



Neuro-linguistic Psychology Modeling Jesus as a Preacher and Pastoral Counselor

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November 11, 2014

In partial fulfillment of requirements for

The Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology

University of Central Nicaragua

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Problem

My aim in this study is twofold. First, it is to present a model for training pastors, clergy and laity, to preach and counsel more effectively utilizing the principles, practices, and procedures of Neuro-linguistic Psychology. I want them to be able to use NLP in their preaching and counseling. Second, it is to present a procedure for modeling the person, preaching and counseling of Jesus Christ, utilizing the modeling approach of Robert Dilts. By this procedure pastors will learn to preach and counsel like Jesus and replicate the effects of his communication upon his audiences in their preaching and counseling. The idea is for them to become more like Jesus as a Preacher and counselor. Having learned to model Jesus, they will be able to follow the principles they learned by modeling on Jesus in modeling other Preachers and counselors. In the end, this study will provide a manual of NLP and NLP modeling that pastors can use to become better Preachers and counselors.

The primary audience for this study is pastors and persons assuming pastoral roles of preaching and counseling. Pastors preach and counsel. By learning NLP and utilizing it, pastors will be enabled to communicate effectively from the pulpit and in counseling.

NLP provides a set of presumptions, practices, and procedures that can increase the quality of communications of pastors for application in preaching and counseling. Both

of these functions are important, but in my estimation, preaching is the more important role.

Much can be generalized into counseling from training in preaching as communication is part of both. Generalization is the act or process whereby a learned response is made to a stimulus similar to but not identical with the conditioned stimulus. It is the process by which elements or pieces of a person's model become detached from their original experience and come to represent the entire category of which the experience is an example (Bandler and Grinder, 1975).

The modeling techniques presented come from the field of Neuro-Linguistic Programming. I propose that NLP can be used to develop excellent Preachers and pastoral counselors. I also propose that it can be used to train pastors to preach and counsel like any model. In this study I will utilize Jesus as the model.

NLP modeling is referred to as behavioral modeling (Dilts, 1998). I believe that it is more accurately described as cognitive behavioral modeling and that this is what Dilts intends. Modeling is not limited to the external, physical behavior of the subject but includes the internal, cognitive behavior of the subject and the internal reality or consciousness of the subject (Dilts, 1998). Modeling Jesus will include modeling the mind of Jesus and the levels and states of consciousness presumed to exist in him.

NLP modeling is an approach to learning that involves observation, imitation, internalization, and incorporation of aspects of a model until the characteristics and

behaviors of the model are replicated in the observer with the same outcomes that were observed in the model (Dilts, 1998). The approach to modeling utilized in this study is derived from Robert Dilts (1998) a pioneer in NLP.

Jesus like any model is complex. In this study Jesus is seen as divine and human. It is presupposed here that all human beings have divine origin, connection, and the capacity to realize that divinity in their lives. To do so is to actualize their potential as human beings, or in Christian religious terms, to acknowledge and accept themselves as children of God. Jesus is a Preacher, teacher, psychologist, healer, and leader. He has a highly developed mind and consciousness, a precisely defined mission, and a message that is life transforming to those who receive it. Robert Dilts' model of logical levels (1998) will be utilized in this study to model on the subject Jesus. The logical levels that Dilts identifies are source, identity, beliefs, capabilities, behaviors, and environment (1998).

When Jesus preached and counseled he communicated more than words. He conveyed his own spiritual knowledge, consciousness, the spirit of God, and the kingdom reality of God to the people he spoke to. These constituted an inner, experiential reality that he initiated them into. What was real for Jesus became real for them. Jesus did this with large crowds, small groups of disciples, and individuals. This knowledge amounted to a self-knowledge and knowledge of God. When Jesus preached and counseled people were metaphorically thrust up a spiritual developmental ladder towards a higher level of consciousness, the consciousness of God (Wilber and Marion (2011).

A Preacher or counselor after the fashion of Jesus is a hierophant who initiates his audience or client into divine knowledge, that is knowledge of God and the reality of God called the Kingdom of God. While preaching was the primary emphasis of Jesus' ministry (Mark 1:14, Luke 4:43-44), Jesus also healed people (Matthew 4:23-35, Mark 3:9-12, Luke 5:15). The healing Jesus provided was physical, psychological, social, and spiritual and is much like the healing provided in holistic or spiritually oriented counseling (Clinebell, 2011). We will refer to that healing as counseling and psychotherapy as counseling and psychotherapy have healing functions (Clinebell, 2011).

Jesus is described as receiving revelations from God such as in his baptism (Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22 and John 1:29-34). Characters in the scripture associated with Jesus also receive revelations about him such as in the Transfiguration episode (Matthew 17:1-8, Mark 9:2-8, Luke 9:28-36) and the episode where Simon Peter refers to Jesus as Messiah and Son of the Living God (Matthew 16:13-20, Mark 8:27-30). Jesus transmits knowledge and spiritual experiences to members of his audience such as through the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), the Last Supper (Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:15-20) and Jesus' post-resurrection appearances (Matthew 28:1-8, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-12, John 20:1-13, Matthew 28:9-10, Mark 16: 9-11, Luke 24:10-11, John 20:14-18. Mark 16.12-13, Luke24:36-43, John 20.19-23, John 20.24-29, Mark 16.14-18, Matthew 28.16-20 and John 21.1-14).

The Kingdom of God or Heaven that Jesus spoke of was not a place but a state of being or consciousness that people could attain after they received the knowledge,

keys, or way to its attainment from Jesus (Marion and Wilbur, 2000). It is too easy to mistake the Kingdom of God as merely a concept that Jesus wanted people to understand (Marion and Wilbur, 2000). That is typically what we mean by message; there is a particular content the audience is to understand. Rather Jesus wanted to deliver, not so much a message, as knowledge. This knowledge is not intellectual knowledge but experiential knowledge that is transformative of the entire psychic apparatus of the self, especially that of the ego and its identity (Marion and Wilbur, 2000). The ancient Greek word for this kind of knowledge is “gnosis;” knowledge of God that involves unity with God (Hoeller, 2010). The product or the fruit of Jesus’ preaching and counseling is gnosis and a change in the identity, such that people no longer are world centered, world-identified, and worldly, but God-centered, God-identified, and godly. The aim of all Christian-living is to be like Jesus, Christ-like, godly, and perfect. Preaching and spiritual counseling is ultimately about transforming the consciousness and lives of its recipients in the direction of God-consciousness. A certain relationship is established between the Preacher or counselor and the people the Preacher or counselor is communicating with, such that something from the Preacher’s or counselor’s consciousness is transmitted to the recipient. For the Gnostic teacher what is being transmitted is gnosis or divine knowledge (Hoeller, 2010). The Eastern Guru when providing Diksha, Darshan, leading Satsang, or providing Shaktipat initiation is doing the same (Shraddhananda, 2014)

The nature of the knowledge transmitted from Preacher or counselor to the recipient is limited to the level of consciousness of that Preacher or counselor (Marion and Wilber,

2000). The capacity of the recipient to receive that communication is limited by the recipient's developmental stage of consciousness (Marion and Wilber, 2000).

Oftentimes, the concept of faith and knowledge are presented as oppositional, but faith in God is a necessary prerequisite for knowledge (gnosis) of God. And knowledge of God is prerequisite for a next level of faith, and so on and on ad infinitum. There is a paradox here, whereby the death of a type of self, the ego, is necessary for a birth of a new or different type of self (Marion and Wilber, 2000). Growth up a developmental ladder from one stage to another is dependent upon prior position on that developmental ladder (Marion and Wilber, 2000). In order to fully enter into a new, higher level of cognitive development one must fully leave the other (Marion and Wilber, 2000). While there is continuity between one level of development and the next there is a qualitative and substantive difference between the two (Marion and Wilber, 2000). This aim of development of faith and knowledge and cognitive and spiritual growth is the aim of preaching and spiritual or pastoral counseling.

The primary means by which Jesus delivered this experience of his own consciousness was by preaching and teaching (Marion and Wilber, 2000). He also did it in healing and exorcism (Marion and Wilber, 2000). Preaching as done by Jesus is not standing up in front of an audience from behind a pulpit or lectern and lecturing about scripture. Jesus preached and taught sitting and before large groups, in small groups, one-to-one, in the Temple, in synagogues, in people's homes, from boats, on mountains and on plains (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). When Jesus preached and taught, he transmitted transformative knowledge to people, changing people in the process, stimulating within

them spiritual growth, healing, change and variety of desirable states of being or consciousness and emotion. Of course, Jesus also healed people (Matthew 4:23-35, Mark 3:9-12, Luke 5:15), drove out demons (Matthew 8:31, Luke 11:14), led a group of disciples (Matthew 4:18-22 and Mark 1:16-20), and generally provided spiritual direction. He provided people with transformational experiences. The preaching of Jesus involved teaching, direction and healing. Jesus very identity was defined by the activity of preaching, teaching and healing.

Methodology

In this study certain NLP principles and procedures will be introduced and applied to the practice of preaching and counseling. The presentation of preaching will serve as a springboard for discussing counseling. I have been applying NLP and NLP modeling to my own preaching and counseling. In the process of introducing the principles and procedures the reader will be led to apply and practice the principles and procedures through examples from my own preaching, pastoral, and clinical experience. I have provided some short and full-length sermons and references to counseling sessions to illustrate these applications as well.

The model of Preacher and counselor in this study is Jesus of Nazareth. There are many models of Jesus of Nazareth available to model. For example, just in the Bible, there are models of Jesus presented in the four gospels of the New Testament, in the Epistles of Paul, and in the Book of Revelation. There are also many models of Jesus available in biographies about Jesus, commentaries on the New Testament and Old

Testament of the Bible, and in movies, theatre and art. There are additional models found in the so-called Nag Hammadi and Gnostic Gospels. There are, in addition, Moslem, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, Mormon, New Age, Psychic and Humanistic models of Jesus.

The model of Jesus presented in this study comes from the four gospels of the New Testament. For preaching the primary material is drawn from the Sermon on the Mount found in the Gospel of Matthew, chapters five through seven. Reference material for counseling is drawn from the four Gospels. It will become clear that Jesus is the ideal model for Christian Preachers and counselors to emulate. Characteristics of Jesus' preaching, particularly in the Sermon on the Mount will be presented. Characteristics of Jesus' counseling will be drawn from the four gospels. As the Sermon on the Mount emphasizes Jesus' preaching and teaching, illustrations of his therapeutic skills will be drawn from numerous gospel stories.

Presuppositions and processes in Jesus' preaching and counseling that are held in common with NLP will be presented. In utilizing these presuppositions and processes one can develop the necessary knowledge, capacities, and skills to preach and counsel like Jesus and realize the outcomes Jesus reached with those he reached. One can install the programs or models Jesus utilized in his preaching and counseling. Installation, in NLP, is the process of incorporating new mental strategies (ways of doing things) within one's mind-body system so that they operate automatically and unconsciously (Dilts, 1998). Installation is achieved by the processes of anchoring,

metaphors, parables, reframing, and future-pacing, among other procedures (Dilts, 1998; Bodenhamer and Hall, 2007).

The key NLP concept and process utilized in this study is called modeling. Modeling, in Neuro-linguistic Programming is a process of observing and replicating the successful actions and behaviors of others. It involves identifying the variables that make up the experience, discerning the sequence of internal representations and behaviors, and presenting a way to accelerate learning an expertise (Dilts, 1998; Bodenhamer and Hall, 2007).

No research has been conducted on using NLP for preaching. There has been some application of NLP to public speaking (James and Shepherd, 2001), teaching (O'Brien, 2012), leadership (O'Connor, 2013) and counseling (Wake, Gray and Bourke, 2013). I will introduce cognitive developmental perspectives that will assist in understanding the Kingdom of God, the consciousness of Jesus, the human beings you are trying to reach, and in modeling Jesus.

Certainly no one can be Jesus. But one can be like Jesus. Howard Thurman (1996) referred to Jesus as the "Great Exemplar." He is the example of what is possible for a human being to be; ultimately holy, even godly, and perfect as God in heaven is perfect. I consider Jesus to be what the American Humanistic Psychologist Abraham Maslow (1962, 1971) called a "self-actualizing man." Overtime Jesus progressively realized more and more of his God-given and vast human potential. Jesus says in Mark 10: 18 and Luke 18:19 would say only God is good, but in Matthew 5:48 instructs his disciples

to be perfect as God is perfect. Being a disciple of Jesus implies emulation of Jesus. It is possible to become like Jesus in every way. Anyone who is a Christian Preacher or counselor has the responsibility to emulate Jesus, as a person, Preacher and counselor. Jesus was the first Preacher of this Gospel, the Kingdom of God or Heaven. A Preacher of this Gospel will want to know what Jesus preached and preach what Jesus preached or what naturally extends from that. Preaching is not merely delivery of ideas, but experiential and spiritual, aimed at the holistic transformation of the listener. Any person who is a minister of the gospel of Jesus is responsible to minister after the example of Jesus and share in the goals of Jesus' ministry, whether that is in a preaching or counseling ministry. John Wesley, the co-founder of Methodism with his brother Charles discussed a dogma called Christian Perfection (Wesley, 2011). Christian perfection is the perfection of a relationship with God that shows it-self to be true even amid the seemingly unimportant aspects of human life. It is the perfection of faith. It is a moment is a moment in the process of sanctification whereby a Christian is made sinless: perfect love for God drives all sin from the soul (Wesley, 2011). Christian Psychologists might say whole in the place of sinful with sinful suggesting brokenness or say cohesive with sinfulness suggesting fragmentation (Clinebell, 1984). Christian perfection is seen at the end point of a process of sanctification or holiness that begins as potential (prevenient grace), is initiated, activated in the person (justifying grace or justification), in which a person grows and sustained and supported in that growth over time (sanctifying grace or sanctification) until that time in which the person is perfected or becomes completely sanctified Wesley, 2011). This is a process of a sinner becoming a saint, a broken personality whole, a fragmented personality cohesive, a

disorganized personality integrated and a base (animal) human being becoming refined and ultimately godly or Christ-like. The process can be gradual or instantaneous. For most people it is gradual and only completed near death (Wesley, 2011). There is evidence of instant and complete sanctification well before death (Wesley, 2011). It is reasonable to expect such an event at any moment (Wesley, 2011). Perfection is this complete sanctification, instantly realized after a long-time or short-time. It is not normal sanctification, called justification, which is really an initiation into the process of sanctification, a beginning or taste of the fruit. It is the fruition of the process of sanctification, its culmination or completion (Wesley, 2011). It is complete realization of the Kingdom of God. It is complete salvation this side of heaven. It is the experience of heaven on earth or the will of God done on earth as it is in heaven. This perfection is the result of God's grace rather than human effort and a second gift received only by faith. And while this sounds like a contradiction, it is necessary to seek it diligently and cannot be maintained without such effort (Wesley, 2011). While the seed is planted into the consciousness of the seeker by God, the seeker needs to cultivate his heart in order for it to take root in his life and grow to actualize its potential. Progress toward perfection can be hindered by "coldness, negligence, and unbelief (PA 408, Wesley, 2011). Buddhism, in its Eight Fold Noble Path speaks of the necessity for Right Effort in one's spiritual path (Thich Nhat Hanh, 1999). The effort cannot be on the basis of normal desire or want, say for a transient object. So the seeking after heaven has to be a devout, pure and uncorrupted, undivided search, a kind of action-less or non-grasping search.

Christian perfection is characterized by sinlessness (Wesley, 2011). As discussed Above then it is likewise characterized by saintliness, wholeness, holiness, grace, godliness and Self-actualization. The essence of Christian perfection is love (Wesley, 2011). So consumed with love for God there is no room for evil or sin. Indications of such perfect love are rejoicing, unceasing prayer and gratitude. One is steadfast in prayer and free of fear and doubt. Temptations are successfully resisted. In all things, the perfected Christian conforms to the virtuous pattern of Christ (Wesley, 2011).

The perfected Christian is not all they will be in heaven (Wesley, 2011). He continues to in faith, love and knowledge of God. Perhaps there are levels of heaven. He is still subject to illness, temptation, misunderstanding, ignorance and errors of judgment. He is not God and he is not an island. He still needs God, human community and a healthy habitat.

These are not sin, because they are done with the motive of love (Wesley, 2011). When Peter rebuked Jesus he did not sin because he did it out of love for Jesus (Matthew 16:13-23). And when Peter claimed that he would never deny Jesus and proceeded to, he did not sin, because he acted out of love for Jesus (Matthew 26:31-34).

The basis of the Wesleyan doctrine of Christian Perfection is found in Matthew 5:48: "Be perfect therefore as the Father is perfect." Wesley denies that after justification that the Christian will inevitably sin, although he could. Human beings are not hopeless

sinner. They are hopeful human beings or children of God (Galatians 3:26). They are heirs of salvation (Romans 8:16-17). The old body of evil is dead and Christ lives in Christians (Galatians 2:20). If Christ is pure, Christians are pure (Wesley, 2011). Christians no longer sin as they have been cleansed by Christ's blood (1 John 1:17). His disciples as examples of perfected Christians: "as he [Christ] is, so are we in this world" (1 John 4:16-18). Finally, Wesley says that if God commands that we love him with all our heart, mind and will we are capable of doing so, whether or not we actually do (Wesley, 2011).

This idea of modeling Jesus should be acceptable to Christians because the Bible, Christian tradition, experience, and study show how modeling Jesus has been a core component of Christianity from the beginning of the Christian movement (Bodenhammer and Hall, 2007). Indeed, the aim of Christian discipleship is to become like Jesus. Christian pastoral counseling and direction has this as a goal (Clinebell, 1984).

We do not have, in hand, copies of sermons delivered by Jesus. Nor do we have transcripts of counseling sessions. What we have are stories about Jesus, and sayings and stories that are attributed to Jesus. We have narratives about Jesus preaching, healing and teaching.

Were they narrative fiction and Jesus a fictional character one could still model Jesus to good effect.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

NLP and NLP Modeling

An Introduction to Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP)

The first step to understanding the application of NLP to this subject is the understanding what NLP is. The letters NLP stand for Neuro-Linguistic Programming. Neuro-Linguistic Programming (Bodenhamer and Hall, 1996) is a relatively new discipline, dating back to the mid 1970s to research conducted at the University of California at Santa Cruz by a linguistics professor John Grinder and an undergraduate student of mathematics and computers, Richard Bandler. Bandler demonstrated a natural gift for observing communication patterns in people and modeling them (Bandler and Grinder, 1975; Bandler and Grinder, 1976; Bandler and Grinder 1979). Modeling is the observation and imitation of others (Dilts, 1998; Bandler and Grinder, 1975; Bandler and Grinder, 1976; Bandler and Grinder 1979). In the process of modeling, the vision, identity, beliefs, capabilities, behaviors, and impact on the world of the person being modeled are observed and imitated by the observer, and expressed in the observer's own vision, identity, beliefs, capabilities, behavior and impact upon the environment and world (Dilts, 1988). Bandler modeled Fritz Perls, a psychiatrist and founder of Gestalt Psychotherapy, Virginia Satir, a world class family-therapist and family therapy educator, and Milton Erickson, the founder of a form of in-direct hypnosis and hypnotherapy named after him (Bandler and Grinder, 1975a; Bandler and Grinder, 1975b; Bandler and Grinder, 1976). Bandler found that he could replicate the approach,

technique and outcome of these great psycho-therapists in himself and others, accelerating learning in the process by years, even decades (Bandler and Grinder, 1975a; Bandler and Grinder, 1975b; Bandler and Grinder, 1976). From this experience, Bandler and Grinder presented their first model, “the Meta-Model of Language,” a model that demonstrated how people think, feel, and behave, and how to change their thinking, feeling, and behaving (Bandler and Grinder, 1975a; Bandler and Grinder, 1975b; Bandler and Grinder, 1976). They identified people’s cognitive-linguistic maps that they could interact with, question and challenge in order to create more accurate, helpful, and richer internal maps. Neuro-Linguistic Programming is the product of years of research and development by Bandler and Grinder and those who followed them (Bandler and Grinder, 1975a; Bandler and Grinder, 1975b; Bandler and Grinder, 1976).

Most writing about Neuro-Linguistic Programming is by practitioners rather than researchers. They write about what they do and what they observe as the results of what they do. They are like mental health clinicians that keep records of their sessions. They note what they experience and repeat what they did that worked. So they do not like to talk about theories. In fact, they will say that Neuro-Linguistic Programming is not a theory; it is a model (Tosey & Mathison, 2009). Neuro-Linguistic programming is not concerned with explaining or interpreting why it works; that is theory. It is concerned about what to do. It provides a means for modeling a pattern of already existing phenomena, which when imitated or recreated exactly, or near exactly, will produce the

identical or approximate outcome as the model produced with the imitated or replicated behavior.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming: "a model of interpersonal communication chiefly concerned with the relationship between successful patterns of behavior and the subjective experiences (esp. patterns of thought) underlying them" and "a system of alternative therapy based on this which seeks to educate people in self-awareness and effective communication, and to change their patterns of mental and emotional behavior" (Oxford English Dictionary, 1984).

"NLP is an explicit and powerful model of human experience and communication. Using the principles of NLP it is possible to describe any human activity in a detailed way that allows you to make many deep and lasting changes quickly and easily" (Stevens in Bandler and Grinder, 1979).

"It's an attitude that has to do with curiosity, with wanting to know about things, wanting to be able to influence things, and wanting to be able to influence them in a way that's worthwhile" (Bandler, Andreas and Andreas, 1985)

Neuro-Linguistic Programming is "a unique model of how people learn, motivate themselves, and change their behavior to achieve excellence in any endeavor. It allows you to model, or copy, human excellence in any form (Horton, 2006).

It is the “study of the structure and patterns of experience and excellence; of how humans think and how that thinking creates mind-body states and experiences, as a communication model that enables us to study how people structure their experience and so model expertise, and as a model about how we program our skills and responses via our thinking, emoting and behavior in our neurology using the languages of the mind to process, code and retrieve information (Bodenhamer and Hall, 1996).

It is a model for communicating effectively both with your-self and other people (James and Shepherd, 2001).

My own definition of Neuro-Linguistic Programming is “a model that strategically utilizes physiology, language patterns, and psychological processes called programs, to effectively enrich human experience, by developing more resourceful sources, identities, states, beliefs, capabilities, behaviors, and environments.”

Neuro-Linguistic Programming works neurologically, linguistically, and psychologically (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). Neurological involves the nervous system. All experience, conscious and unconscious is derived through and from our senses, nervous system, and in general, our physiology. Your sense perceptions are represented internally in your brain and experienced as images, sounds, feelings, smells and tastes. Your internal representations form your model of the world. They allow you to make sense of and communicate within the world (Bandler and Grinder, 1975).

Linguistic refers to language, verbal and non-verbal, conscious and unconscious (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). Your mental processes are coded, organized, given meaning and transformed through language. Your language effects your internal representations and the meaning you attribute to those representations determines our behavior. What you say to yourself or others affects your own state, the states of those you communicate with, and the actions you and others take as the result of that communication. What you say and how you say it, affects the state and potential behavior of the people you communicate to (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). You need to induce a state in those you communicate with of receptivity to your communication. If you communicate what you want you will receive the response that you want. So, be careful and clear about what the response that you want and structure your communication to elicit that response.

Programming refers to the psychological sequences of patterns or programs that comprise our experience and communication. These sequences are cognitive in nature. The term “programming” refers to the habits or repeated patterns of thinking and behaving you employ (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). Many in NLP circles want to replace the term “programming” with the term psychology; the internal cognitive processes that produce particular emotions and behaviors on our parts, and cognitive, emotional and behavioral responses to what we communicate. Your programming or psychology is usually outside of your awareness and thus unconscious. You possess a complex of programs, including programs for waking in the morning, eating, washing, walking, driving, getting excited or motivated, making decisions, learning, being creative,

determining what's real and what's false, remembering and going to sleep (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). Some of your programming is effective and productive, and some ineffective or counter-productive (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). Some programs are homemade, some are imposed (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). You want to discover which programs work well for you and you want to continue and which don't work well that you may wish to discontinue. To preach or counsel effectively you will have to establish new programs for effective preaching and counseling.

You can consciously employ verbal and non-verbal procedures to transform past experiences, current states, and imagined futures within yourself, and with the tacit agreement of others, in others. You already do this in the course of your life, preaching and counseling; sometimes well and sometimes not so well. You will do better if you train yourself to consciously utilize these procedures.

Communication involves observation of external events through the five senses.

Perceptions pass through cognitive filters that include distortions, generalizations, and deletions (James and Shepherd 2001; Bandler and Grinder, 1975). This is an unconscious process. Life experience is managed through this cognitive process (Bandler and Grinder, 1975; Lewis & Pucelik, 1990).

Deletion (James and Shephard, 2001; .Bandler and Grinder, 1975) is the process the brain uses to limit the amount of data in consciousness by eliminating that information that does not fit with what already is present or is perceived as useful. What you communicate has to be in terms that are relevant to your listener. Otherwise there is no

incentive to listen and respond. You have to make fit what you say into what the person already believes or thinks. Otherwise it will not enter their conscious mind. You make the connection for the listener. Otherwise what you say will not make sense to them. The person will not have anything to hang your communication on.

You can consciously ignore or reframe information that hinders realization of the outcome you desire for your communication. Reframing involves placing a different context or frame around what you have said. In counseling, when you place a different frame or help your client put a different frame about a problem, it might not even be a problem anymore or as big a problem (Bandler and Grinder, 1979).

Generalization (James and Shepherd, 2001; Bandler and Grinder, 1975) is the process by which you organize information into categories or classes based upon observable patterns, regularities, and principles and rules. Generalization allows you to prepare for the future based upon these principles. Vast amounts of information are condensed into smaller useful bites or facts. Generalizations are also made upon personal and group experience, allowing you to predict future probabilities on the bases of earlier experiences. Assessment of self or others is often made on the basis of such generalizations. It would be impossible for someone to learn absent the cognitive strategy of generalization. Jesus taught some 2000 years ago in the Middle East. That was in a far different time, place, and culture as ours, yet we are able to apply his teachings in our lives because we are able generalize his teachings to our lives. Also, he presented his teachings in such a way that they are generalizable to us today (Gray 2014). You have to make use of the experiences of the listener to effectively

communicate to them. Employ just your own experience or the experience in general and the chances are you will not be communicating. .

Distortion (James and Shephard, 2001; Bandler and Grinder, 1975) is the process by which you fit information into what you already know or think. It is accomplished through the labeling of experiences, comparing them with prior experiences, interpreting them, assigning meaning to them, drawing inferences about them, and coming to a conclusion. Some have distorted the gospel to fit their preconceptions. Many used the Bible to support the practice of slavery, white superiority and the subjection of women and children. You want to be aware of people's predilection to think in certain ways and fit the message into their prior way of thinking or find a strategy that would shift the context of their thinking so that the message will fit into their altered way of thinking. Assess how the listener processes information and tailor your communication to the listener.

It is beyond the scope of this study to explain how NLP does this. I want to utilize NLP in this study, not explain it. In short, however, NLP breaks down the structure of the experience being modeled into its component parts and syntax (order) in order to present it to others for learning. This process of breaking down the structure of experience or behavior is called "chunking down." It is much easier to learn something step by step than it is as a whole. We can only focus on some of what we want to learn, rather than all of it. So what is to be learned is broken down into manageable chunks. After breaking down learning into these manageable steps, the learned chunks are linked together into a cohesive whole. Then the whole of what was modeled has been

learned (Dilts, 1998). NLP focuses upon the detail of our internal and external communications; how we process, store and recall this communication, and how we can change and employ this communication to achieve the results and goals we want.

Many believe that NLP utilizes hypnotic phenomena. This is, perhaps, because so many people who practice NLP practice hypnosis and mix NLP and Hypnosis. Some Christians are opposed to NLP because of this misconception. What NLP makes use of is trance. While trance occurs as the result of hypnosis it also occurs naturally in everyday life. Bandler and Grinder contend that NLP is not hypnosis. All of the phenomena characteristic of deep trance can be elicited without hypnosis. They are accessible through using the normal trances of everyday life (Bandler and Grinder, 1979).

Trance phenomena naturally occur in human communication. There are outstanding Preachers and counselors that utilize procedures like or similar to NLP without knowing it. Jesus employed practices and procedures identical to those used in NLP (Bodenhamer and Hall, 2007). Of course, these practices were not bundled together in a package called NLP, and the procedures utilized by Jesus were not NLP. NLP was developed on the basis of modeling outstanding communicators in their respective fields who never thought about themselves as using hypnosis or trance. Only one, Milton Erickson made regular use of hypnosis and his understanding of hypnosis, while influential, is unique in being indirect and ordinary (Rossi. 1991). NLP suggests conscious imitation of the practices and procedures of outstanding communicators.

NLP makes use of is trance. Trance is a state where the critical function of the conscious mind is suspended to allow access to the unconscious mind (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). This is a voluntary suspension on the part of the listener and is not imposed upon the listener. It is the result of negotiation between presenter and listener. It is the result of rapport between speaker and listener, where the listener, often unconsciously, decides to be more open and subject to suggestion, influence, and learning in relationship to the presenter. It is, also, the outcome of the presenter's skill in communication.

Rapport is the experience of connection with others. It is a state of openness to others based upon a feeling of familiarity. Boundaries are lightened and loosened and there is an experience of flow between self and other. While boundaries between the two people in the communication are loosed the distinctiveness of self and other is maintained. There is a sense of agreement between self and other. Rapport is attained by how we communicate. Obtaining rapport between self and other is central to NLP (Dilts 1983; Dilts 1990; Bandler and Grinder, 1975a; Bandler and Grinder, 1979; Bandler and Grinder, 1981)

From a Christian perspective, the New Testament of the Bible is full of reference to altered states of consciousness phenomena. In The Book Acts of the Apostles trance phenomena are described three times by name as experiences that were not unusual. The Greek word used is "exstasis." Exstatis, from which the English word ecstasy derives is "an altered and deeply focused state of expanded consciousness where a person perceives with his bodily eyes and ears realities shown him by God" (Thayer,

2011) and where “one . . . transported is full of God, or inspired, or gifted with power” (Kittel 1985). One definition of trance as seen in the New Testament is “an unusually exalted state of feeling, a condition of such total absorption or concentration that the individual becomes oblivious to all attendant circumstances and other stimuli, an experience of intense rapture or a trance-like state in which normal faculties are suspended for a shorter or longer period and the subject sees visions or experiences “automatic speech . . . “(Dunn 1977). Trance experience is described as occurring with Paul (Acts 22:17; 19:6), Peter (Acts 10:11-16), Cornelius (Acts 10:46), the Church at Pentecost (Acts 2), and Peter and John (Acts 8).

For me, the greater use of NLP is in preparing me as a preacher and counselor, rather than in doing anything to anyone. In fact, I am not “doing anything” to my congregation or clients except communicating with them. When I first learned clinical hypnosis back in 1980 or so, a trainer told a story. He had a hobby of training wild mustangs. He utilized hypnosis in doing this. He described walking over to the horse from the side, while looking the horse in its eye, and speaking softly to the horse as he approached it, and then stroking it on its face, mane and back before placing the blanket, saddle and bridle on it. One of the trainees asked him if he was hypnotizing the horse. He replied, “No. I’m calming myself.” Looking back, I see that he was putting himself in the same state that he wanted the horse to be in; calm, trusting, unafraid, and openly communicative. And he was developing rapport with the animal. He was pacing the animal, meeting it on its terms. Then he would lead the horse and take charge of it. One of the desirable functions of Preachers in churches is leading. It is also an

important function of the counselor. It is said that Jesus met people where they were but did not leave them there. He led them to a more desirable state or condition. NLP provides tools with which you can lead. Leading is not something you do to people. It is something you do with people. It is a collaborative endeavor.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming Presuppositions

There are a number of presuppositions that Neuro-Linguistic Programming relies upon to facilitate change towards the realization of desire Bandler and Grinder d goals. Presuppositions are the philosophical underpinnings of Neuro-Linguistic Programming. They are present in every human being and define how human beings conceive of self, world and universe. They are assumptions that are taken for granted, and yet allow a communication to make sense. Presenters who are expert communicators and change agents assume these to be true and they guide their communication and performance strategies (James and Shepherd, 2006.) These presuppositions are taken from the compilations of Horton (2006), Bodenhamer (1997) and James and Shepherd, 2006). They do not refer to Preachers or counselors but to communicators in general. Here I will reference excellent communicators but intend Preachers and counselors. These key presuppositions follow:

Excellent communicators realize that they are always communicating. They realize that they cannot not communicate (Bateson 1972). They communicate verbally and non-verbally and make use of the non-verbal in their communications. They utilize how and where they stand and sit, hold their heads and shoulders, place and move their hands

and legs, and how they direct their eyes to communicate to and affect people. They utilize their facial movements and their gestures in service of their message. They utilize aspects of their speech and sound, including tone, tempo, timbre, pitch, volume, and rhythm to convey what they want to say and impact people.

Excellent communicators respect the model of the world of the people they communicate with. They do not force their perspective on anyone. They prepare people to receive their message or wait until a more opportune time to communicate that message. If change is desired in people they pace the people until people are ready to take action. This is true in one- one relations and groups, both small and large. Repression or suppression of people's model of the world will result in resistance to the desired outcome.

Excellent communicators evaluate all behavior and change in terms of context and ecology: What are the consequences to self, others, and the environment of the outcome desired from the communication? If the desired outcome will create disruption in people's lives the communicator will likely receive resistance from them. Different people may be prepared for different kinds of action. If a particular approach to a problem or even resolution of a problem is likely going to produce new, maybe worse problems, people are likely to resist that change. Maybe the environment has to be changed.

Excellent communicators treat resistance as a sign of a lack of rapport between them and the people they are communicating with. If they meet resistance they restructure

their message or find another way of communicating it. They don't blame people for not responding as they want. They may feel bad for people if they are unable or unwilling to respond as desired. They work to create congruence between the conscious and unconscious minds of those they communicate with

Excellent communicators do not mistake people for their behaviors. People are not their behaviors. If people's behaviors are counterproductive for their well-being or spiritual development, such communicators accept this and find other ways to affect and change the behavior. There are reasons people behave as they do. On some level their behavior makes sense. Excellent communicators seek to understand people even as they disagree with their behavior. They love people for who they are and who they can be.

Excellent communicators realize that everyone is doing the best they can with the resources they have available to them. All behavior is motivated by positive intention. People always make the best choice available to them. Figure out the positive intention behind their choices and you can help them change. Laud them for their intentions. Then lead them to make better choices or stop complaining about the outcome of the choices they make.

Excellent communicators realize that the most important information about people is revealed by their behaviors. Their behavior in response to a communication is feedback about your communication. Inquire about the behavior. Seek to understand it and what motivates it. Then lead them to the outcome they and you desire.

Excellent communicators realize that they are in charge of their minds, their communication, and their results. They are not under the control of other people or circumstances. They are in charge of their own minds and feelings. To change their results with people, they change their minds and approach, rather than other people.

Excellent communicators know that people have most of the resources they need to succeed and to achieve their desired outcomes. Some such resources are the Kingdom of God, faith, a relationship with Jesus, the presence of God, Christ with-in, and the power of the Holy Spirit. These resources may need to be developed but they are already present. Sometimes these resources are inside, sometimes outside, but they are always accessible or in reach.

Excellent communicators know that people respond to their maps of reality and not reality itself. This is why different people have different responses to the same communication. People often mistake the map for the territory. The map is a useful tool. The better the map, the better the chance that one will get where they want to go. Maps sometimes have errors. Or sometimes people misread their maps. Or sometimes a place isn't on the map or the map people have is designed to take them somewhere else. The map may need to be updated. Communicators can help people improve their maps or read them correctly.

All procedures used by excellent communicators increase wholeness. Their concern is people's growth and development. Wholeness is the goal for life. They strive to add to,

build up, firm up or complement rather than diminish. When Jesus died on the cross his own wholeness was not diminished, but advanced. As one would not expect that wholeness would increase as the result of crucifixion this is indeed a paradox. For the disciple of Jesus, ego death in the service of the self leads to resurrection and new life. Such a death is transformative such that the remaining or resultant identity is enhanced.

Excellent communicators accept all feedback. Failure is a type of feedback as important as accolades. Feedback allows correction in a communication to better accomplish the intention of the Preacher.

Excellent communicators know that the meaning of communication is the response they get, regardless of the message they thought they delivered. If people heard something from you, what they heard is what you communicated, even if you intended something else. If they distorted the message, excellent communicators conclude that they did not take into account people's cognitive filters and need to account for their filters the next time they communicate to them. They may need to re-contextualize what they said. Certainly, people can refuse to accept or agree with a message, but there are ways to significantly increase the likelihood of their receiving the message.

All procedures utilized by excellent communicators are designed to increase choice in people. In a Christian context, excellent communicators realize that people have the capacity to sin or resist that sin. They provide the opportunity for grace. "You can do that (whatever it is they did) but think about how much more rewarding it would be, or how much better you would feel, if you did this instead." This is a principle of

enrichment. As one's map of reality is enriched one realizes a greater range of choices in conceiving, experiencing, and acting in the world.

Excellent communicators know that experience has a structure. Anything can be learned or accomplished if it is broken down into small enough pieces and then reconstructed as a learned experience.

Excellent communicators are flexible. They are flexible enough to change based upon the needs, the demands and the feedback in your circumstance. If what they are doing doesn't work they change in order to obtain their desired outcome.

Jesus was an excellent communicator, as a Preacher and healer and in general. By assuming the same presuppositions of excellent communicators you will be a better communicator, Preacher and counselor.

NLP Modeling

NLP is a psychological model that provides tools that can be used to map the cognitive processes that underlie the activities of creative and exceptional people (Dilts, 2006). A model is "a simplified description of a complex entity or process" (Dilts, 2006, 1). It is not the complex entity or process itself. It is broken down into smaller observable components. Modeling is concerned with the manner of doing or being manifested by the model or the method, form, fashion, custom, way or style of the behavior of the model being observed. Thus a model is something active rather than static (Dilts, 2006). One doesn't model the thing, for instance, baseball. One models baseball being

played by a player with others players in the context of rules. The model is not the thing being modeled but a small version of the original model. When I model Jesus I will model a sample of Christ's life, not all of it.

A model is a "description or analogy used to help visualize something that cannot be directly observed. One cannot model what Jesus' identity, consciousness, and thinking is except through how Jesus appears, carries himself, speaks and behaves (Dilts, 2006)." I would add that it is possible to model on the basis of how someone describes the model. Indeed, it is through gospel narratives about Jesus that Dilts models Jesus. In the case of modeling the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of God is a reality that can only be known through a model. Therefore, to model the Kingdom of God it is necessary to model on Jesus because Jesus is its primary proponent. He embodies and exemplifies the presence of the Kingdom of God in his manner of his behaviors and expressions. A model consists of postulates, data and inferences presented as a formal description or state of affairs (Dilts, 1998). Modeling is an interactive, interpretive, and inferential endeavor by the modeler. It utilizes the modeler's observations of the model to recreate in the modeler, the identity, beliefs, capabilities, behavior and impact upon the world of the model.

Dilts incorporates into his definition his intention for using modeling (1998). Dilts is opting to model creative and exceptional people. It is possible to model dull and ordinary people too. For example, children growing up in abusive homes grow up to be abusers or married to abusers more often than those who do not. In order to be non-abusive or to choose a non-abusive spouse when they grow up they need to find

alternate models. So, the choice of model for preaching, counseling or anything else is important.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming Modeling is described by Dilts as a behavioral form of modeling (1998). Behavioral modeling involves the observation and mapping of the processes which underlie successful behavioral performance.

All modeling is successful. Some models are better than others. And some modelers follow directions for modeling better or worse than others. The best outcomes in modeling result from finding an appropriate model, observing that model, relating with that model, and internalizing the values of that model (Dilts, 2006).

Modeling employs a strategy called “chunking down.” Chunking down is the process of taking a performance and breaking it down into parts (chunks). These chunks of behavior are learned by the modeler, one by one (Dilts, 2006). The modeler then reconstitutes the performance by chunking up, whereby each component part of the performance is reconstituted in the reproduction of the performance being modeled. The model is essentially a practical internal cognitive map of behavior that can be utilized to reproduce or simulate the exact behavior being modeled. This involves the modeler identifying the essential components of thought and action necessary to produce the desired response or outcome and describing them so that they can be emulated by others (Dilts, 2006). The model is, however, a model. It is like a set of directions, worthless if not followed. The concern in behavioral modeling is not with the implicit or explicit content of the subjective experience individual being emulated, but the

deeper cognitive structures that produce the results obtained by the person being modeled (Dilts, 2006). Through modeling, the modeler learns to think, feel, and act like the model and to perceive and respond to the world like the model (Dilts, 2006). Thus what Dilts defines as a behavioral model is more aptly defined as a cognitive-behavioral model.

Dilts applied his modeling procedure to Jesus in *Cognitive Patterns of Jesus of Nazareth: Tools of the Spirit* (2006). Dilts recognized certain limits of modeling. He explains that he was not attempting to arrive at an objective view of Jesus' cognitive processes, as this was not possible. Behavioral modeling is by its nature a subjective process. The modeler is never a blank slate. Thus one cannot expect to have a carbon replication of Jesus' thinking, nor that of any other model (Dilts, 2006). The modeler interacts with the model and is changed by that interaction. The modeler doesn't become the model but like the model in certain ways. Although there is no objective book of rules enabling one to think like Jesus, a modeler can obtain a map rich enough in detail that can be followed to approximate how Jesus thought, spoke and behaved. The modeler's thought, speech and behavior are impacted by that interaction.

I will present a derivation of Dilts' model for modeling Jesus. While it is ideal to watch and listen to a role model in action, modeling of a subject can be accomplished through study of the written records (Dilts, 2006). The evidence of this is in the very existence of Christianity as a religion and the reputation of Jesus over 2000 years after his death and resurrection (Dilts, 2006). Christianity has developed fundamental strategies for thinking, and sets of assumptions and beliefs for living in the world based upon the life

and teachings of Jesus. The models we call Christianity has been passed down, age to age, through his disciples. This has been accomplished through a combination of written and spoken word and ritual. Efforts have been made, through the efforts of translators and scholars to improve upon these and make them more accurate. The results are more or better sets of data to model upon. What have been passed down have been models of Jesus that can be emulated. There are arguments that can be made about what are the most accurate and best models of Jesus and which are orthodox and which are heretical. I have opted to focus my attention on Jesus presented through the gospels and primarily through the Synoptic Gospels and the Sermon on the Mount. This is not to suggest that the Pauline corpus, Gospel of John and the Gospel of Thomas and other non-canonical models should not be referenced for models of Jesus.

“By analyzing the words and reported deeds of Jesus as they have been passed down to us through the gospels . . . it is possible to divine certain structures of mind that underlie the content of his life (Dilts, 2006, 2).” Jesus’ words and deeds are accessible by reading of the Bible and through various interpretive lenses like books, commentaries, articles, movies and theatre, constructing a model in the process. Likely, no two models of Jesus are going to be the same. Indeed, the New Testament provides us with multiple models of Jesus, including those in the Gospels and Epistles. While the scriptures extant today have traveled a road of recovery from multiple, fragmentary manuscripts, redaction, conspiracy theories, and multiple sources even within the canon, “only the most robust parts of Jesus’ ministry emerge” from them

(Dilts, 2006, 6). And whether dealing with a historical person, a historicity that I accept, or a legend as others contend, I am content to look to Jesus as described in the New Testament as the model I will present for emulation.

Dilts' Modeling of Jesus

Dilts began his modeling of Jesus by analyzing Jesus' language (2006). He asked the question, "What words did Jesus use?" In particular, he asked, "What sensory predicates did Jesus use?" The three most frequently used predicates used in human speech are visual, auditory, and kinesthetic predicates; verbs describing, respectively, seeing, hearing, and feeling. Two less frequently used predicates are olfactory and gustatory or smelling and tasting. Dilts focused on the three primary predicates. This focus on representational systems and sensory predicates is key to understanding and utilizing NLP. Of course, English was not the language spoken by Jesus or that the scriptures were originally written in. One is left to wonder about the impact of translation from Greek into English and even about the possible translation of Aramaic and Hebrew into Greek on the possibilities and limitations of modeling on Jesus.

Dilts found that Jesus' primary representational system was auditory and his second was visual. According to Dilts, Jesus made very little verbal reference to the kinesthetic or feeling representational system. According to Dilts, the primary way Jesus related to the world was through listening and speaking and the second was through seeing and showing. Although Jesus did not speak directly about feelings, he did touch people and did refer to the body, the heart, and the spirit a significant number of times. In looking

into this data, Dilts found that Jesus followed a particular strategy of communication that began with hearing (auditory), which triggered an internal state (kinesthetic), which generated visual imagery (visual), which stimulated feelings that led him to respond physically (kinesthetically), and share “the Word” (auditory) (Dilts, 2006).

To model Jesus is to constrain to become like Jesus. Dilts suggests that employing the same strategy as Jesus employed would help one to be like Jesus. If Dilts wanted to communicate like Jesus he would use primarily visual language and secondarily auditory language. I would begin with kinesthetic language. On the other hand, I believe that matching the preferred representational system (visual, auditory, or kinesthetic) of people is more important factor in preaching and counseling than what the communicator’s preferred representational system is, even if the communicator is Jesus!

Dilts emphasized how “The Word” was central to Jesus. Thus, listening and speaking were important to Jesus. Every word was important to Jesus. Words represent reality and shape reality. They have a surface meaning and a deep meaning that may or may not be congruent (Dilts, 2006). From a Christian perspective, Jesus is the Word of God. In Jesus, the Word of God became flesh. The origin of creation is the Word. Jesus embodied God’s Word and acted on the world as God’s Word. Christians are people who live on the basis of God’s Word after the example of Jesus. The Word was present in the beginning with God and everything was created out of it. In Jesus it became expressed fully in human form as Jesus and serves as the basis of ideal

human community. The Word of God is central to the Christian who seeks after the example of Jesus to embody God's Word in everyday life.

As I understand this, to be like Jesus, it is important to treat "the Word," like Jesus did. This means to observe how Jesus utilized the word; what he read (scripture) or listened to and how he spoke about it. It also means to identify with God's Word to the extent Jesus did. Jesus was one with and exemplified it in his daily life. Indeed, Jesus is identified with the primordial Word of God that was in the beginning and out of which all things were created. (John 1: 1-5, 14). A good question of a Christian Preacher, teacher or counselor is, "are you open to God's Word as revealed in the scripture? Are you vulnerable to God's Word? Do you value God's Word? Are you motivated by it? Are you committed to it? Do you deeply believe the Word you are preaching? Is the Word you are preaching or teaching or basing your counseling on the love and the basis of your life? Are you passionate about it? Would you die for this Word? The Word of God is both how the Word is revealed through Jesus' life and teachings, Jesus himself and the literal Word. The Word of God is the great light described by Isaiah (Isaiah 9:2). It is what causes Israel joy (Isaiah 9:3) and frees Israel of oppression (Isaiah 9:4). It's authority is embodied in a child, a son who is called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6) who will rule on the throne of David with justice and righteousness from the time of his birth forever (Isaiah 9:7). This Word made flesh (John 1:14) shall be animated by the Spirit of God and its characteristic wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge and fear of God (Isaiah 11:2). And the Kingdom of this Child of God King shall be peaceful, equitable, just and righteous

and a safe haven for all creation (Isaiah 11: 3-9). Israel shall be restored, salvation through knowledge and trust of God established and Israel be grateful to God (Isaiah 12).

Not only is God's Word important to Jesus, so is the word of his audience. Jesus listened to what people had to say before he spoke and after he spoke. This allowed Jesus to be relevant in what he said to them. He was answering their questions and responding to their stated needs. The aim of Christian preaching and counseling is to lead people to approximate God's Word in their life to the fullest extent possible such that they too, like Jesus, exemplify God's Word in their lives.

Another recurrent theme of Jesus that Dilts identified is "the heart" (Dilts, 2006). The heart is where the meaning of the Word of God is received and perceived. It is the seat of true understanding. It is also the place from which the Word of God is shared. We might say that Jesus spoke from and with his heart and he spoke to the hearts of people rather than to their heads. When people did not understand him, Jesus said they could not because their hearts were hard. To be like Jesus one needs to live and speak from the heart. A couple of questions for any Christian Preacher or counselor would be "are you speaking from the heart?" and "what is the quality of the heart you are speaking from?" "Are you being authentic?" And a question of any listener is "Is your heart open? Is your heart flesh or stone?"

The heart is the seat of the person's internal values, motives, and commitments. The heart, if it is open, is vulnerable. Belief held in the heart, is a deeply held belief, not

superficial. Sometimes hatred and hurt are contained in the heart and healing has to occur in the heart. To model Jesus' use of the word "heart" one would have to model Jesus' heart and learn to speak from that heart. Christian Preachers and counselors need to condition their own hearts to be like Jesus' and condition the hearts of the people they are addressing. They can test their own hearts and work with people around this metaphor of the spiritual heart. One can ask the question: What characterizes the heart of Jesus? The heart of Jesus is characterized by love, compassion and forgiveness. Jesus loves God and loves people without condition. He mourns for the city of Jerusalem for its inability to be faithful (Luke 19:41-44). He does not back down from his mission out of fear of suffering and death but steels his face towards Jerusalem, journeys there and speaks and acts against the injustice displayed there (Luke 9:51). As he hangs dying on the cross he cries to God, "Forgive them for they know not what they do (Luke 23:34)."

Dilts presents "the light" as another important theme utilized by Jesus (Dilts, 2006). According to Dilts, the visual filter was, to Jesus, the primary guide for behavior. It was through the eye that one could see the light, whether that light be Jesus or that light be the Truth. Despite using auditory language most often, Dilts contends that Jesus identified himself most with the visual, referring to himself as the "light of the world." He says that it was through visual images that Jesus conveyed an understanding of complex ideas and advanced future states such as salvation, Kingdom of God, and Eternal Life. And he states that Jesus utilized images of the future to stimulate cognitive and theological understanding. This light that Dilts refers to is an inner light;

metaphorical. Still, there may be an inner and outer physiological affect that is experienced physically in the body, bio-chemical or glandular response. The Christian Preacher and counselor needs to be a seer with an eye for the Light, an eye to the internal, and an eye to the eternal. They need to remember the gospel story, seeing its major themes and direction, look deeper into the present and its undercurrents, and imagine what is promised or calling from the future to be activated in the present. They can ask the question of how Jesus is experienced as light by others. And they can ask what light means to Jesus and the people of his day, whether that be in bringing hope to his audience or bringing them to a new understanding of a situation they are in or about how they are living.

Jesus uses other images as well, especially in the Gospel of John in his various “I AM” statements. He speaks of himself as water, bread, the vine, resurrection and life, shepherd, all metaphors drawn from the everyday experiences of the people of his time and place and associated with spiritual and social realities.

To model Jesus’ use of the word “light” one would have to identify with Jesus as light of the world and familiarize oneself with his use of the word “light.” One would have to make a correspondence between Jesus as “Light of the world” and disciple as “Light to the world.”

The reference “I Am” originates in the Old Testament in the Book of Exodus (3:14) where Yahweh (God) responds to Moses question about Yahweh’s name. Yahweh tells Moses, “I AM who I AM.” I AM is the name Yahweh gives Moses to reference Yahweh;

a rather curt response. Jesus in John may be demonstrating his own identification with Yahweh. Recall that Jesus' own name, Joshua in Hebrew or Yeshua in Aramaic, is a derivative of the name Yahweh, meaning "Yahweh (God) saves." So, when Jesus says, "I am," Jesus is saying "God is." He is speaking as the Word of God, identifying with a particular image, saying at the same time "I am that image" and "God is that image." In John's gospel, Jesus is inviting people to relate to him as that image of God and identify with that very same image of God. Given a Jewish culture that eschewed graven images and idolatry, self-identifications like these may have contributed to accusations of Jesus being blasphemous and heretical. Jesus avoided this in the synoptic gospels, particularly in Mark where he quieted references by others to his being the Son of God and the Messiah.

"The Spirit" and "the Life" (Dilts, 2006) are other key references made by Jesus. Dilts states that the realization of "the Kingdom" "Eternal Life," and "Salvation of God" are not possible without them. He describes these as multi-sensory words, a synthesis of different experiences, perhaps even transcendent. They interact with "the Word" to allow access to the experiences of "Kingdom" and "Salvation." Dilts explains that they represent powerfully generative states that operate on a deep and pervasive level, penetrating every aspect of being. These are states that can be conveyed from a person to another by the way the communicator speaks or carries themselves to the extent that they exist in the realization of the presenter.

To model Jesus' use of these terms would involve one realizing how Jesus himself entered these states and utilized these words. For instance how was Jesus "one with

the Spirit” or “the Life” or how was he “King” and “bringer of eternal life and salvation?”

The key is to model the whole person of Jesus and his characteristics as defined by the scriptures and traditions we find him in.

Eye accessing cues as a part of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (Dilts, 2006). The model states, that when a person looks up the person is visualizing. When they look up to the right, they are constructing an image. When they look up to the left, they are remembering visually. When their eyes slide sideward horizontally they are hearing; to the right they are constructing auditorally, and to the left they are remembering auditorally. When looking downward to the right they are feeling. When looking downward to the left they are engaged in self-talk. These are universally true except in the case of handedness with left-handed persons constructing images (up) and hearing (side) when looking to the left and remembering visually (up) and auditorally (side) when looking up to the right

It is difficult to tell what Jesus was experiencing internally from his eye accessing cues because we cannot see Jesus’ eye movements and the gospels give scant detail about his eye movements. The only such references Dilts gives are to Jesus looking-up to heaven (John 17:1). We are not able to determine from that whether Jesus was constructing an image or remembering one.

According to Neuro-Linguistic Programming, the description of eye accessing movements are valid for right-handers, and it may be opposite for left-handers. In any case, for a Preacher it would be difficult to observe eye movements of members of an

audience while speaking to them. We also do not read of Jesus using eye accessing cues. I think eye accessing cues provides us with too little information about Jesus and Jesus as a Preacher to be helpful. They may be useful in individual, couples or small group or family counseling. Plus, there are more reliable ways of determining the representational system of audience members; listening to their use of sensory predicates or paper and pencil assessments. For medium sized or larger audiences this, too, seems useless. Rather, for purposes of preaching or teaching it makes most sense to know the statistics about what percentage of people are visual, what percentage are auditory, and what percentage are kinesthetic. Likely, there will be a mix of representational styles being utilized in every congregation. Presentations that are balanced, utilizing the three primary representational systems, in the order of auditory, visual, and kinesthetic, will involve everyone and develop better use of under-utilized representational systems in audiences, enriching their sensory appreciation. Working one-on-one as a tutor, counselor or coach you can match the sensory language of your audience. To model Jesus' use of senses or representational systems it is necessary to utilize the same type of words as he did and to enhance these by accessing the assumed eye patterns and physiological patterns that go along with that sense utilization. Efforts to model Jesus are impacted by the interpretive bias of the translators of the Bible. Likely Jesus spoke Aramaic, Koine Greek and Hebrew (Flusser and Leibowitz, 1989). The Gospels were also written well after his life, death, resurrection and ascension, the artifacts of oral traditions captured on parchment at different times and places (Erhman, 2000). They were also edited (Erhman, 2000). The Roman Catholic version of the English New Testament, as Christians refer to it,

was written in Greek, translated in Latin and then into English (Erhman, 2000). The Protestant versions of the English New Testament were written in Greek and directly translated into English (Erhman, 2000). Different versions of the Bible are translated differently and some are paraphrased.” For scholarly purposes it might do well to use multiple versions of the Bible in modeling Jesus. In the training of Preachers, teachers and pastoral counselors it might be best to utilize the preferred translation of the Bible of their denomination or their own preferred version.

Dilts begins to define Jesus’ higher level strategies and define ways to put them to use (Dilts, 2006). He describes one of the major outcomes of Jesus’ teaching is providing “the vision and strategy necessary to help people develop the ability to perceive the larger system of which they are a member and to concentrate on and respond to more distant goals relating to that system as a whole” (Dilts, 2006, 28). Modeling Jesus then includes modeling his vision. This means knowing what his vision and aim is. To model Jesus’ vision one must understand his conception of the Kingdom of God or Heaven and thus model that Kingdom. This is the larger view of Jesus’ mission and work. Too often, people focus their attention on the details of Jesus’ message and miss the larger and prevailing context of his message. The preacher and counselor need to have one eye on the present and the other on the future, while considering the past as it impinges on the present with their audience.

