapter 1, p. 22–23. For a quote from Locke decrying the use of metaphor, see p. 23, n. 76, above. Hobbes, giving reasons for the absurdity of philosophers, lists, among others, “the use of Metaphors, Tropes, and other Rhetorical figures, in stead of words proper” (quoted in Soskice, *Metaphor*, 67). This distinction between metaphor and “words proper” is the precursor of the 18th century division of the literal and the metaphorical (or figurative). Though we commonly understand the literal as *the opposite of* the metaphorical in contemporary parlance, before the mid-1700’s, the “sense of the letter,” or *literal sense* (something like “what the words mean” or even “the intent of the author”) would have included metaphor. This complicates the issue of reading classical as well as medieval authors and their views of metaphor. See Cummings, “Literally Speaking,” 209.

³⁹ Because both Aristotle and Quintilian focus on *identifying* and *using* metaphor, it is misleading to portray their descriptions as an understanding of the *mechanics* of metaphor. Quintilian, for example, explicitly rejects the substitution theory of the mechanics of metaphor often attributed to him: “the changes involved [in metaphor] concern not merely individual words, but also our thoughts and the structure of our sentences. In view of these facts I regard those writers as mistaken who have held that *tropes* necessarily involve the substitution of word for word” (quoted in Soskice, *Metaphor*, 10).

⁴⁰ “The treatment of polysemous words in current monolingual dictionaries seems to suggest a substitution view of metaphor: metaphorical senses are treated separately from literal ones, but their metaphoricity is usually left implicit and not explained or labeled.” Murray Knowles and Rosamund Moon, *Introducing Metaphor* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 67.

⁴¹ Howe writes, “Most current work in biblical hermeneutics and ethics that touches on metaphor relies on classical or medieval understandings of metaphor.” Bonnie Howe, *Because You Bear This Name: Conceptual*

metaphor as if it were a mere ornamental substitution for a literal proposition can be found simply by perusing a typical lexicon or commentary. The entry for πολιτεύομαι, for example, lists several meanings for the word: “1. *have one’s citizenship or home;*” “2. *rule or govern the state;*” and “3. *live, conduct oneself, lead one’s life;*” which includes Php 1.27 as an example.⁴² In other words, when Paul says ἀξίως τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ Χριστοῦ πολιτεύεσθε in Php 1.27, he simply *means* “*live your life* in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ,” some variation of which most English translations give for this verse.⁴³

Metaphor and the Meaning of 1 Peter (Boston: Brill, 2006), 13. From the context, Howe means something similar to a substitution view of metaphor. The research by Soskice, cited in this section, along with Cummings, “Literally Speaking,” suggest that this understanding of metaphor may well be a Modern view *read back into* the Classical or Medieval, but Howe’s point remains valid.

⁴² BDAG, 686. It would be correct simply to list a literal paraphrase of a metaphor (like “live, conduct one’s self”) as one of the meanings of a word (like πολιτεύομαι) only if a metaphor has become lexicalized over time. Part of the problem with discussing this lexicalization, however, is that by and large the concept of a “dead metaphor” has included both words that have entirely lost their original meanings and metaphors that have become standard and therefore take little conscious effort. In order to understand metaphor, however, we must be able to differentiate between a “pedigree” and a “daughter congregation.” “Pedigree” has been severed from its original meaning of “crane’s foot” (metaphorically applied to the look of a written pedigree on a page) to the point that the original metaphor is beyond recovery without special analysis or development. A “daughter congregation,” on the other hand, may be a “dead” metaphor, but it is far from being lexicalized to the same degree as “crane’s foot.” To call one congregation started by another a “daughter” congregation does not take a significant amount of interpretation and therefore does not “feel” very metaphorical. Nonetheless, this “dead” metaphor can not only be easily revived, the most important aspects of the metaphorical process—the shaping or structuring of the way we think about or experience one thing in terms of another—are still evident. As long as our experience or reasoning about two congregations related historically is shaped at all by expectations or inferences drawn from the domain of human mother-daughter relationships, then the metaphor is alive in the most important sense. We may mourn if a “daughter” congregation “dies,” but such a loss does not necessarily reflect the “health” of the “mother” church. Likewise, we know without being told that a “mother” congregation is older than a “daughter” congregation and was somehow instrumental in the “daughter” congregation’s coming into being, even if it is natural for the “relationship” between the two to dissolve over time so that the “daughter” congregation is seen as its own “individual,” responsible for its own decisions and livelihood. This is a long way from “pedigree,” which carries with it no structure of inferences whatsoever. See Roger M. White, *The Structure of Metaphor: The Way the Language of Metaphor Works* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), esp. chapter 10, “The Impossibility of Metaphorical Senses,” as well as Georg Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980; reprint, with a new afterward, 2003), esp. “The Objectivist Account of Conventional Metaphor,” 211–213 (page citations are to the reprint edition), and Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, esp. the section labeled, “The Dead Metaphor Theory,” 128–131, from which the crane’s foot example, above, is drawn.

⁴³ “Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ” (NIV); “Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ” (NKJV); “live in such a way that you are a credit to the Message of Christ” (The Message); “Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ” (ASV); “Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ” (ESV, with a footnote: “Greek *Only behave as citizens worthy*”).

In the case of Php 1:27, we must make an interpretive decision about whether or not πολιτεύομαι has been lexicalized beyond the point of providing cognitive structure by the time of Paul. If it has been lexicalized, then all

This kind of translation is substitution.⁴⁴

of the commentary on the dynamics of living as citizens and how Christians are like or unlike citizens of Rome becomes entirely moot, much as a lengthy discussion of the relationship between genealogy and cranes' feet would be (see n. 42, above). In the case of Php 1:27, however, the presence of other terms that help establish both source and target domains here and in the similar context of Php 3:20 would support the view that this is still an active metaphor. Another indicator would be the way the term was being used in the extant literature at the time of Paul's writing. Gordon D. Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995) 161, n. 21, suggests that πολιτεύομαι was "a common verb in Greco-Roman authors, which in the active denotes to 'live in the *polis* (city state) as a free citizen,' but which in the middle (as here [Php 1:27]) meant to 'take an active part in the affairs of the *polis*,' hence, to 'be a citizen' (almost always literally, either of the Greek city state or of the empire). The metaphorical use is rare, since there would be little place for it in the Greco-Roman world." If πολιτεύομαι was commonly used but rarely used metaphorically, as Fee indicates, then it would be hard to see this as a lexicalized metaphor and therefore justifiably listing "live one's life" as one of the dictionary meanings of the word.

Whether or not πολιτεύομαι as a metaphor would have been perceived as a *standard* metaphor at the time of Paul's writing is a separate issue and does not negate the value of describing the structure of the source domain and how it shapes our understanding of the target (unless this usage had indeed become completely lexicalized). Fee's observation that this metaphorical usage was rare at Paul's time would also suggest πολιτεύομαι in Php 1:27 would be perceived as an active or tensive metaphor as opposed to a standard or dead one.

⁴⁴ Modern approaches to Bible translation in general evidence this tendency. See, for example, the following from Eugene Nida and William D. Reyerburn, *Meaning Across Cultures*, American Society of Missiology Series, no. 4. (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1981), 53:

In contrast with the treatment of actual historical events, the handling of figurative or illustrative reference to events and objects involves somewhat different principles and procedures of translation . . . specific reference to the act of circumcision must be introduced when a text speaks of a particular person being circumcised. But when a purely figurative use of 'circumcision' is involved, it is possible to shift the figure to a nonfigurative equivalent, especially when the original figure does not make sense in a receptor language. Similarly, in passages that speak of blood being poured on the altar, the literal substance must be referred to, but in passages in which the Scriptures speak of a Christian being 'saved by his blood,' one may translate 'saved by his death' or 'saved by his sacrificial death,' since blood is a figurative substitute for 'death.'

The substitution view of metaphor does aptly describe both synecdoche and metonymy. If "blood" were simply standing in for "death," the above description would hold. As soon as they suggest "*sacrificial death*" as a viable substitute, however, Nida and Reyerburn themselves are understanding more than mere substitution to be taking place. The fact that many contemporary translations take this stance of approximating or substituting for metaphors present in the biblical text is another good reason to consult the Hebrew and Greek. Weiss for example, laments the "tendency among certain biblical translators to transform the concrete, figurative language found in biblical narrative into abstract expressions" (*Figurative Language*, 181). In a translation, much of the unconscious and automatic work of metaphor interpretation will be removed even further from view if the metaphors in the text come pre-interpreted, as it were, prepackaged in literal language.

This is not to deny the complexity of cross-cultural metaphor interpretation that concerns Nida and Reyerburn. Though all translation is also interpretation, some translations are doing more aggressive interpreting than others. Depending on the function a particular translation is serving, such help may be useful (though I would still say that hiding metaphors as a regular practice in translation is dangerous). The preaching task requires that preachers work hard to treat the actual dynamics of the original text itself. The method of doing so (consulting multiple translations or the original languages, for example) may vary according to training or experience, but all preachers should be striving to interpret the biblical text rather than interpreting interpretations. In this endeavor, it is especially important to be aware of how much of the important dynamics of metaphor in the text tends to be translated away from a substitution perspective that says a metaphor is merely standing in for something more precise and literal. Such a limited view of metaphor has consequences for how texts are translated, understood, and preached.

The Comparison Theory: Duality at the Level of Reference

Next to, and technically as a subset of, the substitution theory, Black also describes a comparison theory of metaphor. Rather than merely substituting one metaphorical name for a literal one, the comparison theory “holds that the metaphorical statement might be replaced by an equivalent literal comparison.”⁴⁵ In a comparison, two referents are placed next to each other to see how they line up.⁴⁶ The comparison view can therefore be expressed as figure A6, below.

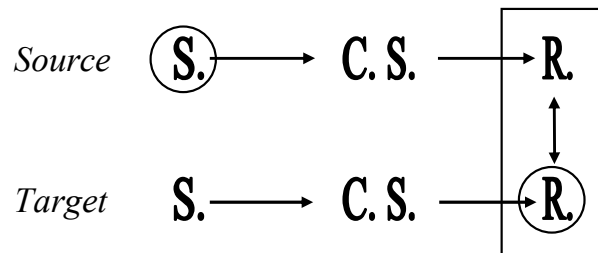


Figure A6. Comparison Theory

Black explicates the difference between the substitution and comparison views on the basis of the example, “Richard is a lion.” According to Black, a *substitution* view would suggest that

⁴⁵ Black, *Models and Metaphors*, 35.

⁴⁶ John R. Searle, “Metaphor,” in *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd ed., ed. Andrew Ortony (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 94 correctly notes that “the comparison view tries to explain metaphor as a relationship between references.” Kittay, building on Scheffler, includes a “*formulaic* approach” in her taxonomy of metaphor theories. The formulaic approach “maintains that we can analyse metaphorical interpretation by reading metaphors as implicit comparisons for which we need to supply the formula that gives us the full statement of the comparison” (*Metaphor*, 179). As Kittay demonstrates on the basis of work by Andrew Ortony (“Beyond Literal Similarity,” *Psychological Review*, vol. 86 [1979]: 161–80 and “The Role of Similarity in Similes and Metaphors,” in *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd ed., ed. Andrew Ortony [1993], 342–356), a comparison theory based on “feature-matching” as opposed to a “geometric model” of similarity (where two things are conceived of as being close to each other in space) can maintain an asymmetry or directionality in metaphor and even emphasize “domain incongruence” when features in the source and target appear to be identical (*Metaphor*, 186–92). In this case, a comparison view of metaphor becomes much more complex and shares important features with the interaction view discussed below. White also lists “polarity at the level of *reference*” as one of his four types of metaphor theory (*Structure of Metaphor*, 163). Though he reads Aristotle in this light, White’s category is nonetheless concerned with “exploring a comparison” (*ibid.*).

this sentence “means approximately the same as ‘Richard is brave.’”⁴⁷ In the terms used by this appendix, the signifier “lion” (S^S) is simply standing in for the signifier “brave” (S^T). The *comparison* view, on the other hand, makes something slightly different of the metaphor: from this perspective, “Richard is a lion” is “approximately the same as ‘Richard is *like* a lion (in being brave).”⁴⁸ The referent Richard (Referent^{Target Domain} or R^T) is being compared directly to a lion in the real world (Referent^{Source Domain} or R^S).⁴⁹

Returning to Php 1:27, a comparison approach might say that Paul is comparing living a Christian life to living as a citizen of a Roman colony, especially since Philippi itself was a Roman colony (see Acts 16:12) with the special right to be ruled as if on Roman soil.⁵⁰ The metaphor in Php 1:27 would then mean something like, “You know the pride and responsibility attached to living in a Roman colony: remember that you have a higher allegiance calling you to faithful conduct.”⁵¹

For some metaphors where the correspondences are limited and fairly straightforward, Black admits that either substitution or comparison may adequately describe what’s going on.

⁴⁷ Black, *Models and Metaphors*, 36.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Of course, this assumes that lions in the real world are actually “brave,” a presupposition that already involves a kind of anthropomorphism. Even mundane examples in metaphor theory tend to be more complex than they are usually given credit for.

⁵⁰ This legal right was called the *jus italicum* and is generally attributed to Philippi at the time of Paul. See David J. Williams, *Paul’s Metaphors: Their Context and Character* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999), 150.

⁵¹ Moisés Silva, *Philippians*, 2nd ed., Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, eds. Robert Yarborough and Robert H. Stein (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 80. See also, Williams (*Paul’s Metaphors*, 150): “Bring the same pride . . . you have in your Roman citizenship to your Christianity . . . live, as colonists do, by the laws of another place.” Williams understands the audience of Paul’s letter to be Roman citizens. This view is not universal. See F. F. Bruce, *Philippians*, Good News Commentaries, ed. W. Ward Gasque (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983), 108 and Stephen E. Fowl, *Philippians*, The Two Horizons New Testament Commentary, eds. Joel B. Green and Max Turner (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 61 for views that it would be unlikely that many (or any) of the members of the Philippian church were also citizens of Rome. The distinction between writing to Roman citizens or non-citizens in the Roman colony of Philippi changes the kind of argument (from a matter of degree, “like this, only more” to contrast, “their citizenship vs. our citizenship”) but not necessarily the structure of the metaphor.

The more complex the example, however, the more difficult it is to work with either of these views. In Php 3:20, Paul returns to the imagery of the city-state: “ἡμῶν γὰρ τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς ὑπάρχει.”⁵² An interpreter could begin to spell out the comparisons, but the question of how interpreters make decisions about what is intended and what is not intended is left unanswered: being a citizen of heaven is like being a citizen of a city-state in that both have an ultimate authority, both have distinctive ways of life, both involve groups of people (?), both can be found in foreign territories (?), both elicit a sense of pride and belonging (?), and so on.⁵³ One of the shortcomings of the comparison approach is that once a metaphor moves beyond an obvious correspondence or two, there is no available description of what may or may not fit within the kind of comparison being made.

Neither the comparison nor the substitution perspective on metaphor is a full-blown theory. Instead, both perspectives describe rather objectivist ways of treating what is now commonly held to be a much more complex linguistic and cognitive phenomenon. Though comparison and substitution views can be seen as descriptive up to a point, they are both limited by the assumption that metaphor is a stand-in, a place holder for something more precise and literal. They both conceive of metaphor as a kind of duality, but interpreting metaphor in both of these approaches involves removing or overcoming the duality: in order to get at what a speaker “really meant,” the literal term or literal comparison hiding behind the metaphor must be uncovered.⁵⁴

⁵² The shift from the verb form to a related noun is not significant on its own from a metaphor theory perspective since, as Black observes, “any part of speech can be used metaphorically (though the results are meagre [sic] and uninteresting in the case of conjunctions)” (*Models and Metaphors*, 28, n. 1).

⁵³ Williams paraphrases the metaphor in Php 3:20, “A Roman *colonus*, no matter how distant he lived from Rome, could be identified by such things as dress, language, the laws that he lived by—his lifestyle. Similarly, Christians should be identified in terms of the place to which they belong, the person to whom they owe their allegiance” (*Paul’s Metaphors*, 150).

⁵⁴ Behind each of these objectivist approaches lies a rather limited view of literal language. For this reason,

A more descriptive way of approaching the duality inherent in metaphor is to take the division of source and target domains not as an obstacle to understanding but as metaphor's defining feature. Rather than focusing on the relationship between signifiers or referents in two different domains, an approach to metaphor may instead focus on the *complex of characteristics* evoked by the use of a signifier from a source domain (S^S) for a referent in a target domain (R^T). This moves the discussion from a focus on word or reference to a consideration of metaphor at the level of thought.

Duality at the Level of Thought

Interaction Theory

I. A. Richards was concerned that the discussion of metaphor in his day was plagued by a lack of good terminology. He therefore christened technical terms designed to clarify the duality inherent in metaphor. For Richards, “when we use a metaphor we have two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word, or phrase, whose meaning is the resultant of their interaction.”⁵⁵ The “thought” appropriate to what this appendix has been calling the *source* domain Richards labels the “vehicle.” That which the metaphor is actually about, the “thought” in the *target* domain, Richards calls the “tenor.” Tenor and vehicle are equivalent to CS^S (Conceptual Signified^{Source Domain}) and CS^T (Conceptual Signified^{Target Domain}) and can therefore be represented by figure A7, below.

descriptions of metaphor that fail to account for any duality in metaphor but have a more nuanced view of language in general can actually do a better job of describing some of the complexities of metaphor than either the substitution or comparison view (see “Linear Approaches to Metaphor,” above). A nuanced view of language in general, however, is not enough to account for the mechanics of metaphor, even if it can be helpful in describing some of the pragmatics involved.

⁵⁵ I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, “Lecture V: Metaphor,” in *Philosophical Perspectives on Metaphor*, ed. Mark Johnson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), 51.

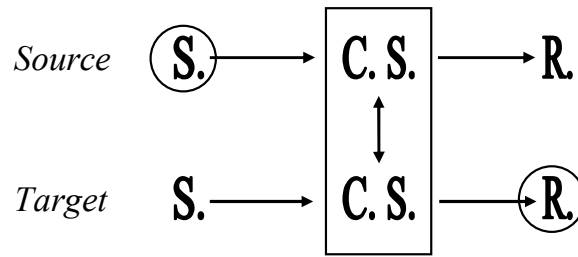


Figure A7. The Interaction Theory

Richards is not focused on words or referents, but on thoughts: “[The traditional theory] made metaphor seem to be a verbal matter, a shifting and displacement of words, whereas fundamentally it is a borrowing between and intercourse of *thoughts*, a transaction between contexts.”⁵⁶

Max Black developed Richards’ insights further and outlined what came to be known as the “interaction” theory of metaphor, a name inherited from Richards’ basic definition. Black moved away from the tenor and vehicle language of Richards and suggested “primary” and “secondary subjects” as a way of defining the duality in metaphor. As Soskice has argued, however, metaphor does not have *two* subjects; rather, *one* thing is being spoken of *in terms of* another.⁵⁷ Black’s terminology of two “subjects” seems to suggest two referents, R^S and R^T , and is foreign to Black’s actual way of treating metaphor. In fact, Black explicitly rejects both the substitution view (which focuses on two signifiers) and the comparison view (which focuses on two referents). Black’s terminology of primary and secondary subjects therefore seems at odds with his own presentation.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Richards, *Philosophy*, 51.

⁵⁷ Soskice, *Metaphor*, 20.

⁵⁸ Black’s theory and method are helpfully described in Charles Forceville, “(A)symmetry in Metaphor,” *Poetics Today* 16 (winter 1995): 677–708.

Black focuses his discussion of metaphor on the *interaction* between what this appendix has labeled CS^S and CS^T.⁵⁹ For Black, the “set of associated commonplaces”⁶⁰ appropriate for the source domain (what Black called the secondary subject) is applied to the target domain;⁶¹ these associated commonplaces, however, are modified by the very fact that they are being applied to R^T instead of R^S. This modification is what is meant by “interaction.”