Dilts directs us to Luke 21:27-34: “Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near. Then he told them a

parable: 'Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.'"

Dilts explains that Jesus utilizes a visual predicate in this passage. He directs the audience to an image of a dramatic future event, the future vision becoming the key element to which the communication refers (2006). By telling them to "stand up and raise their heads," he points them to an internal visual accessing position which helps reinforce and access the vision he verbally describes.

He explains that Jesus follows up the vision with a parable, utilizing it as a verbal device to develop a metaphorical internal picture that illustrates the deeper level principle he is trying to convey. He states that the parable relates to the ability of the audience to find evidence in observations of their present external environment of the long-term, internally represented future outcomes.

Dilts points out that Jesus emphasizes the value of words, especially "the Word" he Preachers, In "the Word" is contained the unchangeable core principles and values that support life, even as the physical content or things and institutions of the world change. Dilts emphasizes that Jesus warns of the consequences of failing to maintain the priority of "the Word" and being unprepared for the coming of the Son of Man. Jesus' strategy is to align a series of different logical levels of experience where his

words represent a larger spiritual mind. Through vision the minds of the people who constitute his audience are able to comprehend the larger mind and relate it to their personal experiences. And through the heart, that vision is translated into the specific beliefs and values that guide his audience's actions and behaviors and thus affect their world. The structure of this strategy is to move the audience from vision to action through the processes of language and emotion. Furthermore, Spirit provides the impetus for the vision that drives the strategy and provides access to a generative experience beyond the confines of individual identity, personal history, and immediate environment (Dilts, 2006). This vision could alternately be conceived as a manifestation of the Holy Spirit. However, the Holy Spirit may be considered to be an active and creative principle of the Divine, originating in the Transcendent (Father) and manifest in the Imminent (Son).

Jesus focuses the attention of his audience on a near reality and distant reality at the same time, playing on the tension between the two. In order to understand the message of the future reality and state that Jesus speaks of, his audience must have an inkling of what he is referring to. The idea of the Kingdom of God or Realm of God is a state that exists in the audience in a not-fully realized state within and a to-be-fully-realized future state that the audience will realize, when and if it is prepared to do so. Heaven, too, is seen as a present, but not yet fully realized state, experienced now as a sample, and later as complete.

Audiences or clients can be swayed by reference to the most distant ends, if they have the means of seeing and having those ends, a measure of progress towards those

ends, and an awareness, flexibility, motivation and energy to stay committed to those ends (Dilts, 2006). It would behoove Christian Preachers and counselors to have an eye to the present, but to keep their eye cast on a far goal, to call people to that far goal, and to show them what signs along the way will indicate to them progress, lest they grow faint along the way and turn away from the goal. What makes Jesus so effective in playing the present against the future is how he maintains a sense of the imminence of the future event in the present, creating in the audience a motivation to change soon, if not immediately.

Having determined Jesus' strategy, Dilt's desire is to transfer that strategy to those who would like to use it to realize similar results to Jesus'. Jesus' use of the image and the parable allows him to accomplish something that cannot be accomplished through mere concepts. He invites people to look, then act, and then anticipate, and then to look again, experience and know what he is talking about. One NLP modeling technique similar to this is T.O.T.E. T.O.T.E. is an acronym that stands for Test, Operate, Test and Exit (Miller, Galanter and Pribram, 1960). The first test in the Test-Operate-Test-Exit strategy is the comparison of our present state to a desired state—an outcome. If they fail to match, we perform some operation with the purpose of changing percepts, behaviors or the world in the direction of our stated outcome. The second compares the present state to the outcome. If the outcome criteria have been met, the process ends; we exit the process. If, however, the outcome has not been met, we loop back through the test-operate procedure until it does (Dilts, 1983; Dilts & Delozier, 2000; Dilts, Grinder, et al., 1980; Wake, 2010).

To model Jesus in this way one needs to follow the direction of Jesus' words and experience their outcome in one's own hearing. One also needs to simultaneously hold in one's own conscious awareness, present circumstance, present desire, and future realization of the desire, as well as a dynamic, unfolding continuity between present, immediate future and far future.

Jesus' teachings were not intended to provide a cognitive strategy. But the cognitive strategies of Jesus are an artifact left behind by Jesus that we can study and utilize, much like a map. Jesus' messages were directed at high levels of beliefs, values, identity, states, and spiritual issues. To manifest what is learned from Jesus teachings it is necessary to obtain or develop specific skills and capabilities and internal cognitive strategies that match Jesus' (Dilts, 2006).

Some might say that it is not possible to obtain from the gospels and epistles enough detail to learn from Jesus to be like Jesus, and that concepts like "Word," "Light," "Spirit," and "Life" are too vague and imprecise to model. But the feedback that history has provided is that this has been the very quest of Christianity. Millions have claimed, in part or full, to realize, or at least approximate, that aim. The reality is that we cannot know everything about Jesus. We cannot know everything about a flesh and blood model today, even one we can see every day. It is very possible to get caught up so much in detail that it bogs us down and keeps us from modeling Jesus. But, Jesus exemplifies a fully God-realized human being; one who is fully human and fully divine. And he illustrates how to accomplish that through his preaching and being (Dilts, 2006). It may not even be desirable to have so much detail. In order to adapt the cognitive

strategies of Jesus or other models, with all the possible situations and nervous systems, a certain amount of flexibility is needed (Dilts, 2006). The ultimate purpose of modeling in Neuro-Linguistic Programming is to provide maps that are rich enough, structured enough, and flexible enough to be of practical value to use. Once enough key elements of the micro and macro strategy of a model is known, the rest of the model's strategy can be filled in by inference and intuition.

The fundamental neurological, linguistic, and psychological capabilities that form the strategies of Jesus are inherent and latent in every human being. The process of utilizing these inherent and latent structures involve tapping into and drawing upon the deeper linguistic structure available to humanity and enriching the surface structure available to the personality. The deep structure is the ultimate source of meaning for human communication and the surface structure always, at best, an approximation of that deeper structure. Jesus, in this estimation, as a human being and communicator, has greater access to the deep substrate than other human beings, and in having such has greater access to God (Dilts, 2006).

While there may be limitations in human modeling of Jesus and developing equivalent structures and capabilities within human subjects, there is a long ways to go between where we are now and perfection, that state Jesus has realized, identified as he is with God.

NLP Modeling Jesus as a Preacher: Gonzalez

Fr. Luis Jorge Gonzalez, presents Jesus as a model for Christian life (1997) and as a model communicator (1994) even referring to him as the “Great Communicator” (1994). Gonzalez provides a comprehensive overview of NLP and NLP Modeling. His emphasis, in this later work, is on modeling communication after the patterns of Jesus’ communication. He approaches Jesus theologically, presenting Jesus as the Word of God incarnate. Nothing is lost in translation in Jesus’ expression of himself as God. The very Word of God is perfectly expressed through Jesus because Jesus is the Word of God. Incarnation is the process by which Jesus joined and identified with those who are to receive God’s communication of God’s self. In Jesus, the fully divine Son of God became fully human. Jesus gave his message not only in words but in the whole manner of his life. Jesus entered into the life of those who constituted his audience. Jesus is the model for Christian living. He is also the model communicator and model Preacher and pastoral or spiritual counselor. He joins with his audiences like he is one of them. This is a key factor for Christian Preachers and counselors. In this section we will discuss Gonzalez’s insights into Jesus as a Preacher. In a separate section we will relate Gonzalez’s observations to Jesus as a counselor.

Jesus preached the divine message authoritatively and with integrity, without fear or compromise (Gonzalez, 1994). What Jesus preached was pure and unadulterated truth. Jesus knew from experience what he spoke about, including about heavenly things. In that he was an authority. There was congruence between who he was and what he said. This made Jesus a powerful presence, person, and Preacher. Modeling

Jesus then involves modeling his authority, integrity, and courage. It is modeling his presence and presentation whether in preaching, teaching or counseling. The key questions in modeling Jesus involve the questions “How is Jesus authoritative, how does he maintain his integrity and how does he behave courageously?”

Jesus adjusted his message to his audience’s way of being, thinking and communicating and their life experience (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus was flexible in how he presented himself, although always consistent with whom he was and what he meant to say. This made Jesus relevant and understandable to his audience. Relationship with Jesus and his message was life changing for his audience. This added to Jesus’ authority.

What made Jesus so powerful a person, Preacher and presenter was his relationship with God (Gonzalez, 1994). Others, like the prophets, priests, and Rabbis spoke for God or about God, Jesus spoke as God. Jesus was all powerful as a person and Preacher, because when Jesus showed up, God was present, and when Jesus preached and taught, God was preaching and teaching. When Jesus healed someone God healed someone. When Jesus forgave someone God forgave someone. His word was powerful, creative, spirit-filled, enlightening, life changing, and even at times, when he so desired, destructive. Jesus modeled God as a Preacher, teacher and healer. Modeling Jesus includes modeling his relationship with God, as God. Jesus tells his listeners to be perfect as God is perfect (Matthew 5:48). Jesus provides the human model for doing this; a model that, for Christians, did not exist before him. It is a model that will continue to develop and grow after he departs the world. He tells his disciples

that they will accomplish even greater things than he has accomplished in his earthly life after they receive power to do so (John 14:12).

Jesus was audience-centered in his communication (Gonzalez, 1994). Rather than be concerned with the elegance of his message, Jesus was concerned with whether his audience understood and utilized his message (Gonzalez, 1994). Modeling Jesus involves adoption of his focus of attention and concern on his audience. Does the audience understand and can they utilize the message? Is the message and delivery producing your desired outcome? Preachers, teachers, and counselors alike complain about audience resistance. Jesus took responsibility for audience compliance. He did not do what his audience must do for themselves but he presented his audience with existential dilemmas whereby they could make the right choice or deny the truth of what was right.

Jesus was an empowering presenter (Gonzalez, 1994). His intent was for his audience to experience God's power in their lives and realize their full potential as children of God. Jesus was bifocal in his view of people, seeing their present condition and their yet unfulfilled potential. While Jesus' audience does not always utilize their potential according to their capability, from Jesus' perspective they can. Jesus will lament over their missed opportunities because he knows that they are more capable than they believe. In this regard, Jesus believes in his audience, even as they don't believe in themselves.

Jesus was Kingdom-centered (Gonzalez, 1994). The Kingdom of God or Kingdom of Heaven is the primary message of Jesus. Jesus sees the Kingdom of God in each person in the audience. It is all around them, in them, and among them. It belongs to them, if only they would value it and take ownership and responsibility for it. It is now, yet not completely realized. Modeling Jesus assumes an understanding and experience of the Kingdom of God, and conveyance of its here and now and eternal reality, in your audience's life. This idea of the Kingdom of God can be otherwise understood as Higher Self, Christ Consciousness, or God or Christ-within.

Jesus was compassionate in his communication (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus sees, feels, and understands the present predicament of his audience. He meets them in their condition, sinful, imperfect, painful, dark, enslaved, trapped, asleep, lost, etc. He feels their pain. Modeling on Jesus demands such compassionate relating with your audience.

Jesus was future-oriented in his communication (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus sees the potential of the future for his audience. He sees the Kingdom of God or Heaven fully-realized in them, even as it remains unmanifest. He sees the members of his audience perfected, saved, liberated, awake, freed, found, enlightened, and healed, and their potential fully-realized. Modeling Jesus adopts both the present and future-orientation of Jesus. What is potential or beginning now will be fully-realized in the future or end.

Jesus was a loving communicator. Jesus loves his audience and expresses his care in his communication (Gonzalez, 1994). He loves them like he loves himself. He is even willing to set aside his divinity for them and give up his physical life for them. In psychological terms, he has unconditional positive regard for them (Gonzalez, 1994). Modeling Jesus involves loving your audience. This means setting aside privilege, in Jesus' case, that of being God and setting aside his own life and desire for the sake of the larger human community whether or not they deserve it. You need to love the people you address unconditionally, however grizzly they may come across, setting aside your status and achievements in the process.

Jesus bore light in his communication (1994). Jesus, light of the world that he is, sees his audience as light to the world. He leads his audience to discover their original state of light, a state of being before the reality of that light was diminished or lost. Where a person may be experiencing darkness, Jesus brings light. This is an extremely positive view of his audience. They are essentially beings of light. This involves Jesus' audience doing good deeds in the world the way Jesus did. Modeling Jesus involves being light, bringing light, and recognizing the light in your audiences.

Jesus' communication was restorative, redeeming, and inclusive (Gonzalez, 1994). Everyone in Jesus' audience counts. They matter to him. He embraces in his view of God's Kingdom the faithful and the lost, celebrating the lost along with the faithful. Jesus leads his audience to find their place in God's kingdom, a kingdom that belongs to them as heirs of that Kingdom. It is only with great sorrow that any of them are left behind. Modeling Jesus involves adopting Jesus' total embrace of every member of his

audience, his view that no person shall be left outside the Kingdom. Everyone is forgivable, redeemable and salvageable.

Jesus' communication was powerful and persuasive (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus speaks and acts with authority, authority derived from God. Modeling Jesus involves believing that everything is possible with God. It involves assuming the authority from God by which Jesus speaks and acts. The power of God is assimilated into people's lives as they listen to God's word, study it, and apply it in their everyday life. Christian Preachers have to believe and convey this to their audiences.

Jesus was intentional in his communication (Gonzalez, 1994). The outcome of Jesus' preaching and other communication is determined by his intention. Jesus has an idea and an outcome in mind whenever he communicates. There are no wasted words for Jesus. Modeling Jesus involves adopting Jesus' intention as the intention for everything you say and do. Jesus modeled his own intention on God's intention. Recall how Jesus said in Gethsemane, "Not my will, but your will." You model on Jesus as you align your will with Jesus' will and surrender it to Jesus'. This intentionality carries over into preparing sermons.

Jesus' communication was God-centered (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus aligns himself with God's will and invites his audience to do so. As discussed in the previous point, modeling Jesus involves adopting the will of God like Jesus did and communicating it. The sermon needs to be God-centered.

Jesus' communication was mission-oriented (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus is determined to accomplish God's will and empower people to do so as well. Modeling Jesus involves making the very mission of Jesus yours, the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. There are different ways to say this. One can also say, "Salvation of the world." These are the same. You need to be Kingdom of God and mission-oriented in your preaching. Mission provides the overarching and pervasive underpinning of everything Jesus says and does and thus what gospel-based Preachers say and do. It provides the overarching reach and pervasive push of your preaching.

Jesus deemed preaching as the primary task of his life mission and ministry (Gonzalez, 1994). The particular subject of his preaching was the Kingdom of God. Preachers who model Jesus have preaching the Kingdom of God, or the salvation of the world, as their primary vocation. This provides focus and devotion to their ministry. Anything else they do is secondary to this endeavor. Preaching cannot be just another activity the Preacher does among others.

Jesus was goal-oriented (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus goal is "the liberation, development, and salvation, of every human being "(Gonzalez, 1994, 95). He wants them all to realize the Kingdom God or Heaven. Jesus' aims to equip and empower his audience to improve, grow and develop and for the audience's community and world to grow. {need to meta model these).. Jesus intended to heal the body, mind, and spirit of his audience. Modeling Jesus involves having the goal Jesus has for people and humankind; development, liberation and salvation. This goal needs to drive the enterprise of Christian preaching.

Jesus' communication was service-oriented (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus' aim was to serve, not to be served. He was selfless, not selfish. Modeling Jesus involves assuming the same self-less, service-oriented attitude as Jesus, coming into the world for its salvation, washing his disciple's feet, giving up his shirt and tunic if requested, picking up one's cross and dying on it if that is what is necessary. This selfless service is modeled in Preacher, teacher and counselor and carried out in the lives of audiences as a sign of their psychological, social, spiritual development and health.

Jesus was vision-focused (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus held a map of the Kingdom of God and of his audience in mind. Jesus perceived the divine nature of his audience. His aim was to focus the mind of his audience on the Kingdom of God. Modeling Jesus' vision involves learning all you can about the Kingdom of God and salvation of the world and seeing the world, people, and God as Jesus did. It involves holding up that vision for your audience until they are able to see it for themselves.

Jesus was invitational in his communication (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus invited his audience into a relationship with God. He presents to them a new model, that being the Kingdom of God, and invites them to participate in it. Modeling Jesus involves inviting people to participate in the model of the Kingdom of God and the kind of life Jesus espoused. This invitation is a perpetual invitation. It involves staying with them in the entry way until they have immersed themselves in it.

Jesus' communication was life-giving (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus embraces his audience, always loving and never condemning them. If they can't receive what he offers, Jesus laments, rather than blames. Jesus always adds to, enhances or uplifts people rather than diminishing them. Modeling Jesus involves being as life-giving, positive, and affirmative as Jesus in your communications. Jesus laments over Jerusalem and its inhabitants, but unlike his predecessor Jonah never gives up on them even if it means dying for them. Modeling Jesus involves maintaining this life-giving stance in the face of the most recalcitrant audience.

Jesus was belief-oriented (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus believes in his audience. He sees them as already possessing the inner resources and capacities they need to grow and realize their full potential. Modeling Jesus involves believing like Jesus believed, not only in God, but in the people you serve. I like to say that God believes in us more than we believe in ourselves. Good parents believe in their children until their children believe in themselves, after they continue to believe in them, even if their children falter. A Preacher who does not believe in their audience will not be effective. Your audience will rise or fall to your level of belief in them.

Jesus was catalytic (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus acts as a catalyst to activate power and capacities that are latent in his audience. Jesus is the catalyst whose preaching activates this Kingdom and power within his audience. He removes the hindrances and conditions that impair his audience's growth and development and provides a spark that leads to combustion of his audience's inner desire. This catalytic process amounts to an act and process of initiation of his audience into the new Kingdom of God way of

being, knowing, living and experiencing. Modeling Jesus involves being a catalytic force in the lives of the people you serve, not doing for them what they can do for themselves, but providing that degree of attention that allows them to manifest God's power in them to accomplish great things for the good of all and the glory of God. Dilts speaks of this as sponsoring a potential (2003). Change of being or thinking, say on the level of values and identity, involves sponsorship. Sponsorship is the awakening and safeguarding of potential within others. It is committed to promoting something that is already in someone that is not fully manifest but can be (Dilts, 2003). The person in the sponsorship position provides a context, contacts and resources that promotes the other's development and performance. Sponsors contribute to the transformation of others by first recognizing or seeing something latent in them, and then by being there for them as a kind of reference point (Gilligan, 1997). Positive sponsorship awakens awareness of self and of the world, and introduces skills and traditions to develop "self-in-world" and "world-in-self" (Gilligan, 1997). Effective sponsorship brings new perspectives that allow people to see the positive side of their values and behavior.

Jesus displayed empathy in his communication (Gonzalez, 1994). However wrong, ignorant, and sinful members of his audience may seem, Jesus knows that they are doing the best that they can and making the best choices they can, given the impediments in their way. Modeling Jesus involves understanding that audiences are doing the best they can given their current level of awareness and sense of personal and community power. No one is trying to do the worst they can or less than they can. Blame, shame or guilt will not, in most cases, cause people to change for the better. In

fact blame, guilt and shame may chain people where they are and contribute to a downward spiral of more of the same. Jesus is not empathetic with the Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees and Temple Priests whose beliefs and practices impede the people he has come to save. He is incensed by their dearth of empathy and care.

Jesus' communication was enriching his audience (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus enriches the individual maps of reality of his audience, increasing the number of constructive choices available to them. Modeling Jesus involves enriching the people you address, increasing their belief in them-selves and what they are capable of, and encouraging them to act upon their ever evolving beliefs and newly developing capabilities. It involves providing them with new markers on their map and skills in reading those maps so they can get to places they might not otherwise be able to get to.

Jesus' communication was contextual (Gonzalez, 1994). He considers the overall context of his audience. Modeling Jesus' ability to contextualize means understanding the complex, interacting sets of influences people live in, and providing them with a wider context by which these nested influences can be acted upon. The larger, wider or higher perspective can act upon the smaller, narrower or lower perspective to produce change in it.

Jesus' communication was enlightening (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus assists his audience in becoming self-aware so that they would have increased choices to develop their capacities for success in realizing their potential. Modeling Jesus ability to enlighten

involves raising awareness, consciousness or perspective in people and creating opportunities for choices they don't see presently.

Jesus had high expectations of his audience (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus expects his audience to make themselves better, take responsibility for their thoughts feelings and behaviors, use their freedom to overcome evil, sin, limitation and lack, to love God, self, neighbor and one another, and to "be perfect" as God is perfect. Modeling Jesus means having high expectations of the people you serve. This is akin to believing that the people you serve are capable of doing anything they set their aim on.

Jesus was facile in his ability to shift perspectives when he communicated (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus is able to communicate from multiple perspectives, including 1st, 2nd, and 3rd person perspectives, and from a Meta perspective that includes all of these. The 1st position is the position of one's self (Gonzalez, 1994). It is the "I" position. "I feel enthused" is a 1st position statement. The 2nd position is the position of the other (Gonzalez, 1994). It is the "you" position. "You say I am" is a 2nd position statement. The 3rd position, according to Gonzalez, is the position of the object of a communication, the subject being discussed (Gonzalez, 1994). "Who do people say the Son of Man is" (Matthew 16:13) is a 3rd position statement. The 4th meta position is a position that is beyond first, second, and third, that takes into account the other three positions simultaneously (Gonzalez, 1994). "After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased'"(Matthew 3:16-18).

This is a 4th or meta position statement, where a perspective outside of the normal frame is provide; the viewpoint of the transcendent or God.

Modeling Jesus means being perceptually flexible, being able to move from perspective to perspective, and enable the people you address to move from perspective to perspective to affect better communication and change.

Jesus was able to communicate to the different logical levels defined by Dilts (Gonzalez, 1994). Human beings exist, conceive, perceive, experience, and communicate on multiple levels: spiritual, identity, beliefs, capability, behaviors, and environment (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus spoke to each of these levels. To model Jesus it is necessary to observe, identify with, internalize, and imitate aspects of Jesus on any or all of these of these logical levels. Jesus is always manifesting qualities of God so to model Jesus is to manifest the characteristics or realities of God. You as a Preacher operate on each of these logical levels as do your audiences. You become a model to your congregation. There is a charismatic aspect, where something of the essence of the person is passed from one person to the next. There is a routinization of charisma (Weber, 2002). Jesus had a certain charisma. The disciples modeled it. We model the disciples' models of Christ. Our audiences and clients model our model of Christ.

Jesus utilized a time-line in his communication (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus makes use of a time line consisting of past, present, and future. The future is like a wide field of possibility where expectations can be realized. The past is where positive experiences can be built upon and negative experiences, errors, and sins forgiven, learned from, and

utilized for the good. The present is where one lives, decides and acts towards growth. To model Jesus involves affecting time with people in the way Jesus affected time in his audiences. It involves taking people back to the past, from the past to the present, the present to the future, and from the future back to the present, and all of the possible combinations of these movements beyond time. The past can be healed in the present and the future can influence the present as much as the past and present can influence the future.

Jesus was a highly relational communicator (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus seeks to know and understand his audience through listening and empathy. He actively questions them for this purpose. To model Jesus involves being relational; listening to people and empathizing with them and even doing things with people.

Jesus was a frugal communicator (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus doesn't preach what his audience could not hear and assimilate at one time or at a given time. He holds back information and adapts what he says and does according to his audience's situations, needs, and capacities. To model Jesus is to be frugal or economic in speech, lest pearls are thrown to swine. Jesus said, "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces" (Matthew 7:5-6). It is important to recognize what people are able to hear and utilize at different times in their lives and development and only present to them what they are ready for. Timing is worth considering. The readiness of an audience is important to consider. An audience, such

as certain Pharisees who are projecting their own propensity to sin on to others may need to be confronted with the reality of their own attitude and behavior. To associate the Pharisees with something unclean like a street dog or a pig or with unholy people like the Canaanites (dogs) and Gentiles (pig) is quite harsh and can shock an audience to its senses or greater defensiveness.

“That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³And he told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen! A sower went out to sow seed. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!” (Matthew 13:1-8). Self-reflection is a difficult task. It is hard to be objective about one’s self. It’s hard to accept that one’s self-image does not measure up to self-examination. This might be especially difficult for people who are invested in a particular self-image and garner much self-esteem from it. A person with deficits in safety, security, love, belonging or affiliation and self-esteem may need remedial help before they can move into meeting their being needs on the self-actualization pyramid of Maslow’s (1962, 1971). The soil or the ground of their lives needs to be cared for, nourished and cultivated so that the seed can grow, take root,

sprout and flower, give fruit and go to seed. The seed contains all of the potential it needs to grow and yield abundant fruit but it needs the right conditions in which to grow. This can be facilitated by the farmer. Every seed has an opportunity to grow, but not all the same conditions for growth. This brings us back to Dilts' (2003) and Gilligan's (1997) discussion of sponsorship of potential.

Jesus was a responsive communicator (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus always considers the response of the audience in how he continues his presentation to them. He wants to make sure that he communicates what he intends to communicate, so he measures the response of his audience to determine what his further communication on the topic is. To Model Jesus' responsiveness it is necessary to gauge the feedback people provide and adapt what you say and do to accomplish what you want with your communication. You may wish to confront and rile up an audience or even provoke an audience from them if it fits your intended goals. Perhaps Jesus did this in certain episodes of conflict he had with the Pharisees.

Rapport was key to Jesus' communication (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus was a master of rapport. Jesus entered into verbal rapport with his audience. Rapport is the state of harmony, affinity, trust, cooperation, and collaboration in relationship with others. It is established most strongly around goals. Rapport is the experience of relational connection, the means by which people experience interpersonal communion. Rapport is established by meeting people on their own level, by showing agreement or alignment with them or bearing some likeness to them, and by facilitating the rise of positive feelings like trust, affinity, and harmony in them. Rapport in communication creates a

climate conducive of change (Gonzalez, 1994). This state is a condition for change and growth in your audience. When preaching to achieve desired change or evoke action from people, it is necessary after gaining rapport to pace and lead the audience in the direction of an outcome. In John 1, disciples are sharing with others what they have experienced, their faith and their hope. They are using sensory language. They speak about what they have heard (auditory), seen (visual) and touched (kinesthetic). They are testifying to what has been revealed to them – eternal life with God. Their aim in sharing this is to invite their audience into community with them and their fellowship with God and Jesus. They are excited about this and would be as happy as can be to be joined by their audience as part of the same faith community. The audience is one that is seeking to walk in the light and they are offering the audience the opportunity to experience this light and walk in this light with them. Likely, the audience is not lost in darkness, but knows darkness. and wishes to emerge out of darkness and into the light of God (1 John 1: 1-8).

Jesus utilized pacing to gain rapport with his audience (Gonzalez, 1994). Pacing is the process of doing something similar to what the person does. It is going along or alongside someone in some action or behavior of theirs. It is a method used by communicators to quickly establish rapport by matching the behaviors, beliefs, moods, interests, body postures, tones of voice and breathing of other people.

Paul said of Jesus to the Philippians "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and

being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (NAS Phil. 2:5-8). In this sense, Jesus became like us. This is theologically incarnation, the divine becoming human. By becoming a man, like us, Christ identified with us, and lived a life just like we do. He came from a source, God or Heaven, the Transcendent to a particular time and place on earth, in a particular human form and proceeded to be raised and grow like any other human being, through the normal biological, cognitive, moral, psychological, social and spiritual stages of life. Indeed, he was even baptized, not because he had to but because it was the right thing to do. "Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?' But Jesus answered him, 'Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased '" (Matthew 3:13-17). Jesus was the Son of God. Matthew and Luke state this in their respective birth narratives. And now God affirms Jesus as such in his baptism. Jesus joins with other human beings, doing what other Jews are expected to do. Thus he is one of us, but a special one of us.

Jesus led his audience after he paced them (Gonzalez, 1994). Not that Jesus was being manipulative, but he paced people in order to lead them. As the Son of God

came into life as a man in Jesus, Jesus will leave the earth as the Son of God. In the process of life, death and resurrection he is pacing people to lead them, so that they born on this earth will be joined with him in life, death and resurrection as children (sons and daughters) of God. If people believe in him and follow him they will experience eternal life in him and with God; through identity with him and the way, the truth and life he is living, a godly way of sanctification that leads to perfection or unity with God.

Leading is the process of getting people to do something you want. So, change or new action is the result of first pacing and then leading. Pace alone and you'll get more of the behavior the audience, student or client is displaying. Lead alone and no one will follow. Jesus paced his disciples by becoming human like them. Then, after establishing a connection, he led his disciples in realizing the kingdom of God on earth. One of the Pharisees invited Jesus to a meal. A disreputable woman stood behind Jesus at his feet. She began to weep and began to wash his feet with her tears and dry them with her hair. She had with her an alabaster jar of nard. She was kissing Jesus' feet and anointing them with the ointment. The host was outraged that Jesus, a prophet, would allow this sinful woman to touch him. Sensing what the man was thinking, Jesus confronted the man, Simon. He told the man a story: "A certain creditor had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he canceled the debts for both of them. Now which of them will love him more?" Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the greater debt." And Jesus said to him, "You have judged rightly." Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water

for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little.” Then he said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” And he said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace” (Luke 7: 36-50). Jesus matches the representational system of the man who had taught in an auditory digital way, “If this man was a prophet, he would know what this woman is.” Notice that the predicates in this statement are sensory neutral; not auditory, visual or kinesthetic. Jesus responds with auditory predicate, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” Jesus matches Simon’s judgment of the woman by telling a story where Simon is going to associate the woman with the debtors in the story. By this story, Jesus is pacing Simon. The creditor decides to forgive the debts of the two debtors, one with a much larger debt than the other. Jesus then asks Simon which of the two debtors will love the creditor more. Simon answers that the one with the larger debt love him more. Jesus affirms Simon’s answer: “You are right.” Lo and behold, Jesus and the Pharisee are in agreement! This is the logical outcome of Jesus’ intervention. Now, Jesus makes it clear that the woman deserves forgiveness because she has shown him great love and confronts the Pharisee with the lack of love shown by the man to him, the man’s house guest. “Do you see this woman?” asked Jesus, “I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You gave me no

kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment.” Jesus invites Simon to see the woman and to think of the differences between hers and his behavior.

Jesus mirrored and matched to create rapport (Gonzalez, 1994). Mirroring is a process that involves adopting another person’s behaviors and mannerisms as a mirror image of that person. Jesus mirrored Mary and Martha’s behavior after their brother Lazarus died. They are greatly distressed and weep. Jesus becomes distressed like they are and weeps. The tempo of their speech is slow. Jesus’ response to them is slow. Jesus even mirrors the words used by Martha. Martha, upon greeting Jesus says, “Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died, but even now I know that God will grant whatever you ask of him.” Jesus responded to Martha, “Your brother will rise again.” Martha replied to Jesus, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” To this Jesus responded, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me, even though that person dies, will live, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” “Yes, Lord” replied Martha. “I know that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into the world” (John 11:20-27). Jesus says, “Your brother will rise again.” Mary repeats, I know that he will rise again . . .” Jesus adds, “I am the resurrection and the life” and then he repeats Martha’s first words, “Even though that person *dies*, will live. He asks, “Do you believe this?” She answers, “Yes, Lord, I believe . . . “

If that person crosses their arms or legs, do the same. Matching is a process of imitation of the other’s behaviors, capabilities, beliefs, identity or spirituality. This

involves observing and subtly copying the other's body posture, gestures, facial expressions, forms of speech, tone of voice, etc. Rapport is best accomplished linguistically when matching the linguistic underpinnings of the audience we are communicating to; that is, the way they talk. These are what NLP calls representational systems. It is possible to match a person on each one of the logical levels (Gonzalez, 1994). On one of the levels, behavior, Jesus matches the daily activities of his audience. Jesus matched other people when he was baptized (Matthew 3:13), by paying taxes (Matthew 17:24-27).

Jesus employed sensory representational language to reach his audiences (Gonzalez, 1994). Representational systems are the sensory systems through which people experience, perceive, understand, and communicate in the world. There are five primary sensory systems, visual-sight, auditory-hearing, kinesthetic-feeling-touch, olfactory-smell, and gustatory-taste. The visual, auditory and kinesthetic representational systems are the ones most commonly used and which define a person's primary sense for dealing with the world. While each person utilizes all of their senses, one (sometimes two) is primary and one may be underutilized. Jesus would often see and what he saw would often lead to feelings which led him to act. Personally, my most frequently used representational system is auditory and my second kinesthetic. However, a person can learn to use all of their representational modes. I use my eyes to support my listening. Occasionally there is an overlap, even a merging of senses, a phenomenon called synesthesia.

Persons operating in visual mode are those who tend to experience, perceive, and communicate in visual terms (Gonzalez, 1994). They use more visual predicates than other predicate types. Common visual predicates are “see, picture, perceive, notice, look, show, appear, clear, imagine, view, and outlook.” Such persons’ breathing tends to be high in the chest and shallow. Ask them a question about their childhood and they momentarily pause in their breathing to access their answer. They reply using picture words. Their voices tend to be expressive, staccato, in quick bursts, high-pitched and strained. Their bodies are thin and tense, especially when thinking. Their gestures point to their eyes or in front of them as if there were an imaginary screen in front of them. There is a tendency for them when thinking and preparing to speak to look up, either to the right or the left, to the left when remembering something and to the right when imagining something. When people look up they are visualizing something; to the left something they remember, to the right something they are imagining. Jesus uses the predicates “see” 82 times and “saw” 10 times in the gospels.

Persons operating in auditory mode tend to perceive, experience, and communicate in auditory terms, using auditory predicates (Gonzalez, 1994). Some common auditory predicates are “sound, hear, listen, discuss, speak, talk, articulate, say, proclaim, preach.” Such persons exhibit a regular and rhythmic flow of breath, involving their diaphragm and whole chest in their breathing, and a prolonged exhale. Auditory speakers tend to change the timbre and cadence of their voices and vary inflection based upon the sounds they hear. Their pitch varies, but their tone is consistently clear and resonant. They are not as tall and slim as visual speakers, nor are they as

muscular as kinesthetic-oriented people. They tend to make minor rhythmic movements with their head, hands or feet, keeping rhythm as they speak. Their eyes tend to move side to side when listening. When gesturing, it is common for them to point to his ears. Jesus makes frequent use of auditory predicates. Jesus used the predicates “hear” 60 times and “heard” 17 times in the gospels.

Gonzalez seems to be confusing Jesus’ use of kinesthetic and auditory predicates, overlooking the kinesthetic predicates with the assumption that Jesus’ use of speech suggests that Jesus is referencing auditory representational systems. However, it is not the act of speech of Jesus that Gonzalez claims to examine, but his use of predicates in that speech.

Persons who operate in a kinesthetic mode tend to experience, perceive, and communicate in terms of touch and feel (Gonzalez, 1994). Some common kinesthetic words are touch, sense, feel, relax, hold, hard, handle, warm, soft, and act. Such people breathe deep and low in the stomach area. Their breathing is measured and regular. They tend to have low-pitched voices. Their voice tone is pleasant, maybe even sensual. They speak slowly and often with long pauses. The eye movement of kinesthetic people is down and to the right, where they access feelings. The body type of kinesthetic people is muscular. Gonzalez does not site the number of times Jesus uses kinesthetic language in the gospels.

Jesus adapts his communication to speak to the representational system of his audience. He makes use of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic language in doing so. He

employs a strategy that consists of a sequence of representations, recognizing that his audience employs such sequences of representations. When Jesus is speaking to one person his speech is tailored particularly to that one individual according to the mental strategy that the individual employs. When he speaks to a larger group of people, where multiple strategies are employed, Jesus employs a more varied strategy, utilizing the three dominant representational systems but mixing in the olfactory and gustatory. Gonzalez speculated that Jesus was balanced in his use of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic predicates, because Jesus was perfect (Gonzalez, 1994).

It is possible to model Jesus' representational systems or how Jesus addresses the representational systems of his audience through his speech, utilizing the language of the three primary representational systems while communicating each main idea in each message.

Jesus' communication was therapeutic (Gonzalez, 1994). The word therapeutic goes farther than the conventional use today of seeking to correct an illness. Rather, it is intended to speak to the developmental needs of the audience; psychological, cognitive, moral, and spiritual. Jesus is seeking to facilitate spiritual growth and wholeness in his audience.

Jesus makes conscious use of his self with his audience, as a model of what he speaks of, inviting his audience to follow in his way (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus makes greatest use of this type of speech in the Gospel of John in his "I Am Discourses." In the synoptic gospels he most often uses self-reference to be authoritative to his audience.

His self-reference is contextual and points to his role as Son of God and Son of Man and Messiah. John's gospel points to his special role as gateway or conveyer to God. You can model Jesus by making careful reference to his identity and finding points of identification with him and by making calculated self-references in your communication.

Jesus, like Rabbis in general, makes generous use of questions (Gonzalez, 1994). Questions play a part in people's interpretation and construction of reality. Perceptions of reality can be changed through questioning them. Normally, people perceive what is in their focus and ignore what is in the background. When a question is asked, the audience is invited to focus their attention on aspects of reality suggested by the question. In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus asks sixty questions.

Jesus uses five kinds of questions: empowering, information-seeking, clarifying, challenging and confronting (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus asks 225 different questions in the gospels (Zuck, 2004). By asking questions Jesus awakens people's resources and enriches their perspectives. His empowering questions elicit the audience's resources or widen their focus. He asks "Who are my mother and my brothers" (Mark 3:33)? He answers this question, "Those who do the will of my Father in Heaven." He asks "What can we say the kingdom is like" (Mark 4:30)? He asks "Who do you say I am" (Mark 8:29) and "What is it that you want me to do for you" (Mark 10:36)? Through questions like this, audiences are encouraged to think and use their resources to find answers and solutions that empower them to act. His informative questions allow him or his audience the benefit of information or clarify information that allows educated action or response. He asks "How many loaves do you have" (Mark 6:38)? And he asks "How

long has this been happening to him” (Mark 9:21)? He asks “What is your name” (Mark 5:9). He asks “Who has touched my clothes (Mark 5:30), can you see anything (Mark 8:23) or “Can you drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism with which I shall be baptized (Mark 10:38)? By questions like these, Jesus broadens his audience’s understanding of their goals, possible solutions to problems, alternatives for personal change or attitude adjustment. Jesus’ challenging questions provoke his audience to make the best use of their resources and capabilities, to confront them with their lack of congruency and righteousness, and to bring them into congruency and righteousness. He asks his disciples, “Do you understand this parable? Then, how will you understand any of the parables (Mark 4:13). Or he asks “Why are you so frightened? Have you still no faith” (Mark 4:40)? Or “. . . if salt has become insipid, how will it become salty again” (Mark 9:50)? And Jesus asks questions that confront people with their incongruencies and lack of righteousness. He asks these of his opponents. When Jesus healed the paralytic sensing that the Scribes and Pharisees were condemning him, he asked them, “Why do you have these thoughts in your hearts? Which of these is easier to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven’ or ‘Get up. Pick up your stretcher and walk?’ (Mark 2:8-9)?

Each of the questions Jesus asks is for the good of his audience, having the intention of empowering them. Jesus even trains his audience to ask the right questions in order to receive what it is they need to bring about the realization of the Kingdom of heaven on earth. The questions Jesus asks focuses his audience’s attention on what it is they seek or should seek, even if they resist that objective.

Jesus makes positive, affirmative statements in his communication (Gonzalez, 1994). He also employs linguistic strategies that Robert Dilts refers to as “sleight of mouth” (Gonzalez, 1994). Sleight of mouth is like a magician’s sleight of hand. Jesus changes meaning by changing the context and meaning of what his audience is hearing. Some might call this cognitive-linguistic strategy “reframing.” Sleight of mouth allows for greater precision in the use of words. Some examples of sleight of mouth are:

- a. Chunking down or stepping down. In a step down you break the element of a belief into smaller components. This is a primary strategy used in modeling.
- b. Redefinition. Redefinition involves the substitution of one of the words used in a belief statement that means something similar but has different implications.
- c. Consequence. This is accomplished by directing the audience’s attention to an effect.
- d. Intention. This is accomplished by redirecting the audience’s purpose or intention when that audience’s purpose or intention is understood differently.
- e. Stepping up or chunking up. This is accomplished by generalizing an element of a belief to a larger classification that changes the relationship defined by the belief.
- f. Counter-example. This is accomplished by finding an example that does not fit the example defined by a belief.

g. Another outcome. This is accomplished by challenging the relevancy of a belief by associating it with an outcome different from the one it is currently associated with.

The High Priest was questioning Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. Jesus explained that he had always spoken openly so everyone could hear, in places like the Synagogues and the Temple. There was nothing secret about his teachings. He told the High Priest to ask those who had heard him speak what he had said. Hearing this, one of the High Priest's guards struck Jesus and rebuked him from answering the High Priest in this way. Jesus asked the guard why he had hit Jesus if there was some offense in what he said to show him or explain why he (the guard) hit him (Jesus). The guard responded with anger at Jesus' words, his hitting Jesus an act of anger (John 18-19-22). Jesus' slight of mouth is an example of a linguistic "chunk down" or "step down." To chunk or step down you drop into the details of a distortion. The distortion is a cause and effect distortion: "What you said made me angry." Jesus asks what he specifically said that was offense. There was nothing. The guard became angry because he thought that Jesus should not speak to the High Priest in the way that he did. It is this appraisal that leads to the guard becoming angry and then hitting Jesus.

After Jesus was baptized he was driven into the dessert by the Holy Spirit. After Jesus fasted for forty days and nights, when Jesus was hungry, the devil tested Jesus. The devil challenged Jesus to tell stones to turn into loaves (Matthew 4:1-4). Jesus responded with a sleight of mouth called "redefine." Jesus redefined the word "loaves." The devil referred to physical loaves of bread, but Jesus said that what he needed to live was not bread alone, but every word that proceeds from the mouth of God (Matthew

4:4). For biblical examples of other types of slights of mouth see Gonzalez (1994, 113-116).

Jesus made deft use of non-verbal behavior (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus communicated nonverbally by the quality, tone and pace of voice, his body, physical distance, posture, gestures, facial expressions, and looks. He communicated non-verbally more than he did verbally. Words account for only 7% of communication. 93% is accounted for by non-verbal communication. 55% of that is accounted for by bodily communication and 38% by voice quality and tone (Gonzalez, 1994; Bateson, 1991; Mehrabian, 2007).

The Word of God that is the substance of all Jesus' communication is the very essence of who Jesus is. Jesus communicates by his very presence as the Incarnate Word of God, or Son of God. It is wise to be aware of the non-verbal behavior you use when you communicate and make sure that it is consistent with and supportive of the intent of and outcome desired from the communication. Use of words, physical expressions and gestures, movement, and vocal characteristics need to be consistent or complementary.

Jesus displayed sensory acuity (Gonzalez, 1994). Sensory Acuity is the capacity to perceive through the senses. Accurate sensory acuity involves calibration. Calibration is the ability to notice and measure changes in feelings and states of self and others with respect to a standard (Gonzalez, 1994; Grinder and Bandler, 1981; Dilts and Delozier, 2000; Bandler, 2010; O'Connor and Seymour, 1993, 2011; Dilts, Grinder, Bandler and Delozier 1980). Calibration might be compared to the tuning of an instrument. Jesus was able to obtain an excellent read on what his audience was thinking and feeling because he paid precise attention to what they displayed in their

non-verbal behavior. Because of his calibration skills Jesus was able to know what his audience was thinking at times. Jesus calibrated the feeling states of his audience.

Calibration is the result of matching and mirroring.

Jesus was able to calibrate or match up to other people's feelings and states, allowing him rapport with them and the ability to perceive their thoughts and feelings. Traveling through the Samaritan city called Sychar Jesus came upon a well. He was thirsty but had no means to draw water from the well. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water Jesus asked her to give him a drink. The woman questioned how Jesus, a Jew, could ask her, a Samaritan woman, for a drink. Jesus responded that if she knew who he was she would be asking him for living water. The woman saw that he had no means of drawing the water from the deep well and asked him if he was greater than their mutual ancestor Jacob. Jesus distinguished between the water from the well and the water he gave. Those who drank from Jacob's well would thirst again but those who drank the water Jesus gave would never thirst. That water would become in the recipient a spring of water that gushed up to eternal life. The woman requested this water of Jesus. Jesus then instructed the woman to get her husband and return with him. She told Jesus that she did not have a husband. He responded that indeed she did not have a husband but had five husbands and the man she was with now was not her husband. This astonished the woman who referred to Jesus as a Prophet. She confronted Jesus and Jewish beliefs about where God should be worshipped. Jesus differentiated between Samaritan and Jewish worship, but revealed that in the future worship would be in spirit and truth. The woman expressed her faith that the Messiah of Jews and Samaritan

would be coming. Jesus revealed himself to be the Messiah to her. The woman returned to the city where she share about the man she met at the well who told her what was true about her ((John 14:1-15). As the town-folk went out to meet him, Jesus calibrated this woman, matching her, generating rapport such that there was a flow between them that allowed him to closely intuit what her life experience was like. He was able to create a connection between them and an openness to who he was and the gift that he had for her. This is not to suggest that calibration will lead to mind reading! The story of the woman of the well is a narrative. I prefer to interpret the story as a teaching narrative, the story-line being important. What is evident from the episode is that there is increasing rapport between Jesus and the woman. They speak directly in intimate detail about who they each are. Jesus makes himself known to the woman to the extent that she believes that he may be the Messiah. She makes herself known to Jesus to the degree that he could tell her everything about herself. To model Jesus in this encounter would model how he calibrates or tunes into the woman such that she feels understood and can receive such a paradigm-shifting communication.

Jesus gave of himself to his audience (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus gave the experience of the Kingdom of God to his audience (In Mark 1:15). This kind of giving amounted to his sharing of himself. The Kingdom Jesus transmitted to his audience was characterized by a variety of states: justice, peace, joy and love (Romans 14:17). Jesus was more than the messenger of the good news of the Kingdom: Jesus was its bestower. In John 14, Jesus speaks of giving his peace unlike the world gives. Jesus gave the experience of eternal or abundant life. This Kingdom is not a place or set of things but a set of

states. These states are states of mind, including security, peace, happiness, love, truth, justice, righteousness and joy (Gonzalez, 1994). You can model Jesus by emulating the states you witness in him and that he communicates by his words, behavior, and presence. You can do this by utilizing the same words, behavior and looks as he in the same manner that he does.

Jesus' communication with his audience was reciprocal (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus gives to his audience and he expects his audience to reciprocate. From one perspective the audience is to give to Jesus (God), but also to give to others. In Luke 6:38 Jesus states that as his audience gives they will receive, the standard for their receiving being their giving. In this way Jesus is engaged in a collaborative relationship with his audience. You can model Jesus by having the same expectation of the people you serve that Jesus had of his. Reciprocity on behalf of the audience may even serve as a measure of the audiences' understanding of the message.

Jesus placed his confidence in his audience, sharing with his audience what he knows (Gonzalez, 1994). The intimacy of his sharing is demonstrated when he shares his identity and mission with Nicodemus (John 3:1-21). Jesus tells his disciples that they are his friends not his servants and because of that he shares with them everything he has learned from his Father, God (John 15:15). There is a tendency to reciprocate what is given to one. So, as Jesus shares his confidences with his audience, they want to do the same with him. Jesus treats his disciples like friends, sharing eternal, human, and personal secrets with those who will listen. In sharing in this way Jesus becomes like his audience. He shares with them his interior experience and becomes vulnerable to

their influence as the result. You can share confidences with your audience, students or clients. There is a certain intimacy that is created by doing this. It is important to be mindful of where Jesus gives confidence and where he doesn't. Does he confide with everyone or just his disciples? Nicodemus (John 3:1-21), the rich young ruler (Luke 18:18-23, Matthew 19:16-22 and Mark 10: 17-27), the Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:21-28, Mark 7:21-3) and the woman at the well (John 4:1-42) were not his disciples. Does Jesus do it all of the time or some of the time? I suspect that Jesus was judicious in sharing confidences. After all, he told his disciples to not throw pearls to swine (Matthew 7:6).

Jesus was complimentary of his audience in his communication (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus compliments and praises his audience, making the audience more receptive. Jesus was visiting the house of Simon in Bethany. He was approached by a woman who anointed his head with an expensive ointment. His disciples were critical of her. Jesus defended the woman and praised her, saying in the end that would be remembered for what she did for him (Matthew 26:10-13). On one occasion a woman called out from the crowd a praise of Jesus and his mother. Jesus replied that those who hear and keep the word of God are even more blessed than he and his mother (Luke 11:47). It wasn't said whether the woman heard and kept the word of God, though that may have been implied, but it kept open the promise that she and others would (in the future) be blessed if and when she heard and kept the word of God. This is a conditional blessing that will be experienced when the condition of hearing and keeping God's word is met. You can model Jesus' use of compliments and praise to

build up people. You can also observe those places where Jesus is confrontational rather than complimentary. There is a time and a place for compliments and praise and a time and place for critique and confrontation.

Jesus was cooperative with his audience. Jesus creates familiarity with his audience by mutual and successful cooperation (Gonzalez, 1994). He elicits cooperation from his disciples and the people he heals. Those he heals must contribute to their healing, even if their contribution is faith. Indeed, faith is all Jesus requires. Other times Jesus is seeking commitment. Jesus came to a pool, known for its healing waters where he met a man who had been ill for 38 years. The man was lying there for a long time. Jesus asked the man if he wanted to be healed. The man explained that he could not move fast enough to the water. Whenever the water stirred, someone would enter the pool before him. The water had to be stirring when he entered to receive the benefit and he was always too late. Jesus directed the man to stand up with his mat and walk. The man was immediately healed and did as instructed (John 5:1-18). Jesus did not heal the man until after the man indicated that he wanted to be healed. In this case, the man knew he could get healed if he could enter the water. In this case, the man believed Jesus could heal him enough to follow Jesus' instruction to stand, take up his mat and walk.

What makes Jesus an effective Preacher and leader is that he is collaborative. Indeed, salvation is a collaborative enterprise between God and humans, initiated by God, but involving humans. The Kingdom of God is a collaborative enterprise of God and

humans. You can maximize rapport with the people you serve by finding points of cooperation and collaboration and building on them.

Jesus was physically attractive (Gonzalez, 1994). The “Suffering Servant,” attributed to many as being “the Messiah to come” is described as startling in his disfigured or marred appearance (Isaiah 42:13-15) and having nothing majestic or desirable in his appearance (Isaiah 43:2). This seems to run contrary to what Gonzalez claims. But the appearance of the “Suffering Servant” is not intrinsically homely. Rather his appearance has been altered by the abuse afflicted upon him (Isaiah 43:3-5). Of course, no one knows what Jesus looked like. However many mystics speak of Jesus’ beauty and light. His attractiveness is reckoned in the gospels as charisma, where his disciples respond to a single call to them to follow him and crowds seek after him relentlessly. To model Jesus physical attractiveness you want to focus not on what he looked like, but his charisma. If what he looked like was important the scriptures would have provided us with a portrait or a detailed description. Part of Jesus’ charisma is attributed to his identity as Son of God and Messiah. In placing himself or being placed by others as associated with God in this manner charisma is generated in Jesus.

Jesus was consistent and congruent. This makes Jesus reliable and trustworthy to his audience (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus is consistent unto death, putting his life on the line everyday for his audience, speaking the truth in love for the sake of his audience, even though there are some who would silence him, even if it came to killing him as it did. Jesus’ integrity and consistency reinforces his audience’s integrity and consistency as they internalize these and other characteristics of Jesus. To model Jesus congruence

and consistency your outer expression must match your inner conviction and you must be consistent in doing so. The opposite of this is being compromised in your expression by external concerns. Jesus came into conflict with Temple authorities by claiming internal authority.

Jesus was non-manipulative (Gonzalez, 1994). While some people, presenters, even Preachers and NLP trainers will engineer compliance, Jesus does not manipulate people. He influences his audience but he does not psychologically coerce them. He makes the most out of his audience's desire for integrity, congruency and consistency. This ethic is imperative for Preachers of the gospel Jesus preached. You need to have a great respect for the people you work with. You want to be persuasive without being manipulative. Being skillful in communications doesn't make one manipulative. You should never seek to have someone believe and do something they don't want to believe and do.

Jesus employed metaphors and similes in his communication (Gonzalez, 1994). In Matthew 5:13-14, Jesus refers to his audience as salt and light and as having the qualities of salt and light. When he speaks about the Kingdom of Heaven or of God, Jesus uses similes, a form of a metaphor. He says that the kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed (Mark 4:31). A metaphor is a statement that reads "you or it *is* a rock, salt, light, or love." A simile is a statement reads "you or it is *like* a seed, rose, or house." Metaphors and similes are powerful literary or oral devices. They are like maps that organize thoughts and actions. They provide direction and orientation that leads to a certain sense of reality. Metaphors can be visual, auditory, kinesthetic,

gustatory and olfactory, like the predicates. Other metaphors Jesus uses, relative to himself are “Way,” “Truth,” “Life,” “Bread,” “Vine,” “Grace,” “Door,” “Gate,” “Good Shepherd,” “Son,” “Son of God,” and “Son of Man.” There are many. I would add to Gonzalez’s analysis that metaphors are multi-sensory. The images used by Jesus are seen, heard, felt, smelt and tasted. Metaphors are symbolic, the symbol representing or pointing to the reality or truth it represents. Jesus has a clear outcome in using them in his speech to his audiences. You can employ metaphors in your language the way Jesus did. You may have to utilize different metaphors than Jesus as Jesus created or drew his metaphors from the activities and things that surrounded him in his life.

Jesus employed parables in his communication. The parables used by Jesus are more elaborate metaphors in the forms of stories. A parable is defined by Brandon Scott (1994) as “Similitudes that employs a short narrative fiction to reference a transcendent symbol.” Parables do not need an introduction but go straight to the point (Gonzalez, 1994). In parables, verbs are in the historic past tense. No comparison is made in a parable with events that occur regularly or which can be repeatedly observed. Some people need to have parables explained to them. The disciples of Jesus ordinarily did not need explanation but in the Parable of the Sower did. The parable is not an exemplary story which needs an explanatory application to be understood. The images used in the parable are simply a sample taken from everyday life. No transfer is needed from symbol or image to reality. However, explanation may be sometimes needed, even among those initiated into the process of parables. This is because, while the unconscious mind may have received the communication, the conscious mind has not

grasped or understood it. This is why people discover that they have learned something at a prior time after they are put in a situation where they will apply what they have learned. The learning was accomplished in the transfer of knowledge but not realized until the knowledge was expressed in action. The illustration already belongs to the intended sphere. The parable may involve an illustration that is unusual and so attract the attention of the hearer or reader. It can employ metaphors as long as they remain within the comprehension of the audience. It needs to be familiar to the audience, drawn from the shared cultural heritage of the audience. The story can present surprise, but must remain realistic, meaningful and plausible so not to force the audience to appeal to allegorical interpretation. Allegory demands that the presenter make a link between image and meaning. The parable in its telling is whole and complete, transporting its meaning in its telling without recourse to explanation or interpretation by the presenter. Jesus utilized parables to express his message. He told the parable in concrete circumstances. The images he used in the parables were familiar to his audiences and related to their customs. The social and economic backgrounds of the parables are self-evident. Parables employ characters, structure, and message. The story progresses through three essential moments: the present state, resources and the desired state (Gonzalez, 1994). To model Jesus' use of parables it is necessary to refer back to the reason behind Jesus' use of parables. What Jesus conveyed through the use of parable likely could not be explained in any other way. Jesus was aiming to convey a transformative, experiential knowledge of the Kingdom of God through the parables (Gonzalez, 1994).

Jesus assessed his audience when he communicated (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus sizes up his audience and assesses their condition; physical, psychological, emotional, social and spiritual. Spiritually they are alienated from God, themselves and others. To model Jesus' use of assessment you must engage your audience in the same way he did. Obviously, Jesus didn't sit down with paper and pen and describe the attributes of his audience. Rather Jesus engaged his audience, observed them, and responded to them based upon these observations. Part of this assessment was unconscious based upon their non-verbal behavior and related to his sensory-acuity, his ability to sense what his audience was experiencing.

Jesus was prescriptive in his communication (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus specifies the desired state of his audience. They don't like the feeling of alienation from God. This alienation is characterized by emptiness and anxiety. The desired state of his audience is one of union with God and the profound pleasure, joy and happiness that comes from that unity. So Jesus' goal is to lead people into an experience of union with God. To model Jesus' prescriptiveness, you have to understand what the people you are addressing want to experience, even when they do not know what they want to experience or think they want to experience something else.