Black describes interaction on the basis of the metaphor, “Man is a wolf.” Black suggests that prior knowledge of wolves is needed in order to understand this metaphor.⁶² This knowledge is “part of a system of ideas, not sharply delineated, and yet sufficiently definite to admit of detailed enumeration.” The “wolf-system of related common places” is then “made to fit” human kind, “either in normal or abnormal senses.” Thus “a suitable hearer will be led by the wolf-system of implications to construct a corresponding system of implications” about humanity which are at once “determined by the pattern of implications associated with literal uses of the word ‘wolf’” and different from “the commonplaces *normally* implied by the literal uses of ‘man.’”⁶³ Black gives an open-ended list of correspondences like “preys on other

⁵⁹ The interaction of a conceptual signified in the source with a conceptual signified in the target domain is labeled “substitution” by White. White’s “substitution” is therefore very similar to Black’s “interaction” (see White, *Structure of Metaphor*, 302, n. 7). White’s description of Black’s position sees the interaction primarily between what Black call the “focus” of a metaphor and its “frame,” that is, between the words used metaphorically in an utterance and the surrounding words being used literally (Ibid., 164–165). I understand White as taking a minor point in Black’s theory and making it central. I read Black as primarily being concerned with the complex of characteristics evoked by a signifier in the source domain and the way this complex of characteristics is changed when it is applied to a referent in the target domain, which the rest of this section seeks to make clear. These differences in interpretation go to show that labels, distinctions, and categories in metaphor theory are seldom black and white.

⁶⁰ Black, *Models and Metaphors*, 39.

⁶¹ In Black’s earlier work, he understands the primary subject (target domain) also as a set of associated commonplaces. As Forceville notes, Black’s later move away from this position is a weakness. Charles Forceville, *Pictorial Metaphor in Advertising* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 7–8. Kittay concurs. One of her “modifications” of Black’s theory includes the claim that “both the vehicle [source domain] and the topic [target domain] belong to systems, not just the vehicle” (*Metaphor*, 31).

⁶² This knowledge could be a cultural set of “associated commonplaces” or it could be knowledge given in the context of the utterance by the author or speaker (Black, *Models and Metaphors*, 39–40).

⁶³ Ibid.

animals, is fierce, hungry, engaged in constant struggle, a scavenger, and so on.”⁶⁴ In the process of interaction, the source domain shapes how interpreters think about the target: “the wolf-metaphor suppresses some details, emphasizes others—in short, *organizes* our view of man.”⁶⁵

Some have misunderstood Black’s concept of interaction as suggesting that metaphor works in both directions, that a metaphor says as much about R^S as it does about R^T .⁶⁶ Black, however, does not have reciprocity or bidirectionality in mind. In terms of the present discussion, Black recognizes that there is only one referent, R^T , though language from a different domain, S^S , is being used to speak of this single referent. The insight of interaction is that the complex of signifiers evoked by S^S *used of* R^T will be different than the complex of characteristics evoked by S^S *used of* R^S . In this sense, the set of associated commonplaces appropriate to the referent in the target domain of a metaphor will affect which associated commonplaces will be evoked by signifiers in the source. The complex of characteristics evoked by “Man is a wolf” is neither the complex of characteristics evoked by the signifier “man” nor the complex of characteristics evoked by the signifier “wolf”; rather, there is an interaction of thoughts, a *man-as-wolf* complex of characteristics or $CS^{T/S}$, the conceptual signified of the target *in terms of* the source, as in figure A8, below.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Ibid., 40–41.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 41.

⁶⁶ Both those who support and those who reject the idea that metaphor is bidirectional have misunderstood Black this way. For an example of the former, see Peter Stockwell, “The Inflexibility of Invariance,” *Language and Literature* 8 (1999): 125–142. For an example of the latter, see Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 131–133. Charles Forceville elucidates Black’s theory (and why it is easily misunderstood) in his “(A)symmetry in Metaphor” as well as *Pictorial Metaphor*. Chapter 3, above, discusses unidirectionality in more detail.

⁶⁷ In light of Voelz’s discussion of the interplay between the “vehicle story” and the “tenor story” in his section on parables (*What Does This Mean?*, 309–315) and his distinction between the referent of an utterance and a real-world referent (see n. 9, above), I take Voelz’s definition of metaphor to be more appropriately understood in terms of figure A7 rather than in terms of figure A3’. In other words, I do not read Voelz to be saying *merely*, “When language employs **metaphor**, the referent [R] is labeled by using a signifier [S] which evokes a complex of characteristics [CS] only *some of which correspond to the characteristics of the referent*.” Rather, I understand him to mean, “When language employs **metaphor**, the referent [R^T] is labeled by using a signifier [S^S]

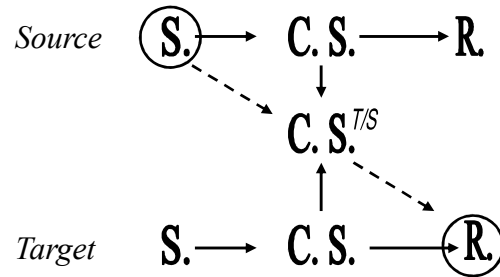


Figure A8. Interaction Made More Explicit

Figure A8 shows a signifier in the source domain being used of a referent in the target domain, thereby evoking a conceptual signified appropriate to the target-as-source, a complex of characteristics informed by CS^S as well as CS^T but reducible to neither.⁶⁸ Notice that there is still a sense of directionality involved. Though CS^T informs $CS^{T/S}$, metaphor is not *about* both the source and the target at the same time; metaphor rather speaks of a target in terms of a source.

In Php 3:20, then, Paul is speaking of Christians living their earthly lives in terms of citizens living as a part of a πολίτευμα . According to an interaction perspective, to understand this metaphor interpreters must first have a handle on the system of commonplaces typically associated with πολίτευμα for competent readers of Philippians. Interpreters who understand

which evokes a complex of characteristics [$CS^{T/S}$] only some of which correspond to the characteristics of the referent [CS^T]” (Voelz, *What Does This Mean?*, 169). This more nuanced definition better fits other nuanced views in *What Does This Mean?*, though comments on the metaphoric process involved in our understanding of reality (cited in n. 9, above) and the designation of some metaphors with high correspondence as “virtually literal” (see *What Does This Mean?*, Addendum 7-A, 176–182) do seem to take a primarily linear perspective.

⁶⁸ Black has his own shorthand that accounts for everything in figure A7 except S^T (which need not be and, indeed, most often is not present in the presentation of a metaphor) and CS^T (which Black intentionally omits): S^S corresponds with Black’s $F(E)$, that is, a metaphorical expression (E) in a linguistic context or “frame” (F); R^S corresponds to Black’s S , or “what $F(E)$ would be about if read literally”; CS^S corresponds with Black’s I or “the relevant system of implications . . . connected with S ”; R^T corresponds to Black’s P , “roughly, what the statement is ‘really’ about”; $CS^{T/S}$ is Black’s A , that is, “the resulting system of attributions . . . asserted of P ”; Black omits CS^T , though he does suggest Richards’ use of the designation *tenor* sometimes refers to “the implications connected with that subject [namely, P]” (Black, *Models*, 47, n. 23). Black suggests: “We must accept at least so much complexity if we agree that the meaning of E in its setting of F depends upon the transformation of I into A by using language, normally applied to S , to apply to P instead” (Ibid.).

Php 3:20 to have a Roman πολίτευμα in mind⁶⁹ might suggest some of the following associated commonplaces: a colony is a distinct group or territory (like the city of Philippi) that relies on a different entity or power (like Rome) for its origin and its continued existence in a foreign territory (like Macedonia). Citizenship carries with it both rights (like the *jus italicum*) and responsibilities (like civic responsibilities to the *polis* as well as a general concern for the “welfare of the state”).⁷⁰ Such citizens, belonging to their native political power while embedded in a foreign territory,⁷¹ also evidence peculiar ways of life that serve to identify them in contrast to other residents of the foreign territory in which they find themselves.⁷²

Identifying a possible or probable set of associated commonplaces, however, is only the first step. Interpreters must then ask how this structure of commonplaces related to πολίτευμα organizes their view of living a Christian life. As Black did with “Man is a wolf,” interpreters could come up with an open-ended list of the kinds of things that are likely meant by the metaphor. If Christians have their citizenship in heaven, then Christians live by a unique and distinctive set of laws; their ultimate allegiance is to the monarch of heaven; they live as a self-

⁶⁹ Another option would be to understand a reference to a Jewish πολίτευμα such as the one set up in Alexandria. Though many of the complex of characteristics would be the same, there would also be differences. In fact, some take πολίτευμα in Php 3:20 to be a politically recognized religious group like a Jewish πολίτευμα and, further, actually to have been an option suggested by Paul’s opponents which Paul is here counteracting. The argument would then go something like this: though some have suggested you Philippians should compromise the Gospel in some way in order to gain status as a legal religion or πολίτευμα, the answer to political persecution is not through such politicking but rather through being faithful to our true πολίτευμα in heaven: the answer for our suffering is a Savior from there. See the discussion in Demetrius K. Williams, *Enemies of the Cross: The Terminology of the Cross and Conflict in Philippians*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplemental Series, ed. Stanley E. Porter, no. 223 (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 228–31. Differences in understanding the associated commonplaces relevant to the source domain will naturally affect how we understand what the metaphor is saying about the target.

⁷⁰ These characteristics are all highlighted by Fee, *Paul’s Letter*, 162.

⁷¹ A sense of belonging (“Zugehörigkeit”) combined with a sense of not belonging (“Fremdheit”) characteristic of a πολίτευμα in a foreign territory (and of Christians in the world) is brought to the fore by Ulrich B. Müller, *Der Brief der Paulus an die Philipper* (Leipzig: ThHK, 1993), 179, quoted in Peter Pilhofer, *Philippi: Die erste Christliche Gemeinde Europas*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, ed. Martin Hengel and Otfried Hofius, no. 87 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1995), 127.

⁷² Williams (*Paul’s Metaphors*, 150) and Bruce (*Philippians*, 108), for example, take this feature as particularly important.

governing enclave in the midst of foreigners who live by a different set of conventions and laws; a Christian way of dress, speech, and life is distinctive; *and so on*. In effect, the metaphor shapes how Christians think about living their lives *as Christians*.

Though at times misunderstood as bidirectional, the interaction theory characteristic of Richards and Black is a great deal more nuanced than either the substitution or comparison view of metaphor. Metaphor is no longer seen as a literal proposition dressed up in fancy rhetorical clothes which can easily be replaced by a more proper literal statement or comparison.⁷³ Instead, metaphor becomes a cognitive as well as imaginative process that is never reducible to a simple, literal paraphrase.⁷⁴ One of the strengths of this approach is that it accounts for the way metaphor can function to shape thinking, perceiving, or experiencing, not just speaking. As a general account of metaphor, it highlights important parts of the interpretive process.

Though the interaction view recognizes more of the complexity of metaphor, it also leaves important questions unanswered. What does the structure of associated commonplaces look like and how do interpreters know? How does the structure of associated commonplaces in the source interact with the structure of associated commonplaces in the target? What guides this interaction? How do interpreters make decisions about what is germane to a metaphor and what is not? Though Richards and Black are the first in the modern era to focus on metaphor at the level of thought,⁷⁵ they are certainly not the last.

⁷³ Black himself suggests that some metaphors may be sufficiently understood in terms of the comparison or even substitution view of metaphor; in this case, these metaphors can be paraphrased in literal language without loss of cognitive content. Any metaphor worth its salt, however, needs the more plenary descriptive power of interaction. See Black, *Models and Metaphors*, 45–46.

⁷⁴ “Interaction-metaphors,” according to Black, “are not expendable. Their mode of operation requires the reader to use a system of implications (a system of ‘commonplaces’—or a special system established for the purpose in hand) as a means for selecting, emphasizing, and organizing relations in a different field.” Black sees this interaction as “a distinctive intellectual operation . . . demanding simultaneous awareness of both subjects but not reducible to any comparison between the two” (*Models and Metaphors*, 46).

⁷⁵ Though often described as the father of the substitution view of metaphor, Aristotle could also be heralded as

Cognitive Linguistics

The cognitive linguistics approach to metaphor characterized by the work of George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, and Mark Turner⁷⁶ is treated more fully in chapters 4 and 5 of the dissertation. Like the interaction theory, the Lakoff-Johnson-Turner approach holds that metaphor mapping takes place at the level of thought and only in one direction, from the source to the target.⁷⁷ Also consistent with the interaction view is the focus on metaphor as a duality of thought. In fact, from the cognitive linguistic perspective, metaphor is *primarily* a matter of thought and experience and only secondarily a matter of language. For this reason, the Lakoff-Johnson-Turner approach is more concerned with the structure of conceptual systems, which shape metaphor production and interpretation, than with the explication of any particular metaphorical utterance in any particular context. Specific utterances are seen as instantiations of conceptual mappings between domains.⁷⁸

In terms of the semiotic model used in this appendix, Lakoff, Johnson, and Turner are not concerned with *particular* signifiers or referents in any particular utterance, but with the way the structure of the broader conceptual system accounts for a variety of particular ways of speaking.

the progenitor of interaction: “Even if Aristotle himself is ambiguous (as some claim) or inconsistent on his point, the notion of linguistic *interaction* is more important and more central to what Aristotle seeks to say than that of substitution.” Anthony C. Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 353.

⁷⁶ Lakoff and Johnson relate their study of metaphor to the broader field of cognitive linguistics: “Metaphor Theory is a central subdiscipline of the field of cognitive linguistics, which seeks to provide explanatory foundations for conceptual systems and language in the general study of the brain and the mind. As such, it draws on, and seeks to integrate, recent work in cognitive psychology, cognitive neuroscience, and developmental psychology to form a unified picture that can explain as many aspects of language as possible” (*Metaphors We Live By*, 270).

⁷⁷ Lakoff, Johnson, and Turner also recognize the phenomena described above as “interaction” (source and target domains may cause mutual modification for the purpose of mapping), though the description of this dynamic by these different authors in different locations is neither consistent nor sufficient. A contributing factor for this chink in the armor of the Lakoff-Johnson-Turner approach may be the fact that they work with an inferior form of the interaction theory. They take interaction to be the claim that metaphor works in both directions, and therefore reject interaction outright (see chapter 3, n. 34, p. 89, above).

⁷⁸ “Metaphor is not just a matter of language, but of thought and reason. The language is secondary. The mapping is primary, in that it sanctions the use of source domain language and inference patterns for target domain concepts.” George Lakoff, “The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor,” in *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd ed., ed. Andrew Ortony (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 208.

Figure A9, below, shows a focus on cross-domain mapping in a structured conceptual system, a mapping that may be evidenced by any number of different signifiers or referents.

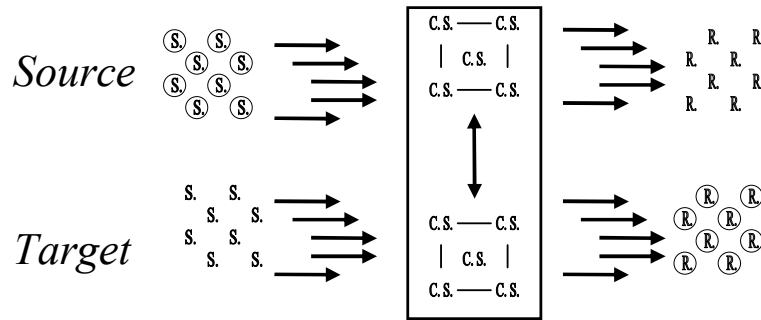


Figure A9. Cognitive Linguistics

The conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY, used in chapter 4 of the dissertation, is a primary example of this approach.⁷⁹ In all caps, LIFE IS A JOURNEY does not signify any single metaphorical utterance in particular but rather a range of utterances that adhere to the same structured mapping from the source domain of JOURNEY to the target domain of LIFE. Utterances that describe people as “making their way in life,” “getting sidetracked,” “needing some direction,” all instantiate the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY.⁸⁰

The focus here is not on the way people talk, but on what the way people talk reveals about the way they think: “To understand life as a journey is to have in mind, consciously or more likely unconsciously, a correspondence between a traveler and a person living the life, the road traveled and the ‘course’ of a lifetime, a starting point and the time of birth, and so on.”⁸¹

Moreover, the way people think is *structured*: “The structure of our knowledge of journeys can

⁷⁹ See pp. 105–117, above.

⁸⁰ Lakoff and Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 3.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 61.

be seen as having well-differentiated components such as travelers, a starting point, a path, impediments, and so on; some are required and some, like destinations, vehicles, companions, and guides, are optional.”⁸² Figure A8, above, therefore shows a structure in CS^S, indicated by connecting lines, which, according to this cognitive linguistic approach, maps onto and can also provide structure for CS^T. The particular signifiers and referents used to express the conceptual mapping from CS^S to CS^T are not as important as this conceptual structuring at the level of thought that stands behind and enables any particular utterance.⁸³ Metaphor interpretation, to this way of thinking, involves mapping general structure as well as specific features from a structured source domain to a second conceptual domain, the target. In ordinary usage, this conceptual mapping often goes unnoticed, since it happens automatically and unconsciously.⁸⁴ The task of the metaphor theorist, then, is to uncover the culturally and experientially determined⁸⁵ structure of source domains on the basis of linguistic evidence and to explore how our conceptual system tends to map across domains.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Line Brandt and Per Aage Brandt note that “the practical application of [conceptual metaphor theory] does not concern the analysis of what metaphors mean but concerns the uncovering of underlying conceptual metaphors in metaphoric discourse.” Line Brandt and Per Aage Brandt, “Making Sense of a Blend: A Cognitive-Semiotic Approach to Metaphor,” Center for Semiotics, University of Aarhus, http://www.hum.au.dk/semiotics/docs2/faculty/private_linebrandt.html (accessed 20 Feb 2007), 37. Similarly, Kittay suggests: “Lakoff and Johnson’s account is not really a theory of metaphor interpretation. They are more concerned with demonstrating the prevalence of metaphor in our language and conceptual schemes than with the question of how we interpret a metaphorical utterance when we encounter one” (*Metaphor*, 186).

⁸⁴ “Metaphor is a tool so ordinary that we use it unconsciously and automatically, with so little effort that we hardly notice it” (Lakoff and Turner, *More Than Cool Reason*, xi).

⁸⁵ Both culture and experience are identified as contributing factors in determining the shape of our conceptual structure. Indeed, the argument that our concepts are shaped in part by the kind of bodies and minds we have as human beings is one of the central contributions of this general approach. See, for example, Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh*. Experience, however, is granted a more prominent role than culture. Lakoff and Johnson, for example, can say, “since our brains are embodied, our metaphors will reflect our commonplace experiences in the world. Inevitably, many primary metaphors are universal because everybody has basically the same kinds of bodies and brains and lives in basically the same kinds of environments” (*Metaphors We Live By*, 257). Though the literature as a whole is usually careful to use the terminology of “near-universal” rather than “universal,” the way our experience (and therefore the structure of our metaphors) is shaped culturally needs more attention. See Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor in Culture: Universality and Variation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) for an example of a start in this direction.

Returning to the Philippians examples, a cognitive linguistic approach would take Php 1:27 and 3:20 together and see how these utterances fit with other ways of speaking and therefore other ways of thinking. While the more common Pauline metaphor for living a life, περιπατέω,⁸⁶ would fit well with the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY, Php 3:20 could also be taken as an instantiation of LIFE IS A JOURNEY since LIFE IS A JOURNEY includes a particular metaphorical understanding of the end of a life, namely, that DEATH IS GOING TO A FINAL DESTINATION.⁸⁷ Singing “I’m But a Stranger Here” as the hymn of the day when Php 3:20 is read connects Php 3:20 to the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY.⁸⁸ This hymn selection takes “our citizenship is in heaven” to be roughly equivalent to “heaven is my home,” a good example of DEATH IS GOING TO A FINAL DESTINATION.⁸⁹

These verses, however, also evidence other conceptual metaphors. The concept of citizenship *in* heaven is related to conceptualizing geographical areas as containers and political groups of people as physical, geographic areas (and therefore also as containers): people can be “in” a city, get thrown “out of” a political group, or be a “resident alien” “in” their earthly life (see 1 Peter 2:11). These mappings are resonant with conceptual metaphors like BOUNDED

⁸⁶ As Fowl, *Philippians*, 60 notes, “It would be much more common for Paul to use a verb like ‘walk’ (cf. Rom 13:13; Eph 4:1; Col 1:10; 1 Thess 2:12; 4:12).”

⁸⁷ DEATH IS GOING TO A FINAL DESTINATION is treated in Lakoff and Turner, *More*, 7.