Jesus had well-formed and ecological goals for his audiences (Gonzalez, 1994). His message is stated in positive terms, can be initiated and maintained by his audience members, is testable in sensory experience, preserves the positive aspects of the present experience, can be appropriately contextualized, and is ecologically sound. You want to have well formed goals for your presentation and for or with the people you

are working. They have to know what outcome they want in their audience, create the environment for that outcome to be realized, and make sure that there are no negative consequences for the audience performing in the way they want their audience to perform.

Jesus utilized awareness of the normal human condition to motivate his audience to desire change from their present state to their desires state (Gonzalez, 1994). There is a natural desire or motivation in human beings to move away from anxiety, pain and unhappiness to peace, pleasure, and joy. And there is a natural desire in human being to move towards pleasure and life. In modeling Jesus' motivational approach, you need to lead the people you address in perceiving their current disdain for their present condition and view an achievable and desirable alternative future.

Jesus communicated to the unconscious mind of his audience (Gonzalez, 1994). Neuro-linguistic programming posits an unconscious mind. The conscious mind contains what we are conscious of or aware of. The unconscious mind contains that which we are not conscious or aware of. People can be unconscious of environment, behaviors, and capabilities, beliefs and attitudes, identity and spirit. If they were conscious or aware of everything necessary to function they'd be overwhelmed. You want to consciously and intentionally communicate to the unconscious of the people you address. This means that you must be very self-aware.

Jesus used hypnosis (Gonzalez, 1994). Certainly Jesus was not a hypnotist. He didn't go about trying to hypnotize people. The set of skills called hypnosis today did not exist

in Jesus' day. Yet, according to Gonzalez, Jesus employed communication strategies similar those used by Milton Erickson, the founder of Ericksonian hypnosis, the school of hypnotherapy that underlies Neuro-linguistic Programming. According to Erickson, hypnosis depends upon interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships (Bandler and Grinder, 1975, Erickson and Rossi 1980). Hypnosis, like NLP, depends upon the establishment of rapport within and between people. Hypnosis is a person-centered process aimed at securing the subject's full cooperation. Rapport is the underlying skill of all effective, persuasive communication including in NLP and in hypnosis. The key to hypnosis is trance induction. Utilization of imagery almost always facilitates the experience of hypnotic phenomena like trance induction. Note Jesus' use of imagery, with phrases like "You are light" (Mathew 5:15) "you are salt" (Matthew 5:13), and "I am the vine and you are the branches" (John 15:1-2). Obviously, Jesus' audience is not light, salt, and branches of a vine, but these phrases work to stimulate the imagination of his audience and to access their unconscious mind. The goal of Jesus' preaching or that of any Preacher's preaching is not hypnosis, nor is it mind control. Rather, it is a process of leading people to realize greater self control, through providing feedback they don't usually have access to. Hypnosis and Neuro-Linguistic Programming are separate approaches. Hypnosis is a specific set of tools and techniques that induce in a subject a trance-like state. The hypnotist can be oneself or another. NLP does not have a formal induction. It does not use the same tools and techniques as hypnosis. In NLP both the conscious and unconscious minds are involved. Hypnosis was modeled by the pioneers of NLP. NLP practitioners may practice both NLP and hypnosis. But remember that Erickson used indirect hypnosis, sometimes focusing the conscious

mind of a subject on one thing as he induced a client. Erickson believed that a light trance worked as well as a deep trance in obtaining the desired outcome of an intervention (Rosen 1982). I would say that NLP is not hypnosis, but is sometimes hypnotic. A wide awake state of openness is created, that facilitated by rapport, allows for effective and impactful communication.

Jesus utilizes suggestion when he directs people to follow simple instructions about where to place their attention. “Look at the birds of the sky” or “Think of the flowers growing in the fields,” which causes the audience to remember or imagine birds and flowers, and thus to expand their awareness. By statements such as these, Jesus builds on the foundation of rapport and paces his audience. After pacing his audience, Jesus is able to lead them. The statements Jesus makes about the birds and flowers are universal. There is no work on the part of his audience to reference them. Jesus says, “Look at the birds of the sky. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth more than they are? Can any of you, however much you worry, add one single cubit to your span of life? (Matthew 6:26-27).” At this point Jesus has his audience with him. Everything he says to them makes perfect sense, even though they are full of worry. Then he continues, “So do not worry; do not say ‘what are we to drink? What are we to eat? It is the Gentiles who set their thoughts on all these things. Your heavenly Father knows you need them all. Set your hearts on his Kingdom first, and on God’s saving justice and all these things will be given you as well. So do not worry about tomorrow (Matthew 6:31-33).”

All in all, Gonzalez describes Jesus as a highly effective communicator who deploys a complex array of strategies and skills for preaching. In doing so he makes Jesus a poster boy for NLP. But really, all of the strategies Gonzalez says Jesus used are used by every communicator, some better than others. It would take volumes to demonstrate how Jesus utilizes each one of the strategies and skills. However, Gonzalez, in discussing Jesus, offers a description of the aspects of NLP that can be used by everyone in their communication and preaching.

Jesus as a Preacher

Gonzalez provides a bridge between the discussion of NLP and Jesus as a Preacher. Each of the authors who have written about Jesus as a Preacher, do so with a certain bias. They are fans of Jesus. The only source material they have about Jesus as a Preacher is the New Testament of the Bible. These are narratives in which the story of Jesus is told and references are made to him preaching and teaching. There is no evidence that what is provided as complete sermons, like the Sermon on the Mount, were actually preached as a single sermon. In any case, these authors speak of Jesus as a Preacher and draw conclusions about what Jesus was like as a Preacher and about how he preached. In this section I will only discuss preaching, as it is the sole focus of these authors.

Chapter 3: Jesus as a Preacher: NLP and Academic Perspectives

Ralph and Gregg Lewis

Ralph and Gregg Lewis (1989), present Jesus as an extraordinary and captivating Preacher whose style of preaching would be suited to 21st century America (1989). 21st Century America is similar to the 1st century Greco-Roman world Jesus lived in; complex, global and pluralistic. Jesus' time was a time of uneasy peace secured by power, inescapable ethical depravity, leadership vacuum, and desire for a long awaited divine rescue. Organized religion was failing to provide what people were seeking (Lewis & Lewis, 1989). Jesus was someone who drew a lot of attention. His message was relevant to the masses, while the established Temple religion wasn't accessible to them, particularly to those who were poor and considered unclean. 21st Century America is the environment that today's Preachers must act upon and influence by their preaching.

Jesus was an effective Preacher, attracting people to hear him and impacting them by what and how he preached. Those who were positively motivated to hear what Jesus had to say gained from his message. Those who had something to lose from his message resisted it. Jesus got the attention of his audience and kept it. And it wasn't Jesus' divinity that attracted his audience and won his influence. Jesus rarely drew attention to himself as divine in the synoptic gospels. Rather, it was his personal attitude that drew people to him (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). Jesus possessed charisma. Characteristics such as charisma may be generated using NLP skills. Jesus did

present himself as anointed by God to preach (Luke 4:18-19). But what this meant was that Jesus was purpose driven, his mission larger than personal, and his authority and power drawn from God. His authority wasn't positional. Rather, he was called to speak to a group of people who needed to hear what he had to say. His passion for his message was evident and his preaching realized his intended outcome. He was confident with his message and maintained an integrity of word and action that made his message all the more powerful and lasting (1989, 20). Preachers need a certain confidence in themselves and the message they preach. They need a personal integrity where they believe and practice what they preach. They have a purpose that drives them in the formation and delivery of their messages. These characteristics give their message power. Jesus' power and authority were aligned with God's, assuming them as his own. His integrity resulted from his identification with God and his willingness to speak for God. In a sense, God was Jesus' model. Jesus matched God's state of being. He assumed the mind of God as his own mind. He took on the attitude, will and word of God as his own.

Jesus' preaching was scripturally based. He referenced the Torah, the Prophets, the History, and the Psalms (Lewis and Lewis, 1989) what we have today as the Old Testament. But his message wasn't limited or constrained by the text. He wasn't about preparing a generation of scripture scholars. He had an outcome in mind, a response that he wanted from his audience. He wanted to motivate people to change their lives and their world. He didn't want to impress and entertain his audience. Rather, he wanted to make the scripture applicable to people's lives, useful in the situations of life

they were involved with. Preachers need a scriptural context that guides them in formulating and preaching their sermons and a motivation to guide their audience in application of the scripture in their daily lives. They need an understanding of the whole of scripture and its spirit so as not to proof text or make conclusions based upon passages aimed for particular cultural or temporal situations. From the perspective of NLP the outcome Jesus had in mind when he spoke was predictive of the response that he received from his audience. It actually produced the response that he wanted in his audience. In his preaching Jesus utilized scripture as his source, although it served as a secondary source for him, the primary source being God whom he referred to as “Father.”

They describe his preaching as responsive to his audience (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). He listened to people, assessed their situations, and determined their needs. He was relational in his preaching. He asked his audience questions and engaged them in dialogue and debate. Sometimes he just listened (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). Lewis and Lewis count 125 incidences of people communicating with Jesus in the gospels, 54% of these contacts initiated by others. Jesus interacted with his audience and responded to what he heard or intuited from his audience. Preachers need to understand the needs and circumstances of their audiences in order to speak to their real needs and situations and lead them to desired outcomes. They need to directly and indirectly interact with and question their audiences in order to know them and respond to their real life circumstances and experiences. Jesus was cued into his audience. He established

deep rapport with them and was empathetic and connected with them. He was sensitive to them and their ways of conceiving of and experiencing the world.

Jesus was intentional in his preaching. He would set up his audience for his main message. He would speak in terms they understood and reflected their real situation and felt need. He would feed people before revealing himself as “the Bread of Life.” He got to know the woman at the well before introducing himself as the Messiah. He engaged Martha and Mary in their hope and disappointment before revealing that he was “the Resurrection and the Life” and raising Lazarus from the dead (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). Preachers need to meet people where they are so that they can understand what spiritual nurture, Messiah, and resurrection and life mean for them. Jesus paced his audience. He went alongside them, speaking to them in terms of their present experience, responding to their felt needs. Then he would lead them to the experience and understanding he wanted them to have. At the same time, Jesus had an outcome in mind when he preached. He would be what his audience needed (e.g. “bread” and “resurrection and the life,”) modeling being that for people, and leading his audience to model being that for others.

Jesus’ “Sermon on the Mount” in Matthew chapters 5 through 7 is presented by Lewis and Lewis as ideal material for studying Jesus’ preaching style (1989). While not a single historical sermon, it does serve in a literary sense, as a composite sermon, in which is captured much of Jesus’ preaching style and content (Lewis and Lewis, 1989).

Jesus' audience for this sermon, are the masses (Lewis and Lewis, 1989), outside at the foot of a mountain, rather than in the Synagogue and at the Temple. These were people who lacked access to the Synagogue or Temple because of their status as unclean due to physical or psychological aberration. In this sermon Jesus answered audience questions, 19 times. He used second person language. He used the words "you" and "your" 221 times (Lewis and Lewis, 1989, 21). Jesus was speaking to the populace about their life conditions, desires and needs. It is possible to strategically change person in language; from first, second and third person, for effect. By doing this Jesus was able to engage his audience in a process of personal change. Second person language is empowering of audiences. It is possible to issue command statements and to lead people from one state to another through the use of second person language. It is also possible to associate persons to a model by the use of second person language. Jesus did this in the Sermon on the Mount when he referred to members of his audience as "salt of the earth. (Matthew 5:13-15).

Jesus as inclusive in his preaching (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). He included in his audience; males and females, clean and unclean, faithful and outcast, criminal and citizen, Jew and Gentile, the helpless, poor, oppressed, ill, children, outcast and forsaken. Everyone was welcome because in Jesus' mind all of these were God's children and worth saving. His message of God's Kingdom was for all of them. It is necessary to actively engage those you want to include through verbal and non-verbal behaviors. This can be accomplished through naming the persons or groups of persons

you wish to include and by utilizing the sensory language and symbols common to those persons and groups.

Jesus was an authoritative Preacher, who drew his authority from God (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). He did not argue for his authority or even claim he had it. Rather, Jesus acted on the basis of this authority and spoke with it. He was secure in his sense of authority. His words and actions spoke for themselves (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). His second source of authority was scripture (Lewis and Lewis, 1989), particularly, the Jewish Torah, History, Psalms and Prophets. Rather than match his words to make a point illustrated by scripture, he used scripture to support his message of the Kingdom of God. His message was consistent with the scripture and directed at the issue of healing or justice that was before him. His use of scripture was application oriented as he related it to the everyday lives of his audience. His third source of authority was human experience (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). He gathered illustrations from human experience to help people understand and experience the reality and will of God. His fourth source of authority was tradition. He referred to tradition mainly in his debates against the Scribes and Pharisees who staked their claims in scripture but made it hard for the masses to meet Temple standards for full inclusion (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). Jesus preached a new covenant, always in light of the Scripture and the tradition of the Patriarchs, Torah, and Prophets and the history of Israel, and the needs of his audience. For most of Jesus' listeners, Jesus had to speak as if his audience had no or little understanding of Scripture and Tradition. Jesus utilized the relative authority of each of these sources for the purposes of his communications. This was a way of his

generating charisma and influence. At the same time Jesus did not allow himself to be restricted by the relative authority of any of these sources of authority. He clearly maintained a hierarchy among his sources, such that God was the highest authority, the Law, scripture, tradition and experience subsidiary to it.

Jesus was the most important authority for Preachers (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). Jesus granted authority to those he sent out to preach. He sent them to preach as he preached and to preach what he preached, that being the Kingdom of God. Today's Preachers need to look to Jesus as their authority for preaching and make Jesus' message their message. Preachers can take their authority from Jesus. They can also take their authority from scripture, experience, and tradition. Unfortunately, sometimes Preachers take their authority solely from God, scripture, experience or tradition. There is danger in this where Preachers may become ego inflated in their speaking for God, become literal and fundamentalist in their messages, ignore revelation, scripture and tradition because it doesn't fit their experience, or only consider the perspective of the tradition in which they have been trained. It is fitting that Christian Preachers look to Jesus as the model for their preaching. It is also fitting that they model Jesus' way of relating to God, utilization of scripture, and way of conceiving, experiencing, and relating to the people and the world, and his relationship to his religious and cultural traditions.

A big problem for American Preachers is that most Americans do not have a true faith (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). They lack memory of the Christian story. At best, the memory they have is second or third hand. What they know about faith is often through

secular media. What they know about scripture has been distorted by secular perspectives and by poorly supported interpretations even in Christian circles. Preachers are unable to proceed with an assumption that their congregations are correct in their understandings. And many may lack the cognitive, moral, and ethical perspectives that congregations of the past were presumed to have about truth, righteousness, love and justice (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). Many have not had access to sound Christian study and example. So, authority cannot necessarily be claimed on the basis of scripture, experience, or tradition. Therefore, Preachers' persuasiveness must come from personal character and integrity, personal faith, confidence in the message to be preached, and ability to communicate effectively to large and small crowds. Preachers today, given the lack of biblical literacy of their audiences, need to make the scripture understandable and persuasive. Preachers must be or become what they preach. Jesus was the Word of God become flesh. Preachers must become the same. By doing so there is congruence between who they are, what they say and what they do and they become believable to their audiences. Preachers may also introduce concepts of God, scriptural story, religious practices, and spiritual, cognitive, and emotional experiences to people in ways that provide new psycho-social-spiritual programming and enrich their lived experiences. Often times persons maintain limited ideas about God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, Faith Community, life, self, others, their' and other's capacities, behaviors, language and the environment and world they in which they live. The Preacher, the pastoral counselor and the spiritual teacher are in unique positions to be able to enlarge and enrich the perspective of people in their circle of influence. They can perform a meta-operation on their audience's surface structure description of

experience by drawing upon the deeper structure of human experience of their audiences through such processes as questioning and reframing (Bandler 1993).

Jesus was a trusting Preacher. However, he was not a naïve Preacher. He trusted his audience to listen to his presentation, and follow it to its natural conclusion, leaving it to them to accept or reject it (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). Preachers today need to assume responsibility for delivering their message and leave it to their audience to unpack it and apply it in their daily lives. This relates back to the NLP presupposition that the meaning of a communication is the result you get from that communication (Bandler and Grinder, 1979, Bandler and Grinder 1982). People in the Preacher's audiences contain within themselves the capacity to make use of the Preacher's message (Bandler and Grinder 1979, Bandler and Grinder, 1975, Rosen 2010, Beck 1979). However, Preachers cannot assume that their audiences have prerequisite knowledge or experience to understand and utilize particular information. Rather they must meet their audiences where they are and proceed step by step in order to produce the desired outcome of their preaching with the audience. A certain step may be prerequisite to achieving a next step (Tart 2001). An example from academics is that an introductory course may be required for taking and mastering the content of a more advanced course.

Jesus was an understandable Preacher (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). He spoke words in the everyday language of his audience rather than jargon. He worked to make sure that he communicated his message in terms his audience understood and make sense of for their lives. Preachers today need to make sure that they know their audiences and

speak in ways that are understandable, relevant, and applicable to their lives. It is the Preacher who is responsible for the audience understanding and responding to the audience, not the audience. If jargon is necessary to be understood by the audience, the Preacher must teach the audience to understand the jargon. Better yet, the Preacher can translate jargon into terms the audience can readily understand and apply to their life circumstances.

Jesus was a respectful Preacher (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). He didn't push his message on his audience or coerce them to believe what he was saying. He would invite his audience to take the next and natural step or to go away and consider their options. Preachers today need to respect their audiences. Too often they speak ill of their congregations and look down on them for not living up to the standard preached in the Bible. If Preachers lack respect for their audiences and besmirch them, it is they, the Preachers, who are failing to look up to the biblical standard for leadership. Audiences believe and respond as well as they can, given what their current understanding and resources are. The Preacher needs to equip the audience and enrich their cognitive maps so that the audiences have new and better choices available to them.

Jesus was an experiential Preacher (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). First of all, Jesus knew from experience, what he preached. His theology was not disembodied but incarnational. What he said mattered to him and his audience and was consequential. And he led his audience to experience directly what he was talking about. All communication is sensory and experience based. It is essential for Preachers to

understand how to reach into the sensory world and lived experience of their audiences. Preachers, too, must be cognizant of states and of how to generate them in their own and their audience's experience. Normally, Preachers are not after informing their audiences, but of equipping them for action and of transforming their level of understanding or consciousness.

Jesus was an imaginative Preacher whose use of image and metaphor helped his audience to relate to what he was talking about (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). NLP makes wide use of storytelling and imagination to communicate to their audiences. By this they are able to speak directly to the unconscious of their audience. By doing this they bypass the "critical factor" and other conscious filters. Also, if Preachers and their audiences are able to imagine a particular outcome, it is more likely that they will be able to obtain that outcome. If they cannot imagine a particular outcome, it is unlikely that they will achieve that outcome.

Jesus was an educative Preacher (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). He educated his audience and took those with greater interest and initiative as his disciples. Preachers can enrich the cognitive maps of their audience by providing them with a greater range of choices and possible outcomes for living their lives. Education can be a process of adding to the knowledge or skill base of a learner from the outside. It also can be a process of drawing out of the learner capacities and understandings that are dormant or underutilized. Most learners underestimate their own potential and capabilities. In Christian terms, they lack faith. However, most abilities are inherent and latent and will

manifest when elicited under proper conditions. The words “potential,” “capabilities” and “faith” in the previous few sentences are nominalizations (Bandler and Grinder, 1979). Nominalization is the linguistic process in which transformations of language change what occurs in the Deep Structure representation of reality as a process word (a noun or argument) in the Surface Structure representation (Bandler and Grinder, 1979). An activity, ongoing condition or relationship (a verb or an adverb is represented as an object or noun. It involves taking an action, a process, and turning it into a static entity or object. The word pretends to be a noun but is not tangible. These are not words that you can see, touch or feel but they are spoken of as if they are nouns or entities. Denominalization is the linguistic process in which nominalizations are turned back into verbs (Bandler and Grinder, 1979). “Most learners underestimate their own potential and capabilities. In Christian terms, they lack faith” Lewis and Lewis, 1989, 22-23). Persons who are learning to practice NLP underestimate their own potential to learn NLP and their capabilities for applying what they are learning in their training. The word “faith” is referred to in the Bible 264 times, 18 in the Old Testament and 246 in the New Testament. Strong’s Greek Concordance identifies 243 occurrences of this word. The Greek word most often translated as faith or faithfulness is *pístis*. *Pistis* can be related to *peithô*, which involves persuasion or coming to trust. Such faith is always a gift from God. It is revelation of God to the person. It is distinct from human belief but involves it. This revelation is ongoing. Its outcome is guaranteed. Once given it will bear fruit. Faith is not only individual, it is collective (Strong, 2010).

The word “faithing” is a denominalization of the word faith. It involves action, belief and confidence in the reality of the belief. The action is goal-oriented and is based in belief in a tangible, demonstrable, objective and operative force. The action is sustained by confidence in the reality of the belief which is maintained until the goal of faithing is realized. Christian faithing is action toward a defined goal based upon belief in the word of God. It is sustained by God’s demonstrated ability to keep his word.

The author of Hebrews discusses faith in Hebrews 11:1-31 discusses faith. “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.”

This faith is faith in God. It is “faithing” or believing in God. This is not a concept but a practice. Abel practiced his faith by making a sacrifice to God of his best produce (Hebrews 11:4). Faith is evident in sacrificial living and giving and in making an offering of one’s self and one’s possessions to God before expending one’s self or possessions on anything else. Enoch’s practice of faith, his pleasing God by faithful behavior, led to his bodily ascension (Hebrews 11:5-6). Faith is evident in a person whose life is predicated upon pleasing God, whose entire pleasure is found in pleasing God by one’s thoughts, words and behaviors. The person is so caught up in pleasing God that he transcends mortal life and disappears into unity with God in eternal life. Noah practiced his faith by heeding God’s warnings, trusting God and God’s revelations and obeying God even though doing so seemed like foolishness (Hebrews 11: 7). He lived a righteous life, true to his understanding of God’s expectations of him. Faith is

articulated in openness to God, trust of God and obedience of God. One's life becomes consistent with godliness. Abraham practiced his faith by responding to God's call and going to the place God sent him and his family. Abraham believed what God promised him. He stayed in the land God promised him. He led a nomadic existence as he looked ahead to the city that existed on foundations and who was designed and built by God. Because of his faith, he and Sarah proved able to procreate, despite their advanced age and Sarah's infertility (Hebrews 11:8-11). By faith one is able to proceed with hope towards an ultimate goal despite it seeming faraway and impractical. God provided Abraham with a cognitive map that Abraham followed with faith although it did not contain all of the detail regarding the route and destination. The promise made to Abraham was not only to himself, but to his descendants. So the map he had was trans-generational. Abraham and the others mentioned in this passage caught a glimpse of the promise that would be inherited and realized by their descendants, the vision of that becoming most clear in Abraham and was better than any they had experienced beforehand (Hebrews 11:12-16). By faith one is able to persevere towards realization of a promise and feel progress towards its attainment, even if the goal will not be realized by one's self, but by one's progeny. Abraham practiced his faith when he offered up Isaac. He trusted God and obeyed God, ready to give up the son he had asked God for. He trusted that God would raise Isaac from the dead if that was necessary. He trusted that God would provide the ram for the sacrifice (Hebrews 11:17-19). By faith one is able to do what is necessary, even while dreading what one must do and hoping for another way to accomplish a directive. Isaac practiced his faith by blessing the future of his sons, Jacob and Esau (Hebrews 11:20). Jacob practiced his

faith, while dying, blessing the sons of Joseph (Hebrews 11:21). Joseph demonstrated his faith proclaiming that the Israelites would escape Egypt and instructing that his bones be carried to be buried in (Hebrews 11:23). By faith one can conceive of a future reality that is not yet evident or likely and speak confidently of its manifestation. Moses' mother practiced her faith by hiding him so that he would not be destroyed Hebrews (11:24). One can practice one's faith by risk-taking and protective behavior of persons and ideas. Moses practiced his faith by choosing to identify himself as Hebrew rather than the Pharaoh's daughter even though this led to him being maltreated as a Hebrew (Hebrews 11:25). One can practice one's faith by declaring one's identity with a person, people or conviction. Moses held out for a greater reward in the future than the wealth and treasures of Egypt could provide (Hebrews 11:26). One can keep one's eye on a larger, albeit more distant reward. Moses maintained an inner vision of the invisible God and realized the power of God to lead the Hebrew people out of Egypt. One can keep one's eye on a reality or power others cannot see yet which exists. In doing so he overcame fear of the power of the Pharaoh (Hebrews 11:27). He practiced his faith by observing the Passover so that the first born of Israel would not be slaughtered (Hebrew 11:28). One can practice one's faith by carrying out God's instructions for salvation; in this case for escaping slaughter. The people practiced their faith by following Moses through the Red Sea as if it were dry land despite their fear that they would drown in doing so (Hebrews 11:29). One practices one's faith by daring to do something dangerous but necessary to get to where one needs to go. Rahab practiced faith by helping the spies who penetrated the walls of Jericho. Rehab obeyed God's direction. She did what was right. One practices one's faith by doing what is right. Faith is an

active process. It is not static but dynamic. It is not necessarily an outward expression but manifests behaviorally. The key is to denominalize and operationalize faith so that the action contained within it can be expressed.

The word God is another word that can be denominalized and operationalized. What does God do? In Genesis 1 we read that God creates (Genesis 1:1, 21, 27, 2:4), God lets . . . (Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 15, 20, 24, 26). God separates . . . (Genesis 1:4), God sees (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31), God calls (Genesis 1:5, 8, 10, 3:9), God makes (Genesis 1:7, 16, 25, 26, 2:4 , 9, 18, 3:21), God says (Genesis 1:11, 24, 26, 28, 29, 2: 18, 3:3, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 22), God sets (Genesis 1:17), God blesses (Genesis 1: 22, 28, 2: 3), God gives (Genesis 1: 30), God finishes (Genesis 2:1, 2), God forms (Genesis 2:7, 8, 19) God breathes into or on (Genesis 2:7), God causes (Genesis 2:5, 21), God plants (Genesis 2:8), God takes (Genesis 2:15, 21, 22), God puts (Genesis 2:15, 3:15), God commands (Genesis 2:16, 3:11, 17), God brings (Genesis 2:19), God knows (Genesis 3:50), God walks (Genesis 3:8), God sounds (Genesis 3: 8), God curses (Genesis 3:14, 17), God increases (Genesis 3:16), God clothes (Genesis 3: 18), God sends (Genesis 3: 23), God drives out (Genesis 3:24) and God rests (Genesis 2:3). God is transcendent but acts in the world.

Jesus was a sage Preacher (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). He conveyed the truth to his audience and trusted them to recognize and respond to it according to their abilities. In my own training in NLP, my trainer made use of a metaphor of the relationship of Yoda and Luke Skywalker as Luke served as an apprentice on the way to becoming a Jedi

knight and master. From this perspective, Jesus is a wisdom figure who dispenses knowledge to his disciples as they learn to become like their master and proficient in the skills he exposes them to. More to dispensing knowledge about skills Jesus (and Yoda) convey to their disciples a way of being, thinking and doing. In this way, my trainer made use of a story that was familiar to me to enable me to learn from him the fundamentals of NLP and its application to public speaking. He becomes Yoda to my Luke Skywalker. Preachers can utilize the teacher-disciple model provided by Jesus with his disciples to facilitate processes of discipleship in their audiences.

Jesus was a story-telling Preacher (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). Jesus' preaching occurs in the context of his personal story and the history of Israel/Judah as it is presented to us in the gospels. His own story is part of every sermon he delivers. Storytelling is perhaps the most effective form of communication. Any Preacher needs to be able to utilize story, metaphor, simile and other creative means of communication in order to be most effective. Preachers need to know the gospel story and other Biblical stories, be able to relate these stories to their own personal narratives, and engage the personal and communal narratives of their audiences with the gospel and Biblical stories they utilize in their preaching.

Jesus was a self-revealing Preacher (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). He is the epitome of the word he Preachers. That word has taken flesh in his life and his every word is a manifestation of who he is. Preachers can represent what they preach; that they be what they are talking about. For instance, if they want their audience to be passionate

and excited about something, they must be passionate and excited. They have to “go first” so their audience can follow (Bandler 1993). If they want their audience to follow them somewhere they need to be already there. Authenticity is the key. Preaching is not make-believe. It is not play acting, however dramatic the preaching may be.

Preaching is about revelation. It is about realization. It is about growth and development. It is about incarnation. It is about God and self realization. The human and the divine meet in the act of preaching. As Jesus was fully-divine and fully-human, when effectively modeling Jesus as a Preacher, Preachers are fully-divine and fully-human. They represent God. They represent their own highest and most authentic self or being. Preachers may not to confront and change their own limiting beliefs about God, Jesus and themselves as well as the limiting beliefs of their audience about God, Jesus and the capacities of human beings.

Jesus told parables as a Preacher (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). Parables were principal parts of his message. Rather than illustrate his point, they contained his point. While containing content, they describe a process, all of the parts of which are integral parts of the whole message. The message is revealed in and through the scene depicted in the parable. The storyline of the parable engages the imagination of the audience so that they discover and experience the message. Stories like parables allow a holistic communication rather than a linear one, where multiple perspectives are communicated at the same time. For example, in the so-called “Parable of the Prodigal Son” we are presented with a story for which the perspective and relationships of the father, the younger son and older son, and the actions of the younger son’s leaving, time

away, and return, and those of the father and older son are integral. The point of the story is conveyed in the story and cannot be understood by taking it apart. The desired outcome of the story teller isn't a cognitive understanding but to impact all members of the audience to respond in a particular way. Knowledge is being transmitted from Jesus to his audience and is received from the perspective of the listener. The saying that it is the Preacher's responsibility to "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable" holds true here. In the so-called "Parable of the Prodigal Son," three groups of people constitute Jesus' audience. These are his disciples, they disenfranchised (sinners, outsiders) and the Scribes and Pharisees (self-righteous, insiders). The disciples are learning to be, preach and teach like Jesus. The disenfranchised represented by the younger son are comforted by Jesus' method. The Scribes and Pharisees represented by the older son are afflicted by Jesus' method. Preachers, like Jesus, can expect multiple responses to and outcomes from their preaching as while they have modeled Jesus on a variety of levels their audiences are a complex entity with people who have different needs and agendas. Parables of the Kingdom of God allow the Preacher to engage multiple audiences at the same time to accomplish the overall purpose of the Kingdom of God, in the case of the "Parable of the Kingdom of God," this, the reconciliation of conflicting parties of the same family.

Jesus was an inductive Preacher (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). Rather than present a thesis and defend it, Jesus presented a single multi-faceted concept that his audience contemplated until coming to an understanding of his message. NLP can be utilized in inductive and expository preaching. A skill Preachers and Pastoral Counselors need is

to facilitate change in their audience's beliefs. A person's current beliefs are stable and thus difficult to change. In order for them to be changed they need to be destabilized (Dilts, 1996). The person will naturally resist change of current beliefs because they have come over the course of time to believe it and collected evidence for supporting that belief. However, over the course of a life time developmental and situational needs may change necessitating a different belief. Like any system, belief systems desire equilibrium (Dilts, 1996). Past beliefs and future beliefs are relatively stable. While more open to change than current beliefs they too are resistant to change. Because of the stability in belief past, present and future, the person can maintain a cohesive identity and consistent life goals (Dilts, 1996). In order for there to be a movement of current belief into past belief doubt about the current belief must be obtained. The person must become open to doubt about that belief. To obtain a new current belief the person must want to believe that new belief. That person must become open to that new belief (Dilts, 1996). From this the person needs to fulfill the belief by obtaining resources from within and without his or herself and by developing capabilities and demonstrating them by their activities and impact upon the immediate environment. Equilibrium is obtained in the person's belief system the person becomes more confident in the belief and it is stabilized in the belief system (Dilts 1996). Because NLP makes much use of story and imagination and indirect communication, it is intuitive to believe that an inductive style of Preaching could make good use NLP.

Jesus was a dialogical Preacher (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). In the gospels Jesus asked 153 questions (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). By his questions Jesus prodded his listeners

to explore and to discover. He asked his disciples, “Who do people say I am” and “who do you say I am?” He asked Peter, “Do you love me more than these,” and “will you not stay awake with me an hour?” They observe that Jesus made use of contrasts and comparisons in his preaching. Jesus made 142 comparisons in the Sermon on the Mount (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). NLP makes use of use of ongoing communication between Preachers and their audiences throughout the sermon delivery. Much of the communication is non-verbal. Much of the communication occurs after the sermon has been delivered. Preaching can be considered an ongoing conversation between Preacher and congregation. Everywhere I have served as a Pastor and Preacher I have been told that my latest sermons are better than my earlier ones. As I became a more experienced Preacher my sermons improved. But a factor in their improvement was that I knew my audience better and they knew me better. It makes sense for Preachers to consider the makeup of audiences and anticipate their likely responses to the message in preparing the sermon, and then to be open and flexible to the non-verbal and verbal feedback of their audiences during the delivery of the sermon.

Jesus utilized analogies drawn from his audience’s life experiences (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). These analogies provided them a frame of reference by which to understand his message. Through his use of analogies Jesus could spend less time making his point and more time addressing their deeper feelings and most meaningful life relationships. He referenced animals, light, salt, houses on rock or sand, shepherds and sheep, yokes, burdens, water, fire, seeds, vines, branches, trees, doors and gates; images people could easily understand. Preachers communicate best when they utilize the

symbols that populate the knowledge and life experiences of their audiences. Their audiences are able to generalize from their knowledge of these to understand something new or perhaps something less tangible like states of consciousness and theological concepts like “kingdom of God.”

Jesus was a “right-brain” Preacher (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). What they mean by this is, rather than focusing his speech on argument, rhetoric, logic and fact, Jesus utilized metaphor, image, symbol, imagination, memory, experience and feeling. He evoked pictures in the minds of his audience. Rather than have his audience think about what he was saying, he would have them experience what he spoke about. When he spoke he evoked pictures in people’s minds. He described experiences and led his audience to discover, explore, and relate to actual experiences. He defined his terms by examples rather than creeds. And he relied upon questions and emotions rather than exhortation and persuasion. NLP aims to make use of image and imagination to facilitate learning, change and growth rather than more linear and explanatory language. Logical, linear argumentation has its place but it is more suitable to the lecture hall than it is to the church sanctuary. This is likely so because church audiences are after such things as comfort, life change and transformation, while university students are seeking to amass knowledge and vocational skills. I have problems with Lewis and Lewis explanation of right and left brain. The theory is helpful in describing a brain that has both linear and holistic modes of operating. But the brain functions as one not as two.

Jesus made frequent use of visual imagery in his preaching (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). NLP makes use of sensory experience and sensory based language in order to increase communication and understanding and impact listeners to respond as desired by communicators. Preaching would likely be much more effective if it utilized images, colors, temperature, movement, touch, texture, and the like.

Jesus spoke in terms of the everyday experiences of his audience, many of whom worked on the lake (commerce) and the land (agriculture) (Lewis and Lewis 1988). He also preached holistically to the instinctive, emotional, and thinking parts of their listeners (Lewis and Lewis 1988). He made his illustrations universal and thus easily understandable. The universe of his illustrations was the common life of the people he spoke to. Preachers need to speak the language of their audience in order to best communicate to them. Often Preachers speak in the jargon of the seminary, like professors speak the jargon of the academy, and psychologists that of their school of psychology. This use of jargon presents a barrier to understanding on the part of audiences. Expert communicators opt to speak languages their audiences are already familiar and fluent in. They also speak to multiple levels of human experience. Lewis and Lewis are speaking from the perspective of MacLean's three brain theory (1974). According to this theory humans have three brains: a primitive, reptilian brain that provides for survival; a middle brain responsible for emotion, feeling, and motivation; and a neocortical brain that provides for thinking, analysis, planning and imagination. It is possible to speak to and activate each level of the human brain and nervous system. By varying language Preachers are less likely to not leave one segment of their

audience behind when they preach. More concrete words, non-jargon words, a diversity of sensory type words, and more imaginative words are likely to engage a wider swath of audience members than Preachers relying upon their own predominant style.

Jesus was an emotive Preacher (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). He spoke directly to the primal and emotional states of his audience rather than to do their intellects. He addressed their felt needs. In Matthew 11:28-30, he says, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and heavy burdened, and I will give you rest.” Preachers want to speak to more than the noetic or higher cognitive and reasoning part of their audiences. Otherwise, all their audiences will do is entertain ideas. If they want action or motion they need to speak to the emotions of their audiences. It is at the emotional level that audiences, other than those in academic and professional settings, experience felt need. It is necessary to speak as well to their intellect, as ego is likely to provide protection to their more sensitive, feeling parts, but messages that address felt needs are more relevant and of greater interest of church audiences.

Jesus made emotional appeals to his audience in his preaching (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). Some of these appeals were positive, others negative. His positive emotional appeals were made in the form of faith promises. By use of faith promises Jesus attracted people to him and led them to the conclusions and outcomes he wanted. He made promises and offered rewards. If people responded to Jesus’ appeal good things would happen for them. They experienced happiness and well-being. His faith

promises motivated people to move ahead. Examples of Jesus' use of faith promises are found in the Beatitude section of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-12).

3 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 'Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

5 'Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

6 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

7 'Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

8 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

9 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

10 'Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 'Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely* on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Jesus is making faith promises to his audience members who are experiencing certain states, conditions or identities

Jesus' negative emotional appeals took the form of faith threats. They repelled, drove or pushed people from their current states or behaviors. They compelled people to change. Jesus threatened his audience. They were going to face judgment and punishment for their immoral behavior. The aim of these faith threats was to motivate people to cease bad behavior and increase good behavior. Jesus was dining at the home of a Pharisee. Jesus did not wash before dinner. Jesus remarked to his host that the Pharisees are clean on the outside but greedy and wicked on the inside. He instructed them on how to be clean on the inside as well as the outside. Then he scolded the Pharisees for tithing of their possessions but neglecting justice and the love of God, for taking the seats of honor in synagogues and insisting upon being greeted with respect in the marketplace and for being like unmarked graves. They looked good on the outside but were dead on the outside. The scolding continued about how the lawyers loaded people with heavy burdens and did not help ease the burdens, how the Pharisees honored the prophets their ancestors killed while approving of their ancestors' behavior and how they took away access to spiritual knowledge, didn't enter themselves and hindered others from entering (Luke 11: 37-52). The consequences of these moral failures are not discreet but it is plain from the context that there is woe to pay. The consequences are clearer in the following: "But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry. Woe to you who are laughing now for you will mourn and weep (Luke 6:24-25). The consequence is more dire in the story of "The Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31). A rich man used to walk by a poor man named Lazarus. Lazarus was covered with sores and sought to quell his hunger with scraps from the rich man's table. The

poor man suffered greatly. Dogs came and licked his sores. The poor man died and was transported by angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also was died and buried. The rich man ended up in Hades where he was being tormented by the flames. He looked up and saw Abraham and Lazarus far away. The rich man called out to Abraham for mercy and send Lazarus to cool his tongue with water. But Abraham reminded him that he received his good things during his lifetime while Lazarus received evil. Only now, Lazarus was being comforted and the rich man was in agony. Even if Abraham and Lazarus wanted to help the rich man there was an impassible chasm between them. The rich man pleaded for mercy again, that his family would be warned, that they would not end up in Hades. Abraham told him that they have Moses and the Prophets and can listen to them. The rich man knew that they were not heeding Moses and the Prophets but promised that they would listen to someone who had returned from the dead. Abraham responded that if they had not listened to Moses and the Prophets they would not be convinced even if someone rose from the dead. The warning is imbedded in the story.

A more optimistic person will respond better to positive emotional appeals or faith promises, while a more pessimistic person will respond better to negative emotional appeals or threats. Lewis and Lewis report that in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus made faith promises 60% of the time and faith threats 40% of the time. Preachers can join their audience where they are, magnifying or generating different emotional states in their audiences. Fear and hope are different states. Knowing their audiences is important as optimistic audiences respond better to faith promises and pessimistic

audiences to faith threats. Faith promises and faith threats can serve as a propulsion system (Bandler 1993). A propulsion system pulls you towards a goal (faith promise) and pushes you from behind (faith threat).

The suggestion here is that Jesus made use of both and Preachers can make use of either or of both to motivate their audiences for particular actions. Preachers can make use of faith promises and faith threats, faith promises with the more optimistic and liberal audiences, faith threats with more pessimistic and conservative audiences, and both faith promise and faith threats with more moderate audiences.

Jesus was a conversational Preacher rather than an expert literary style Preacher (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). The literary style Preacher is more likely to read from a text. This conversational style of Jesus is more graphic, straightforward, simple, warm and personal and populated with action verbs and concrete nouns. A conversational style is more likely to generate rapport between Preachers and their audiences. It is more likely to be responsive to audiences' needs and to allow for nuanced delivery. Preachers can be literary in style even when they don't read from a text, as when their delivery is more performance-oriented and dramatic or fact-filled and academic. A conversational style can be as well-prepared as a literary style. The greater the rapport between Preachers and their audiences the greater the impact of the preaching. The conversational style Preacher is going to appear more approachable and likeable to the audience. Public speakers like Presidents George W. Bush and Bill Clinton are more conversational in style. Those like Presidents George H. Bush and Barak Obama are more literary and

intellectual in style. There is a greater perceived distance between the latter two Presidents with their audiences than there is with the former.

Jesus preached without a manuscript and notes (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). His sermons were not carefully written and scripted. There are no observations of Jesus preparing his sermons, other than, perhaps, to go off alone and pray. Of course this doesn't mean that Jesus didn't prepare his presentations. It is likely people were more focused on Jesus' performance than his rehearsals. Jesus knew his scripture, likely the result of upbringing and study and sharing stories within his family and circle of friends as a child. And he applied his understanding of scripture expertly. Remember too, that Jesus grew up and lived in an oral society and there was likely to be verbal give and take during any of his presentations. This is not to say that Jesus did not read at all to his audiences. In an incident in his hometown Jesus read from a scroll of Isaiah and offered commentary on it (Luke 4:16-21). In my NLP training in public speaking and training the emphasis was upon speaking without notes. The aim of the training was to create a greater sense of inner security in applying what we learned and of assisting us in gaining the greatest amount of rapport and intimacy with our audiences. There is a greater sense of authority in presenters who don't read from a manuscript or refer to notes. They seem to know what they are talking about more than those who refer to their notes. Also they do not get caught up in their manuscript or notes and so are able to maintain their focus on their audience. They are, as a result, more flexible and able to adapt to the needs and questions of their audiences, including those that are not verbally stated. They are able to read and respond to their audiences' non-verbal

communications. However, presentations without manuscripts and notes need to be well-prepared and practiced. The best Preachers and presenters seem natural. This is not to say that they are unpracticed.

Lewis and Lewis suggest that the Preacher prepare a sermon orally first. A written sermon limits the speaker both in terms of time and direction. It doesn't allow for divergence from what is planned and utilization of feedback from the audience. They suggest focusing more on what is heard than what is written. This can trigger the imagination in including the audience and conversation with them during the creation of the sermon. The language utilized in the sermon would likely be more conversational and engaging and enjoy the development of rapport with the imagined congregation than a literary style presentation. It is helpful to have a well-formed intention and desired outcome for every sermon in order to obtain the desired outcome of the sermon.

Raymond Bailey

Jesus is a model of God through whom God is made known or revealed to the world (Bailey, 1990). He is, also, a model of the ideal human (Bailey, 1990). He is the model of what each human is capable of becoming (Bailey, 1990). Jesus' demand of his audience was that they reproduce his own way of life in themselves and their lives (Bailey, 1990). He demonstrated how to live a godly life (Bailey, 1990). Created in God's image, humankind was intended to incorporate God as their model for living (Genesis 1:27). Human beings are expected to be perfect as God (the Father) is perfect (Matthew 5:48). And while human beings don't see themselves clearly yet, they

ultimately will see themselves as they really are which is like Christ (Bailey, 1990).

They are to conform themselves to the image of the Son (Romans 8:29). Jesus came in the image of a man to demonstrate to them how they can manifest the likeness of God (Bailey, 1990). The daily struggle for Christians is to think and act like Jesus (1 Corinthians 2:16; Phil 2:5). Paul, whose model for himself was Jesus, called his audience to model him, to the extent that he was modeling his life on Jesus (Bailey, 1990). It is possible to model persons whose attributes one wants to emulate. In the cases of Preachers, to model Jesus is to expect of their audience what Jesus expected of his.

Not only is Jesus to be the model godly human, Jesus is to be the “perfect professional role model for the Pastor-Preacher” (Bailey, 1990). For many pastors, preaching is not an important function of their jobs. Other things like pastoral care, administration, and social justice activity are more important (Bailey, 1990). Many biblical scholars don’t find biblical evidence that Jesus spent much time preaching. This conclusion is based upon the observation that Jesus did not stand and present his teachings from behind a pulpit or in a hall designed after a lecture or performance hall (Bailey, 1990). Bailey concluded the following about Jesus as a Preacher:

Jesus identified himself as a Preacher. Jesus was constantly preaching. He preached whenever he encountered one, a few, or many. Indeed Jesus told his disciples that he had to preach the good news of God’s kingdom to other cities than Capernaum, because God had sent him for that purpose. This preaching was proclamation or

announcement of what he referred to as the good news that the Kingdom of God or Heaven was at hand (Bailey, 1990). To model Jesus as a Preacher it is necessary for Preachers to identify vocationally as Preachers and value preaching as highly as Jesus did. It is also necessary to understand, value and proclaim the Kingdom of God with the same clarity and urgency as Jesus.

Jesus preached with authority. He was authoritative (Bailey, 1990). He spoke with integrity and credibility. He was experienced by his audiences as credible, reliable, valid, and trustworthy. His authority was not based upon his position or education, but upon his message, presence and presentation. And it was not based in his audience. Indeed, some rejected what he had to say, concluding that he did not possess authority. Jesus wasn't a priest of the Jewish Temple, or a Pharisee, Sadducee or Scribe. Titles were attributed to him, but in the synoptic gospels, not once by himself. He made no claim to be Messiah or Son of God in these gospels. Jesus' authority was personal (Bailey, 1990). It came as the result of what he said, how he said it, what he did and how he did it. Indeed, Jesus had to establish his own credibility with his audience and convince his audience of the relevancy and benefits of his message. The source of Jesus' authority as inner spiritual strength and a right relationship with God (Bailey, 1990). The base of his authority is in his experience of God. His ministry was initiated in the Spirit proclaiming the Kingdom of God (Luke 4:14-16, Matthew 4:17). When Jesus spoke of the Kingdom of God he was perceived by his audience as speaking with authority, not as a Scribe or Pharisee (Mark 1:22). The Spirit, referred to usually as the Holy Spirit is referred to, in Christianity, as the Third Person of the God, God understood

both as a One and as a Trinity. Jesus, considered the Son of God, is thought in Christianity to be the Second Person of the Trinity. He was sustained by his submission to and dependence upon the Spirit of God within him. It appears that God acted as the Holy Spirit in Jesus from the outside, first in his birth (Matthew 1:18), second in his Baptism (Matthew 3:13-17) and later driving him into the desert (Mark 1:12-13). His birth to Mary was the result of his being conceived of the Holy Spirit. His Baptism was at the hands of John the Baptist who served to initiate Jesus into solidarity with humankind, the Holy Spirit coming upon Jesus like a dove and the voice of God, the Father, the First Person of the Trinity, announcing that Jesus was his Son. This Holy Spirit was present in Jesus at his birth, existing in his very DNA. It came upon him in such a way that he realized himself as the Son of God. At his baptism he experienced exstasis whereby his consciousness was dominated by the consciousness of the Holy Spirit and Presence of God. He became aware of himself in a new way as a realized Son of God capable of operating at the highest level of human development. Aware of his origin or source of his being, he realized his identity as Son of God, believed in himself and his mission as the Son of God, manifest capabilities of the Son of God and behaved in ways that altered the people and environment in which he lived. This was like a life force was activated in him that drove him into the wilderness to be tested and prepare him for his future ministry (Shraddhananda 2014). Jesus grew in stature as the Son of God (Luke 2:40, 52). He maintained his relationship with God through prayer (Bailey, 1990). He drew authority from training and learning (Bailey, 1990). Bailey likely relates this to his childhood experience at home as he does not use extra-biblical sources. It is possible that training and learning assisted Jesus in coming into a full identity as the

Son of God, develop beliefs and understandings consistent with his natural, biological, cognitive, social and spiritual development and develop capacities realized through certain of his actions on the environment while making use of divine authority and power manifest in him. He understood scripture and utilized scripture as a starting point to his preaching and vehicle for expressing his vision of God and God's Kingdom (Bailey, 1990). By claiming and asserting authority Jesus pushed his audience to decision, to accept his message or reject it, support it or oppose it (Bailey, 1990). In this, Jesus was a self-differentiated Preacher, speaking what he believed was right, even as others disagreed. Self-differentiation is a term "Self-differentiation" is a term used to describe one whose emotional process is not dependent on anything other than themselves. Such persons are able to live and function on their own without undue anxiety or over-dependence on others (Bowen, 1978). It was Jesus' delivery of his message that was authoritative. In modeling Jesus it is necessary for Preachers to assume the same level of authority as Jesus. It involves taking on the mind and attitude of Jesus, to conceive of self and others the way Jesus did, to relate to God and world the way Jesus did, and to insist in preaching on the outcome they intend.

Jesus' preaching was relational (Bailey, 1990). Jesus met people where they were. He was an itinerant Preacher. He didn't have a synagogue of his own. He spoke wherever people gathered. He preached to individuals, small groups and large assemblies. He spoke to people who were outside the religious mainstream and those who harbored animosity to it (Bailey, 1990). He identified with his audience joining with them in their lifestyle. Jesus was always connecting with his audience. He was always proclaiming

the truth of God and what that truth demanded of his audience. While he tailored his message to his audience he did not compromise his message. To model Jesus Preachers need to maintain their relationships with their audiences, even build them, no matter their response to their message. They must utilize language, symbols, and dynamics that will increase acceptance and comprehension of their message without diluting it.

Jesus' preaching was inclusive (Bailey, 1990). He spoke to everyone, those counted among the religious and those not, even those rejected by his religion. He related to the Pharisees and the outcasts, sick, publican, sinners, the unclean, children, the possessed, and foreigners - eating with them, talking to them, and healing them. He was respectful and compassionate towards his audience (Bailey, 1990). Jesus' preaching was relevant because despite his "higher spiritual state," he lived among them as one of them (Bailey, 1990). Jesus valued his audience more than he did the law regarding the Sabbath, dietary laws, and ritual purity laws (Bailey, 1990). Jesus' preaching was oriented towards healing rather than regulative, coercive, and policing (Bailey, 1990). Jesus preaching could be confrontational (Bailey, 1990) but in such a way to reflect back to his audience so that they saw the contradictions or wrong in their own attitudes, thoughts, and behavior. He saved his chastisement for leaders who unjustly ruled and treated others and prevented other's access to grace. Jesus preaching was oriented towards the learning and growth of his audience (Bailey, 1990). To model Jesus, Preachers need to value both their message and the people they

preached to more than the Law, the rites and the traditions of the church and the culture in which the church is located.

Jesus preaching was conversational (Bailey, 1990). He was not a manuscript or scripted speaker. This is not to say that Jesus did not prepare his messages, although this is not noted in the scripture. Jesus' preaching included parables, which were memorable stories, the whole of which contained his message (Bailey, 1990). Jesus' preaching was oral rather than literary (Bailey, 1990). He created a multisensory event that engaged his audience with facial expression, physical intensity, eye contact, and vocal inflections. His words were selected for their effect and impact. His choice of words, images and structures held his audience's attention and transformed their way of being, thinking, perceiving, and experiencing. To model Jesus' communication style, Preachers need to use the language skills available to them to deeply connect and influence their audiences.

Jesus' preaching was provocative, evoking responses in his audience that were overt, normally positive, but sometimes negative, anxious, agitated and even violent (Bailey, 1990). It caused his audience to think and act and demanded their immediate response. Jesus' preaching was purpose-driven or intentional (Bailey, 1990). He knew what he wanted as an outcome and pursued it. He would challenge the status quo in order to incubate change (Bailey, 1990). Preachers need to be intentional in their preaching, at times provocative. They need to have well-defined outcomes in mind while preparing and delivering their sermons. They need to do whatever they must to

obtain the response they want from their audiences. Sometimes the desired outcome will disrupt the status quo so as provide space for contemplation of necessary change and motivation to act to produce that change.

Jesus made use of universal desires (Bailey, 1990), metaphors (Bailey, 1990), hyperbole (Bailey, 1990), humor (Bailey, 1990), simile (Bailey, 1990), comparison and contrast (Bailey, 1990), direct address (Bailey, 1990), questions (Bailey, 1990), brevity (Bailey, 1990), and involved his audience as participants in his presentations (Bailey, 1990). Preachers need build a tool box of devices that they can utilize to accomplish their purpose in preaching what they do. Jesus does not limit his interpretation of scripture to what his tradition prescribes (Bailey, 1990). Bailey writes from the perspective of a traditional Christian and so may not consider such Talmudic argument in his understanding of Jesus' tradition. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus makes reference to the traditional, teaching attributed to Moses, "You have heard it said . . . (scripture) "and then says "But I say . . ." expounding the law in a different way than Moses did. In this way, Jesus is presented as the "New Moses," the "New Law-Giver" and assumes the authority to do so. This authority is drawn from his relationship, as Son of God, to God, the Father and to the Holy Spirit as part of the Trinity, the Three Persons of God. Jesus considers the Holy Spirit and the experience of the community in his interpretation (Bailey, 1990). He does not use scripture to prove points, but to point to a particular understanding and life application that furthered his overall agenda (Bailey, 1990). Jesus used narrative to interpret and expand the application of the Law and made connection between the past description of God's Law and the present. He

led his audience to a higher ethical understanding and application of the Law than was possible, say in the time of Moses (Bailey, 1990). His aim was to use the Law to enlighten and free rather than enslave (Bailey, 1990). He did not seek to explain scripture but to use scripture to assert God's meaning for the present (Bailey, 1990). NLP is not content- oriented, but process-oriented. It sees scripture as a tool by which God's will and human good is pursued and realized. While Preachers must be mindful of scripture and its place in the religious life they need to ask the question of what does God intend by this scripture and how can they utilize it to future the Kingdom agenda of God. To model Jesus it is important to observe and imitate how Jesus goes about engaging, utilizing and applying scripture.

The most frequent form of communication Jesus used in the Synoptic Gospels was story, particularly parable (Bailey, 1990). Parables provided Jesus an indirect form of communication intended to transform his listeners. They are intended to provoke specific responses in the audience (Bailey, 1990). Parables are employed to speak directly to the unconscious of the audience. They confound the conscious mind. They must be grasped holistically in order to be understood. Jesus, as presented in the Synoptic gospels, is a story teller par excellence. The life of Jesus from his birth through his ascension may be interpreted as a parable. Such a hypothesis may not be easily attained by those who employ a literal interpretation of scripture (Donahue 1978, Straus 2009), Preachers need to be able to use story forms like Parable and not be trapped into explaining them to their audiences. The explanations themselves aren't likely to make sense to their audiences. Preachers need to be able to retell these

parables, or tell new parables, in ways that grip their audiences' imaginations and disrupt their normal, logical analyses.

Jesus is an ideal model for preaching. Every thought, word, and action of Jesus is worth emulating by Preachers. Jesus paces his audiences and leads them from present understanding and application to a higher level and better application of the religious law they have grown up with. Bailey's perspective is consistent with that of Lewis and Lewis.