⁸⁸ As but one example, *The Lutheran Service Book Hymn Selection Guide* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2006), 70, connects “I’m But A Stranger Here” to Php 3:20 and suggests it be used for Lent 2, Series C, the day on which Php 3:17–21 is read as the Epistle Lesson. Homiletical helps based on Php 3:20 provide further evidence that heavenly citizenship is readily understood in terms of DEATH IS GOING TO A FINAL DESTINATION. A single example will suffice: “If there are members of the congregation who have moved back to their home state to retire, this could be an analogy for persons who live in this world but whose commonwealth is heaven, to which they will go at death.” Perry H. Biddle, *Lectionary Preaching Workbook: Series II* (Lima, Ohio: C.S.S. Publishing, 1988), 121.

⁸⁹ See also Justin Rossow, “If Jesus ‘Came Down from Heaven,’ Where Does That Leave Me?” *Concordia Journal* 32 (October 2006): 388–395 for a brief treatment of how conceptual metaphors like DEATH IS GOING TO A FINAL DESTINATION or GOOD IS UP can cause us to misread the Bible.

AREAS ARE CONTAINERS or SOCIAL GROUPS ARE CONTAINERS⁹⁰ as well as LIFE IS A JOURNEY.

Because Php 1:17 and 3:20 can be combined with other biblical passages like 1 Peter 2:9–11, a cognitive linguistic approach might also see these Philippians passages as part of a broader conceptual system in which CHRISTIANS ARE A PEOPLE GROUP, THE CHURCH IS A CHOSEN NATION, or THE CHURCH IN SOCIETY IS A PEOPLE IN EXILE.⁹¹

This kind of analysis is not primarily concerned with explicating the meaning of Php 1:17 or 3:20 in the context of Philippians, but rather with describing the kinds of conceptual structure and mappings that allow instances like Php 1:17 or 3:20 to take place. Since the focus of a cognitive perspective is heavily on *thought* rather than *utterance*,⁹² the important role the actual context of an utterance plays in guiding interpretation is often granted but rarely explored.⁹³

Like interaction theory, the cognitive linguistic perspective views metaphor as complex and structured. Some of the same kinds of questions left unanswered by the interaction approach, however, can again be raised of the Lakoff-Johnson-Turner descriptions of metaphor interpretation: What does the structure of the source or target domain look like? How do interpreters make decisions about what kinds of things get mapped and what kinds of things

⁹⁰ Lakoff and Johnson describe “container metaphors” like BOUNDED AREAS ARE CONTAINERS (*Metaphors We Live By*, 29–30) as well as “SOCIAL GROUPS ARE CONTAINERS” (59–60).

⁹¹ These are all conceptual metaphors Bonnie Howe finds in 1 Peter (see *Because*, Appendix to Chapter 9, 367 for a list containing these and other examples). In my list, I have reversed Howe’s “Exile is The Church in Society” because I take it to be a slip of the pen: the *source* domain is exile, the target is the Church in society, as Howe herself explains elsewhere (*Because*, 269, for example).

⁹² Though proponents of this theory tend to focus on the conceptual metaphors evidenced by actual utterances, they are also aware that while our conceptual structure shapes the way we speak, the opposite is also true. See for example Howe’s comment: “Cultural beliefs are both *products* of conceptual blending and powerful shaping *forces* in conceptual metaphor and other mental space blends” (*Because*, 93, emphasis original).

⁹³ Related to an insufficient concern for context is the critique that this cognitive linguistic approach fails to give an adequate account of how metaphor interpretation actually happens “on-line,” that is, in actual communicative situations: “Lakoff and Turner’s approach to metaphor is to focus on the way in which concepts are structured. They do not have a semantic-pragmatics distinction and they do not explain how metaphorical utterances are interpreted on-line. The assumption seems to be that meanings are retrieved directly . . . What is missing from Lakoff and Turner (1989) is an account of how we get from what is taken from memory to what is understood to have been communicated” (Pilkington, *Poetic Effects*, 110).

don't? What is guiding or constraining metaphor interpretation or production as specific instances of conceptual metaphors are being used or understood?⁹⁴ Although the technique of describing structure or mappings based on the evidence of a range of metaphorical utterances provides very helpful examples and analysis, by its very nature this approach leaves unaddressed the question of *why these particular mappings and not others*, because the mappings evidenced by a range of related utterances are taken as a *starting point* for descriptive analysis rather than the *end result* of a cognitive and imaginative process.

Blend Theory

A more recent development in cognitive linguistics is an approach that is concerned with cognitive blending in general rather than with metaphor in particular.⁹⁵ Blend theory suggests that as part of the natural functioning of our minds, human beings take information or experiences from multiple “mental spaces”⁹⁶ and blend them together to make decisions, imagine possibilities, understand reality, and the like.⁹⁷ For example, a nautical magazine reported a 1993

⁹⁴The example LIFE IS A JOURNEY used in chapter 4, above, includes a range of correspondences like “the person leading a life is a traveler,” “purposes are destinations,” “the means for achieving purposes are routes,” “difficulties in life are impediments to travel,” and so on (Lakoff and Turner, *More*, 3–4). The point here is not to contradict (or even dispute) this list, but to ask where this list comes from. How do we know these kinds of things fit and others don't? Joseph E. Grady, “Foundations of Meaning: Primary Metaphors and Primary Scenes,” (Ph. D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1997) notices the same blind spot and suggests his own answer to the problem.

⁹⁵ Blend theory is generally taken as complementary to the original work of Lakoff, Johnson, and Turner. Kövecses (*Metaphor*, 227), for example, takes it this way as do Joseph E. Grady, Todd Oakley, and Seana Coulson, “Blending and Metaphor” in *Metaphor in Cognitive Linguistics: Selected Papers from the Fifth International Cognitive Linguistics Conference, Amsterdam, July 1997*, Current Issues in Linguistic Theory, ed. Gerard Steen and Raymond Gibbs (Philadelphia: John Benjamins) 1999. Others, however, have suggested that Blend Theory and cognitive metaphor theory are contradictory, not compatible. See Line Brandt and Per Aage Brandt, “Making Sense of a Blend,” for example.

⁹⁶ “Mental spaces are small conceptual packets constructed as we think and talk, for purposes of local understanding and action . . . Mental spaces are very partial. They contain elements and are typically structured by frames. They are interconnected, and can be modified as thought and discourse unfold.” Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 40.

⁹⁷ Howe, *Because*, 85, n. 61, identifies Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, “Conceptual Projection and Middle Spaces,” *USCB Cognitive Science Technical Report* (1994) as the first presentation of blend theory. Other

voyage from San Francisco to Boston in relationship to a voyage made by a different vessel in 1853 with the same destination and port of origin. The two different voyages were spoken of together in terms of a race, as if the two different journeys on different occasions were a single event. Though this event never actually took place, the blend allows inferences, conclusions, evaluations, and expectations to form: mental space blending has taken place.⁹⁸ Although it doesn't explicate the entire theory, a basic blending diagram helps demonstrate this approach and how it relates to metaphor. See figure A10, below.

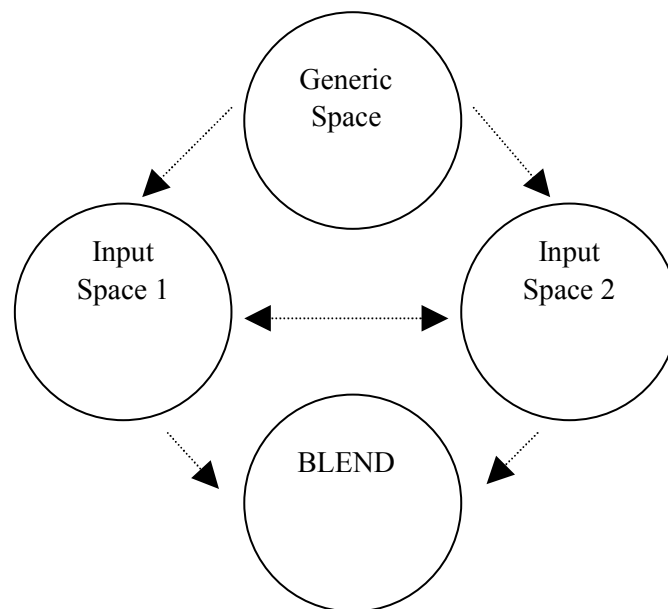


Figure A10. Metaphor and Blend Theory⁹⁹

significant works include Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*; Turner, *The Literary Mind*; and Gilles Fauconnier, *Mappings in Thought and Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

⁹⁸ This example, taken from a report in the sailing magazine *Latitude 38*, is used in Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think* (63–65), and in Turner, *The Literary Mind*, 67–71.

⁹⁹ Source: Bonnie Howe, *Because*, 87. A slightly more complex version is provided by Fauconnier (*Mappings*, 151).

According to blend theory, cognitive blending includes two or more input spaces, a generic space, and a blended space. The generic space includes what the input spaces have in common.¹⁰⁰ The blended space, on the other hand, imports (and sometimes combines) elements from all of the input spaces into a blend that has its own “emergent structure” and unique logic.¹⁰¹

Blend theory explains metaphor by treating the source and target domains as input spaces and the resulting metaphorical structure and implications as a blended space.¹⁰² In terms of the semiotic language used in this appendix, CS^S is one input space, CS^T is another input space, and CS^{T/S} is result of “running the blend.” Like cognitive metaphor theory, blend theory is more interested in a description of a *cognitive* capability rather than the specific signifiers or referents which demonstrate the capability. Figure A11, below, combines these considerations in a way that brings blend theory into relationship with the other descriptions of metaphor in the appendix.

¹⁰⁰ Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*, 41.

¹⁰¹ “The blend develops emergent structure that is not in the inputs. . . . *composition* of elements from the inputs makes relations available in the blend that do not exist in the separate inputs” (Ibid., 42). The result of this combination of elements from different mental spaces is that “familiar structure is recruited into the blended space” which allows us to “elaborate” or “run the [blend] scenario dynamically,” giving us insight that was unavailable apart from the blend (Ibid., 43–44). In the nautical example given above, the two vessels from different time periods are projected from their different input spaces into a blended space. The familiar “frame” or scenario of a race is then imported to relate the two. The result of “running the blend” would be the ability to evaluate speed and distance traveled by the contemporary vessel in terms of the speed and distance traveled by the 19th century vessel; in the blend, the first can be “ahead of” or “behind” the second, though there is no actual race. The crew can even experience “winning” or “losing” a race that exists only in the blend. See Turner, *The Literary Mind*, 68.

¹⁰² See, for example, the description of metaphor by Fauconnier: “Metaphor is a salient and pervasive cognitive process that links conceptualization and language. It depends crucially on cross-space mapping between two inputs (the Source and the Target). This makes it a prime candidate for the construction of blends, and indeed we find that blended spaces play a key role in metaphorical mappings. That is, in addition to the familiar Source and Target of metaphorical projection, blends are constructed in which important cognitive work gets accomplished” (*Mappings*, 168).

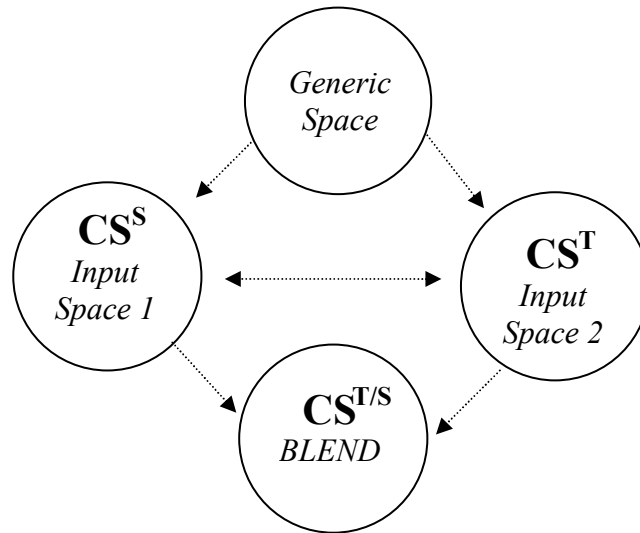


Figure A11. Blend Theory à la Saussure

As the blended space, $CS^{T/S}$ becomes the central feature of the cognitive operation behind metaphor. A blend theory perspective Php 3:20 demonstrates that different understandings of metaphor account for different parts of an utterance in different ways. A blending account of Php 3:20 might look something like figure A12, below.¹⁰³

¹⁰³ For a detailed diagram of the metaphor “this surgeon is a butcher” see Grady, Oakley, Coulson, “Blending and Metaphor.” Howe also uses a blend diagram to describe the metaphor of devil as both a prowling lion and a court-room adversary in 1 Peter 5:8 (*Because*, 87). There, Howe is demonstrating how a source domain can be a blend of two domains rather than showing cross-domain mapping. In other words, Howe does not include the target domain of the metaphor in her blend diagram.

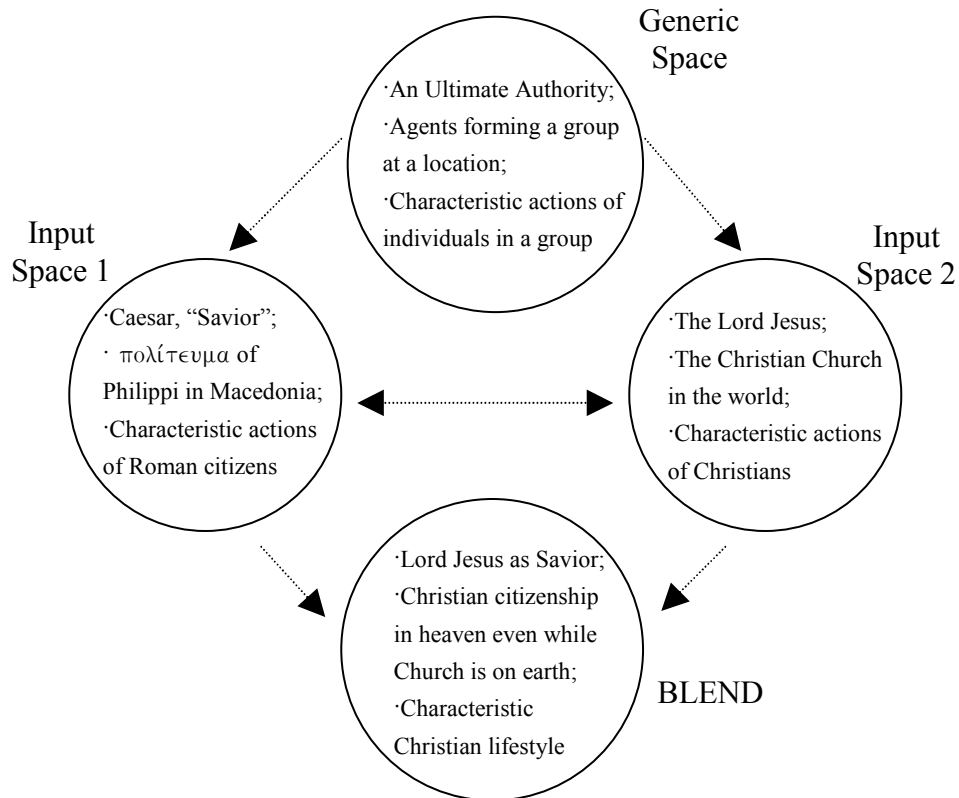


Figure A12. πολίτευμα Blend

Input Space 1, the source domain, contains things like Caesar as the ultimate authority who could also be designated by the term “savior,”¹⁰⁴ as well as the city of Philippi with its special status as πολίτευμα and the Roman citizens who live there and have their own peculiar way of dressing and speaking and acting as well as their own sets of laws and legal proceedings. Input Space 2, the target domain of the metaphor, includes things that belong to the situation of the Church at Philippi, namely, the lordship of Jesus, a group of believers who find themselves yet in the world, and the kind of actions and way of life Paul is advocating by his own example in his

¹⁰⁴ See n. 107, below.

letter to the Philippians.¹⁰⁵ The generic space includes what these two spaces have in common, namely some ultimate authority or ruler, a discrete people group within a broader population or region, and the typical actions that identify this group as distinct or unique.¹⁰⁶

The blended space gives us the actual language of the metaphor, where Christian people living in the midst of non-Christians are designated as “citizens of heaven,” something only possible in the blend since heaven is not literally a physical location or political state that can have citizens. The blend is designed to help the Philippians understand and reason about their current situation and to see their own moral action and lifestyle as being exemplary of the kind of people they are and reflective of the ultimate authority to whom they swear allegiance. In this context, even the term “savior” for Jesus could be understood as a part of the blend. Though Jesus can be called savior in other places in light of the OT witness or his own saving actions, in a context where “savior” is also a political title for Caesar,¹⁰⁷ we could understand Jesus as having a political title that identifies him as the ultimate authority in the blend, though Jesus does not hold any earthly political office in the input space.

Blend theory includes both structure and relationships in the input spaces as well as in the generic and blended spaces much the same way cognitive metaphor theory holds that

¹⁰⁵ Fee includes elements of both of these input spaces in his description of Php 3:20 (*Paul’s Letter*, 162). Furthermore, Fee’s discussion of the obligation or responsibilities of Roman citizens and Christians is reflected in the use of an ultimate authority in both input spaces. For the sake of space in figure A11, the ultimate authority is standing in for a sense of origin and obligation.

¹⁰⁶ Justification for including particular elements in any of the input spaces or for making the move from the input spaces to the generic space is not generally given in typical examples of blend theory in the literature.

¹⁰⁷ The title of “savior” for Caesar isn’t the only political/military allusion that may be present in the blend. Besides suggesting “savior,” Joseph A. Marchal, based on others’ research, also suggests a connection to “the imperial cult” in which the “gospel” refers to “the good news of an important military victory or the rise of a new emperor (who often bears the title [σωτήρ])” as well as (in 1:27) “ἀξίως” as a reference to “excellence in combat” and “τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου” as “a soldier’s pledge of allegiance to the general and the emperor.” Joseph A. Marchal, *Hierarchy, Unity, and Imitation: A Feminist Rhetorical Analysis of Power Dynamics in Paul’s Letter to the Philippians*, Academia Biblica, no. 24 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 30–31. Fowl, on the other hand, recognizes the fact that Caesar can be called “savior,” but nonetheless understands the term in Php 3:20 first and foremost as “ascribing to Jesus a role and status which the OT reserves for God alone” and then, in a second move, as setting up Jesus as the Christians’ counterpart to the emperor (*Philippians*, 174).

cross-domain mappings are structured. Some recurring questions crop up again here: What does this cognitive structure look like? How do interpreters know? Why place *these particular features* in the generic space or the blended space *and not others*? Like the interaction and cognitive linguistic views above, blend theory makes decisions about what interpreters can legitimately include or exclude from consideration without making this decision-making process evident.

Understanding the duality of metaphor primarily at the level of thought has important implications for what a theory can account for well and where its descriptive power begins to break down. Though both cognitive metaphor theory and blend theory are more complex than interaction theory, both of these also move further away from a concern for the understanding of particular metaphorical utterances in their particular contexts. All three of these approaches also deal with the structure of multiple domains or input spaces and make decisions about what kinds of things should be included in analysis or interpretation without making explicit how those kinds of decisions are guided or constrained.

Duality at the Level of Situation Assumed by the Utterance

A focus on particular utterances in their particular linguistic settings and a concern for how interpretative decisions are guided and constrained both fit with an approach to metaphor that describes the structure and mapping of metaphorical thought as a *situation* in the target domain being understood in terms of a *situation* in the source. Such a narrative perspective on metaphor is not entirely new. Chapter 2, above, notes some suggestions from within the cognitive linguistic and blend theory approaches that narrative and metaphor are somehow related in an important way.¹⁰⁸ From a more linear perspective, David E. Rumelhart claims that the

¹⁰⁸ See chapter 2, pp. 36–37, above.

interpretation of metaphor, like the interpretation of literal language, hinges on what he calls “schemata,” which are used to account for the “situation” assumed by an utterance, giving both *structure* and *narrative* as key dynamics in metaphor.¹⁰⁹ Closer to the theory of Richards and Black, Roger White understands metaphor as “a conflation of two implied sentences . . . simultaneously presenting the reader with two different *situations* in juxtaposition.”¹¹⁰ The idea that metaphor is somehow connected to narrative or a narrative situation is not unique to this dissertation.¹¹¹

What is unique, however, is the suggestion that the structure of metaphor is a narrative structure and that the narrative implied by a metaphor guides and constrains the act of interpretation. In order to demonstrate the importance of the “situation” seminal to metaphor, this closing section will look briefly at the approach suggested by Roger White¹¹² before relating the narrative approach advocated by the dissertation to the language and examples of the rest of the appendix.