John MacArthur

John MacArthur says that preaching is the most important ministry task of all as it is the means by which God's truth is communicated to the world (Abendroth, 2008). Enoch, Noah, Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah, Ezra, John the Baptist, Peter, Stephan, Paul, Timothy, and Jesus all were Preachers and Jesus was the greatest of Preachers (Abendroth, 2008). Jesus is the "Prince of Preachers" (Abendroth, 2008). Jesus' message was divine and was authoritative as it was divinely conceived, from the very mouth of God and made flesh in his existence in the world (Abendroth, 2008). This is a very anthropomorphic description which can be understood as God's Word, the second person of the Trinity, was manifest in Jesus through his living. When people heard Jesus preach, they were amazed. He was incomparable as far as wisdom, power, influence and compassion (Abendroth, 2008). Jesus was a model who did things when he preached that today's Preachers can emulate. These included his reference to scripture, his Gospel message, the compassion he showed his audience, his

confrontation of evil as expressed in the lives of the Pharisees, his prayerful preparation, the boldness of his proclamation, his precision of application, his concern for God's glory, and the conviction and authority with which he spoke (Abendroth, 2008). NLP provides a means that would facilitate the modeling on Jesus that McCarthur and Abendroth calls for. But that modeling will be based on the way Jesus preached, rather than preaching about Jesus. Much of the evangelical church's focus on preaching is not preaching like Jesus preached, but preaching about Jesus. They are particularly concerned with believing in Jesus rather than believing and being like Jesus. It is far easier to find texts about preaching Christ than being Christ or even being like Christ. There is a certain fear in doing this as the traditional church fears identification with Jesus. The logical extreme of such identification is deification. Traditional Christian Theology claims that a person can become like Jesus, while Gnostic and Eastern perspectives believe that it is possible to become Christ or Word of God manifest in the flesh. Divinization (deification, making divine, or theosis) is the transforming effect of divine grace, the spirit of God, or the atonement of Christ. It literally means to become more divine, more like God, or take upon a divine nature (Irenaeus, 2014; Clement of Alexandria, 2014; Martyr, 2014; Theophilus of Antioch, 2014; Hippolytus of Rome, 2014, Athanasius of Alexandria, 2014; Gregory of Nyssa, 2014; Augustine of Hippo, 2014; Gregory of Nazianzus, 2014; Basil of Caesarea, 2014; Catholic Church, 1995; Aquinas, 2014; St. Catherine of Siena, 1980; St. John of the Cross 2014; Andrewes, 1843; Wesley, 1777; Hoeller, 2012).

The latter perspective is considered blasphemous and heretical in traditional Christian theology. But it is the charge made against Jesus that led to his crucifixion. It is the perspective that is presented by such thinkers as Jim Marion and Ken Wilber (2000) who will be presented later.

Mike Abrendoth

Mike Abrendoth says of Preachers, “We must preach and we must do so as Jesus, the ‘Prince of Preachers’ did. We must measure excellence in preaching by comparing all Preachers to Jesus himself” (2008, 14). Abrendoth strongly endorses Jesus’ preaching. He believes that if Preachers preached like Jesus did their churches would be flourishing (Abendroth, 2008). He argues for examining Jesus closely as a Preacher, seeing his greatness as a Preacher, and developing a yearning to preach like Jesus (Abendroth, 2008). The problem is that few Preachers look to Jesus as an example for preaching. In an examination of 842 chapters in 66 books about preaching, Abrendoth found exactly 40 chapters that dealt with Jesus as a Preacher (Abendroth, 2008). NLP offers a process by which Preachers can learn to actually preach like Jesus did.

Abrendoth concluded the following about Jesus’ preaching: Jesus was a Preacher and acted like one. Preaching was preeminent in the mind of Jesus and primary to his identity (Abendroth, 2008). Jesus viewed preaching as the most important thing he did in ministry. In Mark 1:34-38, we read that after Jesus healed illnesses and quieted demons, he withdrew to a quiet place to pray. He didn’t even tell his disciples where he had gone off to. His disciples searched for him and found him. They explained that

everyone was looking for him. Jesus responded to them that they must go elsewhere, to the surrounding towns, so that he could preach in those places also, for it was to preach that he had come.

The gospels feature the preaching of Jesus. The narrative sections in Matthew's gospel served as introductions to his teaching. The teachings end with a statement indicating that Jesus had finished teaching: "Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded by his teaching, for he had taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes (Matthew 7:28-29) and "When Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and proclaim his message in their cities (Matthew 11:1).

Preachers who model Jesus' preaching, treat preaching as their primary vocational practice. Their churches ought to make preaching the pivotal moment of the worship experience. NLP provides a structured means by which Preachers can model the preaching of Jesus.

There are many activities that fill a pastor's job description, preaching being just one of them. Not all pastors are called to be Preachers. But to preach like Jesus, it is essential to make preaching primary. Preaching is one of the attributes of Jesus to model. Jesus' preaching is one of the most important aspects of Jesus' life. If more people actually modeled Jesus' preaching, the Christian evangelical enterprise might be more fruitful. A whole group of people who are more mystically-oriented would find the church more appealing. Such persons find themselves on the outside looking –in at the

church rather than in it. They find themselves more at home in New Age, Eastern, Liberal and Independent Catholic and Western Magical traditions than they do in Mainline Protestant, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Evangelical and Pentecostal Churches. They seek religious movements that embrace mystical idea like union with God, God-realization, and Christ Consciousness. I cannot tell you how many pictures of Jesus I have seen on the home altars of persons practicing some form of Hindu Yoga, Sufism or New Age religion.

Jesus was clear about his message. Abrendoth presents the primary message of Jesus as being forgiveness of sins (Abendroth, 2008). Certainly, Jesus' preached the forgiveness of sins. But the scripture passage he bases his conclusion on says that Jesus' primary message was the "Kingdom of God." Perhaps the experience of the Kingdom of God is predicated on the forgiveness of sins, but the Kingdom of God was the primary message that Jesus proclaimed. Jesus told his disciples that he must preach the Kingdom of God in other cities for he was sent (by God) for the purpose of preaching this message (Luke 4:43). While healing sickness, quieting demons, and miracles were important, preaching the good news that God's Kingdom had come was more important. Indeed, healings, exorcisms and miracles were signs that the Kingdom of God had arrived. They are manifestations of the Kingdom. Preachers need to be clear about their message. Is it "the" message of Jesus or "a" message of Jesus? Abrendoth sounds like he is clear about what "the" message of Jesus is. It is "forgiveness of sins." But that message of forgiveness of sins is found in the overarching message that Jesus brings, "Repent. The Kingdom of God is near or here."

The forgiveness of sins occurs in the context of the establishment of God's Kingdom. Preachers need to enter into an understanding of Jesus' message of the "Kingdom of God." They need to live that message and be that message and all that entails. NLP can be used to facilitate the effective delivery of either the message of the Kingdom of God or forgiveness of sins. Of course, when Jesus forgave sins, he was claiming the authority and power of God. Only God could forgive sins. Yet Jesus gave his disciples authority to forgive sins. He also gave authority to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When Christians forgive sins or pray for forgiveness of sins, they normally claim to do so "in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," or "in the name of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit." For some this may merely be giving due lip service or it is a magical incantation invoking the presence of God or Christ. But for some "in the name" represents identification with God as "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," or with "Jesus Christ." There is something "mysterious," "mystical" or "sacramental" about this. Modeling is not concerned with informing people that the Kingdom of God is present or near as a belief. It is not concerned with providing people with an understanding that their sins are forgiven, the result of which is that they will have the belief that they will "go to heaven." Rather modeling provides the audience with a means of access and entry into the Kingdom of God. It is to create in them a realization that the Kingdom of God is here, now and that they are on course to realize it fully before they die. And it is to provide them with an actual realization that their sins are forgiven and their lives full of grace that they will continue to grow in until they are perfected. The concern in NLP is actual realization as experience.

Jesus had a high view of scripture (Abendroth, 2008). True, but mind you, Jesus had access to only what we call the Old or Hebrew scriptures. What he had were separate texts rather than a single one. It is possible Jesus referenced other texts that no longer exist today or were not included in the canon of scripture we consider authorized today. Jesus spoke confidently of the scripture he made use of; the Torah, the Prophets and Wisdom literature. As regards the New Testament, written after his death as it was, he knew nothing of it, but was the subject of the largest part of it. To model Jesus as a Preacher, Preachers need to share the same high view of scripture Jesus did. It involves approaching scripture in the same way Jesus did. This includes scripture Jesus had access to and scripture he didn't have access to. Jesus did not blindly conform to the letter of scripture. Jesus reflected upon scripture and reasoned on its basis even as his reason led him beyond what the scripture said. At the same time Jesus did not seek to ignore or discard any scripture. Rather he sought in himself to fulfill it; to follow it to its logical, psychological and spiritual conclusion.

Abendroth states as fact that Jesus did not question the accuracy of scripture, and concludes that this means that, to Jesus, the scripture is inerrant. However, Jesus did not make use of all of the scripture, only select parts of it. He utilized scripture where it was necessary to amplify his own ministry and message. He never said that the scripture was inerrant. Rather, we see Jesus as drawing upon and expounding upon scripture to interpret and lend credibility to his own ministry mission and activities. In modeling Jesus' preaching, Preachers need not limit themselves then to preaching a

particular canon of scripture. It is more important to focus on Jesus use of Hebrew scripture and how Jesus used that scripture.

Abrendoth also states that Jesus never quoted an extra-biblical source, rather regularly quoting from Hebrew scripture. Abrendoth relies solely on references to canonical scripture to support his claim. However, there are statements attributed to Jesus that are not apparently related to canonical Old Testament texts. Also, non-canonical scripture are now extant that refer to statements by Jesus included and not included in the canonical scripture. Jesus took it upon himself to expand upon or reinterpret Hebrew scripture in light of his own sense of identity and ministry mission, placing himself within particular biblical interpretive strains and not in others. To model Jesus' use of scripture, Preachers would do well to focus on how Jesus interpreted and used scripture.

Abendroth claims that Jesus submitted to scriptural authority (2008), but at times it seems to me, that Jesus had authority beyond what the Hebrew scriptures suggests. That authority certainly was not granted by New Testament writings as they have their basis in Jesus, not visa-versa, and they did not exist until after Jesus' death. To model Jesus' preaching it is necessary to recognize a hierarchy of authority where Jesus' authority is higher than scriptural authority. In doing this there is a danger of dismissing scriptural authority altogether. This is especially disconcerting when scripture is the primary source for our knowledge and understanding of Jesus. Jesus did not dismiss scriptural authority, but viewed it from the perspective of his own understanding of the primary and other sources of his authority.

Jesus made direct and indirect reference to the Hebrew Scriptures (Abendroth, 2008). Jesus uses the phrase, "It is written," 20 of the 67 times it is employed in the New Testament (Abendroth, 2008). The statement is an authoritative one carrying the considerable weight of legal attestation. When used, what follows has lasting relevance and cannot be easily discarded, if at all. Similar to this is the statement, says Abendroth is the statement "Have you not read" (2008, 38). But remember that Jesus has said, "You have heard it said, but I say," signifying his own higher authority over scripture. Jesus' interpretation is more stringent, yet provides the opportunity for grace as the result of faithful obedience to the Law (Torah). Indeed, Jesus is referred to in the New Testament as "the Word of God" and his words and actions, and those of his disciples, are being recorded as God's word and activity in the New Testament period. Abendroth cites references to Jesus speaking from the Hebrew scripture in referencing Adam and Eve, Daniel, Cain and Abel, Noah, Moses, Lot and his wife, Moses and the serpent, manna from heaven, Jonah, and Sodom and Gomorrah (Abendroth, 2008). Abendroth claims Jesus affirmed and confirmed the veracity of heaven (Abendroth, 2008). To model Jesus involves assuming authority over scripture in the way Jesus did. One must be careful not to assume without careful consideration the full authority of Jesus. Jesus existed at a level of consciousness higher than most people would ever aspire to, never mind attain. Jesus had achieved a level of conscious that was non-causal and non-dual. He had achieved a radical relationship with and unity with God. It is not likely that one will succeed in one obtaining in full the same mind or consciousness that was in Jesus. One would be limited to making sense of Jesus at the level of consciousness one presently held. One could advance within that level or proceed upward one step,

but likely not beyond that. At best, one's life would consist of a gradual, upward approximation of the mind or consciousness of Jesus, however beneficial that approximation would be (Marion, 2000).

Abrendoth rightly points out that Jesus employed what was contained in the Hebrew scripture. And he affirmed the importance of the scripture to Jesus, particularly that part referred to as “the Law” (Abendroth, 2008). Jesus said of the “Law” that he came to fulfill it, rather than replace or destroy it, and that not the smallest letter or stroke of the word would be destroyed until heaven and earth passed away. I do not want to diminish the authority of scripture. But to quote New Testament scripture (Matthew 5:18 and Luke:24), as Abrendoth does, to argue for the literal word for word, letter for letter, inerrancy of the Bible and state that it was Jesus meant, is errant. The Bible we have today was not even in existence during Jesus' day. Jesus, as evident in the Temptation Narrative, and throughout the gospels, is clearly a master of the re-contextualization of scripture. The point to be emphasized here is that Jesus made use of scripture to support his ministry mission and he set himself in the light of select scripture. The scripture was an artifact of the tradition Jesus came out of and fulfilled. Jesus saw himself in light of his tradition and the Hebrew scripture, but Jesus certainly was never restrained or constrained by scripture, a point supported by the challenges he received from the Scribes and Pharisees. Jesus was empowered by the scripture, but that power did not come from the scripture but from God his Father and the power of God's Holy Spirit. A Preacher has to have supreme confidence in the scripture, as it is the primary source material available. Also, a Preacher after the tradition of Jesus has to have full

confidence in Jesus as a person and as a Preacher. As evidence of this, Jesus said, “We (himself and his disciples) speak of what we know.” Modeling can be used by Preachers to increase their confidence in utilizing scripture in fulfilling God’s and their purposes in preaching.

Abendroth speaks of Jesus preaching Christ and Christ crucified (Abendroth, 2008). He claims that the central aim and object of Jesus’ preaching was Jesus himself. As we look to the synoptic gospels, there could be nothing further from the truth. From the perspective of the synoptic gospels Jesus preached not about himself, but about the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God. Certainly the Synoptic Gospels were about Jesus and referenced his life and death, but also his resurrection, ascension and promised return. But for the most part, references regarding Jesus as subject of scripture are not placed on Jesus’ lips, but came in the words of other characters in the gospel and from the pen of the narrators. Paul made Jesus and Christ crucified his message. To support his claims, Abendroth must make use of the Gospel of John and the Epistles of Paul. For the part of the Gospel of John, certainly Jesus makes ample reference to himself. He refers to himself in his “I Am Discourses,” as “the Bread of Life,” “the Light of the World,” “Door of the Sheep,” “the Good Shepherd,” “the Resurrection and the Life,” “the Way, the Truth, and the Life,” and as “the True Vine” (Abendroth, 2008). But ultimately, in John’s gospel, Jesus is preaching attributes of himself that if engaged by his audience will lead them to experience God and new life in God. By having a relationship with Jesus as each one of the attributes of the I AM Jesus is, his audience accesses God, the Father of Jesus directly. They become one

with Jesus, who is one with God, which means they become one with God. This life in unity with God through Jesus expressed in the gospel of John, is akin to the life in the Kingdom of Heaven or Kingdom of God described in the synoptic gospels. While Jesus is referencing himself in the Gospel of John, really he is referencing God and a way for his audience to have access to God, and life in relationship to God, or in terms of the synoptic gospel, in God's Kingdom. The true emphasis in John's gospel is not so much on Jesus, but the effect of knowing Jesus as the attributes described, through identification with him as he is identified with the God who declares that his name is I Am. Paul does "preach Christ and Christ Crucified" rather than "preach Paul." But the question to be asked is why does Paul do this; for what effect? Like John's Gospel, Paul's aim is for his audience to achieve a certain identity with Christ and as the result of that, access to God.

There is certainly merit in preaching Christ and Christ crucified. However, there is greater merit to preach like Christ and what Christ preached and to implore and encourage audiences to be like Christ. To have integrity as a Preacher who preachers like Christ it is essential to become like Christ in character, consciousness, and capability; to preach what his primary message is; and to instill in others the same character, consciousness and capability that was in Christ. This character, consciousness and capability that was in Christ is the same mind, life, and Spirit that was in Christ, the experience of the Kingdom of God on earth, or Word of God in the flesh. It is to inaugurate or initiate in the audience the character, consciousness and capability of Christ and the character, consciousness, and capability of the Kingdom of

God. The ideal of modeling Jesus is not to model a literal understanding of the Bible or a literal, historical understanding of the life of Jesus, but to bring the message preached to life in the life of the audiences today's Preachers serve.

Jesus preached doctrine and that Preachers have to preach doctrine like Jesus did (Abendroth, 2008). In his argument, Abendroth speaks about the authority with which Jesus spoke when he taught. Abendroth points to Mark 1:23-27 for evidence of that authority. So powerful were Jesus' words that even demons obeyed him. Abendroth goes through pains to substitute the word doctrine where others would translate teaching, saying that Jesus taught in a doctrinal fashion. He lists a number of areas where Jesus spoke doctrinally in Matthew's gospel. These are what he refers to as "big topics" like evangelism, bibliology, sanctification, prayer, pneumatology, Kingdom of Heaven, anthropology, Christology, Church discipline, forgiveness, marriage and divorce, soteriology, rewards, sovereignty of God, the sacrificial death of Christ, immortality of the soul, exposing false teachers, eschatology and ecclesiology (Abendroth, 2008). He defines doctrine as anything that explains any truth about God, God's universe, or God's creation (Abendroth, 2008). . Here I disagree significantly with Abendroth. I would rather put it this way. Jesus spoke with authority. He spoke about what he knew from experience. What he spoke was truth from God's perspective. He didn't necessarily use the doctrinal definitions others used, but spoke to the big topics of his day. He spoke on the basis of the scripture of his people, the traditions he was raised in, his experience, and through the prism of reason. He spoke into the world his audience populated, and confronted and challenged the powers and principalities that

populated that world. He was playing from God's rulebook and not the rulebook the world played by. This isn't "doctrinal preaching" but teaching spiritual truth as it has been revealed to him through his study, prayer, and practice, and most of all his relationship with God. And Jesus preaches God's word with absolute congruity. His will is God's will. He fully manifests God's Word. Modeling can be utilized to help Preachers speak with the authority Jesus spoke with. It is important ethically that they speak to what Jesus spoke to and with the ethic that Jesus spoke with. Always the responsibility of the Preacher is to serve God and not their own ego. To assume the authority and power of Jesus and apply it to topics and concerns Jesus didn't could represent a misappropriation and misuse of the power and authority of Jesus. Jesus himself was humble and held himself as ethically accountable to God. It is important to model Jesus' humility as well as his authority.

Jesus preached as a herald (Abendroth, 2008). This kind of preaching breaks through or introduces something into someone's personal and social life. Jesus came "heralding the Kingdom of God" (Abendroth, 2008). To herald is to announce, make known or make public, even to invite. Jesus advanced the very same message John the Baptist had, to a larger, more diverse audience. As a herald, Jesus represents God. It is God's announcement that is being made. God's Kingdom of Heaven is near. And the message Jesus brings is unidirectional, although he demands and expects a response of listening and obedience. Abendroth is right in saying that Preachers need to herald like Jesus did. They need to make known the good news of the Kingdom and invite people to participate in it. This is a function separate from teaching, doctrinal or

educational functioning. The herald gets the audience's attention and keeps it to secure a response. In modeling Jesus as a herald Preachers need to focus on identifying with the role of Preacher as herald of the Kingdom of God. To do this, Preachers need to enter into the same state that Jesus was in when he announced the Kingdom of God.

Jesus preached discipleship (Abendroth, 2008). In Mathew 28:18-20 and Luke 24:46-49 Jesus addresses his disciples. He charges them with baptizing and teaching others what he has taught them. Preachers need to make disciples through their preaching, calling people to relationship with and membership in the Church, the Body of Christ, and the Kingdom of God (I use these phrases interchangeably) and nurturing them there by the Word of God. The content of what Jesus taught is important, as it is from the universe of the crowds that disciples are made. And the universe from which the crowds are drawn are the nations or world that Jesus says we are to make disciples of. Preachers need to model the attribute of Jesus as a disciple-maker, disciple-making informing every aspect of their preaching. If Preachers are identifying with Jesus as a disciple-maker, they are inviting their audiences to follow them as they follow Jesus. Paul is an excellent example of a Preacher who did this. But Paul did not seek disciples egotistically but to serve the purposes for which Jesus first preached.

Jesus preached for a verdict. Jesus preached so that his audience would draw a conclusion or make a decision (Abendroth, 2008). Jesus made ultimatums in his sermons (Abendroth, 2008). . Jesus caused his audience to examine their own lives and the world around them. Abendroth describes Jesus as confronting his audience with questions about whether they believe in him, believe him or believe what he is

saying. There is a purpose for preaching, a particular outcome that the preaching is designed to obtain. The concern here is the way in which Jesus preached that led to him obtaining the responses he did.

Jesus approached the intellect. He was after cognitive and rational comprehension that led to attitudinal and behavioral change (Abendroth, 2008). Emotions were stirred as he confronted the intellect, and attitudes and actions were changed as the result. In his preaching, Abendroth points out, Jesus ultimately charges his audience to choose between alternatives. He offers such choices in the Sermon on the Mount: in Matthew 7:13-14 two gates, Matthew 7:15-20 two trees, Matthew 7:21-22 two professions, and Matthew 7:24-27 two foundations (Abendroth, 2008). When Jesus taught by parable he sought a verdict (Abendroth, 2008). Jesus tells a story to a questioner about a father inviting two sons to work in his vineyard. The first declines but later goes to the vineyard and works. The second agrees but fails to show up for work at the vineyard. Then Jesus asks which son did the will of the father. The inquirer responds, "The first." Then Jesus drives the point home that the tax collectors and prostitutes would enter the Kingdom before the inquirer (a Pharisee,) because the former believed John the Baptist and the Pharisees did not (Matthew 21:28-32). Jesus confronted his disciples about who people believed he was and then who they believed he was. He asked them "Who to people say I am?" After they answered, he asked them "Who do you say I am?" (Matthew 16:13-17). Jesus was seeking a verdict. Abendroth is calling on Preachers to confront their audience as Jesus did; to press them for a decision and a response. Such preaching is outcome-oriented. Clear choices are presented with the desired

choice, however difficult to make, obvious to the audience. Preachers make choices obvious to their audiences. They make clear the routes that lead to the right choice. But they leave it up to their audiences to choose. They sometimes empathize with the audience in having to make choices and lament their inability, leaving open the possibility of arriving at the correct choice at a later time. Admonitions are possible, but following Jesus, these are usually communicated to persons in leadership positions whose choices impact the lives of others subject to the leaders' decisions.

Abendroth concludes that Jesus was an expository Preacher (2008). He is careful to define what expository preaching is and is not. Of all the definitions offered by Abendroth, I think the best is "Expository preaching is the process of laying open a biblical text in such a way that its original meaning is brought to bear on the lives of contemporary listeners" (2008, 144). Expository preaching is a style or method of preaching God's word that seeks to logically expose the mind and will of the congregation to the biblical text (Abendroth, 2008).

Abendroth offers a critique of his own premise that Jesus is an expository Preacher, stating that it is not fair to ask if Jesus was an expository Preacher because Jesus normally did not preach by quoting or referring to Old Testament texts, like expository Preachers of today do (2008). What Jesus did, instead, was expose his audience to himself, the incarnate Word of God, speaking for God and as God. Abendroth states that Jesus could have preached expository sermons based upon scripture texts if he wanted or needed (2008). It is difficult to model Jesus as an expository Preacher if he's only one in spirit and not in practice, or if he could have been if he wanted to be.

Perhaps expository preaching is the better form of preaching for Preachers after Jesus. But my desire here is to model Jesus, even if his preaching style is inferior to the style Abendroth advocates for Preachers other than Jesus. Abendroth offers two examples of expository preaching by Jesus. These are found in Luke 4:14-22 and Luke 24: 25-27. Jesus spoke in the Synagogue in his hometown. He read from the scroll of Isaiah. Afterwards he told his audience that the Isaiah scripture he read was fulfilled in their hearing of his reading the scripture. Abendroth goes on to say that this scripture referred to Jesus preaching in an expository style. However, there is no evidence suggesting how Jesus preached. He may have preached in the inductive style Abendroth so disdains. In Luke 24:25-27, Jesus drew upon Moses and “all of the Prophets” to explain the things concerning himself and the Hebrew Scriptures that they knew of. But how did he do this? Did he go book by book, chapter by chapter, verse by verse, through the scriptures? The question is how. As we don’t have a record of what Jesus said, we can’t conclude anything about Jesus’ preaching from these texts.

Jesus is the subject of Jesus’ preaching (Abendroth, 2008). A stronger argument for this can be made from the Gospel of John where Jesus speaks more often of himself than from the Synoptic gospels where Jesus speaks infrequently about himself and more about his message. It is possible to model Jesus as a Preacher from either the synoptic or Johannine perspectives.

William Brosend

William Brosend speaks of four characteristics of Jesus' rhetoric (2010).

First, Jesus' preaching is conversational. It is responsive to his audience. Almost everything Jesus says comes either in response to or in conversation with someone else. His conversation is not only with inquirers and disciples, but with the tradition and culture of which he is part.

Second, Jesus' preaching is proclamatory. His intent is declarative and his tone is authoritative. Jesus is not asking, even in the middle of dialogue, but is making claims, theological and soteriological.

Third, Jesus, in the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) is reticent about speaking about himself. He does so only occasionally. Although he Preachers the Kingdom of God, he resists accepting the crown.

Fourth, Jesus uses every opportunity to elaborate, illustrate and sharpen his message via metaphor (Matthew 15:24-26), hyperbole (Mark 9:42-50), allegory (Luke 20:9-19) and other rhetorical techniques. Jesus' preaching is persistently figurative.

Brosend reduces the description of Jesus' preaching to four broad categories.

Preachers can look to how Jesus is conversational, proclamational, message-oriented, and utilizes certain literary vehicles and employ these in preparing and delivering their sermons. His perspective is consistent with our other authors.

Francis Handy

Handy (1949) emphasizes the preaching of Jesus, that “Jesus came preaching” and that his preaching and teaching overlapped (1949). Jesus’ preaching was prophetic (Handy, 1949), educational (Handy, 1949) and scribal (Handy, 1949). He was identified with divine truth and preached from that authority (Handy, 1949). Jesus was a “child of the synagogue” who opposed the injustices of the Temple and its sacrificial system (Handy, 1949). A “sacramental Preacher,” Jesus led people in “synagogical worship” and “mediated God to them” (Handy, 1949). I believe that Handy meant by this that Jesus led a decentralized form of religion and replaced the Temple as the locus of mediation between God and people with himself.

Handy writes of Jesus being multi-lingual, speaking Aramaic, Hebrew and possibly Latin (1949). Given the location of Nazareth and Israel along major trade routes and Roman interest in Israel, Koine Greek was a language Jesus likely spoke. Handy describes Jesus as using figurative and poetic language. He uses parallelism, rhythm, and rhyme in his speech to make it more powerful (Handy, 1949). He utilizes parables (Handy, 1949), illustrations (Handy, 1949), dramatic elements like in the stories of the Prodigal Son and Good Samaritan (Handy, 1949), and object lessons like his talks about little children (Handy, 1949). He describes Jesus as utilizing expository preaching in the synagogue (Handy, 1949), evangelical preaching when preaching about the Kingdom of God (Handy, 1949), and topical preaching about spiritual and ethical life (Handy, 1949) and to a lesser extent doctrine (Handy, 1949). In conflict with religious leaders Jesus

preached sermons that were polemic (Handy, 1949), ethical (Handy, 1949), and eschatological (Handy, 1949).

Handy adds one perspective that has not been considered thus far that is useful for modeling Jesus. He presents Jesus as a mediator of God to his audience. God reaches and touches Jesus' audience through Jesus and Jesus' audience reaches and touches God through Jesus. This has been implied by Gonzalez's work. It is possible for Jesus' audience to connect with God and know God through Jesus. So identified with Jesus, Preachers mediate God to their audiences. By doing so Preachers can generate great charisma and their messages are possessed by great power. The challenge for Preachers is to get out of God's way and serve as vessels of divine truth, love, peace, and justice. A danger for Preachers is that their egos will be inflated and they will be self-possessed as opposed to God-realized.

Herschel Sheets

Herschel Sheets (1977) looks at Jesus' frequent use of hyperbole. Jesus exaggerated often and on purpose for effect (Sheets, 1977). Exaggeration helped Jesus get his message across effectively. When Jesus said such things as the hairs on people's heads were numbered, advised cutting off offending body parts, keeping one hand ignorant of the others, accounting for all of one's idle words, specks and logs in peoples' eyes, camels and needle's eyes, the number of times necessary to forgive, gnats and camels, faith and mustard seeds, and stones that cry out, Jesus wasn't being literal. He wanted to make a rhetorical point. Sheets makes his point that Jesus used

hyperbole to help him make his point but little about why. In modeling Jesus as a Preacher one wants to make use of the types of images and other literary devices he uses. Often times to make a point it is necessary to exaggerate or overstate one's position.

Rick Warren

Rick Warren (2014) makes a case for modeling Jesus as a Preacher. He does so by reference to scripture that speaks to his impact upon his audience. Jesus “wowed” his audience (Matthew 7:28, Matthew 22:33, Mark 11:8, and Mark 12:37). Jesus elicited the state of “amazement” in his audience. And it was his delivery that kept his audience spell-bound. So Warren directs us to the New Testament, and Jesus, to learn to preach. Jesus is the model whose delivery and impact we model. Warren's emphasis is upon the “how” of Jesus' presentation. How does Jesus preach? Warren directs us to John 12:49 where Jesus says “The Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it.” Thus, Jesus draws his authority from God, the Father. The content of what Jesus says is important, and so is the delivery. So much of Christian teaching is about what Jesus said instead of about the manner by which he said it. So, the question Warren would ask is “How did Jesus preach? How did he deliver his sermon?”

Jesus began with people's hurts, needs, and interests (Warren, 2014). Jesus met people where they were. When people came to Jesus, they came with questions, concerns and problems. Says Warren “Jesus scratched where people itched (Warren, 2014, p.1).” Jesus' preaching was immediate, relevant, on target, and practical.

Jesus didn't move beyond people's immediate needs to lead them to an action he desired of them, until they had received the practical immediate benefit of his preaching for their lives (Warren, 2014). Jesus paced his audience. He kept up with them. He didn't go beyond this to teach them something new until he knew they were ready. Jesus obtained rapport with his audience. He maintained that rapport so that he could influence them to follow him.

After meeting people's needs, Jesus taught and led people to grow spiritually. Only after the audiences' needs were met would Jesus go on to present his lesson and lead the person to where he wanted to take them, e.g. a new identity, a new way of being, a new level of development or consciousness, new behavior, and discipleship.

Jesus' aim was to assist the person to grow spiritually (Warren, 2014). He did this by bypassing the "critical factor" of the conscious mind. The critical factor convinces the mind of all the reasons why something cannot be done, even when doing that thing is good. Jesus used means of communication that allowed him to bypass the critical factor and speak directly to the heart or unconscious of the person. Jesus also spoke in ways that allowed him to overcome the filtering process of the brain. The conscious mind cannot make sense of all information and stimuli that constantly bombard it. But most everything gets collected into the brain and unconscious. Jesus accomplished this by engaging the conscious mind while directly communicating to the heart or unconscious of the listener. He utilized processes used by great communicators that came before him and have lived since. He utilized processes used by NLP which were modeled after the great hypnotherapist Milton Erickson. Warren observed that Jesus

bypassed the conscious mind and “reptilian brain or reticular formation system of the brain” by speaking to his listeners about things they valued, things that were unique, and things that threatened them.

Jesus did not believe that people were looking for truth, at least consciously (Warren, 2014). Jesus recognized that people in his audience weren’t consciously looking for truth. Jesus realized that most people could not handle the truth right away. But, Jesus realized that people are looking for relief. Provide them with relief and they want more of it. They want to know where that relief came from. They want to know the truth.

When Jesus proclaimed the truth, he wasn’t proclaiming it in thin air, but to particular people, for the benefit of those people (Warren, 2014). His message was never more important than the people he was proclaiming it to. Jesus’ message was always formed on the basis of what others needed to hear, not on the basis of what Jesus needed to say.

For Warren, “The Sermon on the Mount” is the greatest sermon ever preached. Lives are changed as the result of this sermon. What Jesus teaches is how to be like Jesus. In Jesus, we find the example of what he teaches, the means by which to apply what we learn from him, and the process by which to obtain the outcome Jesus points us to. Jesus doesn’t preach to increase knowledge base, but to change lives. He doesn’t focus his audience on dogma but life-application. And in the final examination Jesus doesn’t inquire about what we believe, in whom we believe, what denomination we have membership in, or even what religion we adhere to, but how we lived. When Jesus

completed a teaching or healing, he would release the person or crowd to put into action what he taught them. The life-related teaching of Jesus is designed to explain life, change life-style, and transform lives right where they live.

Jesus preached with an interesting and entertaining style (Warren, 2014). The crowd loved to listen to Jesus. They listened to him with pleasure or delight. To entertain is to capture and hold the attention for an extended period of time (Warren, 2014). This involves developing rapport with one's audience and generating personal charisma. Jesus captured the interest of large crowds by telling stories to make a point and using simple language, not technical or theological jargon. Jesus was a strategic communicator. Jesus knew how to utilize certain communication laws. Jesus had control of his communication and could naturally and easily influence those who were open to be influenced by him.

Fred Craddock

Fred Craddock is for me a logical place to look to learn about preaching. His texts on preaching were primary in my seminary training on preaching. Craddock unfortunately has little to say about Jesus' preaching. His statements about preaching can be applied to Jesus' preaching. Craddock insists that Preachers need to be able to communicate in view of the concrete, lived experiences of their audiences (2001). Jesus seems to be a Preacher who communicated into the lived experience of his audience. He accepted and respected the worldview of the audience and spoke the sensory language they spoke. He also seemed to be a Preacher that led his audience to understanding of his

gospel rather than tell his audience what they should think (Craddock, 2001). Jesus paced along his audience as he developed rapport with them and once he had earned their respect and trust he led them to the understanding and outcome he desired of them. Jesus sermons were not subject to form, but moved from beginning to end, in such a way that the elements of story carry the audience without contrivance to a moment of application (Craddock, 2001). Jesus sermons moved people by virtue of drama, story, conversation or parable. This movement functions to sustain interest, create anticipation, and hold attention and is integral to the content of the message (Craddock 2009). Preachers can make use of story and the movements of story to move people state by state to a desired experiential and conceptual end. Story is a holistic vehicle of communication rather than linear. It speaks to peoples' minds, hearts and lives; to their emotional, emotional and behavioral capacities.

Today's Preachers do not enjoy positional authority (Craddock, 2001). Jesus did not enjoy the positional Temple priesthood of his day. Jesus' authority was demonstrated by how he conveyed himself to his audience as described in the New Testament. Preachers can create authority, relevance and credibility through association with sources of authority, relevance and credibility. This is accomplished through associating one's self as a Preacher with the particular source of authority, be it God, Jesus, the scripture, or a tradition. For example, Jesus places himself in the context of Moses and the Prophets and even God when he speaks. He generates a certain charisma when he does this. At the same time he generates rapport with his audience.

Indeed, he creates an aura of himself as being both human and divine. This demands a certain inner confidence.

Preaching is an oral activity and should be prepared as such and not as written communication (Craddock, 2001). Jesus' sermons were oral productions. While Jesus read from the scripture he preached and taught from his heart. And although sermons are oral expressions and not written ones, they need a logical organization and structure that engages the audience to pursue an issue or idea from the perspective of their own thoughts and feelings relative to Christ and the gospel (Craddock, 2001). How one prepares affects one's outcome. There is a difference between preparing a sermon as an oral presentation and preparing it as something to read. One makes better use of non-verbal communication when one plans and practices that non-verbal communication along with one's verbal communication. One needs to prepare the sermon as if the audience is present during the preparation and is being communicated to during it. Jesus was always engaging people to pursue the idea of God's Kingdom and its realization in their lives. In NLP, this is what is called "future-pacing." Jesus related to the person in their current reality, introduced the Kingdom of God to them in the present, and led them to anticipate a fuller, later realization of the Kingdom.

In "Overhearing the Gospel" (2002) Craddock emphasizes the importance of communicating the essence of the gospel in place of information about it. Unable to do this Preachers leave their audiences bored (Craddock, 2002). There is more to communication than conveyance of information. Some are successful in communicating the essence of the gospel and its experience. Craddock asks the

question, “How did they do it” (2002)? People in our churches have heard the gospel proclaimed numerous times. People outside our churches think they know what is being preached (Craddock, 2002). Often times what gets construed as Christian is talking about life rather than living it. The challenge becomes speaking to an audience that has heard it all and knows too much (Craddock, 2002). Jesus, as a Preacher is not giving information, but introducing a reality. He is also speaking to audiences that have heard it all, some with reason to hear it again in a new way, some with investment to hear it in ways that maintain the status quo, and some who have no reason to hear it in a way that applies to their everyday existence. NLP modeling is interested in the question of how one preaches especially how the successful Preacher is effective in their preaching, like Jesus is effective in his. One models what the Preacher does from the time of sermon preparation through the time of its delivery.

Preachers need to know of what they speak (Craddock.2002). Appropriation of the gospel is necessary for preaching, but not adequate to the task of effective preaching (Craddock, 2002). One cannot speak of grace without experience of it. One cannot speak of salvation, forgiveness, love, the Kingdom of God, prayer, crucifixion, resurrection, transfiguration, and other theological concepts, without experience of them. Craddock speaks of the necessity to study these things to communicate about them. Craddock is not speaking of mere intellectual study, but devotional study and worship, out of which preaching is expressed as an offering to God (2002). Something of the Preacher’s relationship with God then is conveyed to the audience in the preaching event, such that they are hearing what the Preacher says to God Craddock

(2002). To accomplish an outcome in an audience one must first accomplish that outcome in one's self. If one wants the audience to experience a state one must be in that state, whether that state be an emotional or cognitive state like passionate, interested, relaxed or motivated or a spiritual state like enlightened, awake, saved, self-actualized or God-realized.

In the matter of the message, Craddock advocates freeing the gospel, and I would say Jesus, from "eighteen centuries of dogma, tradition, ecclesiastical machinery and claims of authority" (2002, 50), redundant recitation of the texts (2002), and from the ways biblical authorities, fundamentalist and liberal, fight over correct interpretation of the texts (2002). Craddock sees a solution to the problem of ecclesiastical and intellectual clouding of gospel truth through its indirect communication, through means, for example, that Jesus used like parables (2002). One of the few things Craddock says about Jesus' preaching is that "Jesus lured his followers into listening and then caught them in a new vision" (2002, 74). Says Craddock, "Jesus often communicated indirectly, most obviously with parables," where Jesus offered surprise points in unexpected places" (2002, 74). Parables are an important means of indirect communication. However, non-verbal behaviors such as facial and bodily gestures and movements and non-verbal expressions like tone, cadence, volume, pitch, and timbre all communicate meaning as much or more than words.

Craddock said that Jesus interpreted scriptures (1985) and made use of stories (1985). Also, Jesus was a "Preacher of judgment," but was full of compassion (1985). When Jesus used parables as his message they were ambiguous and their meaning implicit

(1985). Yet Jesus also interpreted text to make it more understandable to his audience (1985). On the road to Emmaus Jesus explained familiar scripture to his audience in light of himself (Luke 24:13-27). Clearly Craddock is knowledgeable about preaching, 'though the preaching of Jesus was not a research interest of his.

Craddock advocates for inductive preaching, but also narrative preaching where audiences can overhear the gospel story (1985), perhaps see and hear them enacted, as they are told in the third person, past tense with anonymous characters acting and speaking in life situations distinct from the listeners" (1985). What makes the biblical narrative more effective than a typical lecture or sermon is that "a narrative is of the nature of life itself" (1985, 118). NLP advocates the strategic use of language, verbal and non-verbal to accomplish the purpose of one's speech. One can change person and perspective in preaching to communicate meaning effectively.

Eugene Lowry

In "The Homiletical Plot" (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2001) Eugene Lowry makes the case that a sermon is a narrative that involves a process (2001). Lowry defines a sermon as a plot, predetermined by the Preacher, characterized by a sensed discrepancy of plot, a homiletical bind, where there is a tension with an unresolved issue (2001). For Lowry, preaching is story-telling. It is a narrative art form. Every sermon needs to focus on the homiletical bind which is experienced as a tension that results from a discrepancy between text and life (2001). In a sermon, the tension is between the homiletical bind and the knowledge that Jesus is the answer. How is

Jesus the answer? This is the question that will hold your audience's attention until the end (2001). Story engages both memory and imagination and unconscious processes. Narrative provides an external structure that engages the internal narratives of the audience and when skillfully applied interrupts that internal narrative, even changing it, thus altering the way audiences conceive and experiences the world.

For Lowry there are five stages in the homiletical plot. These are presaged by an established equilibrium between the parts of the story. There is no conflict or tension between the parties in the story. One, early in the sermon, the equilibrium is disrupted (2001). Conflict or question arises. Two, the discrepancy is analyzed (2001). Three, the clue to resolution of the discrepancy is revealed (2001). Four, the gospel is experienced as the effective solution to the discrepancy. Five, anticipation of the consequences of the solution are anticipated (2001), the climax of the sermon is reached and a call to commitment is made. The story may proceed out of order through stages 3-5. Stage Three involves a principle of reversal where the problem is turned on its head. I find it easier to speak of the "discrepancy" as "problem." An audience's state of mind is altered through the disturbance of equilibrium. There is a break from normal patterns of attention. They become curious about the nature of the disturbance. They begin to realize that a resolution is possible and to desire that resolution. A Preacher wants to maintain the tension to prevent premature closure and abandonment of the search for the best possible solution. Once closure is obtained there is no longer motivation for further solution. While the disruption is still in place and the desire of resolution is at its height one the gospel can be presented as an effective solution to the

problem, leading the audience to apply it imaginatively to the difficulty, utilizing the cognitive facility of generalization to accomplish this. The Preacher elicits a state of anticipation that the application provided will succeed when enacted.

Lowry assumes that Jesus made use of this homiletical plot strategy (2001). He made use of plot in the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15: 11-32), of bind in the story of the Pharisee and the Publican (Luke 18: 9-14), of clue to the approaching resolution in the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) and of reversal in the story of Lazarus and the Beggar (Luke 16:25). Lowry spoke of the importance in maintaining ambiguity until the end of the sermon. Jesus was so successful, according to Lowry, because he did so (2001). Ambiguity can be maintained through a process of nested loops where a number of stories are begun but not completed, one after another. This creates wonder or curiosity in the minds of audience members. After opening the stories and leaving them incomplete one can offer a teaching which the audience may retain better because of their heightened curiosity. Then the stories are completed, the last story begun first, until each of the stories are completed. The loops are closed.

Calvin Miller

Calvin Miller (2006) speaks to the need of preaching to be passionate and fascinating. For this to happen, Preachers must enter into states of passion and fascination during their sermon preparation and delivery. Preachers need to be dialogical and conversational rather than lecture (2006). They must develop and maintain rapport with their audiences. Jesus told stories and utilized images in his sermons, so much so that

they were image driven (Miller, 2006). Jesus was a story-teller and master communicator (Miller, 2006) and the best available role model for Preachers (Miller, 2006). Preachers need to build upon the rapport they create with their audiences through the use of images and stories so that their messages best connect with the lived experience of their audiences. They need to know the word of God and world of God (Miller, 2006), be mystics (Miller, 2006), shepherds (Miller, 2006), learn who they are, and learn who their audience is (Miller, 2006). God and God's Word has to be the source of the Preacher's experience and message. It involves identifying with God and Jesus as models and living the gospel message Jesus preaches. It involves entering in to mystical states, assuming the role of shepherd, and getting to know and love their sheep; their audience.

Church goers are living in private perceptual fogs (Miller, 2006). While this sounds critical of church goers, Miller may be sharing an observation of normal human consciousness as described by Guurdjieff (Ouspensky 1949). The challenge of preaching is to wake people from their routine and stir them to action or change. They may be considered sleep-walking or in a dream state rather than awake and aware. The aim of preaching is assist people to progress along the developmental pathway they are traveling or to step up to a new developmental stage. People are often in a maintenance consciousness that needs to be disrupted if there is going to be developmental change or transformation.

Preachers need to know their congregations and what they believe (Miller, 2006) and know about God in order to address their issues (Miller, 2006). They need to help their

congregations find significance (Miller, 2006), cope with pain (Miller, 2006), and find reconciliation and hope (Miller, 2006). Preachers need to have rapport with their audiences. They need to have empathy with their audience and meet their audiences where they are emotionally and cognitively. Preachers need to penetrate the defenses of their audiences in order to move them beyond their defenses into authentic being and into motivated states.

Sermons need to be about Christ, the Bible, and about the audience (Miller, 2006). Christ and the Bible provide authority to Preachers. Knowledge of the audience provides them with relevancy. Sermons must be “kindergarten in clarity and Harvard in force” (Miller, 2006). They are “oral events” and should be written with this in mind (Miller, 2006). Preachers need to be aware that half of those in the pews are in the midst of life challenges that need addressing (Miller, 2006). Every sermon shows where an audience is, where they ought to be, and provides movement from that initial place to that desired place (Miller, 2006). To facilitate movement from that starting place to the desired end Preachers are advised to keep the audience together (Miller, 2006), consider the feedback they provide to make sure rapport (Preacher and congregation) is maintained, pace the delivery to make sure the delivery remains conversational (Miller, 2006), live with the successes and failures of weekly preaching (everyone delivers a dud now and then), and preach over the long haul to create community (Miller, 2006). This idea of keeping the audience together is pacing. Utilizing feedback is the way Preachers can utilize feedback they receive to improve their communication such that they achieve their desired outcomes.

Robert Mounce

It is difficult to separate the preaching of Jesus and the teaching of Jesus. C.H. Dodd (1929) insists that they are distinct. This view is denounced by Robert Mounce (1960). The distinction between preaching and teaching is irrelevant from the perspective of NLP as NLP can be utilized for all forms of communication.

Mounce explores the function of herald in the ancient world (1960). John the Baptist is a Preacher in the herald mold (Mounce, 1960) and goes on to describe Jesus as a Preacher in this mold (Mounce, 1960). The content of Jesus' teaching in the Synoptic Gospels as focusing primarily on the Kingdom of God or Kingdom of Heaven (Mounce, 1960). The Preacher can model the basic function of herald and on John the Baptist and Jesus as heralds. Both John the Baptist and Jesus are heralding a particular thing; the Kingdom of God or Kingdom of Heaven and draw upon authority from God, scripture and tradition in doing so. In order to announce or call forth the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Heaven in their audiences Preachers need to be clear about what the Kingdom of God or Heaven is and define it in their preaching.

Jesus' preaching and teaching was continuously related to one another and overlapping (Mounce, 1960). Terms like preaching, evangelizing, and teaching are used interchangeably to describe the same activity (Mounce, 1960). The teaching of Jesus is expounding in detail of what Jesus has proclaimed (preached) (Mounce, 1960).

Haddon Robinson

Haddon Robinson (2001) makes scarce reference to Jesus as a Preacher. Although an advocate of expository preaching, Robinson says, that in a picture or image-based culture narrative preaching is important (2001). It is likely that Jesus evoked images in his preaching through the use of metaphor and story. He notes that “Jesus came telling stories and most of them have entered the world’s folklore” (2001), and that Jesus demonstrated the impact of narration” in the parables he told (2001). Today’s audiences may benefit from more image-based preaching. Jesus preached, however, in an oral culture, where speaking, listening and hearing were important skills. Robinson demonstrates how little has been made of Jesus as a Preacher.

Thomas Long

Thomas Long (1989) discussed Preachers as operating as heralds (1989), pastors (1989), storytellers (1989) and witnesses (1989). He uses these terms as metaphors describing types of Preachers. Herald Preachers are all about the voice of God manifest in their own voices. They want to be true to the Word. They are not concerned with communication strategies, the personality or artistry of the Preacher (Long, 1989). Pastor Preachers are concerned with needs of the listeners (Long, 1989). Whereby the herald knows his message, the pastor knows his people. The concern is with impact on the audience. The listener is better on account of hearing the sermon. The Story-teller Preacher uses narrative in a normative way (Long, 1989). People remember stories better than any other form of communication. The content of the

story is not separate from the form of the sermon. The Witness Preacher provides authority to the Preacher but at the service of the congregation (Long, 1989). The Witness Preacher preaches to a community on behalf of that community about the relationship of God to each and every member of the community (Long, 1989).

Long makes only a few references to the preaching of Jesus. He cites Jesus as speaking to his audience in parables, images and metaphors, in particular about the Kingdom of God (1989). Unfortunately Long did not expound on Jesus as herald, pastor, story teller and witness as he could have, although Jesus functioned as each of these. To preach like Jesus a Preacher would want to could focus on each of these four attributes of Jesus as a Preacher. Preachers want to herald, pastor, story tell and witness like Jesus, sometimes simultaneously, sometimes separately. To accomplish this, Preachers would model on each of these attributes separately and work on bringing them together.

Bryan Chapell

Brian Chapell (1994) mostly advocates for expository preaching. However, he dedicates a chapter to illustration. Illustrations have value as “sensory and emotional descriptions” that draw audiences into the narrative world of the illustration (Chapell, 1994). Such illustrations are essential to excellent preaching (Chapell, 1994). Concrete images are needed to ground abstract ideas in the experience of the audience (Chapell, 1994) and make the preached Word accessible, understandable and real. Propositional statements don’t accomplish this (Chapell, 1994). Illustrations are necessary because

most of the population is accommodated to visual imagery (Chapell, 1994). Listeners who experience concepts – even vicariously – learn more than those who must consider words and ideas in the abstract” (Chapell, 1994). Jesus communicated truth through illustration (Chapell, 1994). Jesus’ preaching methods and priorities were illustrative (Chapell, 1994). Preachers can make use of sensory language. Preachers can utilize the same sensory language as their audiences. If their audiences utilize visual predicates in their sentences, these Preachers can utilize visual predicates; if their audiences use auditory predicates or kinesthetic predicates, they can utilize auditory or kinesthetic predicates respectively. In a crowd it is good to utilize all three in a balanced way. My current congregation has a significant number of engineers and scientists. In this case it is useful for me to utilize digital auditory predicates. These are more abstract terms than the primary sensory ones. Examples are the terms “compute,” “analyze,” “synthesize,” and “test.” Preachers also can utilize images, metaphors, and similes to illustrate their points rather than present logical, linear arguments. In this way they speak to the “unconscious” of their audiences.

Hughes Oliphant Olds

Hughes Oliphant Olds (1998) states that the Bible places an emphasis on Jesus’ preaching. Jesus’ ministry was “above all” a preaching ministry (Olds, 1998). Jesus preached in formal and informal settings (Olds, 1998). The subject of Jesus’ preaching was the Kingdom of God (Olds, 1998). Jesus was a Preacher in the tradition of the prophets and was the “culmination and fulfillment” of that prophetic movement (Olds, 1998). Jesus’ preaching had a strong teaching component (Olds, 1998). Jesus was an

expository Preacher (Olds, 1998) and an example of how Preachers should preach (Olds, 1998). His sermons were well-prepared (Olds, 1998) and included dialog (Olds, 1998). He made consistent use of parables, similes, and illustrations (Olds, 1998). He directed much of his preaching to an inner group of disciples (Olds, 1998). Jesus' identity is forged out of the prophetic tradition which served as a source level for him. Preachers who model Jesus would be prophetic in the way Jesus was prophetic.

Characteristics of Jesus to Model– Preacher and Preaching

Dilts, Gonzalez, Lewis and Lewis, Bailey, MacArthur, Abrenoth, Brosend, Hardy, Sheets, Warren, Craddock, Lowry, Miller, Mounce, Robinson, Long, Chappel, and Olds, provide excellent perspective regarding Jesus as a Preacher and great agreement. Where there is notable disagreement it regards the type of Preacher Jesus was – inductive and narrative or deductive and expository - and their perspective of how inerrant Jesus considered scripture and doctrinal Jesus was – there is unanimity about Jesus as a Preacher and the value of emulating him as a Preacher. Each of these scholars viewed Jesus as the ideal model for Preachers. All agree about these characteristics of Jesus and his preaching:

Jesus was an authoritative Preacher. He drew his authority from God, from the scripture, from the Jewish tradition of the Law and the Prophets, and his own personal experience. He manifested his authority congruently. He was grounded in an intimate relationship with God, a thorough familiarity with scripture, a firm knowledge of his place in the Jewish tradition of the Law and the Prophets, and his own inner conviction of

love, truth and justice. Jesus was an authoritative Preacher, but he wasn't an authoritarian Preacher. He would not bully or manipulate his audience, although he would educate, encourage, challenge, confront and even chide to get his point across. He conveyed authority to his audience despite lacking an official position and the endorsement of the establishment religion.

Related to this, Jesus was a vision, mission, and goal-oriented Preacher. There were important but secondary things he had to accomplish, but preaching the Kingdom or Reign of God was his primary task. By staying true to his calling his preaching was all the more effective. Forgiveness of sins, healing of illness, and driving out demons were signs that the Kingdom or Reign of God he proclaimed was present in the world. They were activities that he was involved in and that he had his disciples perform. But to put these ahead of his primary task of preaching about the Kingdom and preparing others to live in that Kingdom would be detrimental. Jesus preached as Messiah, King, Prophet, and Teacher heralding in and inaugurating or initiating a new and advanced way of being human; individual and communal.

The image of the Kingdom of God that Jesus presents is an inclusive and inviting one that draws his audience in, proving them with a sense of immediate belonging and achievement while holding out promise for greater future realization and reward. It is characterized by a variety of states including righteousness, peace, joy, freedom, love, forgiveness, grace and glory. Indeed it is an expansive state rather than a restrictive state. Jesus is capable of leading his audience from one state, say a less desirable

one, to a more desirable one, or if so desired, as he did with the Temple Priests, Scribes and Pharisees, and hometown skeptics, over the edge.

Following on this, Jesus was a powerful, persuasive and transformative Preacher who impacted his audience, challenging them and motivating them with a compelling, life-changing presentation and message, deconstructing and reconstructing the lives and world of his audience, and setting in motion a chain of events that could be resisted and even fought but not arrested. The power he wielded was a limitless spiritual power that could move mountains and command systemic change. Rather than accumulate power for himself Jesus sought to empower and catalyze growth in his audience. At the same time, Jesus was charismatic. His charisma made him attractive. Charisma flows from the inside out and can be generated. Likely, it is connected with Jesus' relationship with God as Father and Holy Spirit, his own identity as Son of God, his own conviction about divine truth and his message of the Kingdom and the reign of God, his familiarity with the scripture, and his ability to present himself in the context of the character of God. Likely, too it is the result of his spiritual, physical, and emotional fitness.

Jesus was so effective a communicator because of his personal integrity. He was the same inside as he was outside; congruent and consistent. Any one he related to knew exactly where he stood. His self was well-defined and differentiated from the crowd, other teachers, leaders, and Preachers, and even the Prophets that came before him. There was no falsehood in Jesus, only conviction of what is right and just. At the same time, Jesus had outstanding relationship skills. He respected and cared about his audience. He listened to them, even seeking them out. He asked them questions and

answered their questions. He met them where they were in their life condition. He paced them; that is, he walked beside them in their trouble in the direction first of relief and then leading them to realize their promise. He earned their trust through empathy and rapport. He assessed their condition and sought to address it. And he never manipulated anybody. He believed in his audience. He saw them as Children of God, people of great worth, deserving of love and attention and capable of accomplishing great things for God's Kingdom. He loved them so well that he would give his life for them. He affirmed them. He knew how to communicate. He spoke to both their conscious mind and unconscious mind. He stimulated their imagination. He told them stories that elicited responses from them, utilizing images from their everyday life that corresponded to spiritual reality and developmental step he was leading them. These stories, called parables, employed plot, binds, cues, and reversal, and carried his message to his audience, bypassing their conscious mind. They sustained interest, created anticipation, held attention, and were integral to the content of his message. His language was clear, common, concise and jargon-free, as well as skillful. He engaged his audience in conversation, dialogue, question and answer, and debate. And he didn't express more than they could handle even as he pointed them to next steps that seemed unreachable for the moment. He was flexible, able to speak from different perspective, first, second and third. At times he spoke from a transcendent position, a God position. He was scriptural. He utilized the scripture to accomplish his mission. The Holy Scripture and the Temple were at the heart of Jewish religion. But he did not make an idol of the Scripture and the Temple. Indeed, where the Scripture did not go far enough, he expanded upon it, creating new scripture in the process, or

where the letter of the Law was contrary to the spirit of the Law he applied it so that it served people rather than subjected them. He was opposed to those who were what I call “strictural” instead of scriptural. And when the Temple became a stumbling block to the people of Israel, Jesus replaced the Temple, referring to himself as the Temple on one occasion, and himself as the cornerstone and the people as the Temple.