¹⁰⁹ David E. Rumelhart, “Some Problems with the Notion of Literal Meanings,” in *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd ed., ed. Andrew Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 71–82.

¹¹⁰ White, *Structure of Metaphor*, 168.

¹¹¹ See also the discussion of narrative and metaphor in homiletics, chapter 1, above, pp. 34–36. The earliest example I have seen of the suggestion that metaphor depends on the narrative setting of the source domain comes from Cyril of Alexandria (ca. 378–ca. 444 AD). Commenting on Jesus’ words in Jn 4:35 (“I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see how the fields are already white for harvest”), Cyril paraphrases Jesus: “That is, lift up the eye of your understanding a little from earthly affairs and behold that the spiritual sowing has whitened, as if already progressing to the threshing floor, and calls the reaper’s sickle to itself. By the likeness to the events in the narrative (τῶν ἐν ἱστορίᾳ πραγμάτων), you will see the meaning. You should understand the spiritual sowing and the multitude of spiritual ears to be those who were tilled before-hand by the voice of the prophets and brought into the coming faith by Christ . . .” Pusey 3:295.26—296.15, quoted in David Maxwell, “The Search for a Legitimate Figural Reading of Scripture,” unpublished document, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 2007. For Cyril, the “events in the narrative” of harvesting are key to understanding Jesus’ metaphor.

¹¹² Though White is nowhere near as widely known or used as most of the rest of the authors in this appendix (Richards, Black, Lakoff, Johnson, Turner), he still provides an important insight into the dynamics of metaphor interpretation from a narrative perspective. His method has also been appropriated for biblical scholarship in Weiss, *Figurative Language*.

Roger White: Primary and Secondary Situations

Using and critiquing the work of both Richards and Black, Roger M. White suggests a way of describing metaphor that hinges on how interpreters understand the situation implied by the utterance.¹¹³ For White, metaphor is a “conflation” between two sentences, a primary and a secondary one.¹¹⁴ Metaphor interpretation is a matter not only of finding the right (kind of) secondary sentence, but also understanding the situation assumed by both the primary and secondary sentences. White uses the metaphor, “He *bridled* his anger” as an example.

To get at the primary and secondary sentences, White first identifies which parts of the metaphor belong to which domain (or which “sentence” in White’s terms) and then creates “two open sentences, one containing only the primary vocabulary and the other, only the secondary vocabulary, with variables inserted in the place of the missing elements.”¹¹⁵ “He bridled his anger,” can be represented by two sentences that contain only those elements that belong to their respective domains:

Primary: He *x* his anger.
Secondary: *Y* bridles *z*.¹¹⁶

The next step is to “create two complete sentences: the primary sentence that describes the *actual situation* and the secondary sentence that describes the *hypothetical situation* to which the actual situation is being compared.”¹¹⁷ What is the “actual situation” expressed by this

¹¹³ White, *The Structure of Metaphor*.

¹¹⁴ This terminology echoes Black’s primary and secondary subjects and is susceptible to the same kind of critique, namely, that in metaphor we are speaking only about *one* thing, though we are speaking of one thing in terms of another. In practice, however, White (like Black) does not treat metaphor as involving two subjects or as working bidirectionally.

¹¹⁵ Weiss, *Figurative Language*, 87 summarizing White 78–79.

¹¹⁶ Weiss, *Figurative Language*, 88.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 87.

metaphor? What kind of “hypothetical situation” might include someone bridling something for some purpose? For “he bridles his anger,” White offers the following:

He checks his anger
The rider bridles his horse
He bridles his anger¹¹⁸

White admits that the vehicle (or source domain) “horse” is not present in the text. The thought expressed by the metaphor, however, requires something that it seems natural to bridle: “For most of us, bridling a horse is far and away the most familiar case of bridling. Maybe someone in North Africa would detect an allusion here to a camel in the same automatic way that we detect a horse.”¹¹⁹ In this way, White recognizes the roles culture and experience play in filling in the blanks left by a metaphor. Furthermore, White suggests that there are a “variety of reasons for which we put a bridle upon a horse.” In fact, without changing the secondary sentence, White suggests different possible *situations* behind the metaphor:

- i A cowboy at a rodeo breaking an untamed horse.
- ii A farmer harnessing a cart horse.
- iii A jockey preparing a racehorse for a race.¹²⁰

In this case, the *situation* to which the metaphor refers in the target domain functions to limit the possible *situations* that could potentially stand behind the understanding of the source domain: “If we almost automatically choose (i) among these, it is not because we are constrained by the words of the text to do so, but because this gives us the best picture of the man restraining himself when angry.” In fact, White argues, a different metaphor might have the same secondary *sentence* while understanding a different secondary *situation*. “He bridles his imagination,”

¹¹⁸ White, *Structure*, 93.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 93–94.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 94.

brings this comment from White: “An ‘unbridled’ imagination suggests, not one that threatens uncontrolled destruction, but one that wanders unproductively from idea to idea. Hence, the idea of the powerful arab being brought under control so as to be enabled to complete its task becomes the most natural way to hear the metaphor.”¹²¹ In other words, a different target domain with a different implied situation results in a different implied situation being highlighted in the source domain.

Along with (1) what seems “natural and familiar” based on culture and experience and (2) the dynamics of the situation understood in the target domain, White also adds (3) “linguistic context” to the list of ways in which interpreters are “guided” in finding an appropriate secondary sentence and situation assumed by the metaphor. In this way, White’s concern for the thought-nature of metaphorical comprehension and production does not outweigh his concern for factors that help shape the interpretive process, including both cultural convention and the development of the text itself. White still allows for a kind of interaction—“As a result of such a conflation [between primary and secondary sentences], we are invited to explore a network of similarities and dissimilarities between the two situations, and see the one situation in terms of the other situation, to see it as if it were the other situation.”¹²²—but this cognitive interaction is being shaped by the dynamics of a *situation* implicit in both the source and the target. Combining these features with the semiotic diagram used throughout this appendix, figure A13, below offers a way of thinking about White’s approach to primary and secondary situations and metaphor theory.

¹²¹ Ibid., 94–95.

¹²² Ibid., 80.

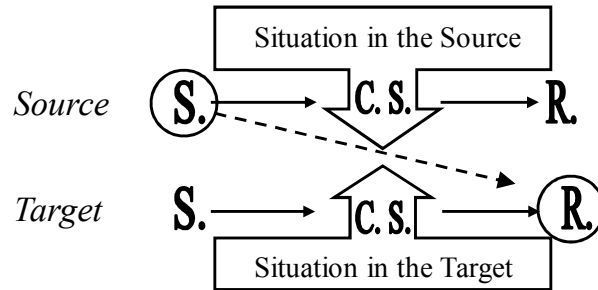


Figure A13. Situations Implied by the Utterance in the Source and Target

The application of White’s approach to the metaphor of citizenship in Php 3:20 begins with the identification of two sentences with variables that express the two different kinds of language combined in the metaphorical sentence.

Primary (target) sentence: Our *x* is in heaven.
 Secondary (source) sentence: Our citizenship is in *y*.

A reasonable approximation of the two sentences being conflated in the metaphor must be created on the basis of cultural and textual factors.

Our ultimate authority and hope is in heaven
Our citizenship is in Rome
Our citizenship is in heaven

As an initial approximation of the metaphor, this approach seems to suffer from a substitution view of metaphor, where “citizenship” is simply standing in for “ultimate authority and hope.” White’s method can also feel rather convoluted in practice and neither particularly user-friendly nor descriptive.¹²³ The payoff in White’s approach, however, is not in the basic

¹²³ Weiss, for example, can find the application of White’s method “awkward” (*Figurative Language*, 112), at times failing to “capture the thrust” of a metaphor (117). Weiss also points out the failure of White’s method of composing a secondary sentence when dealing with “construct phrases like ‘bundle of the living’ [1 Sam 25:29]” (115) or “metaphorical predications, metaphors in the form ‘*A* is a *B*’” (118). Nonetheless, for Weiss, “the awkward integration of such phrases does not overshadow the insights uncovered in the process of employing White’s approach to biblical metaphor” (115).

method of finding a secondary *sentence* but in the concern for the *situation* behind the source and the target, a situation informed by cultural and textual issues.¹²⁴ Returning to the text with White's method in mind, interpreters might ask what kind of situation requires a *citizen* to be *longing* for a *savior*. Is there any cultural or experiential situation for Paul or his hearers that might indicate a relationship between *citizenship* and *rescue*? Without losing the unique way of life that seems to fit with the context of the metaphor, can an interpretation also account for "eagerly awaiting a savior from there" who will bring ultimate victory?

Thinking in these terms might lead interpreters to consider situations in which Roman citizens might expect or hope for military rescue or intervention *because of their status as Roman citizens*. In fact, the book of Acts records just such a situation in the life of Paul when, by virtue of his status as a Roman citizen, he is rescued from an angry mob and even given a military escort out of town to ensure his safety (Acts 22–23). An interpreter with this kind of situation in mind will not very likely read "our citizenship is in heaven" as "heaven is my home." Instead, the eschatological hope of ultimate resurrection victory present in the context of Php 3:20 comes to the fore. Such a confidence in and longing for rescue is present in the text but easily hidden if Roman citizenship is considered in the abstract instead of within the *situation* understood by the source domain of the utterance *in its context*.

In other words, White's method suggests that interpreters not only find an approximation of sentences which describe both the source and the target domains, but that they choose between possible situations suggested by the text. Just as bridling a horse in the example above could be

¹²⁴ Weiss too notices "the dissonance between the hypothetical situation and the secondary sentence" in White's approach (*Figurative Language*, 118). Like Weiss, I find White's hypothetical situation more insightful than the grammatically constrained secondary sentence.

understood in terms of different kinds of situations, so Roman citizenship has different implications depending on the citizen's situation:

- i A Roman citizen in Rome taking part in a legal proceeding in Rome.
- ii A Roman citizen in Philippi dressing, acting, or going to court as if in Rome.
- iii A Roman citizen threatened by non-citizens in a Roman territory where Roman military intervention is necessary to secure the citizen's safety.