Here are descriptions of Jesus as a Preacher by the authors we have considered above: assessed his audiences, attractive, authoritative, affirmative, asked questions, answered questions, approachable, belief-oriented, biblical, captivating, catalytic, challenging, charismatic, compared and contrasted, collaborative, common language, compassionate, complimentary, confidential, conversational, courageous, credible, disciple calling and shaping, emotive, empathic, empowering, encouraging, enlightening, experiential, expository, faith promises, faith threats, flexibility, future-oriented, goal-oriented, goals well-formed, God-centered, healing-oriented, heralding, high-expectancy of audience, hyperbole-exaggerates, hypnotic, identified with God, identified with humans, image-driven, imaginative, impactful, inclusive, inductive, influential, inner-strength and conviction, integrity, intentional, invitational, justice-oriented, kingdom of God oriented, leads, life-giving and enhancing, light-bearing, loving, mission-oriented, non-manipulative, non-controlling, non-verbal communication, passionate, perceptually flexible, persuasive, poetic, positivistic, powerful, prescriptive, present-oriented, presents choices, primarily a Preacher, proclamatory, prophetic, proscriptive, redemptive, relational, restorative,, sacramental, sage, salvation-oriented, scriptural, self-giving, self-revealing, sensory acuitive, sensory language, service-

oriented, similes, therapeutic, transpersonal, solution-oriented, story-telling, trusting, verdict-demanding, vision-oriented, wholeness-oriented. Taking together we are provided with a composite model of Jesus as a Preacher worthy of emulating as a Preacher.

Chapter 4: Literature Review: The Kingdom of God/Heaven

Jim Marion

In “Putting on the Mind of Christ (2000),” Jim Marion insists that it is a necessity for Christians to understand the true nature of the Kingdom of God. This is so because the Kingdom of God is the central theme of Jesus’ preaching and teaching. Jesus intended to impress upon his audience an appreciation and understanding of the Kingdom of God. Marion contends that Jesus understood the Kingdom of God as a particular level of human consciousness. Realization of the Kingdom of God consciousness would produce lasting changes in peoples’ lives. Realizing the Kingdom of God would involve forgiveness of sin, reconnecting people to God in the process, but would produce in them a new sensibility of being and a new consciousness of self and other. This Kingdom of God was a human consciousness characterized by a lack of separation of between God and humans, and a lack of separation between humans. It was of being of one mind or consciousness (Marion, 2000). This kingdom of God was not a place, physical, metaphorical, or imagined, but a state of being or consciousness that was established in the being of certain humans. It was not a place people go to after they die (Marion, 2000). When Jesus spoke about the Kingdom of God, he referenced space, but that space was not literal or geographic. He also referenced time, but not exact time. Rather he spoke of it as past, present and future. In Mark 1:15, Jesus says that the time has come and the Kingdom of God is near. The Greek word for time used in Mark 1:15 is *kairos* (Strong 2003). In this case, the time is fulfilled. Everything that is necessary for the Kingdom of God to appear is present. The conditions are right. It is

like a pregnancy has come to its culmination and the birth is about to occur. It is not a time to come later or a time in the past. It is about to happen immediately.

According to Marion this Kingdom of God is an experiential reality of human consciousness; a permanently established state of being (It is, always was and always will be). Jesus intended by his preaching and teaching to lead people to an experience of this Kingdom consciousness. NLP is a tool for modeling. NLP is able to model states. NLP can be used to replicate the state of mind or consciousness that was in Jesus in others. Paramahansa Yogananda speaks of the Kingdom of God and the consciousness that was in Jesus as “Christ-Consciousness”(2007). It is possible for persons to attain “Christ Consciousness” through the practice of meditation (Yoganada 2007). Preachers might ask a person or audience to imagine the person of Jesus in their presence, and to imagine how Jesus thought and conceived of the world. They might then ask the person to imagine them-selves being Christ, looking out at the world as Christ, conceiving of the world in the same way Jesus did, thinking in the same way he did, talking and acting in the same way he did.

The Gospel of Matthew Jesus references the Kingdom of Heaven instead of the Kingdom of God. This is the equivalent of the Kingdom of God in the remainder of the New Testament. A gospel written to a Jewish audience, Matthew does not use the name of God, but Heaven, the place of God’s domain. Jews, at that time, would not speak or write the name of God. Thus, Matthew used the phrase “Kingdom of Heaven” instead of “Kingdom of God.” In Matthew 4:17, Jesus is described as initiating his public ministry by saying, “Repent for the kingdom of Heaven has come near.” Marion

relates this as “Turn from your mistaken thinking, because the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” It is a mistake to believe that the kingdom of God is other than here and now. This is normally translated, “Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” But here it is rendered, “turn.” Jesus invites his disciples to transcend the limitations of their minds; to go beyond their ordinary patterns of thinking, perceiving and conceiving. Some meditation practices, such as the Buddhist Vipassana (Mindfulness or Insight) and Hindu Advaita observe the contents of mind or experience in a kind of thinking about thinking. In both of these forms of meditation a witness consciousness is created. Such a witness consciousness is a meta state (Hall 2000). This Kingdom of Heaven represents a different kind or order of thinking; a new way of conceiving, perceiving, experiencing, and understanding. Jesus is making a demand of his audience in his preaching and thinking: “repent, change, and start thinking in a godly way.” Start thinking the way I think.” Jesus was inviting people to share in the same consciousness as he; to experience unity with God or to realize their selves as one with God. I believe that Jesus was inviting his disciples to share in the same consciousness and God-Self as he. Preachers might lead a person or audience to imagine two realities, one “the Kingdom of the World” and the other the “Kingdom of God.” The person or audience would be asked to imagine themselves first in the worldly consciousness and then in the godly consciousness and then see themselves in the world thinking, speaking and acting in a worldly way and then see themselves in the world thinking, speaking and acting in a godly way. Preachers can lead the person or audience to disassociate from the worldly consciousness and associate with the godly consciousness and to see themselves in the future with this godly consciousness. Preachers could create an

anchor state that when triggered in the future would elicit the godly consciousness in the person or audience. An anchor is a trigger associated with the actions the Preacher has programmed to occur in the person or audience in the future.

In Matthew 4:23, Matthew writes, “Jesus went all over Galilee, teaching in the Synagogues, preaching the Good News of the Kingdom.” This Kingdom of Heaven Jesus preached was a superior way of thinking to the order of thinking that most people used. And it was good news to all who heard and received it. It liberated people from their prior way of thinking; a way that limited them in their lives. What made Jesus effective in his delivery of this message was that he represented and modeled this Kingdom consciousness and way of thinking to his audience. He provided them access to it. It is possible to replicate in people who are disciples of Jesus this same way of thinking that Jesus employed via modeling Jesus. Disciples are those who have a desire to become like their master. This motivation is a necessary state for obtaining the same mind that was in Jesus. Rather than insist on a person or audience realizing the fullness of the Kingdom of God, Jesus provides the person or audience a taste of the Kingdom, a mini-revelation or foretaste of glory, that will be revealed over time until it is fully realized in the fullness of them or when the person or society is ready for it (2 Corinthians 3:18). The preacher can pace people in this way, leading them step by step and stage by stage to the ultimate state of perfection or the full realization of the Kingdom of God on earth. In reality, not everyone who desires this full-realization will realize it, but they can approximate it.

In the Beatitude section of the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:1-10, Jesus identifies the characteristics of those who would inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. He said that they were poor in spirit, mourning, meek, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemaking, and persecuted for righteousness' sake. It is important to reflect upon what these states are and how they are experienced by the audience. Otherwise they are merely concepts. You might wonder as you read what you might look like, feel like, hear, think, do, smell or smile like, eat or not eat and taste if you were poor in spirit, mourn, were meek, hungered and thirsted after righteousness, were merciful, pure in heart or persecuted for righteousness's sake, lingering for a while as you explore each state from each sense, experiencing yourself from first, second and third person perspectives. The crowds that came to Jesus were Jews from all throughout the region, many of whom were seeking healing. Jesus was teaching the crowds and the disciples of which he only had three at the time of the Sermon on the Mount. In each of the Beatitudes Jesus was blessing particular members of his audience who were receiving that blessing as he spoke. The poor in spirit were those who were emptying themselves and thus availing themselves of the reigning of God in their lives. Those who were mourning were receiving comfort. Those who were behaving meekly, submitting to power rather than overpowering others were inheriting the earth. Those who were hungering and thirsting to act righteously were being satisfied. Those who were being merciful towards others were finding others being merciful towards them. They were experiencing mercy in their own lives. Those who were loving purely were seeing God. Those who were making peace in their relationship with

others were experiencing themselves as children of God. Those who were being persecuted for following in the ways of Jesus were inheriting the reign of God.

.We will explore these states together when model them in our consideration of the Sermon on the Mount. Marion says that these characteristics of being or consciousness in Jesus' listeners are preconditions for experiencing the consciousness that is the Kingdom of God. They are also signs that they are experiencing the reality of the consciousness that is the Kingdom of God. Jesus instructed his audience how they could enter the Kingdom of God, telling them to "Seek first the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 6:33)." In order to experience this Kingdom of God level of consciousness it is necessary to desire it more than anything else and then to seek it, abandoning other priorities. Imagine wanting something more than anything else or more than any experience. Are you curious about what that is? Are you excited about obtaining that thing or of realizing that experience? Are you willing to let go of everything else you have physical and psychological, mental and emotional desire for and attachment to and trust that if you have it you will have everything that you need? Such a strong motivation to change is a precursor to such a paradigmatic shift in consciousness and will manifest the state of mind or being or emotional state that you desire (Prochaska, 1995). It is important for a Preacher to consider an audience's readiness to change. An audience can be in a pre-contemplative stage where they are satisfied with the status quo and not even considering change (Prochaska, 1995). It can be in a contemplative stage where they are mulling over options and thinking about change (Prochaska, 1995). It can be ready to change, right at the cusp of moving forward and preparing for

change (Prochaska, 1995). A hymn that describes this is appropriate for this stage is “Walk with me and I will walk with you and build the land that God has planned where love shines through (Rice 1988, 2242). It can be actively involved with change (Prochaska, 1995). It can be invested in maintaining change (Prochaska, 1995). It can relapse, slipping back into the pattern it had changed away from (Prochaska, 1995). Different audience members can be at different motivational levels. Preachers need to address the level of readiness of change of individual group members but more importantly gauge the readiness change level of the group. There is a need to create cohesiveness in the group such that the group can proceed together along the process of change.

One of my favorite scenes from Sesame Street is called “Put Down Your Ducky (Sesame Street Workshop, 2010).” Elmo is a member of a big band in which he plays saxophone. Only when Elmo plays the saxophone he produces a large squeak. Poor Elmo cannot figure out how he is producing the squeak. He consults with the band leader about the problem. The band leader has Elmo play his saxophone and diagnoses the problem! “Elmo, I see what your problem is.” Elmo is holding a yellow ruby ducky while he is playing the saxophone. Instead of pressing a certain saxophone key he is squeezing his yellow ducky. “Elmo, you’ve got to put down your ducky, Put down Your Ducky, PUT DOWN YOUR DUCKY, in order to play the saxophone. Well, putting down the ducky doesn’t come natural at first and as Elmo figures out over time how to put down his ducky and play the saxophone he squeaks and squeaks until finally he ups and throws the rubber ducky away and plays his saxophone perfectly. You have

to want the Kingdom of God enough to put down your ducky. You have to set aside all your rubber duckies and pick up your saxophone. I can hear in the background the hymn: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and God's righteousness. And all these things shall be added unto you. Hallelu, Hallelujah! Ask and it shall be added unto you, seek and you shall find. Knock and the door shall be opened unto you. Hallelu, Hallelujah! (Lafferty, 1972, 405). At one point Elmo was content to make squeaky noises when he played his saxophone. Later, he realized that something was wrong with his playing and he considered change. He sought to find out what the problem was. He made a plan. He went and found someone to assess his problem. Once his problem was diagnosed he went about losing his ducky. He had to finally put down his ducky. Once he did that he had to continue practicing and playing without his ducky. And it is conceivable that at some point in the future he might pick up his ducky again while playing his saxophone and suffer a reoccurrence of his squeaky playing. Likewise, persons seeking to realize the Kingdom of God within themselves and in their world need to climb the stairway of change readiness to heaven and avoid falling down from the top or on their way there.

What one wants most is what one gets regarding consciousness. In Matthew 16:28, Matthew writes that Jesus told his immediate disciples that some of them would not die until they had seen the Kingdom. Indeed, they had the opportunity to experience the Kingdom of God in the presence of Jesus. If Jesus' words are true, he must have been discussing a state or level of consciousness that was somehow transmitted from Jesus to them. He must not have been speaking about their physical existence, because

obviously they, like he, died. It is possible to generate the psychological or cognitive-emotional states of “poor in spirit,” “mourning,” etc . . . that are necessary to obtain the spiritual state of “Kingdom of God.” The other state necessary to experience the Kingdom of God is to want it more than anything else and to seek it before everything else. It has to be all important because it is more important than anything else.

In Luke 17:21: Jesus is reported to have said, “The Kingdom of God is within.” It’s not in some faraway place. It is directly accessible by turning one’s attention inward to one’s spirit. It is already something people possess. To find and experience the Kingdom of God, the person needs to turn his attention inward (Marion, 2000). The person must withdraw one’s attention from the world, even move beyond normal sense perception. People normally place their consciousness outside of themselves on material things, worldly activities, and other people. But this Kingdom Jesus refers to has its origin not in the external world, but the spiritual world of heaven, God, or Christ within. One can remove attention from outward, worldly matters and place them on inward, spiritual matters. Maneuvers like this are more regularly discussed in Eastern spiritual schools like Advaita and Buddhism but are common to Christian contemplative practices that involve silence and solitude. An audience can be guided to draw a deep inside them-selves, overcoming distractions, to allow one-pointed focus on the spiritual states desired. It is possible to employ images of the Kingdom of God as well as these will occupy the mind as the person or audience searches after the experience they desire. I have adapted a story from the Zen-Buddhist tradition. The teacher pointed to the moon and instructed his students to look at the moon. He later asked the students

to draw a picture of the moon. The students drew a picture of his finger. The Buddha is quoted as saying "my teaching is not a dogma or a doctrine, but no doubt some people will take it as such . . . I must state clearly that my teaching is a method to experience reality and not reality itself, just as a finger pointing at the moon is not the moon itself. A thinking person makes use of the finger to see the moon. One who mistakes the finger for the moon, will never see the real moon (Thich Nhat Hanh, 1991).

In Matthew 6:10, in the Lord's Prayer, Jesus taught his disciples to pray that the inner Kingdom of Heaven would come into existence on the Earth as it is in Heaven. This prayer is that the Kingdom of Heaven consciousness would exist in the person or community that was praying and would be expressed outwardly in that person or community as it already exists, perhaps as a seed, inwardly. That Kingdom of Heaven consciousness is present as both a ground and potentiality, within each person and its needs to grow and develop. It needs to be cultivated and expressed in flesh and blood existence. A Preacher can have people experience the Kingdom of Heaven as a meditative state and then seek to replicate that state in physical experience. After leading a person or audience to enter into a meditative state I might say, "I wonder how it is that you will maintain this Kingdom of God or Christ Consciousness as you wake up, prepare for your day, go to work, engage with your clients, and return home and spend time with your family . . . even as you leave this place today and return to your everyday, ordinary experience."

Marion posits that the consciousnesses of the people to whom Jesus preached were not sufficiently developed for them to understand his teachings about the Kingdom of

God (2000). They were not at a cognitive level of development sufficient for them to comprehend what he intended. The exception for this would be his closest disciples who may have been more highly cognitively developed. So Jesus utilized a certain kind of story, called the parable, to convey his teaching of the Kingdom of God. The parables of Jesus were stories that contained images or metaphors that spoke less to their reasoning minds of Jesus' audience than they did to their imaginative minds. Their reasoning mind would be akin to the conscious mind, and their imaginative mind to the unconscious mind. Jesus used parables to occupy the conscious mind or critical factor of his audience and speak directly to their unconscious mind or right brain hemisphere. Jesus also promised that he or God would send the Holy Spirit to remind his disciples of what he taught them and to teach them what he would have taught them if they had been ready. Preachers, teachers and counselors can employ parables and future pace the person or audience in order to program the person or audience to respond in certain ways under certain circumstances. They can even create in the person or audience states of anticipation and readiness for future learning or realization. They can set the person or audience on a path of realization, even a lifetime journey of cognitive and spiritual growth and development. A particular master of storytelling and therapeutic metaphor was the psychotherapist and hypnotherapist Milton Erickson (Gordon, 1978). Erickson, like Jesus, was famous for how he was able to assist people in making dramatic life change by telling stories, parables and jokes (Gordon, 1978). A parable can be conceived as a specially constructed story (Gordon, 1978). Most conceive of metaphors as being ways to discuss experience, but metaphors are experience (Gordon, 1978). By the use of metaphors the person hearing or reading a story will

perceive and experience life differently (Gordon, 1978). People see themselves in the stories they hear and become part of the story (Gordon, 1978). Well-constructed stories bypass conscious resistance. They are like seeds planted by the presenter that sprout immediately or later when the circumstances for their emergence are satisfactory (Gordon, 1978). Metaphors, which are used in parables or stories can be isomorphic or universal (Gordon, 1978). In an isomorphic metaphor there is a one to one correspondence between every element and event in a story and a real world situation (Gordon, 1978). Universal metaphors are non-specific and conceptual. They are not tailored to individual situations. Not all elements and events in the real world are referred to in the metaphor (Gordon, 1978).

If a Preacher or Counselor were to address an audience's or client's problem by prescribing new beliefs and behaviors designed to lead to a desired outcome there is likely to be resistance to that result. The resistance is likely to be unconsciously motivated. There may not be a proper ecology for the change to occur in that there may be obstacles to the realization of the outcome. There could be a cognitive dissonance between the audience's or the client's real world experience and their desired outcome where difficulty is created by instituting the new belief and new behavior. If I was blind all of my life I might be resistant to pursuing treatments that could restore my vision because I would be put into a situation where I might need to pursue education and job training and work. Also my relationships with people in my life might change. I would have to be more independent. I might not like that or people in my life might not like it. A metaphor provides an alternate world with a metaphorical

problem and solution. The metaphoric story mirrors the real world situation but introduces a crisis, the new belief and behavior and realization of the desired outcome. The audience or client subconsciously processes the metaphor and applies the solution to their own lives. It may be that the audience or client has a preexisting metaphor for their lives that is producing an undesirable or less than adequate outcome for them, so that a new metaphor needs to be provided along with beliefs and behaviors that are more likely to produce the desired outcome.

Jesus promised those who sought the Kingdom of God within themselves, forsaking everything else in order to do so, that they would realize the Kingdom of God before they died. For Jesus, the Kingdom of God was realizable by each and every person right here on earth (Marion, 2000), if only they would make a whole-hearted spiritual search within. In Matthew 10:26, Jesus describes the path to the Kingdom of God as a narrow path within, as contrasted to the path of external laws and observances that lead nowhere. Preachers and counselors can invite the person or audience to recall a time when they wanted something more than they ever wanted anything else, to recall failures in attaining it, to recall overcoming those failures, and to recall ultimate success in obtaining it. They can recall the entire journey. They can then be led to associate that journey to their current search, generating such feelings as faith, hope, and desire for obtaining the Kingdom of God.

The reality of the world Jesus preached and taught in, was like ours today, dualistic. Separation existed between human consciousness and God consciousness. In Jesus, however, there was no such duality. Jesus said in John 10:30 "The Father and I are

one,” and in 14:9 “He who sees me sees the Father.” This duality, real as it seems, is illusory, in that it is not ultimately real. It is transient rather than eternal. There really is only one consciousness and that is God’s. All other consciousness is secondary relative to that God consciousness. Human consciousness has the inherent desire and ability to aspire to and realize the God consciousness that is its original nature and deepest structure. Jesus sees this non-dual God consciousness in all people, although most people don’t see it in themselves and others. In Jesus’ mind, there is no essential separation or duality between God and us. Jesus makes this point clear in John 10:34-35 when he says, “Do you not know that you are gods?” Jesus got in trouble for claims like these. In Luke 22:71 Jesus is accused of blasphemy because he made himself “equal to God.” This is what led to his arrest and execution. Jesus, with an established non-dual awareness, where he was one with God, was capable of existing in a dualistic work and communicating with people whose consciousness was dualistic. Preachers and counselors have to assess the person or audience’s developmental readiness to realize the Kingdom of Christ and the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of Christ is a prior stage to that of the Kingdom of God and exists in relationship to it as one step down the developmental ladder. The Kingdom of Christ is a dualistic consciousness and the Kingdom of God a unitive consciousness.

Jesus’ own identity was dual, but one at the same time (Marion, 2000). Jesus had human consciousness and God consciousness simultaneously. At times he spoke about God. At other times he spoke to God. At other times he spoke of unity with God and spoke as God. Jesus identified with humans, as Son of Man. And he identified

with God, as the Son of God. He was fully both, human and divine. He experienced “homoousius;” that is, he was of one substance or the same substance as God. Jesus was the “Divine Human One.” Thus, God and Jesus were one. In a dual sense, Jesus knew God in an intimate sense as a son knows his father. In a unified sense, there was no differentiation between God and Jesus. Jesus created in the same way as did God, by speaking. As God created the world by his word, Jesus performed healings, exorcisms, and miracles by his word (Marion, 2000).

Most people have not attained to the level of consciousness of Jesus (Marion, 2000.) These are the highest or latest two stages of the development of human consciousness in Wilber’s Spectrum of Consciousness (1977). Most adults have attained to a traditional level of consciousness that is characterized by conformity to the Law and to the masses. They subscribe to certain myths, both cultural and religious. Many have attained to a modern level of consciousness that is characterized by the use of reason. These are more scientifically minded. A smaller group have attained to a post-modern level of conscious that is characterized by an awareness of the limitations of reason and science to explain reality. They see reality through the lens of relativity. On the other extreme, one group that tends to be fundamentalist is the tribal group. Tribal-oriented persons see their group as having the one true way. Often times they are militant and seek to defend their way or export it to others. People, like Jesus, are able to relate with people at lower levels of consciousness, although persons at lower levels of consciousness are not able to understand people at higher levels. People at each level of consciousness understand Jesus’ actions and teachings from the perspective of their

own levels of consciousness. From the higher developmental perspective Jesus occupies, Jesus understands this and so Jesus tailors his expression to the level of the person or audience he is relating to. Preachers and counselors need to recognize the realities of this developmental perspective. Messages need to be kept appropriate to the capacities of the person or the audience. Sermons can speak to persons of multiple developmental stages at the same time. It may be necessary to speak in terms of the developmental perspective of the person or audience. To the more traditional and mythically- oriented person it may make sense to speak of heaven and hell, atonement, virgin birth, physical resurrection, theistic God, Satan, and angels and demons. To the more modern and scientifically- minded it may make sense to define these terms psychologically or metaphorically or not use them at all. It may make better sense to speak of social justice, peace, stress, freedom, truth and measureable outcomes with this person or audience. To the more post-modern and relative-minded it may make more sense to speak of the value of spiritual practice and belief and in terms of narrative and story. To the more integral person or audience who see the value of cultural and religious diversity it may make sense to speak to commonalities of perspective and the relative value of each developmental, cultural, and religious perspective. To the more fundamentalist person or audience it may make sense to speak to foundational issues rather than culturally divisive ones. Different churches, even those within the same denomination may operate predominately at one of these developmental perspectives (Smith, 2011) making theological agreement difficult between them. A non-judgmental understanding of this developmental perspective as

applied to faith, belief and practice may increase understanding between opposing groups within denominations and even churches.

Jesus is always seeking to bring people into unity with him, with God, and with each other. In Jesus' vision of the Kingdom of God on earth, there is no essential separation between human beings. People are bound together in him, in the Holy Spirit, and God, three ways of saying the same thing. Jesus established Holy Communion as a means by which to convey this unitive Kingdom of God consciousness through a ritual reenactment involving bread and wine, such that this unity of Christ, God, and humans is realized (Marion, 2000). The invitation, in Communion, is to enter into the same level of consciousness of the Kingdom of God, and the same kind of love Jesus displayed in washing his disciple's feet and dying on the cross (Marion, 2000). Jesus brought people of every developmental level to him. Many of whom he addressed were traditional, law and order types. Jewish religion had already evolved to the state of law and order. Moses had led the Jewish people out of a tribal and war-like consciousness to a law and order consciousness, although there was a residue of the tribal and warrior level of religion within the Judaism of his time. Jesus began to introduce a more modern and post-modern perspective where people applied the Law as known in that day is a more reflective way, seeking its spirit above its letter. The Jewish Messianic movement, the Way, began as disciples of Jesus; Jews versed in the Torah, History and Prophets seeking the arrival of the Messiah and beginning of the Messianic age. These were people who were attracted to Jesus' message of the Kingdom of God on Earth and all that the Kingdom of God offered. These were spiritual seekers who were

ready to embrace a higher level of consciousness and new way of being human. It grew to include Gentiles or non-Jews in its embrace. The Torah, History and Prophets provided a basis out of which the New or Christian Testament would be derived, Jesus drawing upon it and fulfilling it. Preachers and counselors need to know the people they are serving in order to best realize their desired outcomes. They need to adapt their preaching to the developmental perspectives of their audiences.

The Kingdom of God is a non-dual consciousness and “highest level of human consciousness” (Marion, 2000). The Kingdom of God is the endpoint of a journey of consciousness that begins with infancy and ends in full spiritual maturity (Marion, 2000). Spiritual maturity involves God-realization (Marion, 2000). The Kingdom of God is realized through a “process of inner growth of spiritual awareness, a path of constant spiritual realization” whereby we gradually arrive “at the final stage of non-dual awareness, where God and the Kingdom of God remain” (Marion, 2000, 14). The consciousness of the Kingdom of God and God are identical. Having arrived at this self-awareness, we finally see ourselves as Jesus did, as being nothing less than immortal, unlimited divine spirit (Marion, 2000). Preachers and counselors must come back to the developmental stage of the person or audience and meet them there; else they leave the person or audience behind. They can hope to offer the person or audience a glimpse of what is possible within the term of their lives, but that glimpse has to be stated in terms understandable to their level of development. Preachers and counselors may need to realize that there will be an inner group that understands better than most others in their churches rather than try to bring people along at the same

pace. There may be various circles of audience, the inner-most group of disciples always being smallest.

It is difficult to convey what the Kingdom of God is in dualistic terms, even for Jesus. It is a non-dualistic, unitive reality. Thus, it was necessary for Jesus to speak of it poetically, through parables, analogies, metaphors and stories. Even then, those hearing these communicative devices could not clearly or completely understand Jesus' message, as they were not at the non-dual level of consciousness Jesus was at, a consciousness that it was likely that few of Jesus' disciples had attained. To clearly understand a level of consciousness we need to live at that level of consciousness (Marion, 2000). They could receive the communication but not realize its full meaning, at least immediately.

The words that Jesus conveys about the Kingdom of God are important, but the experience of the Kingdom of God and what that experience involves is more important (Marion, 2000). The experience of the Kingdom of God conveyed by Jesus will involve itself downward from the Kingdom of God into the person or society's earliest or lowest level. From there it work its way up and back to the highest state, bringing that person or society along at the pace necessary for that person or society to accomplish the necessary developmental tasks of each level. The learning of each level is integrated into the learning (experience) until the person reaches the ultimate state; and until the society reaches its ultimate state.

The primary task of the Church is to assist people, not in getting more information, about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Bible and the Church, but in transforming their lives, moving to higher and higher or deeper and deeper levels of inner personal awareness or consciousness (Marion, 2000). Religion should be a tool for the acceleration of growth in consciousness upwards and ultimately to the non-dual vision of Jesus' Kingdom in each person's lifetime (Marion, 2000). NLP is a set of tools, much like Bible study, meditation, and contemplative prayer that can be used to accelerate spiritual growth within a spiritual developmental level and from one developmental level to the next.

Benedict Viviano

Viviano (1988) is not fond of the approach taken by people like Marion (2000) that "the Kingdom of God is within you." He does not believe that Jesus or the New Testament writers intended an individualistic interpretation of the Kingdom of God. The idea of the Kingdom of God is a state of consciousness does not appear to cross his mind.

However, Viviano makes the case of the importance of the Kingdom of God to Jesus and in his preaching, and does provide reference to notable Christian scholars and leaders who stated emphatically that "the Kingdom of God is within."

Viviano prefers to view the Kingdom of God from a socio-political perspective where the Kingdom of God is characterized as a state of justice. Viviano does not conceive of justice or a commitment to justice as being characteristic of the Kingdom of God that is found within and certainly not as a characteristic of human consciousness. But justice

or commitment to justice can be a characteristic of consciousness. Indeed, Jesus was a just man. Justice was characteristic of his consciousness and informed his behavior and relationship to the world. In defining the Kingdom of God as consciousness it is important that the NLP-oriented Preacher include justice so that the person or audience has justice as a value in their character.

For Viviano, the Kingdom of God or Heaven was the primary motif of Jesus' preaching and teaching (1988). Healing and exorcisms were signs that the kingdom had come. The term "Kingdom" is referenced 162 times in the New Testament and 121 times in the Synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) (Viviano, 1988). The longer term "Kingdom of God" or "Kingdom of Heaven" is referenced 104 times in the Synoptic Gospels; 51 times in Matthew, 14 times in Mark, and 39 times in Luke (Viviano, 1988). "Kingdom of God" and "Kingdom of Heaven" are considered equivalent Biblical concepts by Viviano and most other biblical scholars. The Kingdom of God as implicit in everything Jesus says (Viviano, 1988). With this in mind Preachers will want to educate themselves about the Kingdom of God and profess it in their sermons. The Kingdom of God provides the overarching theme and context of almost everything Jesus says, does and is about. His own purpose is predicated upon the Kingdom of God message he proclaims.

Weiss (1971) and Schweitzer (1969) claim the kingdom of God is approaching and near, but not yet. Its approach begins with the advent of Jesus. Its affect is felt in its closeness, although it has not yet arrived (Viviano, 1988). The Kingdom of God enters into the world from beyond the world and we sense its approach and wait for its

consummation. Said Schweitzer "to be a Christian means to be possessed and dominated by a hope of the Kingdom of God" (1955, 384). Preachers, spiritual teachers and pastoral counselors can guide their audiences into a realization of the Kingdom of God, inducing them to an experience of anticipation of its impending appearance in their lives. This anticipation of the Kingdom of God may serve to motivate their audiences, students and clients to prepare for the King and the Kingdom's appearance any-time-now and warn them of the consequences of not being ready for it when it comes. For someone or an audience that does not have an already existent apprehension of the Kingdom of God this would be a strategy that could lead them to dedicate their lives to preparation for the coming King and Kingdom or age.

C.H. Dodd (1967) declares that the Kingdom of God has, with Jesus' arrival, arrived. It is present. It is not something to be anticipated in the near or distant future. It has arrived as a past action that continues to have and will continue to have a present affect. It is fully realized although its effect is not fully realized. Jesus inaugurated, initiated, or brought with him into the world, this Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is here now as Jesus announces it in his person, and his preaching and teaching ministry. It involves judgment and salvation and an activity of repentance to enter it though this is not to say that all have entered it. Upon entry into it, lives are transformed, and ultimately, the world is changed. The Kingdom is the eternally present realm of God that has broken into time in the presence of Jesus in his ministry, and after his death and resurrection, in the presence of the Spirit within the church. The source of the kingdom is transcendent. It does not come from the physical world nor is it the

product of human ingenuity. Yet its presence is felt within this world, here and now, through the living Christ. Dodd explains that Jesus used apocalyptic imagery symbolically to drive the point of his message home for his listeners; that of the ultimate and absolute nature of the Kingdom of God and its entrance into history. "When Jesus spoke about what was in store for the unrighteous and the redeemed when the Son of Man returned, he was motivating his listeners through emotional appeals, negative and positive, to accept his message and live their lives by the rules for life in that Kingdom" (Viviano, 1988). Preachers and counselors can elicit in individuals and audiences the experience that the Kingdom of God has already arrived in Jesus. And if it has not already been received by the individual or audience from Jesus, it can. Indeed, Jesus came to reveal or introduce this Kingdom of God. Jesus initiates this experience in individuals, his audiences, and in the world, first through his closest disciples. They pass on the experience to others. Preachers and counselors can invite individuals and audiences into immediate experiences of the Kingdom of God and direct them to live as if the Kingdom of God is already here. It is a matter of choice for them, whether they live in the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Man.

Dodd identified the base statement of Jesus about the Kingdom as "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15).

Whether Luke 17:21 is rendered as in the King James Version, "The kingdom of God is within you," or more accurately as "in the midst of you," for Dodd, the time-setting is clearly in the present. An important passage is, "But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Matt. 12:28).

Preachers and counselors can invite people to turn away from worldly concerns (the Kingdom of the world) and turn to godly concerns (the Kingdom of God). They can also direct them to discover within themselves and around them among people how the Kingdom of God is already present. They can lead the individual or audience in a discovery about how God or the Spirit is at work in their lives and the Kingdom of God is evolving or unfolding in their lives. They can induce an experience of wonder and surprise as the people they relate to find them-selves participating in positive ways in this unfolding.

Dodd presents the parables of Jesus as important tools by which Jesus inaugurates the Kingdom. Jesus utilizes them to present a crisis of decision and judgment to his audience that is not future but present. They set forth the ethical requirements, a moral ideal, that must be accepted and practiced for entrance into and life in the kingdom. They place the individual or the audience in a cognitive bind where they must choose. The better choice is obvious to the outside observer, although not easy for the audience as their awareness is clouded by worldly and emotional concerns. They embody the heart of the message of Jesus about the kingdom. Preachers and counselors may wish to create in the individual or audience this cognitive crisis of decision and judgment. It is what cognitive and social psychologists call cognitive dissonance. This provides motivation to the individual or audience to seek resolution, resolution that comes as the result of seeking a correct answer, and finally by making of a choice.

While it is difficult to decide between Dodd and Weis and Schweitzer, Viviano sides with Weiss and Schweitzer. His argument in doing so seems to be a “because I say so” conclusion. I would prefer to see Viviano make a clear explanation for his decision. Both Dodd and Weis appear to be engaged in an exercise in disembodied theology. It seems to me that the Kingdom of God is more than a concept. It is something that is characteristic of human development, first as potential, and later as the result of life experience and deliberate and non-deliberate choices and practices. NLP-oriented Preachers, teachers and counselors are not concerned with the theoretical perspective except as it leads to an internal apprehension of its meaning in their audiences. There is a need for the Preacher, teacher or counselor to lead the individual or audience to a desire for the Kingdom of God, an apprehension that it is possible to realize in the present and the future, and then initiate its discovery and enfoldment in the direction of its ultimate full realization.

Other perspectives of the Kingdom of God, such as that of Walter Rauschenbush (1917) and L. Harold DeWolf (1960), emphasize Jesus’ commandment to love God and neighbor and to increase that love and justice in human community. Human responsibility is seen as key to realizing the Kingdom of God on earth. God’s sovereignty needs to be accepted, and barriers to God’s will removed for the Kingdom of God to be realized. People need to faithfully obey God’s rule in love. When and how long does this realization take? These perspectives don’t present a timetable for this Kingdom to be realized. However, they do describe how it will be realized. The Kingdom of God will be realized as part of a growth process. It is present to a degree

now, but progresses gradually due to resistance on the part of human beings. They do describe, however, how it will be realized. The Kingdom is realized as part of a growth process, present in some measure now but advancing slowly because of the recalcitrance of the human spirit.

While Rauschenbush and DeWolf are not discussing the Kingdom of God as consciousness, the love, justice, and responsibility they discuss are integral components of the Kingdom of God consciousness discussed here. Also, the development of a Kingdom of God consciousness is the result of a growth process that overcomes and transforms resistance to its realization as the result of intentional surrender or obedience to its rule, a rule of ever more expansive inclusivity and love. Preachers and counselors can make good use of Rauschenbush and DeWolf's emphasis upon personal responsibility and the intentional concrete steps necessary to realize the Kingdom of God on earth for individuals and society. There are steps like obeying the Great Commandment, accepting God's sovereignty, removing barriers to its realization, and increasing love and justice.

Schleiermacher (2005) explains that the goal toward which Christianity strives is the Kingdom of God. It is through Christ the Redeemer that this forward movement takes place. The Kingdom is the corporate human consciousness of God, experienced in a fellowship of believers through the living influence of Christ. The realization of Kingdom of God consciousness through Christ is the goal of the Christian endeavor. This Kingdom of God is a corporate human consciousness of God experienced in community through Christ's ongoing influence. Schleiermacher does not speak of the Kingdom of

God as a state experienced by individuals, except to say that it is a corporate state experienced in fellowship with Christians living through Christ's ongoing influence. The experience of the Kingdom of God is a shared endeavor experienced in and as community. However, this is a bona fide individual experience. Preachers, to be theologically and ethically correct need to recognize the Kingdom of God as a corporate reality. A concept of the Kingdom of God as separate individual kingdoms is not the Kingdom of God proclaimed by Jesus. It is a composite Kingdom in and of God (Ritschl, 1991) and Adolf von Harnack (1908), describe the goal of the Christian project as being two-fold: one, the freedom in Christ that results from the redemption of the individual from his guilt; and two, the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is realized, then, as the result of the moral restructuring and teleological advancement of humanity through action inspired by love. In brief, Christ redeems, but the redeemed are to establish the Kingdom. Guilt is the emotional experience of alienation and separation from God and human community. Redemption is a step toward the restoration of unity in love with God and the human family. This turn towards God and community makes realization of the Kingdom of God possible. Love is the impetus that inspires action to move towards the realization of the goal of the Kingdom of God. The redemption of the individual from guilt involves a transformation of consciousness from one state to another. Having been redeemed the individual is able to participate in the Kingdom of God, over time growing into the fullness of Christ and the realization of the Kingdom in its wholeness. Redemption, then, is entry or re-entry of the person into the Kingdom of God. Love is necessary for the establishment of the Kingdom. The Kingdom is only partially realized if anywhere within its bounds there is lack of love. From this

perspective, the Kingdom is not complete until all of life has been redeemed and participates in it. Preachers and counselors seek to lead the individual and audience to be redeemed whereby they overcome their separation from others through forgiveness and amends and then to participate in the Kingdom, living according to God's rule of love.

Rudolf Bultman (2007) saw the Kingdom of God as an existential decision. The most important thing about the biblical passages about the Kingdom of God was their stress on the imminence of the coming of the Kingdom. This imminence promoted urgency in Jesus' audience for personal decision about it. The Kingdom is not already present in this call, but it is near, and this precipitates a crisis of personal decision as to whether one will accept the reign of God for his life. It is the decision that marks the realization of the Kingdom of God as here. Thus, the realization of God or heaven is the result of a cognitive event in the life of the seeker. This call to realize the Kingdom is an existential, or life or death, decision. It is a decision that everyone needs to make. To realize the Kingdom the decision needs to be "yes." It is the result of a demand that comes to the person from beyond ones' personal, material, and historical limits, in the domain of God. This personal decision is made in the context of the person's daily life. It is a moral decision that demands obedience to a way of life that produces fruit, or a successful spiritual outcome. Jesus teaches a set of ethical conditions for entrance into the Kingdom of God, but the overarching condition containing all these other conditions is complete surrender to or obedience of the will of God (Bultman, 2007). The cost of entry into the Kingdom of God is obedience to the will of God. The Kingdom of God is

not coming as a world-ending event of epic proportions with Jesus appearing on the clouds of heaven. Nor will it appear as the end of a gradual process of the development of a world order through concerted human effort. Nor is it something already present because Jesus inaugurated it. The Kingdom of God is the supernatural, super-historical gift of God to human beings who respond affirmatively to God in the ultimate, eschatological decision of their own existence (Bultman, 2007).

I do not conceive the existential crisis Bultman refers to as a physical life and death decision point, but psychological and philosophical. The ego or identity of the person must decide to forgo its attachment to the world and its ways and turn its attention to God and the way of being, thinking, and living that is necessary to live in the Kingdom of God. Preachers and counselors can call their audiences and clients into an immediate apprehension of the Kingdom of God through the portal of a psycho-spiritual, life-or-death, existential urgency. The Kingdom of God is within their reach right now, if only they realize it and choose to seize upon it. God appears to present numerous opportunities to choose the Kingdom, but this is **the** one. There might not ever be another. The alternative is life outside the Kingdom.

There are 35 references to the Kingdom of God in Luke and 7 in Acts, with 21 references in Luke and 2 in Acts referring to the future and 12 in Luke and 5 in Acts as referring to the present (Viviano, 1988). Viviano's own research finds that Jesus referred to the Kingdom of God as both present and future, yet he concludes that the evidence supports a future realization, rather than a present one.

It is my position and I believe the consensus opinion amongst scholars, that the Kingdom of God was present fully in Jesus 2000 plus years ago, and that its full significance has yet to be realized, but it can and will be realized in individuals and society. The Kingdom of God is present and is still arriving. One who realizes the kingdom in part will realize it fully later.

When Jesus preaches about the Kingdom of God, he announces its actual existence, its initial appearance, and its commencement as the new or next age of human history or a new or next stage of consciousness. He is inviting his audience to enter immediately into it, according to their readiness to do so, even initiating them for this to occur. The initiation is immediate, the unfolding of the Kingdom into the person's life gradual or ongoing.

From a biblical-historical perspective, the ages previous to the age Jesus is initiating were Abraham to Moses, Moses to David, David to Exile and Exile to Messiah (Viviano, 1988). Jesus as the Messiah is proclaiming entry into the new age, the age of the Kingdom. Jesus' announcement marks a crucial turning point in the history of Israel and humankind (Viviano, 1988). There is a progression in history and development, and Israel has reached a new stage in its history and development. And it is occurring when it is because the "time is full." It is the right time for the Kingdom to arrive because all of the conditions necessary for it to occur are present. It is possible now to model the Kingdom of God. It is a present reality with characteristics that can be embraced.

But for the Kingdom of God to be realized, it has to be received by the people (Viviano, 1988). The people need to accept God's message, the gospel, and God's messenger, Jesus. The people need to repent. They need to make room in their lives. They need to change. They need to cease to behave badly or unjustly. And they need to align their own will with the just will of God. Enough of them need to make a commitment to it for there to be a cultural shift to its realization. The Kingdom of God has to be presented to the individual and audience in such a way that they can receive and accept it. They need to want it more than they want anything else and to turn from those other things to the Kingdom of God. They need to empty themselves of other desires and possessions including ideas, conceptions, and beliefs in order to comprehend the Kingdom of God. Jesus provides a model for self-emptying. In Philippians 2:5, it states "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." This scripture is used to support the kenosis theory (McClain, 1923). The word kenosis is derived from the Greek word Kenoo which means "to empty." According to this theory proposed by Gottfried Thomasius, Jesus gave up the attributes of omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence. He did this voluntarily in order to function as a man and fulfill his mission. However, this biblical passage does not indicate that Jesus gave up any of his divine attributes, only that he humbled himself to leave his heavenly state and take the nature of a human being. The idea is that Jesus abandoned his divine estate to enter a human

one in order to meet us where we are and bring us from our earthy, sinful estate to a heavenly, forgiven estate, restoring us from our separation from God to unity with God. In John 14:1-7, it states 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.'

Jesus is inviting his audience, his disciples to follow his example in emptying themselves of their identity, in order to join him in his, connected to God, his source, as he is, believing what he believes, being capable as he is, acting like he does and acting on the world as he does. In this way the disciples put on the same mind that is in Christ Jesus and Christ, the Son of God, and become in doing so like Christ, Children of God. Spiritually Christ is living in them, and they as the Body of Christ, with the Mind of Christ in the world. In the name of Christ they are able to do what Jesus has done and even greater than he, because they are one with Christ in identity.

In Mark 13:32 Jesus said "But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone." Jesus did not know the day or hour of his own return! According to Christian Orthodoxy Jesus assumed the form and limitations

of being human and in the process voluntarily refrained from exercising his omniscience. He was still divine but was moving and living completely as a man. Even though Jesus was fully human he maintained a hypostatic union with God and was simultaneously God and human.

Their will has to be aligned with God's will, as the Kingdom of God is better translated and defines as the Reign of God or Rule of God. They need to make a commitment to the way of thinking, acting and being that defines life in the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God has its origin as a transcendent reality that can become an earthly reality. Viviano (1988) points us to Daniel, where it states that the Kingdom of God originated with the Ancient of Days, a term meaning God the Creator that will come down to earth with the Son of Man, who in the estimation of most Christians is Jesus (Daniel 7:9-10). Where Jesus says in Luke 17:20-21, "My Kingdom is not of this world," or "My Kingdom is not from this world," Jesus is not referring to an after-death Kingdom, but a Kingdom that does not originate in this world, but can come here or appear here (Viviano, 1988). It is not a human-made Kingdom, but a God given Kingdom that is humanly realized upon the earth. This Kingdom of God is a gift of God already given in Jesus and thus present and a gift of God still to come with the Son of Man in the future. There is a need for the individual or audience to detach from the Kingdom of the World in order to receive the Kingdom of God. Then, it is important for the audience to be still. It cannot create the Kingdom. It is God-made and God-given. The audience must be in an active, receptive state, one that seeks and finds that which is being given to it by God.

In my estimation, there is a tension here between present and future that allows for a growth of consciousness that is not possible in the absence of this tension. We can realize the future form of the Kingdom because we realize the present form of the Kingdom. Without the present form we cannot realize the future form. We can realize the future fullness of the Kingdom because the present Kingdom is fully present in us. The Kingdom of God can only be full because it is God and is of God. The Word and the Light of God came into the world as Jesus, although many didn't know him and accept him, but those who did received power to be children of God (John 1:1-13).. This Word, in the perspective of the Synoptic gospels is the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is accessible to the human being because it is in the world. It has been revealed to us. It is accessible to us through Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus made it available to us through his disciples. He has made it available to us through his gospel. It is available to the eternal presence of Jesus, the risen Lord, or the Christ, and through the Holy Spirit. Jesus made it accessible through his preaching, teaching, and healing. The Kingdom of God is accessible through those who are preachers and counselors oriented by God's word. What can we do to bring about the Kingdom of God? Jesus tells us that we can pray (Matthew 6:10). We can hunger and thirst for justice (Matthew 5:6). We can prepare for the Kingdom by prayer, groundwork, human presuppositions, and belief and step by step we can approximate its high ideal. We have to want it. We can even hasten it (2 Peter 3:12). We can bring about the Kingdom of God by believing and doing what Jesus said we could do.

God has already taken the initiative in establishing the Kingdom of God in its fullness in Jesus (Viviano, 1988). But God will not force it upon an unwilling and unready people. The human task is to remove obstacles and prepare ourselves and the world for the Kingdom of God. It is necessary to look forward to the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, to anticipate it and strain forward in hope, longing, earnest prayer, intelligence, plans and action. It is possible to bring about the Kingdom of God by setting the stage for it. We cannot bring about the Kingdom of God but we can be prepared for it (Matthew 25:1-13) and even prepare the way for it (Isaiah 40:3, Malachi 3: 1, Matthew 3:3 and Mark 1:3).

Jesus says, "Seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and its righteousness and all these things will be given to you (Viviano, 1988)." The Kingdom of God a top priority and connected with the struggle for justice (Matthew 5: 3, 10). The Kingdom of Heaven and the Church are connected, the Church being given the keys to the Kingdom (Matthew 16: 19). While the Church is not the Kingdom it provides direction or access to it, and is a witness to the world of what the Kingdom of Heaven on earth will be like. It is necessary to generate within the individual or audience a desire for the Kingdom of God that is stronger than anything else. Such a desire is prerequisite for finding the Kingdom of God. It motivates the requisite search for the Kingdom. The Church can serve as the setting in which that the search can be conducted. The Church needs to be presented as an idealized version of the Church as its image has been corrupted. It needs to be presented less as an institution and more a community or body of Christ. The audience itself can be held up as the Body of Christ and guide to an approximate

an idealized understanding of what it means to be the Body of Christ and corporate representation of the Kingdom of God.

Human beings and human society realize the Kingdom of God on the basis of the will of God. They are initiated into it by some act of God and their response to that act.

God is always involved in the evolution of consciousness (Aurobindo 1949). Initiation is necessary. Initiation is the beginning of something. But usually there is an impetus behind a new beginning. It may come from outside of the person say in the form of a teacher, preacher or counselor that is advanced upon the path the person is initiated into or inside the person, as an awakening or activation of some energy that has been previously dormant or unfocused or through a discovery of a God or Christ or Teacher within. It may even happen accidentally. It could be that the initiation is granted to those who are ready. Or it can be that the initiation is granted to everyone but only realized after certain preconditions are met. Human receptivity is a necessary condition to experience the Kingdom. God's initiative may cause the individual to desire and prepare one's self to realize what God has initiated. The ground of receptivity needs to be cultivated so that the conditions are right for the Kingdom to develop in the person. Human beings and human society must be ready for, open to, desirous of, and accepting of the Kingdom of God. Even a little faith, hope, desire, or preparation can provide the necessary receptivity, but the cultivation of receptivity certainly is more conducive to realization of the Kingdom than is not. It takes a God- realized person like Jesus to inaugurate the cultural shift, Kingdom of God, and to initiate individuals into the consciousness of the Kingdom. Grace plays a part in this. Grace is often spoken of

as the unmerited favor of God of human beings. Merited or unmerited it is something experienced by people. They may feel energy moving through their bodies, relaxation, invigoration, excitement, peace, unconditional love, flow and space between themselves and a problem. This grace is present in people's lives even before they know it. Such grace is called prevenient grace (Wesley, 1872). At a certain point a person may receive this grace. They become aware of it in their lives as an active force. The person feels like they are made right say with God or the universe. The process is called justification. This may be called justifying grace or saving grace (Wesley, 1872). The grace continues to affect the person, becoming established and growing in the person, leading the person to become holier, more whole or more integrated. The process is called sanctifying and the grace is called sanctifying or perfecting grace (Wesley, 1872). There is an end in sight for this grace as the person continues to grow in it. This end is called perfection or glorification (Wesley, 1872). It is a state of God-realization (Yogananda, 2007), Self-realization (Yoganada, 2007) or Self-actualization (Maslow, 1962).

Persons can model their lives after Jesus. They can approximate the perfection that is in him. Pastors, Preachers, leaders, teachers and counselors in the Christian community can model on Jesus and communicate the very consciousness that was in Jesus to their audiences.

“That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen! A sower went

out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen! (Matthew 13:1-10).

Initiation may like the sowing of the seeds in ground. The sower is the initiator. The ground are the hearts of those for whom initiation is possible. The seed falls on different quality ground. The seed will grow depending upon the quality of the ground. The quality of the ground may be dependent on the geographic location and climate of the ground. It may be dependent upon the nurture and cultivation of the ground, the commitment of the farmer, the resources of the farmer, rainfall, sunshine, wind, birds and animals and protection of the fields. The seeds may not all be of the same quality. They may be of good genetic stock or not or somewhere in between. It may take generations to produce the best stock and eliminate bad seed and only produce good seed. And the harvest can take place too soon, too late or just at the right time. Thus nurture is necessary from the time of conception of the seed through its death and transformation into a plant that flowers, bears fruit and produces seed which in turn needs to be sowed. Fields continue to need to be cultivated and produce harvested and marketed. Likewise, in any spiritual journey, there is a process of preparation,

planting, growing, cultivation while growing, harvest, marketing and replanting. Thus there is a need for spiritual discipline.

There are a variety of ways to define the Kingdom of God. Paul Tillich describes four characteristics of the Kingdom of God (1963). These are political, social (peace and justice), personal, and universal. The Kingdom of God is God's future for humanity. It is present by anticipation in Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Tillich's personal definition is consistent with Marion's and my own. This personal experience of the Kingdom of God is accessible to everyone. Personal experience of the Kingdom of God can lead to political, social and universal realization of the Kingdom of God. This occurs after a sufficient number of people subscribe to the ideas and practices of the Kingdom. There first must develop a creative minority who fully embraces the principles and realities of the Kingdom and live their lives on its basis. Once the creative minority provides a significant enough witness to the Kingdom, the majority will begin to emulate them (Toynbee, 1965).

In the period following the New Testament period, 10 AD to 1000 AD, the Church Fathers described the Kingdom of God in four ways: eschatological, the spiritual-mystical, the political and the ecclesial (Viviano, 1988). The eschatological, refers to end times, and is a continuation of New Testament doctrine. In the spiritual-mystical interpretation, the Kingdom of God is identified with a spiritual good in the soul of the believer – knowledge, contemplation, illumination or virtue, or a future blessed state of the faithful conceived as general resurrection, immortality, incorruptibility or eternal life. The political interpretation refers to a political structure or program on earth like the Holy

Roman Empire. The ecclesial interpretation refers to the church being the Kingdom of God on earth. The interpretation of Kingdom of God that serves this project is the personal or spiritual-mystical. Bishop Origen represented the personal or spiritual-mystical interpretation (Viviano, 1988). Origen refers to Jesus as the King of Heaven. He sees Jesus as embodying the Kingdom of Heaven itself and the characteristics of wisdom, justice, and truth, as well (Matthew 10:5 and Matthew 14:7). In other words, to know or experience Jesus is to know or experience the Kingdom of Heaven. By extension, we could say then, to know and to experience Jesus, is to know and experience God. Knowledge of the Kingdom of God to Origen was not an intellectual attainment but an experiential one. Origen began his treatment of the Kingdom of God with Luke 17:2, translating this verse, "The Kingdom of God is within you." For Origen, the perfection of the individual soul was possible right here and now. Origen believed that in meeting Jesus Christ one experienced the Kingdom of Heaven in all its fullness and glory, but one might not realize it fully. What was experienced would have to be experienced in time as the recipient integrated the realization in his or her life. So, Origen would encourage the recipient to pray for increased wisdom and knowledge of that which one received. Origen believed that in Christ one would be made spiritually alive. Jesus is a model of the Kingdom of God. A preacher can foster a mystical identification of an individual or audience with Jesus. If you expect to do this with an individual or audience you need to be in a state of identification and union with Jesus prior to and for the duration of the transmission to the individual or audience. You are limited to conveying knowledge that you have actually obtained. This is not a form of

trance mediumship where Jesus speaks through you. Rather it knows what Jesus is talking about or demonstrating after being led to experience it for your-self.

Augustine saw the Kingdom of God as present and future, the present being within you or among you, and the future being near or coming (Viviano, 1988). Joachim of Fiore (1135-1207) saw the Kingdom of God as a future state where all people would live in pure contemplation with God (Viviano, 1988). Thomas Aquinas had an individualistic understanding of the Kingdom of God (Viviano, 1988). Aquinas maintained that Christ resides in humans through grace. He translated Luke 17 as “the Kingdom of God is within you.” It is by means of grace that the Kingdom of God is begun in humans. Augustine, Joachim de Fiore and Aquinas each speak to the individual, spiritual-mystical understanding that Tillich and Origen spoke of.

This review of Viviano suggests that the Kingdom of God can be considered an individualistic, spiritual, mystical state realized by spiritual practice and piety. While the other categories of understanding are important, the primary concern here is with the Kingdom of God from the individualistic perspective. However, as discussed earlier, these various categories are interdependent. Individual spiritual development is not necessarily selfish. In fact political, social, and universal dimensions of the Kingdom of God may not be able to advance without the development of the Kingdom of God in individuals and its political, social, and universal advancement are conducive of individual development. Practices such as meditation, prayer, worship, and study can be utilized to impact consciousness and obtain a Kingdom of God or God consciousness. While NLP has not been used to approximate the Kingdom of God

before or applied as it is here to preaching or Christian spiritual teaching, prayer, worship and study, it is suggested here that NLP can be utilized to approximate in the consciousness of individuals and audiences, the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God (Heaven) in the New Testament

Both Jesus and John the Baptist preached "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand." They proclaimed the nearness of God's Kingdom (Matthew 3:2; 4:17; Mark 1:15). A literal translation is "has come near." The long-awaited rule of God was near. This message was called the gospel, the good news. Many were eager to hear and respond to this message of John and Jesus. John and Jesus preached a soon-coming Kingdom, something that was near in time to their audiences. Their message said something about what people should do now in anticipation of its arrival. So, their message had immediate relevance and urgency. It aroused interest and jealousy. By proclaiming that changes were needed in government and in religious teachings, the message challenged the status quo.

In preaching the Kingdom of God myself, I would put myself into the frame of mind of Jesus as I modeled it. I might even use the very words John and Jesus used to open my sermon: "Repent, the Kingdom of God is at hand." I might say to the congregation, "Imagine that you are back 2000 years ago and Jesus is speaking to you, "Turn from the world; Turn towards God. The reign of God is here now."

The phrase "Kingdom of God" was familiar to first century Jews. They were eager for God to send them the Messiah that would free them from Roman domination and make them an independent nation and light to the nations. Jesus and John preached their message of Kingdom nearness in this environment. But the hoped-for Kingdom did not happen and the Jewish nation was not restored. Worse, the temple was destroyed and Jews were scattered. Jewish hopes are still unfulfilled. I might say, "You are ready, I know, for God to reign in your life. You are ready for God to free you from the oppression you are under."

But the Kingdom Jesus and John proclaimed was not a political Kingdom like the Jews wanted. It was a Kingdom that did not belong to this world (John 18:36). Rather the Kingdom Jesus proclaimed was a spiritual Kingdom (John 3:3-6) understood and experienced only when born into God's Spirit).

I might say, "I know that what you want is a physical kingdom. But what I am proclaiming to you is a spiritual kingdom. I know that you are disappointed. I know you are confused. But you will experience this kingdom when you are born into God's Spirit.

And although Jesus spoke about the Kingdom coming in apocalyptic terms, after certain signs (Matthew 24, Mark 12, and Luke 21), elsewhere Jesus explains that the Kingdom arrives in a gentler, quieter way, like a seed growing (Mark 4:26-29), a small mustard seed (Mark 4:30-32), or yeast hidden in dough (Matthew 13:33) before its detection as the powerful reality that it is.

I might say, "This kingdom is already upon you. In fact, it is already in and among you. It may have caused some disruption in your life or it may be growing in you barely perceptible, but you will discover just how powerful a reality this kingdom is."

In addition to being a future reality, it has reality right now, albeit not fully developed or realized. Evidence is found in Mark 1:15 in John's announcement, "The time has come... The Kingdom of God is near." Both these verbs are in the past perfect tense, which indicates that something has happened and its results continue. In Matthew 12:28 and Luke 11:20 Jesus said, after casting out demons, "If I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you." Proofs that the Kingdom is present are the exorcisms performed by Jesus. Further proofs are found in the works of the church as recorded in Acts. And "If we cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is working here." Satan still exerts some influence, but he has been defeated and condemned (John 16:11). He has been partially restrained (Mark 3:27). Jesus overcame Satan's world (John 16:33). However, as the Kingdom has not been fully established, there remains bad as well as good in the world (Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43, 47-50; 24:45-51; 25:1-12, 14-30).

I might say, "As you look around you and at your life you will see evidence of the kingdom's presence in your life. Evil is being overcome. You are overcoming evil. There's bad in the world, but you are overcoming that bad with good."

Participation in the Kingdom is not a passive activity. Jesus says in Matthew 11:12, "The Kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing," and forceful people are laying hold of it. The verbs used here are present tense—the Kingdom existed in Jesus' day. Luke 16:16 reads "everyone is forcing his way into it." The Kingdom is a present reality and can be possibly entered as the result of people's own actions. Luke 16:16 begins "the good news of the Kingdom of God is being preached," suggesting that the advance of the Kingdom is coincident with its proclamation. The Kingdom already exists and is advanced by being preached. In Mark 10:15, Jesus indicates that the Kingdom has to be received in some way. It is not realized apart from human participation or action.

I might say, "The Kingdom of God is being advanced as it is being preached, even right now in your presence. And you yourself can enter the Kingdom right now. You can choose it. You just have to say, 'Yes I will.' And as you participate in it, more and more, you experience it more and more."

When Jesus was asked by the Pharisees in Luke 17:20-21 when the Kingdom would arrive, Jesus responded that they could not see it but "the Kingdom of God is within (or among) you." Paul states in Colossians 1:13 that the people of the church are already in God's Kingdom. Hebrews 12:28 states that because the Kingdom is already being received, the proper response to God ought to be reverence and awe. Revelation 1:6 states that Christ has made his followers to be a Kingdom. It's already been done. 1 Peter 2:9 refers to the church as a holy nation that has not yet realized its potential. There is no further need to await its arrival; the Messiah has already appeared and inaugurated the Kingdom of God.

I might say, “I am here with you now. The Kingdom of God is within you and among you. The Kingdom is here and now. Thanks be to God! You are part of God’s Kingdom; part of my Kingdom. You are a holy nation. There is no longer need to wait for a savior. And you have not seen anything yet!”

At the same time that the Kingdom of God is here it has not yet fully arrived. It is something that people have to enter and live into or discover within and nurture and grow. 1 Corinthians 15:19 states, “if our only hope is in this age, we don’t have much hope.” Daniel 2:44, 7:13-14, 22 predicts a Kingdom of God that will rule the earth. Revelation 11:15, 19:11-16) describes its future arrival. Matthew 6:10 and Luke 11:2 state “your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven.” Matthew 5:3, 10, and 12 promises that the poor in spirit and the persecuted await their future reward in heaven. Matthew 7:21-23 and Luke 12:22-30 indicate that people will enter the Kingdom on a future day of judgment. In Matthew 26:29 Jesus described dramatic events that would come before his return in power. In Matthew 26:29 Jesus stated he would not drink wine again with his disciples again until he did in his Father’s Kingdom. In 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10; 15:50; Galatians 5:21; Ephesians 5:5, Paul speaks about inheriting the Kingdom of God as a future occurrence and in 1 Thessalonians 2:12; 2 Thessalonians 1:5; Colossians 4:11; cf. 2 Timothy 4:1, 18 he indicates that this will be at the end of the age. Paul also speaks of present manifestations of the Kingdom in Romans 14:17 and connects it with Jesus in Colossians 1:13.

I might say, "You have not seen anything yet. There is more to come. It only gets better from here on in. The outer world will go through its changes but the Kingdom of God will come on earth as it is heaven."

Some references to the Kingdom in scripture apply whether the Kingdom is here now or there later, like Matthew 5:19-20 where lawbreakers are considered least in the Kingdom, Luke 18:29 where families are abandoned for the sake of the Kingdom, and Acts 14:22 where entry to the Kingdom is considered fraught with tribulation.

I might say, "And you who are obedient to God's Law, who have put spiritual obligation above physical obligation, and have faced trouble in order to enter the Kingdom, you shall be at home in the Kingdom."

While most discussion of the Kingdom of God relates to its immediate or future presence, some relate to its existence in the past. Matthew 25:34 tells us that the Kingdom has been in preparation since the foundation of the world. It has been in existence all along, albeit in different forms. For instance, God was a King to Adam and Eve who gave them dominion or authority to rule over the earth and animals. In Genesis 17:5-6 God promised the Kingdom of God to Abraham, telling him that his descendants would become great nations and Kings would come from him. In Exodus 19:6, when the Israelites escaped Egypt God made a covenant with them to be a Kingdom of priests. The covenant he made with them was similar to treaties powerful kings made with smaller nations. God saved them, and they agreed to be God's people. 1 Samuel 12:12 and 8:7 indicates that God was their king. 1 Chronicles 29:23

states that David and Solomon sat on the throne of God, ruling on God's behalf. Israel was a Kingdom of God.

I might say, "This kingdom has been prepared from the beginning. God has always been your King. God has always had a place for you in the Kingdom. The physical Kingdom has always been a reflection of the spiritual and ultimately will be so in the end."

Jesus did not speak of the Kingdom in terms of physical blessing or chronology. Rather Jesus preached a message of accessibility of the Kingdom of God to everyone. In Matthew 21:31 Jesus said that tax collectors and prostitutes could enter the Kingdom of God. What they needed to do to gain entry to the Kingdom of God was believe the gospel (Matthew 21:32) and do God's will (Matthew 21:28-31).

I might say, "This kingdom is for all of you. I don't care what you have done before. If you repent you are forgiven. All you need to do is believe in God. Believe in me also. There is a place for you here in God's Kingdom."

In Mark 10:17-26 and Luke 18:30 Jesus told a man who wanted eternal life (to enter the Kingdom) that in addition to keeping the commandments he would need to sell all his belongings and give the proceeds to the poor. Then he could enter the Kingdom. Jesus commented on how hard it was for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God. His disciples, not rich themselves, wondered how anyone could be saved. Jesus concluded this discourse by saying what is impossible for human beings is possible for God, suggesting certain cooperation between God and human beings is necessary for entry

into the Kingdom of God. After all, it is God's Kingdom. In Luke 12:31-34 further reference is made to entry into or possession of God's Kingdom, entry becoming possible by response to Jesus' teachings.

I might say, "You may think that there are reasons you cannot enter the Kingdom of God; things you must do first, things you must keep, and life styles you must obtain. You might say that what I am asking is impossible. But nothing is impossible with God. Everything is possible with God. Let go of your baggage and enter in right now."

This brief exploration of what the scripture says about the Kingdom suggests what both Marion and Viviano have suggested, that the Kingdom of God is past, present and future and it is accessible through a right relationship with God, a relationship made available through relationship with Jesus and adherence to his teachings. Where the scripture speaks of belief as being necessary for salvation, here understood as entry into the Kingdom, it is necessary to understand that belief involves behavior that orients the person towards God, behavior whose mores revolve around the Kingdom, mores that are based in the commandments of God.

I might say, "So, here you are where I am, in the Kingdom. How did you get here? How will you stay? How will you live here, even as you live in the world? I wonder.

Chapter 5: The Development of Human Consciousness

While the idea of the Kingdom of God as a stage of human consciousness has some historical validation as demonstrated in the section by Viviano, developmental thinkers like Ken Wilber and Jim Marion give it a different focus. They provide the perspective of psychological, spiritual, and cultural development which has been thus far missing from the academic discussion of Kingdom of God. When Marion discussed the Kingdom of God he does it from this developmental perspective; a development of consciousness. Marion proposes a nine-step map of the spiritual path to the Kingdom of God. The work of Ken Wilber is particularly helpful to Marion as he has brought all developmental theories of human consciousness under a single framework.

The fundamental structures of human consciousness are the same, one historical era to another (Marion, 2000). Human consciousness develops through a hierarchy of stages. The final stages are what Christians call “Union with God” and “the Kingdom of God.” These stages are the same today as they were for the first Christians. Nor do the basic structures of consciousness vary cross-culturally. They are universal.

Wilber, whose perspective underlies Marion’s, does not limit his classification of the levels of consciousness to psychology, but includes the insights of mystics, philosophers and researchers from other fields. He divides the spiritual path into nine stages, each corresponding to a separate level of consciousness. These levels overlap to an extent, such that one level can begin before another has been completed. This allows people whose consciousness is primarily established at one level to obtain a

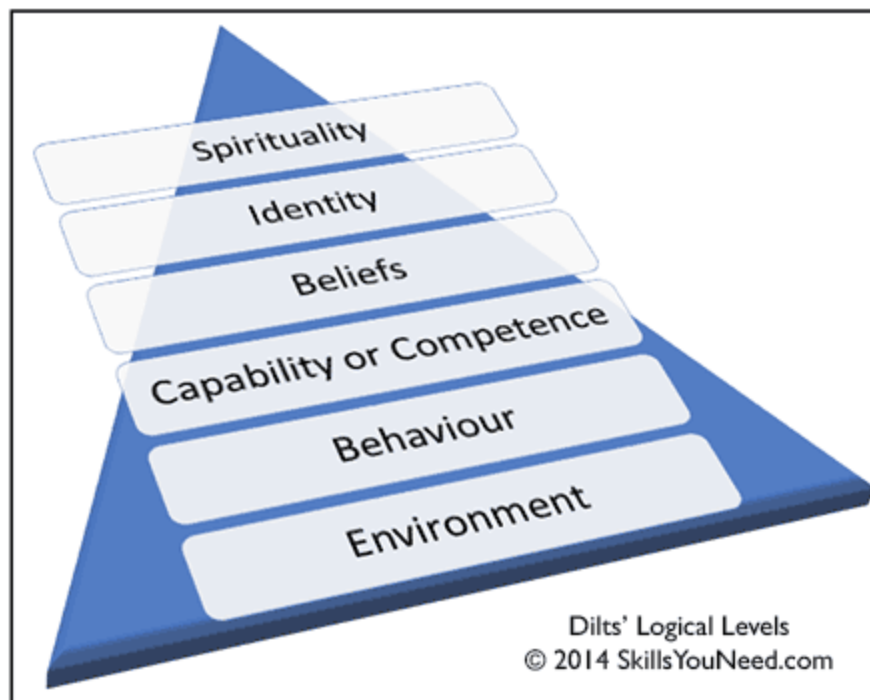
glimpse or taste of that next level of consciousness. People can pass to a later level of development without full mastery of the previous level. The further one goes beyond the level realized by one's family, community, religion, and culture, the more one may experience difficulty, misunderstanding, and controversy in relations with members of one's family, community, religion, and society. This is because others, not at that person's further level of development, don't understand that person. It is possible to understand the perspectives of persons at levels of development that one has already experienced (earlier stages), but not at levels one has not experienced (later stages)

Wilber's model concerns the development of the individual, but also the development of the human race. He asserts that the human race has already passed through three levels of consciousness: the archaic, the magical, and the mythical and now is in the fourth, the rational. A few sub-cultures are functioning at the magical level, more at the mythical, and many at the rational, although not everyone in any culture is at the same level as the majority of their culture. There is a subgroup of individuals who are functioning at post-rational stages of development.

Wilber developed his levels of consciousness on the basis of studying a sample of some sixty to seventy theories of development taken from developmental psychology in the West and the philosophical, religious, and mystical traditions found throughout the world. Jim Marion, follows Wilber describing these nine levels of consciousness, but does so with particular interest in the Christian tradition. These levels of consciousness Wilber and Marion refer to are of individuals and of humankind as a whole. This journey of consciousness is life long, beginning with birth and continuing through old age. We

will rely upon Marion for the discussion of stages below, because of Christian worldview, understanding that Marion is dependent upon Wilber. We are concerned with a Christian worldview here, because it is the worldview from which the phenomenon of the “Kingdom of God” is drawn.

For Wilber and Marion all growth in consciousness is a process of inner realization. All inner realizations are the result of personal experience mediated upon by life. Spiritual practices such as scripture study, contemplation, meditation, ritual, conversation, and service can impact spiritual development. They have a mediating effect on a person’s consciousness. NLP modelling can be used to impact spiritual development. I will be making use of Robert’s Dilts Logical levels (1998) in the modelling I do. Dilts describes six levels. They are pictured hierarchically as in this chart:



Environment is about the external conditions in which behavior takes place, and in which individuals and groups operate. Environment impacts people who are present in it and is impacted by the people present in it. It is possible to influence behavior by effecting the environment. The environment is not only physical. It is psychological, sociological and theological. It can be empowering or imprisoning. If I live in a racist white community and I am Puerto Rican and Irish, I may underplay my Puerto Rican heritage in order to avoid conflict and fit in. I may pass white in order to receive the rewards of being white and avoid the disadvantages of being brown.

Behavior includes actions and reactions by individuals and groups within the environment. Behavior will have an impact upon the environment. Behavior is limited or empowered by capability, the next logical level and can be limited or empowered by the environment. I can eventually move out of the racist neighborhood if I am able to, possibly by pursuing higher education, if I am able to, and obtaining a good job and career and affluence. I can take on a role in my new or my old community to address the issues of racism, even moving back to the community or working in it in my new role and openly identifying myself as Puerto Rican.

Capability or competence is concerned with what an individual is able to do.

Competences drive behavior. But capability may be influenced by belief, the next logical level. I may develop capabilities of study, writing and perseverance and allow me to succeed in higher education and obtain professional skills and credentials that allow me to address issues of racism, internal to myself and in the community and

world. I may have to believe that I am capable of succeeding in school, the work force and as a community leader. To do so I may have to overcome what I believed before or my home, school, and neighborhood environment and what other people believe about me and them, say to and about me, and do to or about me.

Belief involves understanding of self, other and the world. Beliefs and values can either reinforce or undermine capabilities. Beliefs are influenced by the next level, identity. Who I am is determined in part by what I believe and value. Beliefs also can influence identity. If I believe Puerto Ricans are inferior to whites, I am in danger because of my ethnicity, or have less rights and freedom and opportunity than whites that can impact what I believe I am capable of and what I do in relationship to my environment and how I consciously or unconsciously choose to self-identify.

Identity is about 'who' you are, and could also be considered as the sense of self. Identity is complex as we have many possible identities. For instance, I am Puerto-Rican and Irish, I am American, I am male, I am heterosexual, I am married, I am a father, I am a Pastor, I am a Christian, I am inter-spiritual and more than I wish to identify here. I am also more than that and I simply am. I identify with God in certain ways and depending in what context I am considered godly or heretical. My beliefs impact my identity. My belief in God and my belief about what human beings are and are capable effect my identity and my understanding and experience of God. I have a primary identity and secondary and even tertiary identities. I have a hierarchy of identities in which one is at the top. And that identity is that of a Son or Child of God, although I can and do identify with God directly.

Spirituality is about source or origin. Identity can be derived from understanding and experience of source. And it can impact understanding and experience of source. Some will be uncomfortable referring to source as spiritual. That may be in the case of Marxists, atheists or agnostics. But everyone has a source. It can be a worldview or a philosophy. It can be an ethical code. I call my source God as I understand God to be. But I have multiple sources. The various scriptures of the world are a source for me. Various understandings of God, theistic and non-theistic are a source for me. Various traditions, religious, national, ethnic and professional are sources for me. My experience and the experiences of others are a source for me. I have a hierarchy of sources some more important to me than the others and one source primary, the others ranked consciously and unconsciously behind that source.

Dilts' Logical Levels is derived from Bateson's (1972) logical levels of learning, communication and change:

Level 0 involves no change. Repetitive behaviors occur. There is no reflection on the behavior. The person is stuck in a rut or trapped "inside the box." Behavior is habitual and resistant. There is no learning. There is no movement.

Level I involves gradual, incremental change. There is reflection on behavior such that corrections and adaptations can be made. This involves flexibility. Learning occurs. Thinking remains "inside the box." New procedures can be advanced and capabilities developed.

Level II involves rapid, discontinuous change. Categorical changes are made.

Switches are made from one box to another. Policies, values and priorities shift. There is a new way of thinking.

Level III involves evolutionary change. Changes in identity occur. Thinking is now, not only outside of the box, it is outside the building containing the box. There is a change of role, brand or identity. It is like new people are involved.

Level IV involves revolutionary change. There is an awakening to something completely new, unique and transformative. Thinking is now not only out of the box and out of the building, it is out of the world. New responses, technologies and capabilities are developed that open the door to unknown and uncharted possibilities.

Bateson's level involves a progression in the learner's capability for self-reflection. At level 0 there is no self-reflection and no learning. Behavior remains the same and if there is a problem no solution is possible. At level 1 there is reflection of behavior and from that there is learning. At level II there is reflection of the thinking about the behavior. Change is limited by the past. At level III there is reflection of the reflection about the thinking. Change occurs out of past, remaining related to the past like there is a chain of being back to a point of origin which the new thought and behavior is dependent upon. At level IV change is total. There may be no connection to the past. Rather than renewal there is radical newness, a beginner's mind that is more fertile than the thoughtful mind that proceeded it.

According to Marion, all growth in consciousness involves a decrease in self-centeredness involving a “death” of self-centeredness and a simultaneous increase or rebirth into a selfless way of experiencing. In order to proceed from one level to the next, the prior level of consciousness needs to die or give way to the new level of consciousness. This death-rebirth process can be incredibly difficult. Certain spiritual practices are believed to help persons transition from one stage to another.

The person’s consciousness goes up a developmental ladder, level to level, and in the process becomes less and less attached to or defined by physical matter (Wilber, 1996; Marion, 2000). This is because each stage is defined less and less by physical concerns. Attachment need not be to the physical dimension alone, as attachment is related to identity. One can be attached to feelings or emotions, thoughts or concepts or beliefs, or to activities. One might even be attached to spiritual powers. As one proceeds up the developmental ladder one becomes less attached to anything, material or immaterial. In a sense the form of each succeeding level feeds upon the content of the previous form. While the previous form ceases to exist, it remains foundational for the succeeding form that cannot exist without the previous form. The content in the previous form needs to be integrated for the content to be integrated at the next (Piaget, 1970).

When discussing cultural development it is necessary to understand, that every level of consciousness is represented in the consciousness of the individuals that comprise that culture. But every culture has a center of gravity around which that culture’s ethics, norms, rules, and institutions are organized and which provides the basic cultural

cohesion and social integration of that culture. This average consciousness of the culture acts like a magnet, tending to pull those below the average level of consciousness up to it, and those above it down to it. For a culture to advance from one stage to another there must be a significant and sufficient mass of individuals at the higher level of consciousness (Toynbee, 1965).

Wilber utilizes the image of the ladder to describe his developmental model (1996). His perspective includes the ladder, the climber, and 'the view from the level of the ladder the climber is at. But the ladder is not a literal, linear figure. Rather, Wilber explains that what looks like rungs of the ladder are really a series of concentric circles or nested spheres, with each level transcending and including the one before it. He describes it as an "actualization holarchy," where each stage unfolds and then enfolds the earlier stages in a nested fashion.

The ladder consists of nine rungs or levels. These levels represent nine basic structures of consciousness. These basic structures are universal in that they have existed throughout history and in every culture. They emerge in fairly discrete stages. Destroy a lower rung and you don't get to a higher one.

But the real action of human cognitive development does not belong to the ladder. It belongs to the climber; the person whose consciousness is in the evolutionary process of growth and development. It is in the self of the person or of the culture. The ladder is there for the individual or cultural self to climb. Wilber calls each step on the ladder a fulcrum. It is the meeting place of self and ladder. The climber, at each step on the

ladder, must negotiate the territory of that particular step or stage before moving upward to the next step. When the self evolves, develops, or steps up to a new level of awareness, it needs to identify with that level. It must unify itself with the reality of that level. Then, it begins to move through and beyond that level. It must emerge from it, differentiating from it, disidentifying from it, and transcending it. Lastly, it steps up to the next or new and higher level and center itself there. The new rung rests on the previous rungs, so experiences of the previous stages need to be integrated into the experience of the new one. Failure to do so results in being impaired in the process of traversing the newer stage of development.

At each level or rung on the ladder, there is a different view of the world, of self and of others. There is a different understanding of self and others. The world is different. So, at each level there is a change in self-identity, a different set of needs, and a different moral stance or outlook. In other words, each level has a distinctive consciousness.

It is important to realize that no person or culture is ever one hundred percent at the stage they are at. They may be 50% at the stage they identify with primarily, but 25% in the stage before and 25% in the stage beyond it. There may be experiences of regression backwards, spiralling backwards and then forward, temporary leaps forward and peak experiences. And if a stage is not negotiated very well, it may emerge as pathology in that or future stages of development, with the greatest pathology being experienced when the failure at a developmental task was at an earlier level.

Understanding is limited to the highest level of development at which one's consciousness is established. One cannot understand a level one has not yet experienced. One can read about it or be told about it, but one cannot understand it because he has not experienced it. But, one can have a spiritual or peak experience at almost any stage of growth, an experience understandable in terms of that level of development.

All of the structures of consciousness exist as structural potentials in every person's being. As Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is within you," or "The kingdom of God is among you." It already exists in and among people although many people are unaware and not in touch with it. Although people may experience the "highest state of consciousness," they cannot live at that level of consciousness, unless they have developed all of the stages of consciousness between the stage of consciousness they were at when they had the experience and that latest stage of consciousness. At best, the person can move to the next level of consciousness. However, "peak experiences" can motivate the person to grab hold of the developmental ladder and seek avenues by which one can proceed to consciously climb it.

It is important to note that Wilber and the developmental systems he has studied, do not advocate regression, but transcendence. He advocates growth and maturity. Ego is not destroyed, or even displaced or replaced, but transformed and transcended, moving beyond its current limitation to a new, expanded level of development. Ego has to be developed in the first place. At the highest level of development it is not ego at all, although ego has not been destroyed in the process, but transformed.

The ladder that Wilber speaks of may be understood as both a cognitive ladder and a moral ladder. Wilber speaks of these like they are two ladders. The issue is that a self may develop cognitively without developing morally. For spiritual development, we might say that cognitive development is a necessary but insufficient condition for moral development. At issue here is whether the self wishes or is able to enter into the higher level of consciousness. There is a price to pay in entering into a higher level of conscious; that is, the death of the consciousness established at the present level. A self may be satisfied with the particular power, prestige, and profit she experiences at a certain level or may be stuck in that experience and unable to move forward, even believing that they have achieved the highest state available to them. The self's development may stop being vertical and upward and be horizontal and forward for the benefit of oneself or one's group. Wilber's and Marion's perspectives are developmental and evolutionary.

These stages of development proceed from ego-centric, through ethno-centric to world centric (Wilber, 1996). These correspond to Kohlberg's stages of moral development which proceed from pre-conventional, through conventional and to post-conventional (1984). The 'Pre-conventional' individual is practically amoral and egocentric. What he wants is what is right. He is primarily concerned for his own needs and desires. With an egocentric view, individual concern only extends as far as "me and mine." Myself and my family needs and desires are most important. This stage is characterized by magical thinking. Wilber's first two stages, archaic and magical are pre-conventional stages. The conventional individual is ethnocentric, and thus is concerned with what

the group, tribe or country wants. This is what is right. The person is concerned for others in one's social group (family, nation religion, ideology, etc.) With an ethnocentric perspective, care extends to the group, community and society. Cooperation, collaboration and teamwork within the group are driving forces. Thinking is mythic and mythic-rational. Wilber's mythic consciousness corresponds to the conventional stage. The Post-conventional stage is world-centric. The concern is with fairness to all peoples regardless of race, color or creed. Fairness is what is right. There is concern for all people, beings, ecosystems and cultures. World-centric awareness extends caring and a sense of justice beyond just you and your people, but also all beings. The Post-conventional stage includes Wilber's rational, trans-rational and transpersonal stages, including his rational, vision-logic, psychic, subtle, causal and non-dual stages. Each successive stage proceeds from the last.

The first stage they identify is "archaic consciousness" (Wilber, 1996; Marion, 2000). This is the stage of infancy and early childhood (age 3). At the onset of this stage infants experience themselves as one with their mothers. During the stage infant differentiate physically and emotionally from their mothers. Collectively, this stage was predominant during the "stone age." People then felt themselves undifferentiated from nature. They responded instinctively to the world they lived in. They were totally individualistic and narcissistic. There was no sense of self and other. One's identity is "me." "Other" is experienced as an extension of me. There is no capacity for an experience of "we." There is no separate sense of God. "I" is the center of the universe I call this primitive consciousness.

The second stage is “magical consciousness” (Wilber, 1996; Marion, 2000). This is the stage of early childhood, ages 2-7. This is the level where the self-concept emerges. It is an ego-centric consciousness. There are no distinctions between people’s thoughts and the external world. The stage is characterized by magical thinking where people think that things in the natural world occur because of what they say or do. They believe that the world revolves around them. Gradually they learn that there are points of view other than their own. Collectively, this is the age of the polytheistic, animalistic, and tribal societies. These societies are organized around kinship. Religiously, this is the age of polytheistic world of Gods, demons and fairies. Animism is the primary form of religion. Natural phenomena are seen as alive and people believe they can control these by magical words and ceremonies. Such religion is the primitive religion found in remote parts of the world and may continue in the minds of some who believe a certain rite done correctly may protect them from divine consequence. I call this tribal consciousness.

The third stage is “mythic consciousness (Wilber, 1996; Marion, 2000).” The age period defined by this consciousness is 7-12. Conservative evangelistic and fundamentalist Christians are firmly situated at this stage. Mainline Christians are emerging from this stage although most traditional Christians are at this level of consciousness. This is a law and order stage where proper conduct and belief is expected. This is the first mental stage and the stage when ego emerges. Conventional beliefs, possessions, and lifestyles are best. Social roles are important. Right and wrong is defined by society as taught by the family. Self worth is defined by following societal rules and fulfilling social

roles. Authority is important. Parents, teachers and peers serve as gods whose rules need to be internalized and guide behavior. Imaginative figures like Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny figure in rewarding compliance with the social order. These gods are combined to form a concept of “one true God” who abides above or in heaven and who provides for his children when they petition him through prayer. It is not the prayer that produces the manifestation. It is God. The religion or worldview of people at this stage is the “one true religion” and their way of life the only right way of thinking and living. There is no possibility of tolerance for religions and worldviews different than their own or compassion for persons who hold these views. Toleration of other religious views is a betrayal of their own and of their God. This leads to the vigorous, even violent defense of these rules, roles, beliefs, and lifestyles.

The aim of a mythic religion or believer is to convert the whole world to the one true religion and value system, that being the religion and value system of the believers. This involves the elimination of all other belief systems, by conversion or otherwise, as they are inferior, wrong, false, and even dangerous, as they threaten the worth of the believer and his belief system. Stuck in this mythic stage, the Christian sees persons holding other worldviews such as Marxism, Feminism, Humanism, Islam, and Hinduism as evil and headed for hell, while those who die for Christianity go directly to heaven. It may seem right, for the Christian at this level, to seek state control over religion to impose one’s religion over others and punish those who don’t participate in it. The idea that the world is floundering because public prayer is not allowed in the schools or marriage is endangered if homosexuals are permitted to marry reflect mythical beliefs

and values. It is for the good of all that the “true believer” forces his idea of truth on others, even killing others of other religions and Christian beliefs, for the sake of “saving their souls” and the soul of humanity. At the cultural level, the mythical stage of consciousness has been the dominant and average consciousness of all the world’s universal religions. The religions are universal in the sense that anyone of any race or nation could belong to the religion and be saved, provided they agreed to its rules and roles and accepted its mythology. The early part of this stage is a “warrior consciousness;” the later part a “traditional consciousness.”

The fourth stage is “rational consciousness” (Wilber 1996; Marion, 2000). It is the second of the mental levels. At the onset of this stage people think in generalizations and clichés. Later they think abstractly. They learn to handle abstract ideas and grasp universal principles and argue and write according to the rules of logic. This is the dominant consciousness of the present age. As this rational consciousness dominates our society and its institutions, it’s likely to be the highest level of consciousness realized by people. Some at this level get caught up in ideologies. Those who have mastered this level are not caught in the isms of our time. There is a struggle at this age to conceptualize God.

The development of reason allows people to analyze and critique the conventional rules, roles, and mythologies of society, including religion. This allows them to imagine the world in a different way, with different perspectives that are more sensible to them. Their consciousness arrives at a place of true universality, to a global perspective not limited by membership in any particular family, tribe, race or mythic belief system.

They are able to begin to understand universally applicable spiritual truths, such as those taught by Jesus, and distinguish these from merely sectarian and cultural perspectives. They become more tolerant, less judgmental, more compassionate, more inclusive, less fearful, less aggressive, and more universally loving. Their faith is in the invisible spirit within them that directs their life. They are not living a spirituality based upon rules and roles and concepts that don't make sense. They can consider rational philosophical arguments about the existence of God and explore the God or the spirit that exists deep within them and reveals itself as real, loving and merciful. They can be introduced to a science of prayer and meditation as taught by Jesus and the apostles, as a means of aligning personal will with God's will and manifesting God's will (1John 5: 14-15)." And they can be introduced to a theology that says that through prayer and spiritual practice and living they are connecting to a God who is the spiritual depth of which their lives are a divine expression. They can then discover their own divinity, co-creatorship with God, and divine nature as being children of God and heirs, with Jesus of the Kingdom of God, and their power to manifest not only what they need, but true abundance. It is important to note that every cultural institution in our world is bound by rational consciousness, including much of the Church. The Church has been instrumental in sowing the seeds of rationality in society. But Society, including parts of the Church, has resisted the process, and in some cases even obstructed it. I call this modern consciousness.

The fifth stage is "vision-logic consciousness (Wilber, 1996; Marion, 2000)." It is the highest of the three mental levels of consciousness. At this stage people identify with

the abstract mind and are able to think from many different vantages. They take on multiple and diverse perspectives, integrating them, and putting them together in new and creative ways. They are able to transcend rigid ideologies. They have concern for global problems over which there is much anguish. God is a more abstract and more universal concern. I see this as a Post-modern consciousness.

The sixth stage is called “psychic” (Wilber, 1996; Marion, 2000). It is rarely realized. It is a subtle consciousness, no longer associated with the rational mind, but with an inner witness that observes body, emotions, and mind. This is a level where paranormal gifts, like clairaudience and clairvoyance are evident. Some people will get caught up in the paranormal gifts and believe that they have achieved some final outcome. However, these gifts are concomitant with the meditative state and not the final outcome. There are further stages to reach. I wonder if this consciousness is not a refinement of the rational mind, such that the rational mind is reflecting upon itself and where the rational mind is able to make sense of normally non-sensed phenomena.

Following the 16th Century Spanish mystic, John of the Cross, Marion refers to a passage between the psychic and subtle realm as the “Dark Night of the Senses (2000).” It is during this transition that the person deals with the “seven deadly sins.” The seven deadly sins are pride, envy, gluttony, lust, anger, greed and sloth. It is a time of intensification of spiritual energies called libido in depth psychology, prana and kundalini in Hinduism, and chi in Taoism.

The seventh stage is called “subtle (Wilber, 1996; Marion, 2000),” and is also rarely experienced. It is the last level where a person is identified with human personality. At this stage, the person may receive direct communication from the causal level, the level of the soul. Such contact may be with a guardian angel, one’s own spiritual master, or with Jesus. These serve as messengers from the person’s true self to the person and guide the person to his final individuation as a human being. The person may hear voices, music, experience visions, and have raptures and spiritual revelations. During the individuation process, the person’s world-view and psychic structure collapse and the person moves into the causal level. Marion refers to a passage from the subtle stage to the causal stage. He calls this passage, after the mystic John of the Cross, the “Dark Night of the Soul.” This is a spiritual crisis, akin to the crucifixion and death of Jesus, followed by the resurrection of Jesus, through which we enter human beings and emerge divine (2000).

The eighth stage of consciousness is the “causal level (Wilber, 1996; Marion, 2000).” This is the level of Christ Consciousness. At this stage the person experiences identification with the true Christ Self in a spiritual union with God, the Creator. St. Paul describes himself as having attained this level of consciousness; “I live, now not I, but Christ lives in me.” At this level, the person sees Christ in others. He lives in a state of pure compassion and unlimited expression of love. At this stage, all of the lower stages are integrated and there is freedom from anxiety and suffering as he lives in the present. There is continuing communication with God, now seen as a Great Void, from

which all creation and creativity arise. However, there is a separation of self and God who are in intimate relationship with each other.

The ninth stage of consciousness is a “Non-dual Consciousness” (Wilber, 1996; Marion, 2000). This is a stage of direct apprehension and unity with God. There is no duality of God and self. God and self are one; they are undifferentiated.

Jesus operated in all of these levels of consciousness. However, Jesus’ primary identity was in the eighth and ninth levels of consciousness, and permanently so. To say that Jesus was fully human, it is necessary to say that Jesus passed through all of the stages other human beings did. To say that he is was fully divine, it is necessary to say that Jesus functioned at the highest level of consciousness. Because Jesus has passed through and mastered every level of development of consciousness Jesus can understand and communicate to persons at every level of development, although others can only relate with Jesus at the level of consciousness they presently occupy.

A large percentage of the adult population of the church is at the mythological level of development. The other sizeable portion of the population of the church is at the rational level of development. It seems to me that fundamentalist churches tend to be attended by persons characterized by mythological type consciousness. The main-line Protestant and Catholic churches are populated by persons who are either mythologically oriented, rational oriented or a mixture of both. The reason why there is greater numerical growth in fundamentalist and conservative oriented churches than in mainline churches is that they attract persons at the mythological level of

consciousness. Mainline churches are in conflict and crisis and facing dwindling numbers to a large extent because church doctrine has typically been stated and interpreted in terms consistent with a mythological perspective that does not pass muster with a rational cognitive perspective. Therefore, more rationally inclined people are leaving the church. The churches do contain persons who are at post-rational levels of cognitive development, including the vision-logic, psychic, subtle, causal and non-dual, but at lower numbers. The numbers are lower in each succeeding level, reflecting a lower number in each succeeding stage in the general population. Moreover, these persons operating at higher or later levels of development have been drawn to New Age, Eastern, Esoteric, Theosophic, and Gnostic religious movements, some while maintaining a Christian, or I think better put, Christic perspective. Certainly mysticism is part of the Christian tradition, but it is not something familiar to the general church population as something accessible to them to the degree it is to the mystics who are held up as exemplary and special (saints) and rare, if not strange.

Wilbur (1996) and Marion (2000) see the consciousness of Jesus being at the causal and non-dual level, the causal level being named by Marion "Christ Consciousness." Jesus has attained the ninth level, non-dual consciousness, but is seen operating in the dualistic world from the perspective of Christ Consciousness. Jesus has passed through all of the stages of development, as he is fully human, and is capable of relating to people at each level of development. He is able join with people at their level of consciousness and then lead them, systematically, from one level of consciousness to the next. The level of consciousness that Jesus is at, the eighth and ninth level, is

present at each level of prior consciousness as a ground as a potential, but is only realizable in its completeness as the result of progression through each stage successively. This development can be accelerated, but stage-by-stage in the order given.

In modeling the consciousness of Jesus, one does so from one's own level or stage of consciousness. One can experience the causal level or non-dual level and be affected by it but will return to one's current level, whether that be mythic, rational, vision-logical, psychic or subtle. Because of one's engagement of one's own consciousness with that of Jesus your consciousness will be affected. The more one experiences causal or non-dual states and the more one progresses within one's current developmental level, the more likely one is to make a developmental leap from one stage to the next. Other factors such as age appropriate developmental level, education, inter-cultural experiences, social environment, and intentional psycho-spiritual and mystical practices can contribute to the possibility of a transformative shift from one level to another.

Chapter 6: Literature Review: Jesus as a Pastoral or Spiritual Counselor

Introduction

Much has been made thus far about Jesus as a Preacher. The case has been made that Jesus was a Preacher par excellence and for the value of NLP modeling on him as a Preacher. But can we say that Jesus was a counselor or psychotherapist? Is it possible to model on Jesus as a counselor and psychotherapist? The procedure for modeling on Jesus as a counselor or psychotherapist is the same as that for modeling on him as a psychotherapist at each logical level.

Jesus referred to himself as a Preacher and as having a primary objective of preaching a particular message; the arrival of the Kingdom of God. He did not refer to himself as a counselor or psychotherapist or engage in counseling or psychotherapy as is practiced today. But Jesus fulfilled the role of spiritual teacher and healer, roles that may be carried out in the pastoral talk counseling and psychotherapy of today. The key to what follows is not saying all that there is about Jesus as a pastoral counselor and psychotherapist but to learn from Jesus as a Preacher, teacher and healer about how to be an effective counselor and psychotherapist.

Much of what has been said about Jesus as a Preacher can be applied to the counseling and psychotherapy situation. Jesus' famous Sermon on the Mount has provided rich material to examine Jesus' preaching. In examining Jesus' behaviors and words much of Jesus' personality and character has been exposed. His personality, character and verbal and non-verbal behaviors can be modeled for use in counseling

and psychotherapy. However, the Sermon on the Mount is not a transcript of a counseling or psychotherapy session or series of such transactions and so there are limits to its application to counseling and psychotherapy.

In discussing counseling and psychotherapy it is natural to immediately think of a one-to-one interaction between counselor and client or psychotherapist and patient. But counseling and psychotherapy are delivered in familial and non-familial group methodologies as well, with individuals in the group treated and the group itself being treated. There are goals for the individuals in the group and family and for the group or family as well. In this way, the example of Jesus' preaching is not wasted in the situation of counseling. Indeed, it is possible to argue that Jesus' preaching possessed a therapeutic impact upon his audience including its individual members.

Below I will bring forward Gonzalez's observations of Jesus, this time applied to counseling and psychotherapy. I will introduce some ideas drawn from the psychotherapeutic approach called Logo-therapy, particularly the ideas of Victor Frankl, founder of Logo-therapy and that of the pastoral-counselor Robert Leslie who studied Jesus as a counselor and logo-therapist. And I will discuss the field of pastoral counseling and psychotherapy and its practice.

Fr. Luis Jorge Gonzalez places great emphasis upon the person of Jesus. How does Jesus use himself in his relationship with others? Much is made of the counselor's use of self in the counseling relationship. Also much is made of competencies and qualities of counselors. Pastoral and spiritual counselors must make use of the spiritual

dimension, their own and their clients, in the counseling process. In looking at Jesus as a model pastoral or spiritual counselor or director, it is necessary to understand his identity with and relationship to God. Jesus is “the Word of God incarnate” or “God in flesh.” Jesus enters into a relationship with human beings as both God and human.

A counselor who models Jesus as a counselor must share in Jesus’ identity as Son of God in such a way that they do not think too highly of themselves and suffer ego inflation. This demands a certain discipline and ethic where the counselor has a bonafide relationship with God and identification with Jesus. God has entered into human life or relationships with humans through Jesus. He has forgone his privileged existence as Son of God to be human (Philippians 2: 6-8). The spiritual or pastoral counselor, in the spirit of Jesus, represents God as a human being, bringing the presence, compassion, love and power of God in the relationship with the client. The spiritual or pastoral counselor intentionally enters into relationship with clients from this perspective. Having a personal relationship with Jesus helps the Christian pastoral or spiritual counselor identify with Jesus as Son of God, Son of Man, Messiah, Good Shepherd and Suffering Servant and respond to client need from this unique experience. Indeed the counselor can put on the mind of Christ or attitude of Christ and have the same mind in him that was in Christ Jesus.

Exercise: Disassociation and Association

Let’s try an experiment. If you are willing, you are going to disassociate from yourself and associate with Jesus. This will allow you to identify with Jesus and become like him

for a moment. Are you willing to disassociate with yourself and identify with Jesus? Sit upright in your chair, relax your arms, place your hands on your lap, separate your feet, feel your feet flat on the ground and take a deep breath and release it and with every breath relax more. Imagine up in front of you a movie screen. While relaxed in your seat see Jesus on the screen. How does he look? How is he positioned? What is he doing? What is he thinking? What is he saying? What is he feeling? How is he moving? What does it mean that Jesus is Son of God, Son of Man, Messiah, Good Shepherd, and Suffering Servant? See Jesus expressing this. Hear what he is saying. Feel what it is like to be like him.

Now project yourself from where you are sitting onto that screen before you, entering into the image of Jesus, experiencing yourself as Jesus. What you are thinking as Jesus. What you are feeling as Jesus. What you are saying and doing as Jesus. What is it for you to be Child of God, Child of the Human One, Messiah, Good Shepherd, and Suffering Servant? See yourself relating to others as Jesus. Feel this. Hear this.

Okay, sit back. Bring yourself back into your body as you see Jesus on the screen before you. Maintain your identity with Jesus as you see Jesus in front of you. Feel that connection with Jesus inside of you as the image of Jesus on the screens slowly fades and disappears. See that image of Jesus inside of you, in your mind's eye and inside your heart.

Feel yourself fully in your body, fully supported by your chair, feet on the ground, breathing naturally. Attune yourself to your surroundings, any people around, the

sounds, the movements, recalling the key elements of your experience as you open your eyes and adjust to the room.

What did you just experience inside of you? How did you experience Jesus, the mind of Christ, Son of God, Son of Man, messiah, Good Shepherd and Suffering Servant?

There certainly is a human dimension that the counselor brings, eliciting familial transference in the client. However, there is also a divine dimension, eliciting transpersonal transference in the client. God and God realization is present in the client unconsciously and projected onto the spiritual or pastoral counselor and that projection needs to be integrated into the client through relationship with the counselor. In eastern systems this is the guru disciple relationship where the true guru lies undiscovered within the disciple and is projected onto the guru who has already realized their God identity. Through the process of their relationship, the God identity of the disciple is eventually realized. Locate this God dimension inside of yourself. This is Christ within. This is your Guru who is always there, accessible when you call upon it. How do you call it? I call Jesus, Word of God or Father-Mother God, or Spirit of God. Call upon it right now and attune yourself to it; its' vibration, frequency, tone. See what it looks like; its color, its brightness. Feel its presence, divine, holy and feel its rhythm and movement and power.

Gonzalez: Jesus as a Pastoral Counselor and Psychotherapist

Jesus communicated with authority (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus communicated his divinity and the message of universal divinity in his message of the Kingdom of God and human

perfection authoritatively. He drew his authority through his own relationship and identity with God; his own understanding of who he was and what was possible for human beings and human community. Where do you find your authority as a counselor? Go to your source. Just be there with your source. See what your source looks like its size, shape and color. Hear what it sounds like or says? Feel what it feels like; temperature, vibration, motion.

To counsel like Jesus it is necessary for the counselor to assume the same authority that was in Jesus. This is possible through relationship with Jesus and realization that Jesus is a perfect expression of God and acting in identity with Jesus (as way, truth and life) in relationship with clients. This takes great spiritual faculty and a strong, healthy, flexible ego on the part of the counselor. It demands a great openness to God and self and trust of God and self, as well as a well-developed knowledge of God and self-understanding. The counselor needs to maintain alignment of their self with their higher-self or God and maintain the integrity of that reality and relationship without fear and without compromise (Gonzalez, 1994).

Not every counselor can provide this kind of counseling. Mental health counselors need to exhibit the traits of stability and mental health. Addiction counselors need to be free of addictive substances. Spiritual and pastoral counselors need to be well-developed spiritually. They need to be more advanced cognitively and spiritually than their clients. They need to be able to represent the states and stages their clients want to realize themselves. Jesus knew from experience what he spoke about, including about heavenly things (Gonzalez, 1994). This made Jesus credible and relevant to those he

addressed. The counselor must have a solid experience of the states the counselor wishes to elicit in the client, whatever those states are. While counseling often is focused on alleviation of symptoms or undesirable conditions and states, once the ego is shored up and the client's life stabilized, emphasis can turn to substantive change. The aim becomes positive development like spiritual growth, enlightenment, self-actualization, God-realization, happiness, fulfillment and transcendence. All along the counselor can aid the client in generating productive attitudes and beliefs, capacities and capabilities and behaviors that positively impact the world they live in and lead to desirable outcomes. The counselor must have achieved mastery of the object (state, condition) that the client desires. What state do you need to enter into to be in the ideal counselor state; fully present, awake, aware, attentive, balanced, poised, responsive, caring, and objective?

Exercise: Changing States

Take a moment now to relax, seated in your chair, back straight, arms at your side, hands on your lap, feet flat on the floor. Take a deep breath, in, now out, breathing in, relaxing out. Now go back to a memory of when you felt stuck in the past, anxious, afraid, worried about the future, on automatic pilot, going through the motions in life, bored, apathetic and reactive . . . It was deep dark time, dark as night, a long cold night and you were tired and sleepy. . . Feel yourself in that memory black, icy cold, heavy, slothful . . . Allow it to get darker, colder, heavier, lazy. Now allow it to get lighter, warmer, lighter, energized. Open your eyes. Close them. Take a deep breath, in, now out, breathing in, relaxing out. Now go back to a memory of when you felt free, calm,

peaceful, courageous, excited about the present, aware awake . . . It was a bright time, the sun high in the sky, bright as day, warm and breezy and you were energized and awake . . . Allow it to get brighter, warmer, lighter, energized. Open your eyes. Close them. Take a deep breath, in, now out, breathing in, relaxing out. Go back, dark, cold, heavy, slothful . . . black. Brighten the darkness, heat up the cold, lighten the heavy load, and energize the tired . . . white. Open your eyes. Close them. Take a deep breath, in, now out, breathing in, relaxing out. Black . . . White . . . Black . . . White . . . White . . . White. Now when I say “Black,” you say “White.”

Jesus maintained flexibility with the people he helped. Although an authority, Jesus related in such a way that the people he addressed could understand and utilize what he said. He adjusted his message to people’s way of being, thinking and communicating and their life experience (Gonzalez, 1994). The counselor needs to adapt to the needs of clients; to how they conceive, perceive and make sense of life. Not everyone is at the same place cognitively, morally, psychologically, emotionally, intellectually, culturally and spiritually. To treat them like they are is to ignore and disrespect them. The counselor connects to clients by empathically meeting them where they are in their lives and interacting with them in terms they understand and proving them with tools they can use. See yourself entering the counseling room with your client. You have prepared for this session based upon the plan you made with your client. You are ready. Now the client brings up something different; something new has emerged that takes priority over everything else. You need to let go of your plan. Let go of your plan. You need to adapt and focus on what your client needs and

is saying and feeling. You need to come up with a new plan for this session. Shift. Notice how you change. Notice how you respond to your client. Notice how your client responds to you.

For spiritual, transpersonal or pastoral counseling, relationship with the divine is all important. This is what made Jesus so effective (Gonzalez, 1994). While many spoke about God, Jesus spoke as God. Jesus conveyed the presence, the purpose and the power of God in his relationships with others. The implications for this for counseling, spiritual direction and spiritual teaching are important. Jesus was transmitting knowledge of God; not conceptual knowledge but experiential knowledge. Jesus transmitted the reality of God into the life of those he related to the degree they were capable of assimilating what he presented; what they were ready to appreciate and utilize and at what pace they could incorporate his teaching. The impact of this was either dramatic and immediate or gradual depending upon the preparation and desire of the people he related. This is difficult for conventional westerners to understand, but these ideas exist in the more esoteric western religious systems and eastern systems that employ gurus or spiritual masters. Counseling aimed at spiritual growth and development makes use of the level of spiritual development of the counselor, the counselor only being effective up to the level of their own development. Counselors need to understand their own limitations and that there are others at stages above theirs who can better assist those who are further along the spiritual path than they. But the counselor can bring God or the spiritual dimension into the counseling relationship. I wonder how you will discover the Presence called God inside you now, how you will

experience that invisible presence resonating within you and all around you. I wonder how that Presence will manifest in you and your relationship with your client. If you have developed the dance of rapport, your own consciousness of the Presence as it manifests in your physiology will draw the client into the same experience of Presence as an ultimate resource state. This state provides a meta-perspective from which the client may perceive new possibilities for action and perception grounded in love and acceptance. He will be more able to understand the positive intent underlying the problem, contexts where it is and is not appropriate... He will see himself and others with unconditional positive regard (Gray, 2014).

Jesus was client-centered (Gonzalez, 1994). While Jesus shared of himself and utilized his experience with people, his emphasis was upon their experience, not his own. What good would it do if they did not understand his teaching or could not use the technique he offered? While Jesus did not control how people responded to him, he took responsibility for his communication to them. He took responsibility for the outcome of his communication. At the same time he did not do for others what they ought to for themselves. Rather he confronted them by offering them existential dilemmas through which they either made the right choice or denied the truth of what was right. In this way he helped them realize their personal power in the awareness of the decisions they made that impacted their life. The spiritual or pastoral counselor needs to take responsibility for the counseling and its outcome, altering his approach in order to obtain the desired results with clients. At the same time, the spiritual or pastor counselor needs to elucidate for clients their responsibility for the choices they make, bringing the

decision-making process to the foreground and increasing their sense of personal responsibility and power. Imagine a counseling session, focusing all of your attention on your client, all of it, like the client is the only person in the room, yet you maintain your awareness of your-self and your sense of personal boundaries. Now respond to your client's needs and communication, verbal and non-verbal, noting how your client receives your communicating, changing your communication, verbal or non-verbal, even in small and subtle ways so that the outcome is what you and your client want.

Jesus was empowering (Gonzalez, 1994). The people who sought help from Jesus did so because they were powerless. This was their identity. They could not or would help themselves. But Jesus saw what they were capable of. Jesus saw their present condition. And Jesus saw their unfulfilled potential. These were children of God and heirs of salvation. The power of God for good was available to them, just not accessible. Jesus believed in them and made God accessible to them. Jesus did not heal people. Their faith did. Jesus did not pick up mats and walk. The lame did. Jesus did not open eyes and see. The blind did. Jesus was an instrument of healing. Jesus maintained intent for people to experience God's power in their lives until they could realize that intention for themselves. Modeling Jesus, the counselor can see clients in their suffering and in their solution; in their present state and their future state; broken now, whole later. The counselor can convey hope to clients; redefine their image of themselves and their sense of what is probable and possible that will render a different result. The counselor has to believe in the full positive potential of clients; for them to be the best and the most than they can be, even more than they have ever imagined

before. As you sit down with your client at the onset of the session, you wonder when it will be that they realize their capability to change and to grow. You marvel at their potential. How will they even scratch the surface, so great are their possibilities? How will they see themselves out of their plight; open their eyes and see the road before them, obstacles overcome; hear the whisper of angels pointing them in the right direction, encouraging them to persist against all odds until the odds are in their favor and then collect their winnings?

Jesus was Kingdom of God centered (Gonzalez, 1994). The Kingdom of God or Kingdom of Heaven is the primary message of Jesus. It is his aim and object. It is what all humankind is to achieve. It is what God will achieve through human beings. It is what life on earth can be for human beings. It is the corporate realization of Christ in the world. It is all of our God-given potential together being realized now in part, ultimately fully. When Jesus saw an individual or the world, Jesus perceived the Kingdom of God. It is in, around and among everyone. It is the ideal image of the world. It belongs to God but it belongs to all God's children; that is, to humankind, every single one. It just needs to be valued, owned and taken responsibility for. The counselor needs to recognize the Kingdom of God or Heaven within, around and in clients. The counselor needs to see the possibility of perfection being realized and guide clients, step by step, to its realization.

Exercise: Kingdom of God

Remember the details of the Kingdom of God/Heaven and its contrast to the Kingdom of this world. It is a society of love, trust and justice, where everyone is aware and responsible and where all is healthy, perfect, whole, prosperous, vibrant and alive. Now, imagine in this Kingdom of God and Heaven, a God bigger than you can comprehend. Experience this God as a powerful Presence that you can experience directly. Feel yourself securely embraced by this Presence. And feel in this Presence all of the potential and fulfillment all that ever existed, exists now and will exist in the future and exists in you. Notice that all of the parts of creation are peacefully coexisting, all part of an integral whole. Hear the celestial music infusing your entire habitat and bathe in the warmth of the full spectrum rainbow of colors. Smell the fragrances of flowers, plants and trees. Taste the fruit from trees and plants. Experience yourself in rapport with your entire surroundings, attuned with every part. There is a peaceful blue light pervading this entire experience. As you experience these feelings, lift your hands before you, turn your palms out in front of you, feel the energy in the palm of your hands and say to yourself "Kingdom of God." Feel yourself now fully present in the Kingdom of God.

From within this divine realm of the Kingdom of God, imagine your client outside of the Kingdom. Feeling how powerful and pleasant this Kingdom of God state is you want so much to share it. Feel that desire in your heart, in your mind and in your spirit and let your spirit reach out to your client and invite her to come inside this divine realm, the Kingdom of God, and experience it for herself. And you know that this experience of the

Kingdom of God is the state to end all states: Paradise, Shambala, Nirvana, Unity with God, Oneness, Perfection and all that you have to do to share it is be in it with yourself with the intention of sharing it.

Jesus was compassionate (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus saw, felt, and understood the circumstances of the people he served. He met them in their condition; sinful, imperfect, painful, dark, enslaved, trapped, asleep, lost, etc. He felt their pain. He openly bore their pain. That is the essence of compassion. The counselor needs to be compassionate. As cognitive and solution-oriented as counseling can be the fastest route to success is through the felt experience of clients and understanding of that experience. Compassion is the mother of rapport. Yet the counselor cannot get caught up in the experience of the other as it is not theirs. It is the clients. There is a shared field of experience where people meet. People like to say that Jesus bore the cross for the world. If he did, why did he tell his disciples to pick up their crosses and follow him? Jesus demonstrated to others a way of responsibility for their own lives. By listening compassionately the counselor allows the client to feel their pain without feeling alone and in the process the counselor helps the client to release his pain. Too often, people who want to help want to act to eliminate people's pain. They take responsibility for others' pain. This robs people's opportunities for learning, healing and growth, from developing healthy beliefs and capabilities. While there are compassionate acts, compassion is generated from within the counselor and manifests as a caring presence. Such care elicits a positive response in clients, who through their own learning, healing

and growth and realization of the Presence within, manifest healthier and productive attitudes and behaviors and experience positive outcomes from their efforts.