Of course, interpreters could extend this list *ad infinitum*—or at least *ad nauseum*—by placing Roman citizens or citizenship in other contexts or situations. The point here (and this is White's primary insight from a narrative perspective) is that in the process of understanding the metaphor of citizenship in Php 3:20, interpreters are by default choosing *some* probable situation that fits the context (as well as the target domain) and guides how the metaphor is understood. Most of the descriptions of Php 3:20 cited above seem to be understanding situation (ii) as most relevant to the context of the readers in Philippi. Considering both the narrative in Acts 22–23 (Paul being rescued from the threat of death by Roman military intervention because of his status as a Roman citizen) and the vocabulary of “enemies” and “salvation” that surround both Php 1:27 and 3:20, it may be better to understand Paul's metaphor here in terms of situation (iii).

Though White's method of underlining and creating primary and secondary sentences is at times awkward as a way of construing metaphor, his basic theory is nonetheless helpful for considering the kind of textual and cultural issues that go into the interpretation of metaphor. Though White is still focused on metaphor at the level of thought, he is also concerned for particular utterances in context and for the shape of the blanks left by the utterance. White's use of primary and secondary *situations* suggests that the blanks left by a metaphorical utterance may well be *narrative* blanks.

A Narrative Approach to Metaphor

Though the dissertation does not follow White's method, his general concerns fit well with a narrative approach to metaphor for preaching. At its heart, a narrative approach to metaphor

understands metaphor as a duality at the level of thought manifested in language. Describing the situation appropriate to the text and to the culture of the metaphor will help describe what kinds of things are considered for mapping across conceptual domains. In other words, the structure evidenced by other approaches to metaphor at the level of thought is given clearer expression if the structure inherent in metaphor is understood as a *narrative* structure. This narrative structure helps guide and constrain the kinds of things that map from the source to the target. As chapter 3 indicates, the target may impinge back on the source for the purposes of the metaphor, but the direction of the mapping is always from the source to the target. Combining all of these features produces a diagram that accounts for the duality, interaction, structure, implied situation or narrative, and directionality of metaphor (figure A14, below).

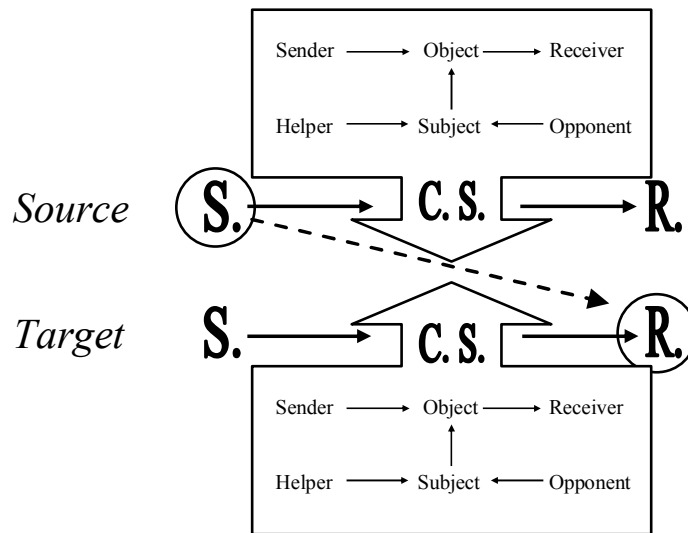


Figure A14. Actantial Models in the Source and Target Domains

Approaching the text and context of Php 3:20 in light of this method requires developing actantial models in both the source domain and the target domain¹²⁵ that are able to account for important aspects of the text while also capturing the shape of the implications, conclusions, and expectations authorized by the metaphor.¹²⁶ See figure A15, below.

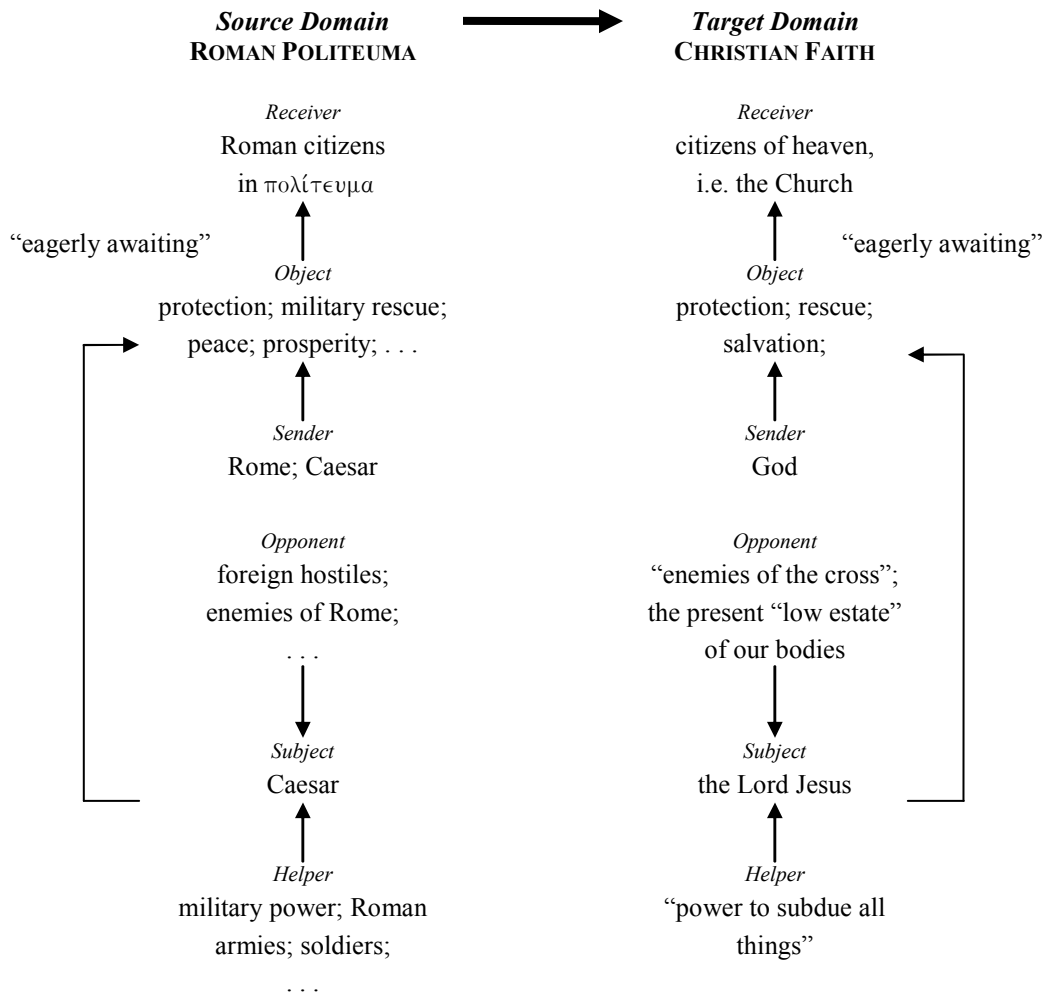


Figure A15. Our πολίτευμα is in Heaven: Actantial Models in Source and Target Domains

¹²⁵ See chapter 2, above.

¹²⁶ See chapter 5, above.

“Eagerly awaiting” (ἀπεκδέχομαι, Php 3:20) the return of Jesus is possible because Jesus is understood in the role of Subject who will transmit rescue, safety, and salvation (σωτηρία in 1:28 and the σωτήρ and κύριος himself in 3:20) to those who are a part of the Church, that is, those who are “citizens” of heaven. The power (ἐνέργεια) of Jesus evidenced in his own resurrection allows him to overcome all enemies (ἀντικείμενοι in 1:28 and ἐχθροί in 3:18), including humans set against the message of the cross as well as death itself. Because salvation is guaranteed by their citizenship and because the champion of their πολίτευμα is coming in power, Christians are able to view their lives now in light of the sure victory that is to come. The moral component of living worthy lives (πολιτεύομαι in 1:27) fits 3:20 as well, but both of these are connected textually to the ultimate victory coming in the Day of the Lord Jesus Christ. This reading of Paul’s metaphor suggests that he is not merely urging unique behavior in light of the Christian status as people set apart and under a different set of laws. Rather, these moral imperatives (or implications) come in light of the fact that Christians can eagerly await the return of their Savior from the place of their citizenship so that ultimately they will be vindicated. Present suffering now is done as citizens of heaven and in light of the final victory that is and will be theirs in Jesus Christ.¹²⁷

Considering the textual setting and inquiring after the implied situation behind the metaphor leads to a description of the metaphor that is both sufficiently complex and adequately tied to the specific text in which the metaphor appears. Interpretive decisions like which elements or particulars to include or exclude are based on the particular structure of the situation suggested by the metaphor in its culture and context. In this way, a narrative approach to metaphor is similar to other approaches that view the duality of metaphor at the level of thought,

¹²⁷ For additional homiletical treatment of this metaphor, see chapters 5 and 6, above.

interaction of thought, and structure of thought. Questions left unanswered by other approaches to metaphor as to the shape and the reason for the shape of a metaphor's structure are addressed in narrative terms. The roles and expected outcomes inherent in the implied narrative structure help account for why interpreters naturally include some details or relationships when considering cross-domain mapping and naturally exclude others.

Conclusion

While taking into consideration a variety of ways other theorists have described metaphor production and interpretation, this dissertation focuses on a narrative approach because a narrative approach seems most able to account for significant elements in the text and in the culture while also describing the kinds of conclusions that are likely to be drawn in the interpretive process. This dissertation, however, does not claim to describe *what actually happens* in metaphor. It rather claims that the considerations highlighted by a narrative approach to metaphor are significant and useful for preachers approaching both the biblical text and the preaching event. As Richards admitted over eighty years ago, “In this subject it is better to make a mistake that can be exposed than to do nothing, better to have any account of how metaphor works (or thought goes on) than to have none. Provided always that we do not suppose that our account of reality tells us what happens—provided, that is, we do not mistake our theories for our skill, or our descriptive apparatus for what it describes.”¹²⁸

¹²⁸ Richards, *Philosophy*, 115.

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VITA

Justin Paul Rossow

20 January 1972

Flint, Mich.

Collegiate Institutions Attended

Concordia University, Ann Arbor, Mich., B.A., 1994

Graduate Institutions Attended

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., M.Div., 2003

Previous Publications

“What the Bird Said and Why It Was the Gospel,” *Concordia Journal* 31 (April 2005): 132–139.

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