Jesus was future-oriented (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus sees the potential of the future for the people he helped. He saw the Kingdom of God or Heaven fully-realized in them, even when it had not been yet. He saw them perfected, saved, liberated, awake, freed, found, enlightened, and healed, and their potential fully-realized. The counselor needs to hold this idealized future in place for their clients until the clients can hold it for themselves. Clients are likely to be trapped in their present condition. Their present condition is likely the result of past decisions and actions. A new, enlightened future vision can act on the present in client's lives in ways that alter their experience of the present and open new vistas and avenues for realization. Jesus did not ignore the present. He was both-and about the present and future, not either-or. The present is where one starts. The future is where one ends. The counselor needs to intervene in the present with a better, even idealized future operating upon the present in order to change the present towards the desired goal. The ideal-future may be different tomorrow than it is today, because the realized future becomes the present platform out of which new future goals are derived. What cannot be seen today can be seen tomorrow because of what is seen today. As you sit with your client and hear their problem and goal defined and hear their struggle to overcome it and succeed, see them approaching the solution to their problem, one step accomplished, next step accomplished until eureka, success, problem resolved, goal realized.

Jesus was loving. He expressed care for people he attended to (Gonzalez, 1994). He loved them like he loved himself. He was even willing to set aside his divinity and give up his physical life for them. He had unconditional positive regard for them (Gonzalez, 1994). This is not a conditional or deficit love. It is not familial love. It is not romantic love. This is godly love. It involves setting aside privilege, in Jesus case, that of being God and setting aside his own life and desire for the sake of the larger human community whether or not they deserved it. The counselor needs to set aside privilege. The counselor gives time, space, intention and interest to the client for the duration of the contracted time, whether that counseling is in a formal office setting or an informal setting like the field, a home or anywhere. The counselor needs even to set aside education, training, theory and status so that two human beings meet face to face, mind to mind and heart to heart in authentic and vulnerable relationship. There is no judgment of the person, but love, compassion and acceptance. As you sit with your client, gaze upon your client, accepting your client, positive, loving, fully present, face to face, heart to heart, genuine, real, and open.

Jesus was a light-bearer (Gonzalez, 1994). Light is an important spiritual symbol and reality, spoken of in many spiritual traditions. Jesus sees himself as light to the world and the people he addresses as light to the world. He does not want to see people cover up their light or let their light diminish or extinguish. In some traditions, such as Christian Gnosticism, the spiritual spark of light has been lost in the darkness of matter and needs to be freed from that dark matter. But to free it, one needs to know that it is there. Jesus brought light into the world. He so identified with this spiritual light - which

was at the beginning - that he was this light. This light was brighter than a thousand suns or all the suns of the universe together; pretty bright! The counselor needs to understand this metaphor. The counselor also needs to experience this light and shine this light into the lives of clients, helping them to open to the light and let their own light be reignited and shine.

Exercise: Light of the World

Return to your relaxed state. Imagine yourself sitting in front of Jesus. See Jesus before you. See his face and his garment. He is wearing a luminous white robe. A brilliant white light is shining from his head, face and body. He is wearing a violet stole draped around his neck and over his shoulders. He is hovering a foot off the ground. Hear him say, "I am the light of the world." See light beaming from his face and heart into your face and heart. Drink that light in. Let that light saturate your body and your being. Feel its warmth. Hear it vibrating. Hear him say, "You are light to the world. Let your light shine for all to see." The light that is in you is matching the light that is in him. It is growing brighter and brighter, warmer and warmer and it is building up in your third eye and you feel it even stronger as you turn your eyes upward and look through that third eye center and say "light of the world."

Jesus was restorative, redeeming, and inclusive (Gonzalez, 1994). Everyone matters. Everyone counts. Everyone has a place in Kingdom; the idealized human family. There is good in everyone and hope for everyone. Everyone, however bad, wrong or lost they have been is redeemable. It is with great sorrow that anyone is ever left

behind. For the counselor it means that everyone is worthwhile and forgivable. This may sound naïve. But Jesus forgave his executioners from the cross as he died. He considered them as ignorant rather than evil. It is important to remember that behavior is contextual. Even if the behavior is labeled wrong by others it serves a positive purpose for the person who does it. A person may not conceive of alternative behavior because his cognitive map leads them to believe that their beliefs and behaviors are correct. Their cognitive map may need correction or enrichment. The counselor needs to have this rehabilitative, redemptive and inclusive model. There are certainly limitations to what most can handle. A friend of mine could not counsel men who were violent towards women and children. Perhaps some commit violence out of evil rather than ignorance. No matter what your client has done, whatever your client believes about himself or herself and others, no matter what your client's desires and motivation are, your client is redeemable. Your client belongs to the world you live in, is worthwhile, forgivable and has something to offer others. Consider a prayer like this one: "Father-Mother God, forgive my client, for up until now my client has done what my client thinks he needs. My client is doing the best my client can."

Jesus' was powerful and persuasive (Gonzalez, 1994). The power of God's word can move mountains. Jesus speaks and acts with authority, authority derived from God. Not everyone thinks of counseling as a persuasive art. But the counselor is in a position to influence clients for their own good. This can be tricky. The counselor does not want to influence the client for the counselor's good; just the client's good. Words are powerful. Counselors must be aware and responsible for their words and for their

power. Clients can learn the power of their words. Related to this is the power of their thoughts, their attitudes and beliefs. As you relate with our client you are aware of the power of your presence and of your words to influence and persuade your client. You use your words responsibly, carefully, consciously, purposely and spontaneously.

Jesus was intentional (Gonzalez, 1994). The outcome of Jesus' communication was determined by his intention. Jesus modeled his own intention on God's intention.

Recall how Jesus said in Gethsemane, "Not my will, God, but your will." The counselor needs to be intentional in counseling. On one level this means finding God's intention for the counseling and the client. Prayer and meditation can be tools for finding this intention. Spiritual and Bible study could be as well. On another, it is helping clients to find their own higher will; where they are choosing a higher or healthier life direction or making better choices. It is having a plan and working that plan in the counseling relationship. As you approach your client remember your intention for your relationship, from the beginning of your relationship to its end, and for your time together today. Know the outcome you want for your client and which your client wants for himself. Know the will of God for your relationship with your client, for yourself in the relationship and for your client, guiding the client to realize God's will for the client.

Jesus was God-centered (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus aligns himself with God's will and invites others to. The counselor needs to align the counselor's will with God's will, and can help clients align their wills with God's will. Personal will and God's will exist within each person although the latter may be dormant. The psychoanalyst Otto Rank spoke of will and counter will (1978). The counter will seems to emerge first in the human

being during childhood as the child learns to say “no” as an assertion of personality before the child learns to say “yes.” This allows for differentiation from the mother and the beginning of the individuation of the child. Otto Rank calls this nay-saying tendency counter-will (1978). The will of the child is carried in the parents. Will and counter-will exist in tension as conflict between parent and child. Ultimately the will of the child develops in the crucible of the parent-child relationship. In psychotherapy, resistance is the result of the projection of the will onto the therapist. Over the course of the therapy, the will of the therapist gets integrated into the person of the client, the counter-will of the client becoming the will. The counselor can assist clients in identifying this will and counter will within. From another perspective, clients can be helped to align their primitive will with their higher will, or another, their ego with their true self. They can align their self with God or transcend their ego to realize their true self. Aside from the reference to will, the counselor can focus more on the presence of God or spirit and seek to center in God and guide clients in doing so. Or the counselor can make frequent reference to and use the concept, entity or person of God or other spiritual references depending upon the client's faith tradition.

Where there is a conflict between what the client wants for himself and what the client believes God wants him to do, it is possible to apply an NLP technique called visual squash. When a person experiences internal conflict, there are often competing desires in the person. This can be conceived as conflicting selves or parts. Likely both parts have good intentions. They are seeking a positive outcome. The conflict can be sorted into two parts. The goal is to integrate the conflicting sides by combining the anchors

for the two sides so that the outcomes sought by both parts can be considered simultaneously. Then the person can pursue new behaviors to satisfy both outcomes.

In a visual squash, the counselor leads the client through the following steps (Andrea and Andreas 1986):

1. Obtain the outcome for part 1: Put one part in the hand that's appropriate, seeing what that part of you looks like, hearing its tone of voice, etc.... How this part is valuable to you?" Or "What is its positive function?"

2. Obtain the outcome for part 2: Put the second part in the other hand, seeing what that part of you looks like, hearing its tone of voice, etc.... How this part is valuable to you?" Or "What is its positive function?"

3. Mutual Appreciation of Outcomes: "Look straight ahead, so you can see both hands. Watch both of the two parts as they face each other. Ask each if it understands and appreciates the value of the other. Have each part express some appreciation for the valuable function of the other polarity."

4. Integration of polarities: "Watch and listen to both these valuable parts of yourself, allowing your two hands to come together only as fast as those two parts can blend and integrate in ways most comfortable and useful to you...in such a way that neither part loses anything, retaining the usefulness and importance of both parts, each gaining from the other the qualities and capacities that are lacking in themselves, and present in the other.

You may be fascinated to observe some of the changes that occur in these two images as they start to come together...only as fast as they can comfortably assimilate these changes....

You may be surprised by the image that is created when the two images finally join and become a single image as they melt into each other and take on each other's capacities....

Notice what that new image looks like. This new part represents a combination of abilities you've never had before... This new part will have skills, and abilities, that you could never have guessed at, that you can enjoy...new ways of accomplishing all of these important outcomes simultaneously...."

5. Associate with new integrated part: "When you're ready, physically use your hands to take this part into yourself, and bring it into your body somehow, so that it becomes a part of you and all your behaviors, easily and readily available. As you do this, you may feel a surge of energy in your body as this part reunites with you....Take a few moments to appreciate and enjoy the qualities of this unique new part."

6. Future-Pace: "Think of the specific times and places where you want these integrated qualities and capacities to be fully at your disposal in the future...."

After the parts are integrated, then the person can begin a search for specific behaviors that can best satisfy all the outcomes of all the parts involved.

On one hand, the client may want to spend a couple of hours a day meditating. On the other hand, the client believes that he does not have time to spend because he has to work and spend time after work, taking a walk, eating dinner and relaxing watching television with his wife.

The counselor may say, "Hold out your left hand. You say you want to meditate for two hours. What does this left hand part of you want?" The client may respond, "It wants to meditate two hours a day." The counselor may respond, "Meditation for prolonged periods of time is valuable to you." The client may respond, "Yes it is." The counselor may then say, "Hold on to that in your left hand as you hold out your right hand. You say you want to work every day, return home and relax with your wife. What does your right hand part of you want?" The client may say, "It wants to work all day, come home, take a walk with wife, eat dinner with her, and relax with her while watching television." The counselor may respond, "Working a full day and returning home to spend time relaxing with your wife is valuable to you." The client may reply, "Yes it is."

The counselor holds up his left hand: "Your left hand part wants to meditate." He then holds up his right: "Your right hand part wants to work and then spend the rest of his time relaxing watching television with his wife."

The counselor can ask the client what meditating for two hours would do for him. The client might answer, "Experience a deep state of relaxation, peace and freedom." The counselor can then ask what working all day and relaxing after work with his wife does. The client might answer, "It gives me a sense of rest and relaxation and connection with

my wife.” The counselor can ask what capacities would the two hours of meditation provide. The client might answer, “The capacity to manage everyday stresses and to be fully present to people throughout the work day and throughout the night.” The counselor can ask what capacities working and relaxing with his wife provide. The client might say “a sense of purpose, productivity and socialization.” The counselor can then ask what both sides can do. The client might say, “Both the meditation and work and after work relaxation are productive. They produce fruit. They produce relaxation, peace, relief and joy. They are rewarding.” The counselor can direct the client to combine the two.

The counselor may say, “Look straight ahead. See both hands. Watch as the two sides face each other. Ask each side if it understands and appreciates the value of the other part. Have each part express some appreciation for the valuable function of the other part.”

The counselor may say, “You may be surprised by the image that is created when the two images finally join and become a single image as they melt into each other and take on each other’s capacities....

Notice what that new image looks like, because this new part represents a combination of abilities you’ve never had before...as such, this new part will have skills, and abilities, that you could never have guessed at, that you can enjoy,...new ways of accomplishing all of these important outcomes simultaneously....”

The counselor may say, “Watch and listen to both these valuable parts of yourself, allowing your two hands to come together only as fast as those two parts can blend and integrate in ways most comfortable and useful to you...in such a way that neither part loses anything and each part retains its usefulness and importance . . . and both parts gain from the other the qualities and capacities that are lacking in themselves, and present in the other. You may be fascinated to observe some of the changes that occur in these two images as they start to come together...only as fast as they can comfortably assimilate these changes....”

The client might come with the idea of relaxing and productive meditation, work and connection. The counselor can direct the client to come up with a symbol combining the two states. The client might come up with an image of himself sitting on a meditation cushion in a meditative posture in front of a computer on a meditation table, followed by an image of himself doing walking meditation together, followed by an image of he and his wife sitting on meditation cushions at a meditation table eating dinner meditatively and finally an image of himself sitting on a meditation cushion next to his wife while watching a television set on a meditation table.

Jesus’ was mission-oriented (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus was determined to accomplish God’s will and empower people to do so as well. The counselor can be mission-oriented. The counselor can explore with clients the nature of God’s call upon their lives. The counselor can even help clients discover calls that are secular by focusing on meaning for clients. The counselor can help clients to find the overarching and pervasive meaning that serves as the foundation of their lives and choices of livelihood,

lifestyle and behavior. Consider the words of this hymn. Reflect on what you are asking for in singing or reading this song. Imagine what it would be like to have God be your vision and wisdom and realize your mission and goals. Victory!

“Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;

Naught be all else to me, save that thou art.

Thou my best thought by day or by night,

Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;

I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;

Thou and thou only, first in my heart;

Great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.

Great God of heaven, my victory won,

May I reach heaven’s joys, O bright heaven’s Sun;

Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,

Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.” (Forgail, 8th Century).

Mission Context or Frame

Know your mission as a counselor. Why are you are a counselor? What are you seeking to accomplish as a counselor? Obtain a big picture. What does it mean for you to be a counselor? Now for your client, why do they want to change or grow? What is your client's life mission? What does your client's counseling have to do with your client's life mission? How do you know and does your client know that your client is living your client's mission?

To become a masterful counselor, the counselor must make it a primary activity. This allows your focus to be at the disposal of the counseling profession and give it due time and energy. The counselor needs to stay on top of the emerging trends and research in order to obtain the best outcomes. What can you do to maintain your identity and develop competencies and skills as a counselor; to improve your skills? Who can you model? What biblical passages speak to you as a counselor? What spiritual stories can you relate to as a counselor? Take a class or a workshop or join a training program. Read counseling literature. Obtain certification or licensing. If you are also a Preacher, Pastor or something else, balance the time you spend between your roles. Major in counseling even if it is a double major. If it's a minor, there are some issues you might not be prepared for as a counselor. Know your limits.

Jesus is goal-oriented (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus goal is "the liberation, development, and salvation, of every human being." He wants them all to realize the Kingdom God or Heaven. Jesus' aims to equip and empower people to improve, grow and develop

(1994). Jesus intended to heal peoples' bodies, minds and spirits. The counselor needs goals for counseling in general and goals for their clients in particular. My own primary aim as a counselor is the spiritual development of my clients. Each one of them will have their own goals pertaining to spiritual development. Metta goals, such as spiritual development, serve as the matrix out of which all other goals are formed. For example, mental and physical health care are subsidiary goals of spiritual development and serve the primary goal of spiritual development. Yet spiritual development serves these goals as well. By pursuing the goal of the Kingdom of God/Heaven, other secondary, but important goals are realized. Know your own goals for counseling and have clear, well-formed goals for your client for their overall treatment and each session. The clearer and more well-formed the goal, the more likely the client will attain it, rather than something short or different from it.

Jesus was service-oriented, (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus' aim was to serve, not to be served. He was selfless, not selfish. The counselor has to be motivated to help not to profit. This is not to say that the counselor should not charge fees. It means to be there for the person. It means to be a servant. You are not there to bolster your ego. If you are you need counseling! If you are service-oriented you will be modeling a service-orientation to your client. Your client needs to know about your service-orientation. When your client develops a service-orientation your client reduces his or her self-absorption. Goals become transpersonal, oriented to God and others. I asked these questions in a recent sermon: "Was Jesus' primary motivation to save or to serve? Was he oriented more as savior or servant? What do you see yourself as a savior or

servant? What is your mission, salvation or service?" I see Jesus as serving to save; serving to respond to existential, practical and ultimate need, unattached to the outcome although committed to the outcome. It is a responsible position that does not diminish the responsibility of the client to choose in favor or against their own salvation, help or liberation from whatever earthly plight the client suffers. It is a service that embraces suffering rather than evading it, Jesus a "suffering servant" committed to overcoming a client's suffering.

Guided Imagery: Foot Washing

Modeling Jesus involves assuming the same self-less, service-oriented attitude as Jesus, coming into the world for its salvation, washing his disciple's feet, giving up his shirt and tunic if requested, picking up his cross and dying on it if that is what is necessary. This selfless service is modeled in the counselor and carried out in the lives of the client as a sign of psychological, social, spiritual development and health of the client. Sit down on a chair, close your eyes, put your feet firmly on the ground, hands on your lap and take a deep breath. Breath in and out, relaxing more with every breath. Now see yourself in the presence of your client. Take off your coat. Wrap a towel around your waist. Fill a bowl with water. Take some soap and lotion. Kneel down at your client's feet. Take hold of your client's feet. Caress them. Place them in the water. Lather them. Massage them. Rinse them. Lift them from the water. Take your towel from your waist and enfold your client's feet and dry them. Place them on the ground. In order to effectively wash your client's feet, for your client to feel safe and comfortable with you washing their feet, you need to allow someone to serve you by

washing your feet. You do not need a complete cleansing, head to toe, because you are already baptized. Your sins have been forgiven. But you do need a partial cleansing. Your feet carry you into the world and are sullied. You need forgiveness, but not of your entire being. That has already been provided. You need forgiveness for any irresponsible acts or lack of action for which you are personally responsible. You need to let go and trust the one who washes your feet, admit to them that they are dirty or your nails are uncut or have fungi or you have athlete's foot. You need to become vulnerable to someone else before you can expect someone to become vulnerable to you. You need to overcome your resistance to allow someone to see your feet as they are and wash them. You need to be able to let go of control and put your feet trustingly into the hands of somebody else. Go to someone else and ask them "wash my feet." Confess to them your sin, your shortcoming, your lack of self-awareness and ignorance and irresponsibility for your life. Receive compassionate and comforting care and go and sin no more. Be responsible. Now you are ready to do what was done for you. Wash other's feet. Serve them wholeheartedly. Accept their trust. You have been in their shoes. They can sense it, trust you completely and relax.

Jesus was vision-focused (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus held a map of the Kingdom of God for the people he addressed. Jesus perceived the divine nature of people. His aim was to focus the mind of people on the Kingdom of God. The spiritual or pastoral counselor wants to learn all about the Kingdom of God and salvation of the world and seeing the world, people, and God in terms of this overarching vision. The counselor holds that vision for clients until they are able to see it for themselves. The vision of the future for

the client needs to be personal. The counselor has a kind of double vision, now and future, maintaining a tension between the two, nurturing acceptance for the present along with dissatisfaction, and the future, nursing anticipation along with patience. In this way the client is motivated for positive change. See your client sitting before you, engaged with you in conversation, revealing their condition to you. Accept your client trapped in their condition, while at the same time seeing your client free of their condition, their condition alleviated, transcending their condition, their near goals attained, and finally their far goals realized.

Jesus was invitational (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus invited people into a relationship with God and to participate in the realm or reality he called the Kingdom of God and the way of God, the way, truth and life he introduced. He said “Come to me you are weary and I will give you rest.” He said, “My peace I give to you. I do not give as the world gives.” This invitation is a perpetual invitation. Jesus stays with the person in the entry way until they have immersed themselves in it. This invitation is to an experience and a new way of being human and in human community. The counselor needs to have responded to Jesus’ invitation and become immersed in the reality Jesus opens. Then the counselor needs to invite clients into this same relationship with God and Kingdom reality.

Exercise: Return to your relaxed state, breathing in, breathing out, letting go, with every breath relaxing more, deeper, deeper . . . Imagine Jesus sitting before you. Go to Jesus with your burden, feel it pressing down on your neck and shoulders, weighing you down. Unload your burden, placing it at Jesus’ feet, feeling relieved . . . Humble

yourself before him, dropping your ego at his feet . . . Feel yourself before him, just as you are, no mask, defenseless, vulnerable, trusting . . . Rest in Jesus' presence, his love, his peace . . . feel his warm glow, accepting you, holding you, telling you that he loves you just the way you are . . . nothing for you to do. . . nothing to prove. . . Feel the embrace of his consciousness, your consciousness enfolded into his. As you feel this embrace, take your left hand to your right shoulder and your right hand to your left shoulder and hug yourself and think "Jesus loves me." Feel that love increasing as you hold embrace and take in all of Jesus' love for you.

Now imagine in that place where Jesus was sitting and see your client and extend that Christ embrace that you received to your client, enfolding your client in that consciousness, that love, that peace and bliss. Let your heart break in compassion if necessary and pour out the ointment of your love on the head and feet of your client. Feel that love and compassion welling up in you and passing from your heart to your client. Reach out your left hand to your client and pull his head to yours and say "Jesus loves you." Feel that love for your client as you hold this embrace and let all Jesus' love for your client pass from you to him.

Jesus was life-giving (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus, ever loving as he is, embraces people, loving them without condemnation. If they can't receive what he offers, Jesus laments, rather than blames. Jesus always adds to, enhances or uplifts people rather than diminishing them. The counselor needs to build up clients, not tear them down, helping them come to self-acceptance and to find the motivation to change in a positive manner. The counselor needs to be as positive, and affirmative as Jesus in his communications.

Jesus laments over Jerusalem and its inhabitants, but unlike his predecessor Jonah, Jesus never gives up on them even if it means dying for them. This is so with most recalcitrant and resistant clients. Life is much more than events. It is much more than bodies transported in activities. Life is a force. It is divine energy. It is the power of God for actualization. It is transformative of body, mind, behavior and the forms of life. Jesus by the life-force within him, activates the dormant life-force in you, awakening it, awakening you. He transmits knowledge of life to you, liberating you from gross, animalistic being, to angelic, light being, to godly being in the flesh after the example he has provided for you. Awake, aware, living in this life-force you bring this transformative life-power to bear on the life of your client, activating this light-force, love force, truth-force in your client to impact your client's belief, capability, belief and to actively transform your client's environment and world so that it is alive in this spirit.

Jesus was belief-oriented (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus believed in the people he addressed. He saw them as already possessing the inner resources and capacities they need to grow and realize their full potential. The spiritual or pastoral counselor needs to believe in his clients more than they believe in themselves. Jesus went as far as saying that people were gods and that they would accomplish more than he. He entrusted them with his mission. And when they doubted he challenged them for their lack of faith. He even said that he needed to leave for them to succeed. They would otherwise rely upon him for what they can do themselves. He taught them and entrusted them with responsibilities to carry out. Notice the condition of your own faith. What do you believe is possible for God, for yourselves, for others and for your client

and your client's immediate environment, family, community and world? What does God believe about you about who you are, whom you belong, what you are capable of, what you do and how you can impact your environment? Can you get out of your boat? Can you walk on water? How so; under what circumstances? Can you get out of your boat and walk on water in the midst of a storm? Are you afraid that the one who walks on water about to show himself to you is a ghost? Or are you going to step out of your boat towards him; towards your own God-potential being realized? Are you going to be like him, confidently walking on water at the height of the storm, mastering the winds and the waters, quiet and strong in the midst of turmoil, both mental and emotional? Are you going to be the master who walks like the master on water unaffected by the storm that is raging around you and ultimately capable of stilling the storm? Jesus believes in you more than you believe in yourself. He says "Come to me. You are capable of walking on water. You are capable of moving mountains. You are capable of slaying giants and dragons. There is light in your shadows and you can shine your light and dispel all darkness. With God in you and you in God, as God, you can accomplish anything you set your mind and your heart to." What is so with you is so with your client. Believe in your client the way Jesus believes in you. Invite your client to leave their boat, to venture out like they have never done before. Invite your client to take the step, the adventure your client is ready to take. Realize their next ready-to-be-realized potential, a sign that they will realize future potentialities, until your client realizes all their potential; one step at a time, sooner or later, this lifetime or later lifetimes.

Jesus was a catalyst (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus acts as a catalyst to activate power and capacities that are latent in people. Jesus is the catalyst whose preaching activates this Kingdom and power within his audience. He removes the hindrances and conditions that impair people's growth and development and provides a spark that ignites their inner desire. This catalytic process amounts to an act and process of initiation. The counselor needs to initiate a process of transformation in the person, channeling the power of God to accomplish this. This means that the counselor needs to have this power and capacity activated within in order to stimulate that activation in clients. In Eastern Indian systems this is referred to as Shaktipat (Krishna 1997). Shaktipat is a Sanskrit word derived from the Sanskrit "Shakti" and "pata." Shakti is the active presence of the Hindu God Shiva. It is the feminine expression of the Divine of which Shiva is the masculine component. It is experienced in the human body as sacred energy called kundalini. This sacred power is thought to lie dormant in the human body at the base of the spine. It can be awakened in the person by a variety of means. It is normally, and best, awakened as part of a spiritual discipline under the guidance of an experienced teacher called a guru. The teacher transmits spiritual energy to the disciple. It can be transmitted by a process guided by the teacher, through the sound of a teacher's voice, by a look from the teacher, from a thought of the teacher, through a sacred word or syllable(s) (mantra), from the writing of a teacher, from a picture of the picture or an object given by the teacher. It can only be received by a person who is prepared enough to integrate the energy in their nervous system. Energy is passed from the teacher to the disciple, from the top of the head (crown), to inside the head behind the space between the eyes at the center of the forehead, to inside the throat, to

the center of the chest at the level of the heart, to the solar plexus, to inside the belly about an inch below the belly button, to the perineal region in the lower pelvis and around the base of the spine. The energy from the teacher activates each of the centers described in the last sentence (chakras) and especially the center at the base of the spine, releasing the dormant energy there which rises up through the centers, from the bottom through the top. The energy is experienced in a variety of ways in the body and mind of the disciple. The teacher or guru can be a living teacher; one who is living in a body, time and space or can be a figure like Jesus, Buddha, Krishna, Mary, Shiva, Rama or someone considered a saint. The kundalini is considered the teacher and directs the spiritual life of the disciple, the disciple's spiritual practice and experience and results in various manifestations or gifts. The mind or consciousness of the teacher enters into the awareness of the disciple, such that the teacher is always with the disciple.

Carl Rogers (1951) speaks of organismic self-regulation. Rogers understood that the humanity has a single motivational force: the tendency towards self-actualization. Every person has an innate tendency toward the positive development of realization of her unique potential to the greatest extent possible. Another innate capacity possessed by each person was what Rogers called the "organismic valuing process." This process provides the person with the ability to choose between what enhances personal fulfillment and what does not. Fritz Perls (1951) also spoke of organismic self-regulation describing it as a process of by which a person responds from her own center and needs within the context of the situation

NLP speaks of the person already possessing capacity for certain states and realizations within. The counselor provides the right conditions for the client to realize them. The client is amenable to change because the counselor's ability to introduce rapport into the counseling relationship. The counselor does not move ahead of the client but walks beside the client, pacing the client before leading the client in the direction of the desired outcome. Rather than be problem-based, the counselor is outcome-based. The counselor helps the client to define her desired outcome and then enrich the client's cognitive map so that points better to that outcome. The counselor encourages the client to stay the path no matter how long or short, to persist through the terrain of the path with faith that the client will reach her temporal destinations and her ultimate endpoint or destiny. The counselor does not do for the client what the client can and must do for herself but stimulates the desire and motivation in the client to take the next step, realize the next goal. This proceeds with the understanding that the journey is worthwhile because the ultimate goal, unity with God is possible, even guaranteed. Yet the end will not be attained without awareness and responsibility.

Jesus was empathic (Gonzalez, 1994). However wrong, ignorant, and sinful people act, Jesus knows that they are doing the best that they can and making the best choices they can, given the impediments in their way. They are doing the best they can given what their current level of awareness and sense of personal and corporate power are. No one is trying to do the worst they can or less than they can. Blame, shame or guilt will not, in most cases, cause people to change for the better. In fact blame, guilt and shame may chain people where they are and contribute to a downward spiral of more of

the same. Jesus is not empathic when he criticizes the Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees and Temple Priests whose beliefs and practices have hindered the people he has come to save. He is incensed by their dearth of empathy and care. His criticism of these religious leaders has to do with their role as leaders and the harm they do to people by denying people access to the spiritual resources of the Temple. Counselors need to practice empathy and care for clients, even understanding what it must be like to have their experience. Counselors need to understand that their clients are doing the best that they can given the past and present conditions of their lives and the decisions that they have made. They can make different or better decisions when they are presented with better and different opportunities and resources in the environment they are in. They will achieve more and more of the life they want as they become more aware and responsible for both their condition and aim in life. They will become more capable, day after day, and grow and develop in the direction of the sun, their far goal, developing greater and greater confidence with every step and intermediary achievement on their way to their ultimate destiny. By being empathic with your clients, on the basis of your journey and achievements along the way, and your letting go of the past to move forward as a new person today, you can join your client on their way in their present condition and lead them at a pace negotiated by you and the client to their immediate, long-term and ultimate goal. The journey never ends until it is over, “somewhere over the rainbow.” That is the covenant we have with God, the promise of the Kingdom of God on earth, a new earth, a new heaven, without suffering, where God is the God of all people and creation, and all are one in God, loving one another as God loves them.

Jesus was enriching of others' experience (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus enriches people's individual maps of reality, in the process increasing the number of constructive choices available to them. The counselor enriches the lives of clients: increasing their belief in them-selves and what they are capable of, and encouraging them to act upon their ever evolving beliefs and newly developing capabilities. It involves providing them with new markers on their map and skills in reading those maps so they can get to places they might not otherwise be able to get to. This is the opposite of criticizing their cognitive maps. The idea is to add rather than subtract.

Exercise: Final Destination

Take a moment again to relax. Take a deep breath, in and out, relaxing more with every breath. Now see a map on an imaginary screen up in front of you. See on your map, in bright green, the final destination where you want to go. Define that destination in detail. Why do you want to go there? Who and what is waiting for you there? What do you see happening at this destination? What sounds do you hear in the destination? What do you feel there? How will you know that you have arrived there? What do you like about your destination? What else do you like about your destination? What do you love about your destination? See yourself celebrating having reached your destination. Make the green even brighter.

See, on your map, the route you will take, beginning to end, in bright yellow. Mark the places where you will stop and rest, refuel and refresh along the way in bright red. See yourself driving along the yellow road on the way to your destination. Feel yourself

moving along the yellow road, a comfortable, safe and steady speed. Listen to the sounds of your vehicle, the music, and the sounds of the traffic and of nature. Enjoy the landscape. Bypass any obstacles along your road by astute precognition and planning. See your-self stopping, resting, refueling, refreshing in the red places along the yellow away and arriving at your green destination, knowing that you have arrived, liking that you have arrived, loving that you have arrived and celebrating that you have arrived.

Open your eyes. Close them again. See the yellow road, drive along the yellow road, stop in the red places, resting, relaxing, refueling, refreshing, driving further along the yellow road, seeing the green destination in the distance, coming closer, looming larger, growing brighter, arriving at your green destination, celebrating in the green destination. Open your eyes. Close them again. Yellow road, red resting, green destination; going, getting, arrived; yellow, red, green!

Jesus was contextual (Gonzalez, 1994). He considers the overall context of people he addresses. The counselor needs to understand the complex, interacting sets of influences people live in, and providing them with a wider context by which these nested influences can be acted upon. The larger, wider or higher perspective can act upon the smaller, narrower or lower perspective to produce change in it. The counselor needs to see the whole picture. To ignore context denies clients connection to the world and their unique upbringing, history and background. Understand your own context. You are a unique and separate being but you live in a complex web of relationships and influences, inside of you and around you, near you and far away. And you are responsible for yourself, your relationships with others and the boundaries

between yourself and others, for how you relate, influence and are influenced by others. See how you are influenced and influence the systems you live in. Notice your limitations and feel responsible for your limitations, staying within them, inching up to them and beyond them, exceeding them, removing them and replacing them, transcending them all together. You are always alone and always together in this intricate relational network, responsible for yourself and responsible for your relationships and how you interpret, navigate and respond to it. In fact, you are part of your client's context and network, responsibly influenced by it and influencing it, able to influence your client in responsibly negotiating it in ways that serve the client and serve the network, inside and out, near and far.

Jesus was enlightening (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus assists people in becoming self-aware so that they would have increased choices to develop their capacities for success in realizing their potential. People are often ignorant or in the dark about themselves and their relationships. They do not perceive their personal power of choice and responsibility and thus they are not free. The counselor needs to be enlightened; to be awake and self-aware. The counselor needs to be freed from conditions of worth. The counselor needs to raise awareness, consciousness or perspective in clients and create opportunities for choices clients do not perceive presently. Wake up right now! Wake up! This is it! This is life! You are responsible for the way you are and the way it is. You are at the mercy of your own responsibility and integrity. It is up to you! You are master of your universe! Being awake and aware and responsible does not make your life problem free. It makes you awake, aware and responsible, in charge of your life and

your choices, deciding moment to moment how you shall relate to what happens within and around you. The capacity for enlightenment is a human capacity and is the capacity for self-actualization and the incubation, growth and realization of human potential. Enlightenment is a response to the conditions of your life and of your freedom from those conditions. And it is a response to your client's condition and your client's response to their condition and choices around that condition.

Jesus had high expectations of people (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus expects people to make themselves better, take responsibility for their thoughts, feelings, choices and behaviors, use their freedom to overcome evil, sin, limitation and lack, to love God, self, neighbor and one another, and to "be perfect" as God is perfect. Jesus had naturally high expectations of himself that he passed on to his disciples. He had a high tolerance for suffering and pain. The counselor does not want to scare clients away by expressing faith in them too quickly, but needs to maintain a high level of expectation for them. Over time, clients' expectations of themselves will increase. If clients had expected to succeed in the area that drew them to counseling, they would have never come not for counseling. But the counselor has to express the expectation that clients will attain success in the counseling from the onset of the counseling. Otherwise why would they return? What are your expectations of yourself as a counselor? I expect to improve the quality of my client's life through transforming their self understanding, their connection to God, their identity, their beliefs, their capacities and behaviors to positively affect their life experience and relationships with the world, changing their world in the process. What is your source of expectation for the counseling? My source

is God and my belief in God. What is your identity as a counselor? I am a spiritual counselor, transpersonal, Christian and interfaith, holistic and integral. What do I believe about counseling? Clients are capable of changing and growing and realizing their potential in ever increasing levels. They have resources inside themselves and around them that will enable them to obtain any goal that is ecological; serves themselves and others. They can take responsibility for their life condition and act in ways that produce their best and most-desirable outcomes. They can influence the environment they are in, change it or leave it and the world they live in by being responsible for their relationships.

Jesus was flexible. He could shift perspectives in order to better communicate (Gonzalez, 1994, 28). Jesus could communicate from multiple perspectives, including 1st, 2nd, and 3rd person perspectives, and from a Meta perspective that includes all of these. The 1st position is the position of one's self (1994). It is the "I" position. "I feel enthused" is a 1st position statement. The 2nd position is the position of the other (1994). It is the "you" position. "You say I am" is a 2nd position statement. The 3rd position is the position of the object of a communication, the subject being discussed (Gonzalez, 1994). "Who do people say the Son of Man is" (Matthew 16:13), is a 3rd position statement. The Meta position is a position that is beyond first, second, and third, that takes into account the other three positions simultaneously (1994). The disciples of John the Baptist asked Jesus, "Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another." Jesus answered them, "Go back to John and tell him about what you have heard and seen, 'the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cured, the deaf hear, the

dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor (Matthew 11:3-6).” Jesus did not take either the first or second position in this biblical passage. He passes immediately into the meta position as he speaks about the actions of Jesus Nazareth. He doesn’t say that he, Jesus, was doing anything, but that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life and the Good news is being preached to the poor. This is a transcendental God’s eye view, like looking down on the earth from a long distance or from the outside of what is being pictured (Dilts, Epstein and Dilts, 1991). Jesus takes God’s perspective and thus is able to give the whole perspective. It is an objective perspective rather than a subjective one as there is no judgment in it.

The counselor needs to be perceptually flexible, able to move from perspective to perspective and enable clients to move from perspective to perspective to affect better communication and change. Jesus would sometimes refer to himself as “Son of Man.” While what he meant by that is open for discussion, he was either talking about someone else or himself. Speaking about oneself in the third person is an odd way of referencing oneself. By doing so Jesus distanced from himself and had people relate not to him but “the Son of Man.” At the same time he induced a transderivational search in people. A Transderivational Search is basically a search for the meaning of a piece of information (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). The people Jesus addressed had to figure out who or what he was referring to. They needed to search within their own minds and find a way to relate what Jesus was saying to an internal experience. Sometimes the search is quite simple. If I ask you to describe what you are wearing

you would not have to search far to answer the question. But the question about who Jesus is talking about as the “Son of Man” can be answered from a variety of perspectives, from which the listener must choose. The vagueness of the reference to Son of Man causes the person to answer the question of who Jesus is talking about himself. The transderivational search is a search among divergent meanings. The mind may pick up one thing on a conscious level but miss others which are communicated directly to the unconscious mind (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). The listener hears Jesus speak about this Son of Man as someone other than Jesus. Unconsciously, however the listener associates the Son of Man as the Son of Man spoken of in Daniel, as the son of David, as the Son of Abraham and as the Messiah. The conscious mind seems to half-detect the ambiguity and becomes occupied in double-checking which meaning is implied. This causes further language patterns which follow on not to be noted by the conscious mind while it is distracted. These further language patterns directly access the unconscious mind, without the conscious mind's critical faculty getting in the way (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). Jesus skillfully avoids referencing himself directly as the Son of Man. If Jesus were to say “I am the Son of Man” or “I am the Son of God” he would invite resistance if not outright attack. Rather Jesus spoke using a generalized referential index by replacing nouns in a sentence that are specific to the audience with general nouns. It also allowed Jesus to speak about himself in past and future terms and both impersonally and trans-personally. The people he spoke to knew what his reference “Son of Man” referred to. When he used the term, the relationship of the people to the expected Son of Man, and the meanings associated with it were immediately transferred to Jesus. So now, he could indirectly

claim to be “the Son of Man” or “the Messiah” without generating resistance to a personal claim of being so himself. When Jesus refers to the “Son of Man” he is “speaking in quotes” (Bandler and Grinder 1979). One certain way to create resistance in my relationship with someone is to claim to be a Messiah or Savior. In doing so, I place myself in a status different from and above that person. If I desire to help the person to realize their divinity, Christ-within or God-realization or to self-actualize or discover their true guru which is within, I cannot reference myself as that. At the same time I cannot help someone to a state that I myself have not, cannot or am not currently experiencing. I have to be “That” to convey “That.” Otherwise I can only convey a concept of “That” or a false sense of what “That” is.

Jesus was a multi-level communicator. Human beings exist, conceive, perceive, experience, and communicate on multiple levels: spiritual, identity, beliefs, capability, behaviors, and environment (Gonzalez, 1994, Dilts, 1998). Jesus spoke to each of these levels. The counselor needs to be able to interact with the different logical levels of clients in a systematic way. To do this as Jesus did, the counselor needs to model Jesus on each of these levels. To model Jesus it is necessary to observe, identify with, internalize, and imitate aspects of Jesus on any or all of these of these logical levels. Jesus is always modeling God so to model Jesus is to model God and the characteristics or realities of God. The spiritual or pastoral counselor is a representative of God in the counseling relationship and is able to facilitate their clients’ appropriation and approximation of godly attributes in their own lives. Jesus also related to people at their developmental and motivational levels. If a person was not ready developmentally

or motivationally, Jesus did not expect the person to. Jesus reached to the level of the person. If the person was starving Jesus would feed him; thirsty give him drink; naked clothe him; imprisoned rehabilitate and release him; and sick or impaired, heal him. If the person wanted to advance spiritually Jesus would challenge her. If the person was wrong and thought he was right Jesus would confront him with reality. If the person needed to establish a new skill Jesus would direct her to do something. The counselor needs to assess the client's logical, developmental and motivational level and plan interventions accordingly. The person who accepts the status quo in his life is not going to change. He needs to be persuaded that the status quo should be replaced by something better. He needs to determine why he should change. A person who is ready for action does not need to be held back to review the reasons for changing. The person who has already changed has to be motivated to maintain the change.

Jesus utilized a time-line in his communication (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus makes use of a time line consisting of past, present, and future. The future is like a wide field of possibility where expectations can be realized. The past is where positive experiences can be build upon and negative experiences, errors, and sins forgiven, learned from, and utilized for the good. The present is where one lives, decides and acts towards growth. Jesus introduces the Kingdom of God/Heaven, life after death, resurrection of the dead, coming of the Holy Spirit, and return of the Son of Man as the future realities born out of present accomplishments and realizations, yet sought as the promised antidote for a present that is a symptom of a depraved past. The counselor, following in the path of Jesus, affects time with people by taking people back to the past, from past

to present, present to future, and from the future back to the present, and combinations of the all of these. The past can be healed in the present and the future can influence the present as much as the past and present can influence the future. Suppose your client has a fear of driving. The last time she drove she was in a serious accident. She wants to drive but is afraid of all things related to driving. She does not mind riding but does prefer the back seat. Her fear of driving did not exist before the accident. She had been driving for years without incident. The counselor could guide her back to a time before the accident when she felt comfortable driving. The counselor could then see herself driving safely in the future. The counselor could have her remember driving on the road she had the accident on safely before the accident and project herself into the future in the same car and a different car driving safely. She could even remember feeling relief having driven successfully in the future over and over until there was no longer need to feel relief. She could see herself driving off from the accident scene looking ahead but glancing through the review mirror until the accident scene faded way further and further into the past, the feelings associated with the accident diminishing with every mile she drove ahead on the road, feeling safer and safer and more and more confident with every mile she drove, arriving safely everywhere she drove (James and Wyatt Woodsmall 1988; Andreas and Andreas 1989; Bandler, Andrea and Andreas 1985).

Jesus was a highly relational communicator (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus seeks to know and understand people through listening and empathy. He actively questions them for this purpose. The counselor in the mold of Jesus is relational; listens to people and

empathizes with them, even doing things with people. This an active role initiated by the counselor, engaging the person rather than waiting on the person actively. Jesus went to people's homes and communities. He invited himself into their homes. In some counseling settings; mental health and addictions, such a strategy might be discouraged. This includes office based pastoral counseling. But the pastor who provides pastoral care and counseling may find herself in church member's homes or in public places with the church member. She may find herself counseling a church member or visitor in the church in church hallways, meeting rooms, sanctuaries and fellowship halls. She may find herself visiting with the client in the clients home, a nursing home, a hospital, in a car or in a café or restaurant. She may even initiate the visit based upon observations of the church member's demeanor and need while otherwise engaged with church member or in proximity to the church member. When Jesus saw Zacchaeus up a tree he asked him what he was doing up there and invited him to come down. Then to the consternation of others Jesus invited himself to Zacchaeus's home to dinner (Luke 19:1-10)!

Jesus was a frugal communicator (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus communicates what people are ready to hear and assimilate at one time or at a given time. He holds back information and adapts what he says and does according to people's situations, needs, and capacities. The counselor, after the mold of Jesus, is frugal or economic in speech, lest pearls are thrown to swine. The counselor recognizes what people are able to hear and utilize at different times in their lives and development and only present to them what they are ready for. Timing is worth considering. Jesus would plant seeds that

would be harvested later when conditions were better. The counselor has to know when to hold back lest the client be confused, overwhelmed and scared away from the counseling process. It is possible to accomplish too much in a session. The outcome might appear successful, but the client may interpret, "I shared too much. That was overwhelming. I need some time to integrate this. Or I do not know if I want to go any deeper. That was scary." It is necessary to move at a pace that is comfortable for the client. At the same time in a brief counseling encounter or crisis intervention, there may only be a need and opportunity for a single session. The counselor needs to determine what the expectations and needs for the client are and pace and lead the client accordingly.

Jesus was a responsive communicator (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus always considers the response of people to his presentation or intervention. He wants to make sure that he communicates what he intends to communicate, so he measures people's responses as feedback that guides what his next step will be. The counselor needs to gauge the feedback people provide and adapt the intervention to accomplish the aims of the intervention. This goes back to pacing. The counselor wants to make sure that the engine (the counselor) is connected to the cars of the train (clients) so as not to leave the client behind.

Rapport is key to Jesus' effectiveness (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus was a master of rapport. Jesus entered into verbal rapport with people. Rapport is the state of harmony, affinity, trust, cooperation, and collaboration in relationship with others (Bandler and Grinder, 1979; Andreas and Andreas, 1989). Rapport is the experience

of relational connection, the means by which people experience interpersonal communion. Rapport is established by meeting people on their own level, by showing agreement or alignment with them or bearing some likeness to them, and by facilitating the rise of positive feelings like trust, affinity, and harmony in them. Rapport in communication creates a climate conducive for change. Rapport is a condition for change and growth in counseling. For a counselor to achieve desired change or action with a client, it is necessary to gain rapport with the client (Carkhuff, 1977). After gaining rapport, it is necessary to pace and lead them in the direction of a desired and agreed upon outcome. Rapport-building is part of the pacing.

Jesus utilized pacing to gain rapport with people (Gonzalez, 1994). Pacing is the process of doing something similar to what the person does. It is going along or alongside someone in some action or behavior of theirs (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). Jesus led people after he paced them. Leading is the process of getting people to do something you want. So, change or new action is the result of first pacing and then leading. Pace alone and you'll get more of the behavior the client is displaying. Lead alone and the client will not follow. Jesus paced his disciples by becoming human like them. Then, after establishing a connection, he led his disciples in realizing the Kingdom of God on earth. In the process of doing this his disciples realized new capabilities. Jesus led them through demonstration and instruction. The counselor needs to be patient and allow time for the client to feel understood and accepted, want to change and take action toward the change (Egan, 1994). If the client was ready to

change he would not need the counseling. Just because the client states a desire to change does not mean that the client is ready to change.

Jesus utilized mirroring and matching to create rapport (Gonzalez, 1994). Mirroring is a process that involves adopting another person's behaviors and mannerisms as a mirror image of that person (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). If that person crosses their arms or legs, do the same. Matching is a process of imitation of the other's behaviors, capabilities, beliefs, identity or spirituality. This involves observing and subtly copying the other's body posture, gestures, facial expressions, forms of speech, tone of voice, etc. The counselor accomplishes rapport best linguistically when matching the linguistic underpinnings of clients; that is the way they communicate, verbally and non-verbally (Carkhuff, 1977). NLP makes mirrors the client's use of predicates as well as rhythm, pitch, amplitude, tone, speed and other vocal characteristics (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). The counselor utilizes language to access clients' representational systems. However, non-verbal communication is language too. Understanding can be conveyed non-verbally alone; so can compassion, love, acceptance and acknowledgment or the opposite, anger, hatred, non-acceptance and fear. If a client is angry or afraid, the counselor can pace him in the anger (except in volume) or fear, and mirror and match and then introduce a different state, leading the client into the new state, leading the client in matching and mirroring counselor attitude, state and behavior.

Jesus strategically utilized sensory representational language to reach people (Gonzalez, 1994). Representational systems are the sensory systems through which people experience, perceive, understand, and communicate in the world (Bandler and

Grinder, 1979). There are five primary sensory systems, visual- sight, auditory-hearing, kinesthetic-feeling-touch, olfactory-smell, and gustatory-taste. The visual, auditory and kinesthetic representational systems are the ones most commonly used and which define a person's primary sense for dealing with the world. While each person utilizes all of their senses, one (sometimes two) is primary and one may be underutilized. Occasionally there is an overlap, even a merging of senses, a phenomenon called synesthesia (Bandler and Grinder, 1979).

People operating in visual mode tend to experience, perceive, and communicate in visual terms (Gonzalez, 1994; Bandler and Grinder, 1979). They use more visual predicates than other predicate types. Common visual predicates are "see, picture, perceive, notice, look, show, appear, clear, imagine, view, and outlook." The breathing of people operating visually tends to be high in the chest and shallow. Ask them a question about their childhood and they momentarily pause in their breathing to access their answer. They reply using picture words. Their voices tend to be expressive, staccato, in quick bursts, high-pitched and strained. Their bodies are thin and tense, especially when thinking. Their gestures point to their eyes or in front of them. There is a tendency for them when thinking and preparing to speak to look up, either to the right or the left, to the left when remembering something and to the right when imagining something. According to NLP, when people look up they are visualizing something; to the left something they remember, to the right something they are imagining (Bandler and Grinder, 1979). Jesus uses the predicates "see" 82 times and "saw" 10 times in the gospels (Gonzalez, 1994.)

People operating in the auditory mode tend to perceive, experience, and communicate in auditory terms, using auditory predicates (Gonzalez, 1994; Bandler and Grinder, 1979). Some common auditory predicates are “sound, hear, listen, discuss, speak, talk, articulate, say, proclaim, preach.” People operating auditorally exhibit a regular and rhythmic flow of breath, involving their diaphragm and whole chest in their breathing, and a prolonged exhale. Auditory speakers tend to change the timbre and cadence of their voices and vary inflection based upon the sounds they hear. Their pitch varies, but their tone is consistently clear and resonant. They are not as tall and slim as visual speakers, nor are they as muscular as kinesthetic-oriented people. They tend to make minor rhythmic movements with their head, hands or feet, keeping rhythm as they speak. Their eyes tend to move side to side when listening. When gesturing, it is common for them to point to his ears. Jesus makes frequent use of auditory predicates. Jesus used the predicates “hear” 60 times and “heard” 17 times in the gospels (Gonzalez, 1974).

Persons operating in the kinesthetic mode tend to experience, perceive, and communicate in tactile terms (Gonzalez, 1994; Bandler and Grinder, 1979). Some common kinesthetic words are touch, sense, feel, relax, hold, hard, handle, warm, soft, and act. Kinesthetic-oriented people breathe deep and low in the stomach area. Their breathing is measured and regular. They tend to have low-pitched voices. Their voice tone is pleasant, maybe even sensual. They speak slowly and often with long pauses. The eye movement of kinesthetic people is down and to the right, where they access

feelings. The body type of kinesthetic people is muscular. Gonzalez does not site the number of times Jesus uses kinesthetic language in the gospels.

Jesus adapts his communication to speak to all of the common representational systems. He makes use of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic language in doing so. He employs a strategy that consists of a sequence of representations, recognizing that people employ such sequences of representations. When Jesus is speaking to one person his speech is tailored particularly to that one individual according to the mental strategy that the individual employs. When he speaks to a larger group of people, where multiple strategies are employed, Jesus employs a more varied strategy, utilizing the three dominant representational systems but mixing in the olfactory and gustatory.

Jesus was balanced in his use of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic predicates. This language employed by Jesus was common to those with whom he spoke. It is more universal and direct than rational communication (Gonzalez, 1994).

The counselor can model Jesus' own representational systems and how Jesus addresses the representational systems of people he communicates with, utilizing the language use patterns of each client in one-to-one relationships or couples and varying the use of language patterns in a balanced way while working with groups of clients. To prepare to do this the counselor needs to observe the counselor's own representational systems and those around them. In my own NLP training I was provided with lists of visually, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory and gustatory predicates and practiced utilizing them first in exercises and role plays, in the field and then in relationships with clients.

The idea is to become fluent in more than your own primary representational system and flexible enough to match the predicate use of your clients.

Jesus' communication was therapeutic (Gonzalez, 1994). The word therapeutic goes farther than the conventional use today of seeking to correct an illness. Rather, it is intended to speak to the developmental needs of people; psychological, motivational, cognitive, moral, and spiritual. Jesus is seeking to facilitate spiritual growth and wholeness in people. The counselor needs to have a developmental approach to clients in order to determine the proper intervention with a client. If a client is hungry or thirsty the client needs food and water. If the client is lonely, the client needs relationships. If the client is ignorant the client needs knowledge. Therapy is needed for physical, psychological, emotional, relational and spiritual issues or even disorders. Indeed, the goal of all pastoral counseling, beyond symptom relief, is wholeness. It is awake, aware and responsible living. It is making the most out of the client's potential for wholeness, self-actualization and even God-realization. If a client's connection with his or her spouse is broken it needs to be fixed. The same with the client's work relations, with their intrapersonal relations and with God (as the person understands God to be, theistically or non-theistically). In this sense every word and action of Jesus was purposeful and therapeutic. Ideally, this is the case with the pastoral or spiritual counselor or therapist.

Jesus made conscious use of his self with people, as a model of what he speaks of, inviting his audience to follow in his way (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus makes greatest use of this type of speech in the Gospel of John in his "I Am Discourses." In the synoptic

gospels he most often uses self-reference to be authoritative. His self-reference is contextual and points to his role as Son of God and Son of Man and Messiah. In John's Gospel it points to his special role as gateway or conveyer to God. The counselor in the mold of Jesus makes careful reference to their own identity, finds points of identification with clients and makes calculated self-references. Client feedback to these interventions is important to note, as the interventions can be too much, too soon and need to be modified. I remember sharing with a depressed client that I had been depressed in my past. My intention was to offer her hope. She responded by saying she did not need or want to know that I had a history of depression. She needed to see me as healthy. I listened to her grievance with understanding and turned the discussion back to her depression. One of the "I AM Discourses" used by Jesus is "I am the way, the truth and the life. Nobody comes to the Father except through me John 14:6)." This statement has been used as a proof text for the exclusivity of Christianity as the one true religion and of Jesus as the Son of God. However, Jesus could mean "I am" is the way, the truth and the life and the way to God. The way I live, the truth I express and the life I have is the way to God. I am related to God. Relate to me and you relate to God. But God is in you, too. Marcus Borg (2003) said that the way, the truth and life of Jesus that leads to unity with God is the way of suffering, death and resurrection. According to Borg one does not have to be a Christian to realize this. In Siddha Yoga, it is believed that the personal guru is a reflection of the true guru that is inside the disciple. At a certain point the disciple no longer needs the inner guru. Some Siddhi sages insist that Jesus was a Siddhi, that he was one with God and displayed the powers of God in his human life (Shraddhananda, 2014; Jivanmukti, 2013; Yogananda,

2007; Govindan, 2007; Feuerstein, 2003; Ravindra 1990). Jesus was able to transmit his consciousness into the consciousness of others, his consciousness becoming the model for theirs, activating the God-consciousness trapped in the matter of the human body as a dormant spiritual unconsciousness (Yogananda, 2007). The counselor can only use the counselor's self to the extent that it is developed. The counselor can only be effective with clients who are at the counselor's level of development or lower. Jesus functioned at the highest levels of consciousness that of God (non-dual) and Child of God (dual). He served as THE prototypical, archetypal Child of God for every child of God who was made in his image to aspire to.

Jesus made generous use of questions (Gonzalez, 1994). Questions play a part in people's interpretation and construction of reality. Perceptions of reality can be changed through questioning them. Meta modeling is an NLP process that seeks to increase the accuracy of a client's perception of reality.

Meta modeling is an NLP process that seeks to increase the accuracy of a client's perception of reality. People possess cognitive maps that they use to navigate the world they live in. However, their maps are not the territory that the maps refer to (Korzybski 1933). The neuro-linguistic models of the world people make of the world are not the world itself. Rather they are representations of it (Dilts and DeLozier, 2000). The Meta Model was NLP's first formal model (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). The Meta Model consists of a set of thirteen or so linguistic patterns that can be used to facilitate change or create obstacles in people's mental maps of themselves and the world Dilts and DeLozier, 2000). It provides an effective verbal model that can be used to achieve

the goals of counseling and psychotherapy. They are designed to enrich the mental maps of clients engaged in counseling and psychotherapy. They work to expand and revise the cognitive maps of clients to compensate for the limitations of these maps. The maps are improved and lead to more effective behavior (Bostic and Grinder, 2011). Clients are helped, through a process of questioning, to identify Meta Model violations. Meta Model violations are limiting patterns. They are obstacles to success and satisfaction. The questions lead clients to find alternative strategies. Meta Model violations can be the result of other limiting patterns such as identity confusion and boundary ambiguity. Removing an obstacle makes progress possible in the territory that the map refers to (Bostic and Grinder, 2011). Not everyone has the same number and type of Meta Model violations in their thinking and speech. The three primary means by which Meta Model violations occur are deletion, distortion and generalization. Deletion is the process by which people selectively attend to parts of their experience and exclude others. Deletion allows people to better manage their experience and navigate their worlds. It keeps them from being overcome by information and stimuli. Useful in certain situations, deletion can cause problems. Distortion is the process that allows people to fit new perceptions into their current conceptual schema. Creativity often results from misrepresentation of data, but conflicts and difficulty can result from this unconscious cognitive strategy. Generalization is the process by which people find similarities in new situations to previous ones. They are able to apply principles from previous learning to new situations. The Meta Model is used to identify deletions, distortions and generalizations in people's thinking and communication that cause problems and propose new ways of thinking and operating (Bostic and Grinder, 2011).

Normally, people perceive what is in their focus and ignore what is in the background. When a question is asked, people are invited to focus their attention on aspects of reality suggested by the question. In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus asks sixty questions. Questions provide direction to the conversation. Questioning is an active form of communicating rather than a passive one. The pastoral or spiritual counselor needs to maintain certain stillness in the background, a non-anxious presence, while simultaneously assisting the client to define the client's present experience, determining what is missing from that surface experience, drawing from the deeper well of the client's inner experience. The deepest quanta of the client's self is God or the spiritual unconscious out of which all spiritual, mental, emotional, physical and behavioral forms are born and grow. It is said that there are no bad answers, only bad questions. Well-formed questions lead to the outcomes they seek.

Jesus uses three kinds of questions: empowering, information-seeking, and challenging (Gonzalez, 1994). His empowering questions elicit people's resources or widen their focus. Through questions like this people are encouraged to think and use their resources to find answers and solutions that empower them to act. His informative questions allowed him or people whom he questioned the benefit of information or the clarification of that information in order to allow educated action or response. By questions like these, Jesus broadens people's understanding of their goals, possible solutions to problems, alternatives for personal change or attitude adjustment. Jesus' challenging questions provoke people to make the best use of their resources and capabilities, to confront them with their lack of congruency and righteousness, and to

bring them into congruency and righteousness. The aim of these questions is greater responsibility. The counselor wants to use all three types of questions. If a client already possesses the power to change, he may only need information to correct a faulty outlook. The client may have been pursuing a wrong goal based upon inadequate information. Or the client might not have known what to do or why or how to do something. Or the client might have power and information but is lazy or unmotivated. The client needs to be challenged to be responsible. Again the client might act if they had more information. If a client lacks the capacity or the resources to do something, all of the information and challenge one can provide him will not enable him to succeed. The client needs to obtain power whether that is physical, authority or capacity.

Each of the questions Jesus asks is for people's good, having the intention of empowering them. Jesus even trains people to ask the right questions in order to receive what it is they need to bring about the realization of the Kingdom of heaven on earth; that is to produce a certain standard of life on earth where justice prevails and human suffering is eradicated. The questions Jesus asks focuses people's attention on what it is they seek or should seek, even if they resist that objective. The counselor needs to help the client clarify the clients own values and own desires and bring these into congruence. To enter the Kingdom of God on earth the client needs to trust God completely, rely upon God's rules for living in a natural way and detach from dependency on the outer world while contributing to the well-being of all others, loving God with neighbor as one's self without restraint.

Jesus made positive, affirmative statements in his communication (Gonzalez, 1994). He also employed linguistic strategies that Robert Dilts refers to as “sleight of mouth” (Gonzalez, 1994). A sleight of mouth is like a magician’s sleight of hand (Dilts, 1999; Hall 2002; O’Brien 2011). Jesus changes meaning by changing the context and meaning of what people usually think. Some might call this cognitive-linguistic strategy “reframing” (Bandler and Grinder 1982).

The high priest was questioning Jesus about his disciples and his teachings. Jesus responded, “I have spoken openly for the entire world to hear; I have taught in the synagogue and in the Temple where all the Jews meet together; I have said nothing in secret. Why ask me? Ask my hearers what I taught’ they know what I said.” Hearing this one of the guards slapped Jesus in the face and said, “Is that the way you answer the high priest?” Jesus replied, “Is there some offense in what I said, point it out, but if not, why did you strike me? (John 18:19-22). Jesus used a sleight of mouth pattern to confront the guard’s cognitive distortion of what Jesus had said. The distortion is called “cause and effect” (Dilts, 1999; Hall 2002; O’Brien 2011). It is a distortion because while a causal link is implied between what Jesus said and the guard’s response, no such link exists. The cause of the guards seeming anger at Jesus and his physical display of anger is the guard’s is his own assessment about what Jesus said. What must the guard had thought to become angry with Jesus and strike him? He must have thought to himself, Jesus should not be talking to the high priest in this way. It is disrespectful. It was that thought that led to the guard’s anger and his action against Jesus. Jesus’ response was a sleight of mouth called “chunk down” or “step down.

(Dilts, 1999; Hall 2002; O'Brien 2011) Chunking down or stepping down involves descending into the details of a distortion. In our example, Jesus asks about the specific words he spoke that the guard took offense at. In doing so, he exposed the lack of a causal link between what he said and the guard's response.

Jesus was hungry after he had fasted of forty days and forty nights. The devil came and tested him "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into loaves." Jesus replied, "Man does not live by bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God (Matthew 4:4). Jesus' response is a sleight of mouth called "redefinition" (Dilts, 1999; Hall 2002; O'Brien 2011) He redefines the word "loaves" that was used by the devil.

The devil took Jesus to Jerusalem and set him on the parapet of the Temple. The Devil challenged Jesus to throw himself down from the Temple for the Scriptures say the God has given the angels instructions to rescue them in their arms. Jesus responded to the devil, "The Scripture also says, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test'" (Matthew 4:6-7). Jesus used the sleight of mouth called "consequence" (Dilts, 1999; Hall 2002; O'Brien 2011). He directed the attention of the devil to the affect of the belief about the relationship defined by the belief. The consequence of Jesus throwing himself down from the Temple parapet would be to test God

Jesus received a message about his friend Lazarus' death. He replied, "Our friend Lazarus is at rest; I am going to wake him." The disciples responded, "Lord, if he is at rest he will be saved." The disciples misunderstood Jesus. He was speaking about

Lazarus' death. His disciples thought that he meant sleep. Jesus revealed Lazarus' true condition. He was dead. Then Jesus describes his true intention. Lazarus was allowed to die so Jesus could perform a work, raising Lazarus from the dead, that would cause them to believe (John 11:11-15). The sleight of mouth used by Jesus is called "intention" (Dilts, 1999; Hall 2002; O'Brien 2011). "Intention" draws attention to the real purpose or intention of a person when such a purpose is understood differently by the intended audience.

Jesus' disciples returned from a preaching mission. They rejoiced at the impact of their preaching: "Even the demons submit to us when we use their name." Jesus responded, "Do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you. Rejoice instead that your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20). The sleight of mouth used by Jesus is called "stepping up" or "chunking up." This involves generalizing an element of a belief to a larger classification that changes the relationship defined by the belief (Dilts, 1999; Hall 2002; O'Brien 2011). Jesus stepped up to a higher level, to the larger classification called eternal life or the Kingdom of God. The disciples learned that their status with God is more important than what spiritual capacities they possessed.

One Sabbath day Jesus was walking through some cornfields. His disciples began to make a path by plucking ears of corn. The Pharisees, upon seeing this, asked Jesus why his disciples were performing an act that was forbidden to be done on the Sabbath. Jesus responded by asking the Pharisees if they had read what David had done when he and his followers were hungry. David entered the House of God and ate the loaves of the offering which only the priests are allowed to eat and gave some to his men (Mark

2:25-26). Jesus used the sleight of mouth called “counter-example” (Dilts, 1999; Hall 2002; O’Brien 2011). He found an example that did not fit the relationship established by the Pharisees. The Pharisees related “plucking ears of corn” with breaking the Sabbath day. Jesus’ counter-example contradicted that relationship.

Jesus and his disciples saw a man who had been blind from birth. His disciples asked Jesus who had sinned, the blind man or his parents, that the man was born blind.

Jesus responded that neither, the man nor his parents sinned. Rather, he was born blind so that the works of God would be revealed in him (John 9:1-3). Jesus used the sleight of mouth called “another outcome” (Dilts, 1999; Hall 2002; O’Brien 2011).

Through “another outcome” the relevancy of the listener’s belief is challenged and switched to another issue. In this example, Jesus changed the relationship between sin and sickness. He made the claim that the most important thing is God’s plan to create an opportunity to provide an opportunity to prove that he was the Messiah.

Jesus made deft use of non-verbal behaviors (Gonzalez, 1994). According to Gonzalez, Jesus communicated nonverbally by the quality, tone and pace of voice, his body, physical distance, posture, gestures, facial expressions, and looks. Gonzalez does not cite scripture supporting this assertion. Certainly Jesus, like any other person, communicates verbally and non-verbally in the ways described by Gonzalez. It would make sense in modeling Jesus to model what can be observed of all of his communications. The Word of God that is the substance of all Jesus’ words is not verbal but the very essence of who Jesus is. Jesus communicates by his very presence as the Incarnate Word of God, or Son of God. The counselor needs to be aware of his

non-verbal behavior when he communicates and make sure that it is consistent with and supportive of the intent of the communication. Use of words, physical expressions and gestures, movement, and vocal characteristics need to be consistent or complementary. The counselor looking out the window or yawning or twirling a thumb while listening is telling the client “I am not interested and I do not care. You do not matter. Counseling programs used to audio tape counseling sessions. Video tape is much more telling and useful for learning to align verbal and non-verbal behavior.

Jesus displayed sensory acuity (Gonzalez, 1994). Sensory Acuity is the capacity to perceive through the senses. Accurate sensory acuity involves calibration. Calibration is the ability to notice and measure changes in feelings and states of self and others with respect to a standard (1994). Jesus was able to calibrate or match up to other people’s feelings and states, allowing him rapport with them and the ability to perceive their thoughts and feelings. Calibration might be compared to the tuning of an instrument. Jesus was able to obtain an excellent read on what people were feeling because he paid precise attention to what they displayed in their non-verbal behavior. Because of his calibration skills Jesus was able to know what people were thinking at times. After meeting Jesus at a well, a Samaritan woman tells others in her village, “Come and see a man who has told me everything I have done (John 4:29). One day the disciples were arguing among themselves about who amongst them was the greatest. Jesus knew what thoughts ran through their mind. He explained that the least among them would prove to be the greatest (Luke 9:46-48). People brought a paralytic to Jesus. He forgave the man’s sins. The scribes questioned how Jesus could forgive

sins when only God could forgive sins. They did not say this out loud. They thought it to themselves. Jesus was inwardly aware of what they were thinking and asked them why they were thinking them (Mark 1:6-8). Sensory acuity needs to be developed to calibrate like Jesus did. The acronym B.A.G.E.L. provides a five step process for developing sensory acuity (Dilts, Epstein and Dilts, 1991). The B stands for body posture, the A for accessing cues, the G of gestures, the E for eye movements and the L for Language. By observing a person's body postures, accessing cues, eye movements, gestures and Language patterns it is possible to determine his representational system

Jesus gave of himself to people (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus gave the experience of the Kingdom of God to people (In Mark 1:15). This kind of giving amounted to his sharing of himself. The Kingdom Jesus transmitted to people was characterized by a variety of states: justice, peace, joy and love (Romans 14:17). Jesus was more than the messenger of the good news of the Kingdom. Jesus was its bestower. In John 14, Jesus speaks of giving his peace unlike the world gives. Jesus gave the experience of eternal or abundant life. This Kingdom is not a place or set of things but a set of states. These states are states of mind, including security, peace, happiness, love, truth, justice, righteousness and joy (1994). The counselor can model the states witnessed in Jesus and his words, behavior, and presence. This can be accomplished by utilizing the same words, behavior and looks as he in the same manner that he does. Jesus appeared for his disciples. He said, "Believe in God. Believe in me also" (John 14:1b). It is as if he is saying: "Do not be worried. Do not be afraid. Trust God. Trust me also."

And he said, “My peace I give you. My peace I leave with you. I do not give as the world gives” (John 14:27). At another time he breathed upon them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22). Imagine yourself, sitting across from Jesus. Jesus reaches out and touches you on the head or shoulder and says to you: “Believe in God. Believe in me also. Listen closely, Trust God. Trust me also. Trust your life. My peace I give to you. My peace I leave with you. Be brave. Let it all in.”

Jesus’ communication with people was reciprocal (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus gives to people and expects people to reciprocate through giving to him or to God, but also by giving to other people. In Luke 6:38 Jesus states that as people give they will receive, the standard for their receiving being their giving. As people give, they receive. To the degree they give they receive and in the manner they give they receive. Jesus’ relationship with people was collaborative. The counseling relationship is a collaborative relationship. While the roles of counselor and client are different and need to be maintained with clear boundaries there is give and take between counselor and client. Both give and both receive. Both have expectations of the other, expectations that need to be made clear. And the therapeutic alliance becomes a model for other important relationships the client has or clients have. In every pastoral, teaching and counseling relationship I receive from the relationship as much as I give. On one level it may be a paycheck. But it is more than that. The basic currency of an authentic, genuine pastoral or spiritual counseling relationship is grace. Grace has varied meaning in the Bible. It can indicate the whole of God’s activity or a segment of that activity. One common definition is the unmerited favor of God towards people. It is

undeserved acceptance and love received from another. It is a favor, gift or kindness that pleases someone else (Broadman and Holman, 1991). Grace is a kind of divine life energy or power that is transformative. While the roles are different, therapeutic relationships transcend roles. Compassion, love, knowledge, affirmation, encouragement, trust, belief and positive expectation is communicated. Communication is always giving and receiving.

There is a certain intimacy in the counselor-client relationship, the bounds of which are defined by the counselor-client covenant. This intimacy involves confidentiality. The client places confidence in the counselor. But the counselor places confidence in the client, modeling confidentiality in the process. Jesus placed his confidence in people, sharing with them what he knew (Gonzalez, 1994). In John 15:15 Jesus tells his disciples that they are his friends not his servants and because of that he shares with them everything he has learned from his Father, God. There is a tendency to reciprocate what is given to one. So, as Jesus shares his confidences with people, they want to do the same with him. Jesus treats his disciples like friends, sharing eternal, human, and personal secrets with those who will listen. Sharing in this way Jesus becomes like the people he shares with. He shares with them his interior experience and becomes vulnerable to their influence as the result. The counselor can share confidences with clients according to their need. Intimacy is created by doing this. I suspect that Jesus was judicious in sharing confidences. After all, he told his disciples to not throw pearls to swine. The Canaanite women approached Jesus because her daughter was ill. At first he ignored her. He had no connection with her. She was a

Canaanite. His mission was to the Jews. It was a clear mission. It was not to the Gentiles. Jesus discouraged her telling her that a master does not throw bread to the dogs. Now that was a not so kind reference to her and her people. The woman responded, "But even the dogs eat the crumbs from the master's table." Jesus was startled. "You have great faith. Go home and you will find your daughter healed. This story begins: Jesus and she have no connection, nor should they. She is a woman and she is a Gentile. The Canaanites were enemies. The bread Jesus had to offer was the Word of God. The Word of God was for the Jews. Now, if you were a woman and a man called you a dog what would you feel? What Jesus and the woman shared together was quite intimate and candid. Jesus told her the way it was. She responded back the way it was for her. Jesus responded to her with love, seeing her as a person, even a child of God and blessed her for her faith, courage and love of her daughter. Jesus was changed by this interaction. His mission was no longer just to the Jews. It was to Gentiles. It was to anyone who sought him. The Word of God, the Messiah was no longer to the Jews, but to the world. All were worthy of salvation. They were connected at the deepest level. But Jesus and she were changed by their encounter, both significantly. The counselor needs to be just as open to the client and Jesus was to this woman, open to seeing her for who she was, a person of worth who had something to offer him. The counselor can be resistant to the client too. This is counter transference. And the counselor has to transform that resistance into support for the client's "defiant spirit" (Frankl, 1988) "will for healing" (Frankl, 1988), or counter-will (Rank, 1950). One way of treatment resistance is to not label it as such. Resistance can be seen as an expression of a client's will and a manifestation of a client's will to

power (Rank 1945). A client's will can be seen as a healthy and even creative act and a positive step in the client's personality growth and development (Rank, 1945). In NLP a client may not be reacting against a counselor's intervention. The client may be responding on the basis of their own internal map or model. Due to deletion, distortion and generalization the client may not understand the counselor's intervention or may be responding to the counselor's communication in a way not intended by the counselor. Some would treat this as resistance, but it may be feedback. Perhaps the counselor is not communicating what he intended to. If the counselor wants a different response from the client, the counselor may need to change what or how he is communicating to the client. The client may also not change in the direction desired by the counselor, or even by the client, because the change would produce distress somewhere in the client's social system. The counselor needs to be flexible enough to change his approach to the client. The resistance may indicate the counselor does not have rapport with the client and needs to take action to obtain rapport. The assumption, by the counselor, needs to be that the client has the internal resources to succeed, including the will or motivation to do so, if the client so chooses. The client may also be making the best choice available to him, given the circumstances. The counselor is aiming to increase the choices available to the client.

While much that we have discussed up until now pertains to all forms of counseling, it is necessary to understand that Jesus was primarily a spiritual teacher who applied his teaching to everyday living. Mind, body and spirit were important to him. For many counselors the only concern is mind and body. The material and the spiritual went

together for Jesus with the spiritual being primary. For many counselors the mental, emotional and behavioral functioning of the client are the primary concerns of treatment. Jesus' concern was holistic. The spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, behavioral and relational aspects of the person need to be integrated and coordinated in a balanced way. And so the type of counseling discussed here is spiritual or pastoral counseling.

There is a tendency is to think of counseling in a Western manner as it originated in Europe and grew with influence as it spread to Europe and North America. But a Jesus-based spiritual counseling had its origins in the Near East and possibly the Far East. There is much to learn from the Eastern approach of teacher and disciple or guru and disciple. Thus, the intimacy which in Western terms is described as sexual, and familial intimacy, in Eastern terms have to do with a shared sense of inner self-hood and experiential knowledge of divinity. Boundaries of self and other, first well-defined, become progressively, systematically and consciously more porous, and a new definition of self emerges that is both distinct and radically related to a Supreme Self/Other and to all other beings. This new identity is radically unique, compassionate and wise as it is born in knowledge of that which is whole beyond all wholeness. The sharing that happens between teacher and disciple, or spiritual counselor and client, thus involves a sharing in the presence of the divine. There is a transmission of spiritual knowledge, from the teacher or counselor to the student or client, that transforms the client's or disciple's way of being, knowing and experiencing. This kind of sharing is distinctively spiritual. A qualification is that this transmission of knowledge and power is only possible from a counselor or teacher who is at the appropriate level of

psychological, cognitive and spiritual development and to students or clients who are prepared to receive that knowledge.

Jesus was complimentary of people (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus compliments and praises people, making them more receptive. The counselor can use compliments and praise to build up clients or groups of clients. This is true praise and compliment even if it is of something small. Jesus is always genuine.

Sometimes it is important to confront rather than be complimentary. Jesus confronted Peter after he complimented him when Peter recognized that Jesus was the Messiah and Son of the living God. Peter told Jesus that he certainly would not have to die as he had said. Jesus addressed Peter, “Get behind me Satan. You are thinking in human ways, not godly ways” (Matthew 16:13-23). Peter is not being dismissed by Jesus. He is being educated by Jesus. Peter is capable of learning and growing. Jesus is removing fear and doubt from Peter and preparing him to be a teacher in the tradition of Jesus. The counselor can balance the use of compliment and confrontation. When Nicodemus challenged Jesus’ teaching that Nicodemus must be born again by asking how someone can be literally born again, Jesus confronted him asking Nicodemus whether he was a teacher of Israel and if he were he ought to know these things. Nicodemus would have to understand these earthly things before he could understand heavenly things. Jesus was not dismissing Nicodemus. He even praised him, recognizing him as a teacher of Israel. This confrontation was an invitation to Nicodemus to take the next step in his spiritual development; to be born of the spirit, not

just of the flesh and for the spirit to enter into and transform his body and life in the world (John 3:1-21).

Jesus was cooperative with people. Jesus creates familiarity with people by mutual and successful cooperation (Gonzalez, 1994). He elicits cooperation from his disciples and the people he heals. Those he heals must contribute to their healing, even if their contribution is faith. Indeed, faith is all Jesus requires. At other times, Jesus is seeking commitment. What makes Jesus an effective teacher is that he is collaborative. Indeed, salvation is a collaborative enterprise between God and humans, initiated by God, but involving humans. The Kingdom of God is a collaborative enterprise of God and humans (Crossan and Borg, 2012). The counselor can maximize rapport with clients by finding points of cooperation and collaboration and building on them. This might include homework, sending the client out to serve in some way, trying out the teaching or intervention in real life and incorporating it in their lifestyle. This can increase the client's sense of purpose, meaning and usefulness as well as the sense of personal accomplishment and belonging.

Jesus was physically attractive (Gonzalez, 1994). Of course, no one knows what Jesus looked like. I prefer to believe that Jesus looks like me; balding on top and with a little extra padding. However many mystics speak of Jesus' beauty and light. His attractiveness is reckoned in the gospels as charisma, where his disciples respond to a single call to them to follow him and crowds seek after him relentlessly. To model Jesus physical attraction you want to focus not on what he looked like, but his charisma. If what he looked like was important the scriptures would have provided us with a portrait

or a detailed description. Part of Jesus' charisma is attributed to his identity as Son of God and Messiah. In placing himself or being placed by others as associated with God in this manner, charisma is generated in Jesus. The counselor needs to be physically attractive. Now, I can only go so far in that. But this eliminates physical barriers to the counseling. Being clean, well groomed and presented is a start. Also having the meeting space in good order, being on-time and prepared for the session in one's own body, mind and spirit; being in the right state of mind and being; being fully present to the client and the client's needs. Being connected to the Source of Life, in identity with one's model, clear about one's beliefs and capabilities and with a plan for the session to accomplish the goals of the session can add to one's attractiveness or presence adding to one's charisma. The counselor does not have to be Jesus, but like Jesus, a disciple of Jesus, representing Jesus to the client as your own self. The counselor becomes in essence a model for the client in being fully present in this way.

Jesus was consistent and congruent. This makes Jesus reliable and trustworthy to people (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus is consistent unto death, putting his life on the line everyday for people, risking his life. Jesus' integrity and consistency reinforce people's integrity and consistency as they internalize these and other characteristics of Jesus. The counselor who models Jesus can match outer expression to inner conviction on a consistent basis. The opposite of this is compromised in your expression by external concerns. Jesus came into conflict with Temple authorities by claiming internal authority. The counselor needs to have a well-formed identity, display authentic self-hood and maintain his values, beliefs and convictions in the face of doubts or

opposition. While the counselor does not want to argue with a client, the counselor must maintain faith and conviction in the face of client resistance. A client will be insecure in a counseling relationship, if a counselor's words diverge from the counselor's non-verbal cues, or if the counselor's state of consciousness or emotional state and attention were often fluctuating. Warmth and familiarity establishes stability, increases rapport and trust and provides space into which a client can be vulnerable and risk revealing sensitive details of experience. The counselor may be thought of maintaining a holding environment or therapeutic frame that will contain the client's transference or projections long enough for the client to integrate them (Winnicott, 1971; Fordham, 1996). This is a mental capacity of the counselor to encompass the client's symptoms and symbolic communications. The boundaries between counselor and client need to be permeable to allow mutual influence and at the same time offer containment and holding sufficient for intense affective experiences. The counselor must be reliable and consistent as well as empathic. The boundaries may be clearly defined roles; length of treatment; day, time and length of sessions; place of treatment; rules of treatment such as confidentiality; norms for treatment around arrival time, end time and touching.

Jesus was non-manipulative (Gonzalez, 1994). While some NLP practitioners are trained to engineer compliance, Jesus does not manipulate people. He influences people but does not psychologically coerce them. He makes the most out of their desire for integrity, congruency and consistency. This ethic is imperative for the counselor. There needs to be great respect for clients. The counselor can be

persuasive without being manipulative. Being skillful in communications does not make one manipulative. The counselor should never seek to have someone believe and do something they do not want to believe and do. Jesus came upon a lame man who could not get himself into the healing waters at Bethsaida at the time he had to for the healing to take place (John 5:1-15). The man was helpless. He was not hopeless enough that he kept himself away from the water. He wanted to be healed. He did not believe it was possible. Jesus asked him if he wanted to be healed. The man replied “yes.” Had he said “no,” Jesus would not have directed him to take the next step which was to rise up and enter into the water on his own. Jesus did not place him in the water but had the man take that step. The classical Christian position is that Jesus (God) is the healer. However, in this case the man had to be responsible to receive the divine contribution for healing and did so by saying “yes.” He said “yes” to the question “Do you want to be healed?” He said “yes” to the instruction, “Get up. Pick up your mat and walk.” He said “yes” to hope and possibility. The counselor has to believe in the possibility of new life for the client and the possibility that the client can say yes and perform the directive given by the counselor. There is authority in that belief and it elicits a decision within the client to believe or not and to act or not.

Jesus employed metaphors and similes (Gonzalez, 1994). In Matthew 5:13-14, Jesus refers people as salt and light and as having the qualities of salt and light. When he speaks about the Kingdom of Heaven or of God, Jesus uses similes, a form of metaphor. He says that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed (Mark 4:31). A metaphor is a statement that reads “you or it *is* a rock, salt, light, or love.” A simile is a

statement that reads “you or it *is like* a seed, rose, or house.” Metaphors and similes are powerful literary or oral devices. They are like maps that organize thoughts and actions. They provide direction and orientation that leads to a certain sense of reality. Metaphors can be visual, auditory, kinesthetic, gustatory and olfactory, like the predicates. Other metaphors Jesus uses, relative to himself are “Way” (John 14:6), “Truth” (John 14:6), “Life” (John 14:6), “Bread” (John 6:35), “Vine” (John 15:1-7), “Grace” (John 1:14-17), “Door” (John 10:1-4), “Gate” (John 10: 7-10), “Good Shepherd” (John 10:1-18), “Son of God” (Matthew 16:13-20), and “Son of Man” (Matthew 20: 28). There are many. Metaphors are multi-sensory. The images used by Jesus are seen, heard, felt, smelt and tasted. Metaphors are symbolic, the symbol representing or pointing to the reality or truth it represents. Jesus has a clear outcome in using them in his speech. The counselor can utilize metaphor, simile and symbol, even ritual, in communicating with clients, even if they are different metaphors than Jesus used. Jesus created or drew his metaphors from the activities and things that surrounded him in his life. These activate the clients at their unconscious level, even their spiritual unconscious. They can activate processes in clients that are archetypal, deeply imbedded patterns that elicit cognitive and behavioral actions in the client and bypassing conscious resistance in the client. The “I AM Discourses” of Jesus in the Gospel are an example of Jesus applying metaphors and symbols of self-reference (Just, 2012). The images he uses have readily accessible symbolic meaning to the people Jesus is addressing. They are sacramental images in that they point to a spiritual reality that can be accessed through identifying with Jesus. Jesus says “I am” forty-five times in the Gospel of John. In the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament, God or

Yahweh is referred to as “I Am.” Jesus makes absolute emphatic “I am” statements nine times in the Gospel of John. These statements are important but they lack a predicate. Usually the statement is the self-reference “I am he.” Jesus makes the predicate emphatic “I am” statements sixteen times. Some of these are repeated. There are seven images or metaphors that Jesus says he is or “I am.” These are “Bread of Life,” “Light of the World,” “Good Shepherd,” “Resurrection and Life,” “Way,” “Truth” and “Vine.” Each of these refers back to a Hebrew Bible or Old Testament depiction of God.

So when Jesus says of himself “I am the Bread of Life” he is saying he is this aspect of God. Through each of these images, having linked himself to them, Jesus invites people to experience God in their life through him as that image. Jesus is saying “I am” is the “Bread of Life,” meaning two things: “God is the Bread of Life” and he, Jesus, is the “Bread of Life.” Jesus is given as bread to his disciples like God gave a kind of bread, manna, to the Hebrew people in the desert. In that this is God’s bread, it is bread from heaven, spiritual bread, referred in the New Testament pericopes where Jesus is tempted by Satan. Bread is also a metaphor used to refer to Jesus’ body sacrificed for the forgiveness of sin. Jesus gives himself, his body and blood, his life as a settlement for the salvation of the world. People who follow Jesus are to be bread like Jesus was bread, to make a living sacrifice of their lives the way Jesus made a living sacrifice of his life for them. Classical Christianity insists that people can be bread to the world but they cannot be Bread to the world. They can be like Christ, but not Christ. But more Gnostic Christians might suggest that they can be Bread to the world like

Jesus was Bread to the world. The counselor is bread for the life of the client. The counselor may have to help a client receive physical food or money, psychological food like right thoughts, and spiritual food, the word of God or truth in portions the client can understand until the client can feed them-selves.

Jesus also makes reference to himself as “Light of the World.” Christians of course make reference to Jesus as the “Son of God.” They often associate his identity as “Son” with “Sun.” He is referred to as a light so brilliant that it dispels all darkness. The created world is, according to classical Christianity, lost to sin. As such it is dark, but not all dark. It is a world of Shadows. But when the world is redeemed, light is cast on the shadows such that there are no shadows. Everything hidden comes out of the shadows and into the open or into the light. Darkness is transformed into light. This light of Christ, the light of God manifest in the world is so bright that it is blinding. Adjustment need be made to it. One must accommodate to it and learn to see again within its influence. When one approaches Jesus as “Light of the world” one experiences the light that is God, the dazzling “unbearable light of Being.” One undergoes a transformation in the presence of this light, all darkness in one is eradicated, and one experiences himself as a being of light. Classical Christianity would insist that the Son of God shares in the same light as the Father God. Through the encounter with Jesus as the “Light of the World” one becomes “light to the world.” A Gnostic Christian rendering is that a disciple of Jesus can be light to the world in the way Jesus is. The light that is in Jesus is the same light that is God. Jesus is identified with God as Light. Through identification with Jesus as Light of the world, a person can

be a Light of the World. The Classical Christian understanding would suggest that perhaps the light in the person is reflecting the light of Jesus like the moon reflects the light of the sun. A Gnostic Christian understanding is the light shines from the person like it shines from God and from Jesus as from the sun. God, Jesus and humans share in the same one light. The counselor may have to bring light to bear upon the client's life; to guide the client to come out of the shadows of his own defenses and into the light of presence and truth, even to love parts of himself that have been rejected, repressed or denied. The counselor may have to help the client to adjust to new brighter possibilities and realities. The counselor may have to help the client make what is the client's personal and spiritual unconscious conscious and integrate that in to the client's personality and self-understanding.

The image of the Good Shepherd is the image of the pastor. The Spanish for the phrase Good Shepherd is "Buen Pastor". The Good Shepherd so loves his sheep that he will risk his life, fight and die for them. He will not abandon them and flee in the face of danger. He will provide them pasture and water. He will lead them along narrow and treacherous paths. He will use his staff to rescue them if they fall off the path. He will use his staff to ward off predators. He will provide hedges that protect the sheep from predators. He will nurse, heal and soothe the sheep's hurts, illness and upset and fill their troughs. He will lead them into and out of their stable. He will be trustworthy and they will know and trust his voice and enter through the gates he opens for them. Jesus enlisted people to be shepherds or pastors of his people. He charged them to care and lead his people. Their show of love for the people was a demonstration of love for him.

This is a great model for a pastor, but also for the counselor. The pastoral counselor needs to recognize that they have a charge to keep, a charge given to them by God, a responsibility. The counselor must be trustworthy and convey that trustworthiness to the client. Jesus says that his sheep know his voice” and presumably trust it. Rapport is built in caring for the sheep. The counselor then leads the client, like a shepherd leads the sheep, the client following the voice it has learned to trust. Of course, the Shepherd leads the sheep to where they need to go. The counselor does the same with the client.

Jesus says that he is “the Resurrection and the Life.” Jesus is said to have been raised from the dead to life. Jesus also is said to have raised people from the dead, like Lazarus. In the cases where Jesus resurrected people from the dead, people who loved the deceased wanted their loved ones raised. They sought his help. They believed that if he had been there before the person died that he could have healed them. Now, that they were dead it was too late. Jesus quieted the doubts of survivors and then directed the deceased to wake up (from the dead) or come out (of the tomb). Jesus elicited from Martha her belief in the Messiah to come. She did not know that he was the Messiah, and he elicited from her, her belief in the end-time resurrection of the dead. He then revealed himself to her as the Christ. Interestingly, he did this before he died and rose from the dead. Jesus was revealing his mastery over death to Martha. He was eliciting her belief in him. In this, Martha was the first witness to the resurrection and eternal life. He was initiating Martha into knowledge of resurrection and life activating her hope for resurrection and life for her brother and herself. If Jesus

was “the Resurrection and the Life” then he could raise Lazarus from the dead, he could be raised from the dead, and the promise of the resurrection of all the dead was possible. The promise of eternal life was more than a blind hope; it was real. The counselor needs to be able to convey hope for resurrection and new life.

Some years ago I counseled a family in the days leading up to the family patriarch’s death and shortly after in preparing his funeral. Frank was an alcoholic and had been drinking destructively for over forty years. His adult children could not remember their father sober. While they loved him and maintained contact with him the man he used to be was dead. One day he was rushed to the hospital with a major heart attack. He had been drinking and while in the hospital went through alcoholic DTs. The doctor told him that he needed immediate surgery to live. Not thinking clearly, Frank declined the surgery. He would rather die. The doctor told the family to contact me and the funeral home. He would not make it through the weekend, if not the night. I came to his room. He wanted last rights. I anointed him with oil and prayed for him. The next day I received a call. Frank’s DTs were clearing up. He was thinking more clearly. He wanted the surgery after all. The doctor examined him and determined that to put him on the operating table would kill him. He refused Frank’s request. Frank fought the doctor’s decision and the next day the doctor again rejected his request. On the next day, Frank summoned the doctor again. The doctor was surprised that Frank was still alive. Upon examining Frank, he told Frank, “You no longer need the surgery. You are going to live.” Frank lived six months longer. His adult children visited him nearly every day in a skilled nursing facility. He did not consume a drop of alcohol over this period of

time. During this reprieve they came to know their father again. They kept waiting for another lapse but it did not come. He died in peace. His faith was strong. He relished those last months with his family. At the funeral, with the agreement of the family, I named the alcoholism and we buried the alcoholism with his body while declaring that by his faith in Christ his spirit was being raised to heaven. At the moment that I said these words his adult children burst out in a fit of tears and laughter. They were being flooded with memories of their father and their relationship with him from before he began drinking alcoholically at the time his wife died. I said that Frank had died in Christ and that whenever they prayed to Christ, their father was alive. Frank's children experienced resurrection and life that day, the resurrection and life of their father in Christ. The pastoral or spiritual counselor needs to make use of their own and the client's belief about life and death and resurrection and new life. This can be different depending upon the client's religious tradition or belief system. This takes some discrimination upon the counselor's part because the client may not be aware of their belief. The client may not have mined the depths or ascended heights of his spiritual unconscious. The counselor needs to hold the spiritual dimension of resurrection and eternal life in mind in the counseling. Note that some clients may have different but corresponding ideas appropriate for their stage of life. The Hindu may be concerned with reincarnation and the Buddhist with rebirth. But understanding the client's conscious or unconscious beliefs around death and dying is important. Unconscious clues to what they believe may be found in the culture or religion or belief-system they grew up with or are associated with currently.

I have gotten a lot of mileage out of the story about Frank both in sermons and in counseling. It has helped people find resolution with members of their families with whom they are estranged. Persons who are terminally ill and have a relatively short time remaining with family and friends have found value in it. The story of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection, his involvement with disciples after his death and resurrection and his sending the Holy Spirit to his disciples after his ascension, has led people to believe in both a saving Messiah and an empowering one. I was able to make use of death and resurrection as a structure on which Frank's family could find meaning and affect reconciliation, both with their father and within themselves. For this to be effective, I had to understand the details of their life experience, the parameters and characteristics of their experience and the connections between them. Then I had to apply the death and resurrection metaphor to their situation so that they found their life story in it. As they were in their life experience, their entering into the Christ story allowed the family to rapidly reconcile with their father.

Jesus also said, "I am the way, the truth and the life and that no one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). This statement has been used as a proof of the exclusivity of Jesus and the Christian religion. Such an interpretation makes an idol of Jesus and diminishes the impact of this statement. Certainly, Jesus is identifying himself with God. God is his source and his aim. However, Jesus is actualizing religious-ethical values and a vision derived from a spiritual dimension in real, flesh and blood life and relationships. He is living out his religion. Unfortunately, many people have made a religion about Jesus rather than modeling the religion of Jesus. This is not

to say that Jesus should not be revered, only that his example and teachings are most important. Jesus sees himself as coming from God, living in a godly way, according to God's word and will, and returning to God. He finds his identity with God as God's Son. The reference "I am" reflects back to Yahweh's answers to Moses' request to know his name. By the way, Yahweh did not want to name himself. He answered "I am who I am." Interpreters have taken to be Yahweh's name, "I am." One way to read this statement is "'I am' is the way, the truth and the life. . ." God is the way, the truth and the life. Jesus is identified with God. But Jesus enjoins his disciples to identify with him. Live the way, the truth and the life that I am or that I live; that is the way, the truth and the life that leads to God." Marcus Borg defines the "way, the truth and life" that allows one to go to the Father (God) as the "way of suffering, death and resurrection" (2004). It is the way of surrender of one's ego and will to God. In this sense Jesus is the "Great Exemplar" (Thurman 1966) that we are to follow. He provides an archetypal pattern by which we can live like him, actualize our potential as he did his, and claim our crown that is unity with him, God and realization of the Kingdom or Reign of God on earth. The crown of thorns, the crown of suffering becomes the crown of glory. Human beings wear the crown of glory together as the embodiment of Christ. This way of life, as exemplified by Jesus, is a way of responsibility, self-sacrifice and transcendence. Whatever suffering is necessary in order to attain or maintain integrity with one's values is endured, and physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual limitations transcended in order to actualize those values in real life. The counselor needs to be a model to the client in the way, truth and life that leads to unity with God.

Jesus says “I am the true vine” (John 15:1). He is rooted to God. Those who are his disciples are branches connected to him the vine. He sees himself as the lifeline that connects people to God. Yet vine, branches and God are not separate. Where there is disconnect between vine and branches, the branches will die. Where there are breaks along the branches between leaves, those further from the vine stock will die. Where there is a break in connection there needs to be repair. The counselor who is identified with Jesus needs to be part of a community where the counselor is connected to the vine and has connection as a branch with others in the same branch and perhaps to other branches. When counseling, the counselor needs to identify with Jesus as the vine, make connection with the client and assist the client in having healthy relationships in its branch and with other branches all which belong to the same body via its relationship to the vine.

Jesus employed parables. The parables used by Jesus are more elaborate metaphors in the forms of stories. Parables are “similitudes that employ a short narrative fiction to reference a transcendent symbol” (Scott 1994, 154). Parables do not need an introduction but go straight to the point (Gonzalez, 1994). In parables, verbs are in the historic past tense. No comparison is made in a parable with events that occur regularly or which can be repeatedly observed. The parable is not an exemplary story which needs an explanatory application to be understood. The images used in the parable are simply a sample taken from everyday life. No transfer is needed from symbol or image to reality. The illustration already belongs to the intended sphere. The parable may involve an illustration that is unusual and so attract the attention of the hearer or reader

(Scott, 1994). It can employ metaphors as long as they remain within the comprehension of the audience. It needs to be familiar to the audience, drawn from the shared cultural heritage of the audience. The story can present surprise, but must remain realistic, meaningful and plausible so as not to force the audience to appeal to allegorical interpretation. Allegory demands that the presenter make a link between image and meaning. The parable in its telling is whole and complete, transporting its meaning in its telling without recourse to explanation or interpretation by the presenter (Scott, 1994). Jesus utilized parables to express his message. He told the parable in concrete circumstances. The images he used in the parables were familiar to his audiences and related to their customs. The social and economic backgrounds of the parables are self-evident. The message Jesus gives through the parables is illustrated and corroborated by his own life. Jesus' self and story is a metaphor for God for humankind (Scott, 1994). Parables employ characters, structure, and message (Scott, 1994). This corresponds to Gordon's idea that stories and metaphors are structured around details, scope and connections and are at best isomorphic. In Jesus' case, they were therapeutic or transformative. Jesus' metaphors and stories allowed his listeners to derive their own meaning and make parallel connections from the metaphor to their own circumstances at an unconscious level. The characters and events that occur in Jesus' stories are equivalent with those individuals and events which make up his listeners' situations or problems. The situations, events and processes within Jesus' metaphors do not directly represent his listeners' situations but act as an equivalent to them. They preserve the same relationships between the metaphor and the situation. This allows the listeners to identify which aspects in the metaphor most closely

represent themselves and their situation without conscious intervention. This involves an unconscious matching process, thus stopping the natural filtering process that happens when we try to consciously interpret a story. Jesus' metaphors were isomorphic. There were drawn from the worlds his listeners lived in and knew about: agriculture, fishing, laboring in vineyards, a religious meta-worldview, a social structure and the country living. Jesus knew the S.C.O.R.E. model of NLP (Gordon, 1976). He assessed people's situation or symptoms, their understanding of the cause of their plight, what they desired as an outcome from his encounter with them, what resources they needed to obtain that outcome and what the effect of obtaining that outcome would be. Now Jesus did not have a score card to strategize with but likely shaped parables on the basis of an assessment like this. The metaphors Jesus used were made to correspond to his listeners' situations. There would be equivalent characters in the story to the listeners and significant others in their lives. And it would involve places and objects that were familiar to them in their everyday life and culture. There would be events that correspond to actions and events experienced in the listeners present and past. In the progression of the story's plot the protagonist in the story might find the needed resource through an interaction with someone wise, by going on a journey, through an ordeal, through a dream, through learning a task or seeing something in a new way. The resource is the key that the listener needs to obtain and use. When Jesus delivered his story he obtained rapport with his listeners. And then, the listeners came up with the answers. Some were befuddled. They did not possess the cognitive ability to make sense of the story. Perhaps they were dependent upon law and order, being told what to do by authoritative figures.

The story progresses through three essential moments: the present state, resources and the desired state. To model on Jesus' use of parables it is necessary to refer back to the reason behind Jesus' use of parables. What Jesus conveyed through the use of parable likely could not be explained in any other way. Jesus was aiming to convey a transformative, experiential knowledge of the Kingdom of God through the Parables.

The counselor after the mold of Jesus utilizes story, like parables, that involve clients in their hearing of the story as participants in the story or witnesses to the story. They are carried along in the story and attain to the goal of the story. Trance is induced in the telling and hearing of the story, resistance to its meaning and conclusion eliminated and the creative unconsciousness or spiritual unconsciousness aroused in the client. New insights arise and the message is received in the unconscious of the client. New patterns of thinking are inserted in the client's mind and new patterns of behavior follow. In NLP the concern is not on the content or what of the communication, but on the structure or how of the communication (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). The structure of the communication is the process of the communication. In modeling Jesus, then, attention need be placed not on what Jesus said or did, but how he said or did it.

In the story of the man at the pool in Bethzatha where invalids went to be healed, Jesus approached a man who had been ill for thirty-eight years. Jesus asked the man if he wanted to be healed. The man responded by telling Jesus why he was unable to take advantage of the healing waters of the pool. Jesus then directed the man to stand up, pick up his mat and walk. The man did just that (John 5:1-9). When Jesus first saw the man he knew that the man had been by the pool for a long time. He had compassion

for the man and attuned himself to the man. He calibrated to the man. He understood the man's distress and responded to it with his question. Jesus had an embedded statement in his question, "Do you want to be healed?" The imbedded statement was "You want to be healed." The man did not say yes, but he did not say no either. He explained his situation. Jesus then commanded him to take three actions, "Stand up, pick up your mat and walk." What the man said to Jesus was irrelevant. It was that he was engaged by Jesus that mattered. What mattered was how Jesus conveyed his message, "If you want to be healed, stand up, and pick up your mat and walk."

Presumably, Jesus told stories to teach (Scott, 1989). Parables served as a vehicle for his teaching. Jesus did not tell stories to entertain. Jesus, through parables, introduced the Kingdom of God. These parables employed a primary, overarching metaphor. The Kingdom of God is a concept but it is more than a concept. It is a metaphor. It describes a state that exists, not on the earth, but in heaven. It exists as a potentiality. This is not the same as not existing at all. It exists like a seed exists. The potential of the seed exists even before it becomes a seed. It exists in the species of the flower from which the seed will be born. Jesus' whole life, or much of it, can be treated as a metaphor, as a parable, as a story with meaning that teaches (Scott, 1989). Dilt's logical levels (1998) descend, heaven to earth, and rise earth to heaven, spirit descending from its source, being accessed through identity, being prepared to act via belief, becoming powerful through capability, becoming empowered to act and impacting the world through words and actions. The environment, changed by behavior, can become a milieu that fosters productive behavior, which leads to people

feeling confident, which leads to people believing in themselves and others, which causes new identity and leads to more desire to turn to the source.

This Kingdom of God represented a new way of being human and in human community. This Kingdom of God was expressed as an alternative model of being human and living in human community to the prevailing model that existed at Jesus' time. It was pointed to in the scripture but did not previously exist or it existed in primitive form. The model that it emerged in opposition to was a pre-industrial, agrarian, domination system (Borg and Crossan, 2009). This domination system was characterized by imperialistic aristocratic rule by an elite few, economic exploitation, religious legitimization and violent oppression. It was a system that had at its top a beast (Daniel 7), that beast being Rome and its Emperor (Borg and Crossan, 2009). This was the world order in which the Jews of Jesus' day lived. Jesus promulgated an alternative vision. This vision of the Kingdom of God was characterized by shared power, just economic distribution, a just God and non-violent collaboration (Borg and Crossan, 2009). At the top of this system was "someone like a human" from God in heaven (Daniel 7:1-28). The first system was destructive and dominating of people. The second was creative and empowering of people (Borg and Crossan, 2009). Jesus modeled for the world and put in place in the world a new model for being human and being in human community. It stood in opposition to the Kingdom of Caesar and Rome (Borg and Crossan, 2009). Jesus' strategy was an isomorphic metaphor strategy (Gordon, 1978). Jesus identified a problem; the domination system of Rome. He detailed its characteristics: ruled by a few, economic exploitation, legitimized by religion and violent

oppression. He utilized a symbol of the system that summed up its characteristics; The Beast. He described the scope of the Beast. The Beast devoured, trampled upon and broke to pieces the nations it dominated. Connections were made between the Beast or Rome and the people of Israel, between Rome and the Jewish leaders, between the Jewish leaders and the people and between Jews and Gentiles. The context in which this metaphor is set is first century Israel living under imperial Roman rule and living 500 of the previous 600 years occupied by foreign powers. A new context is provided by Jesus, a vision from outside the current system, from heaven, the current system being condemned by God and challenged. Jesus makes connections between God and the Jewish people, God and the religious leaders, he and the religious leaders, he and Rome and God and Rome. The scope of the one like a human one who comes from God (the Ancient of Days or Eternal One) is that he is more powerful than the beast and he will overcome the beast and its power. The detail is that this human one will lead the people to rise up and throw off their oppression and create a just, non-exploitive, non-destructive, non-violent and non-oppressive society where resources are shared equitably. In place of the Beast and its domination system is the Christ (like a human one) and his collaborative system (Borg and Crossan, 2009).

Jesus assessed people as he communicated with them (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus sizes up people and assesses their condition; physical, psychological, emotional, social and spiritual. Spiritually they are alienated from God, themselves and others. Counselors must always be assessing their clients, at the outset of the counseling and throughout, including during interventions and after. Jesus did not sit down with paper and pen and

describe the attributes of people. Rather Jesus engaged them, observed them, and responded to them based upon these observations. Part of this assessment was unconscious based upon their non-verbal behavior and related to his sensory-acuity, his ability to sense what his audience was experiencing. The counselor need be aware of the client's verbal and non-verbal cues throughout their engagement. This becomes an internalized and unconscious process as Jesus is observed as a model and the observations are incorporated into the counselor's behaviors with clients. Jesus' response to people was not preformed but followed upon their response to him at the levels of being, experience, thought, emotion, word and action. Jesus assessed their response and matched his communication to their response in order to obtain the outcome he desired.

Jesus was prescriptive (Gonzalez, 1994). Jesus specifies the desired state of people he engaged with. They do not like the feeling of alienation from God. This alienation is characterized by emptiness and anxiety. The desired state of his audience is one of union with God and the profound pleasure, joy and happiness that comes from that unity. So Jesus' goal is to lead people into an experience of union with God. It is to lead them to the experience of pleasure, joy and happiness and personal power and accomplishment or peace, love, compassion, satisfaction and meaning. The counselor needs to understand what the client wants to experience even when they do not know what they want to experience or think they want to experience something else. Jesus was directive in this even commanding them to certain behavior; to love one another, to take up their cross and follow him, to forgive, etc. . . .

Jesus had well-formed and ecological goals for people (Gonzalez, 1994). It is stated in positive terms, can be initiated and maintained, is testable in sensory experience, preserves the positive aspects of the present experience, can be appropriately contextualized, and is ecologically sound. An ecological goal is balanced, healthy, enhances life, empowers people, increases resourcefulness and brings out one's best. If the goals are related to thoughts, feelings, and states, do these serve the person well, enhance their life, move them towards their desired outcome, empower, limit or affect others or complicate matters in any way (Hall 1995).

The counselor wants to have well formed and ecological goals for the counseling and for their clients to have well-formed and ecological goals. It is necessary to know what outcome is desired from the counseling, create the environment for that outcome to be realized, and make sure that there are no negative consequences for the client realizing that goal. Otherwise there will be resistance to the goal or the client will relapse in their progress towards the goal or maintenance of the goal. Indeed the solution is contained in the well-formed goal. If a blind beggar were to be healed by Jesus, he would want to be able to see. He might be motivated by the possibilities that sight provided. But, the blind man might not want to see if he had to face some situation that he would rather avoid or if now he could not beg but there was no chance of his being employed. A bank robber released from prison with no education or job training and no non-criminal friends on the outside might be pressed back to a life of crime.

Jesus utilized awareness of the normal human condition to motivate people to desire change from their present state to their desired state (Gonzalez, 1994). There is a

natural desire or motivation in human beings to move away from anxiety, pain and unhappiness to peace, pleasure, and joy. And there is a natural desire in human beings to move towards pleasure and life (Freud 1895). The counselor needs to lead the people to perceive their current disdain for their present condition and view an achievable and desirable alternative future. Jesus did this with the lame man at the pool of Bethsaida. There was something compelling about Jesus to the invalid; a certain charisma that he picked up on when Jesus addressed him. All of a sudden, addressed as he was by Jesus, the man realized that not only did he want to be healed, he saw that he could be healed and believed that he could be healed. His encounter with Jesus was a God moment or Kairos moment where, born out of an encounter of God and man was a miracle. All of the man's reasons why he could not be well were dismissed. The man did not even get into the waters that he thought he needed to enter to receive healing. He was empowered by Jesus to stop thinking about getting well to get up, pick up his mat and carry it. He experienced a "strong principal of change." He moved from a contemplating state of change to an action state (Prochaska, Norcross and DiClemente, 2007).

Jesus communicated to the unconscious minds of people (Gonzalez, 1994). Neuro-linguistic programming posits an unconscious mind. The conscious mind contains what we are conscious of or aware of. The unconscious mind contains that which we are not conscious or aware of. People can be unconscious of environment, behaviors, and capabilities, beliefs and attitudes, identity and spirit. If they were conscious or aware of everything necessary to function they would be overwhelmed. The counselor wants to

consciously and intentionally communicate to the unconscious of clients. Jesus did this with metaphors and similes and parables. He did it by sleight of mouth. He did by referral to the imagination: “Imagine the birds of the air . . . ?” He did it by referring the future: “Blessed are you who are poor in the spirit for you will inherit the Kingdom of God.”

Gonzalez contends that Jesus used hypnosis (Gonzalez, 1994). Certainly Jesus was not a hypnotist. He did not go about trying to hypnotize people. The set of skills called hypnosis today did not exist in Jesus’ day. Jesus employed communication strategies similar those used by Milton Erickson. Erickson demonstrated that effective psychotherapy depends upon interpersonal and interpersonal relationships more than anything else. It depends upon the establishment of rapport within and between people.

Utilization of imagery almost always facilitates access to the person’s unconscious.

Note Jesus’ use of imagery in phrases like “You are light,” “you are salt,” and “I am the vine and you are the branches.” Obviously, people are not light, salt, and branches of a vine, but these phrases work to stimulate people’s imagination and provide them access to their unconscious mind. The counselor needs to access the client’s unconscious.

Jesus instructions to “Look at the birds of the sky . . . ” or “Think of the flowers growing in the fields . . . ” causes the audience to remember or imagine birds and flowers, and thus to expand their awareness. By statements such as these, Jesus builds on the foundation of rapport and paces people. After pacing them, Jesus is able to lead them. The statements Jesus makes about the birds and flowers are universal. There is no work on the part of his listeners to reference them. Jesus says, “Look at the birds of the

sky. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth more than they are? Can any of you, however much you worry, add one single cubit to your span of life? (Matthew 6:26-27).” At this point Jesus has people with him. Everything he says to them makes perfect sense, even though they are full of worry. Then he continues, “So do not worry; do not say ‘what are we to drink? What are we to eat? It is the Gentiles who set their thoughts on all these things. Your heavenly Father knows what you need. Set your hearts on his Kingdom first, and on God’s saving justice and all these things will be given you as well. So do not worry about tomorrow (Matthew 6:31-33).” “Like Dilts and Erickson (or perhaps like Jesus, Dilts and Erickson ...) provide an hierarchy of logical structures from the most accessible—birds and flowers, through His attitude towards their needs, their nature as God’s chosen and their hopes in the Kingdom and God’s ultimate provision ... (Gray, 2014). Counselors can lead their clients up a metaphorical stairway to heaven from their clients’ current life situations, through their behaviors, through their capabilities, through their beliefs to become new creatures through their relationship with God.

Logotherapy and Jesus: Victor Frankl and Robert Leslie

The emphasis here on Logo-therapy is that it is used widely in pastoral counseling, emphasizes the human spirit and because of Leslie’s study of the therapeutic behavior of Jesus. It is different from NLP in that Frankl was concerned with the question of why as serving as a motivator in life. The question “why” is concerned with meaning and motivation. NLP is more concerned with the question “how”. How did Frankl and other survive the Nazis concentration camps? They sought meaning out of their experience.

They sought and found reason or will to live. The will to live became more important, more valuable than the will to die. Staying positive about life in the midst of terror became an important strategy. It became their “behavioral preference (Gray, 2013). Transcending the concentration camp experience became a well-defined outcome for the survivors. With that goal in mind, they could prepare themselves for what they needed to do and how they needed to be in order to survive and to survive with dignity and a sound mind and spirit. They could not ignore their plight. It was undeniable. They were reminded of it day in and day out. And some days the horror rose to unbearable. Nor could they just think about it. They had to take charge of their lives, even of how they thought and felt. They had to see it from a different frame, a bigger frame from which they can find meaning and hope (Bandler and Grinder, 1979, 1982; Hall, 1996). Normal coping strategies would not suffice they would need to draw from resources seemingly beyond them, from the well of the spiritual unconscious, the collective unconscious or the deep self. And they would have to do it in a way that did not call attention themselves or put others on the spot.

Victor Frankl’s emphasis upon the need to find meaning in life is consistent with the central theme of Jesus’ ministry (Leslie, 2005). Indeed, the Kingdom of God and what it has to offer Israel and the world informs everything Jesus does. Its interaction with the Kingdom of the world frames Jesus’ life and ministry and gives it meaning. NLP can be used in pastoral counseling to empower the client in finding meaning and experiencing the Kingdom or Reality of God in one’s life. The Kingdom of God can be used as a frame within which the counseling is conducted and the outcome that the counseling

points to. If the Kingdom of God is a type of Consciousness as is proposed here then the client can be led to engage with and enter into the Kingdom reality at a pace appropriate to the client's developmental stage and psychological well-being.

Suffering played a key part in coming to an understanding of personal meaning (Frankl, 1959). Personal meaning is the result of how one engages suffering (Frankl, 1959). The evasion of life's difficulties, problems and tragedies is the cause of one's greatest anxieties and disorders of living. Such symptoms as depression, anxiety, apathy, adhedonia and even suicidality may be the result of failure to accept and address life's difficulties (Frankl, 1959). Frankl's aim is to find meaning in one's suffering and do what one is able to succeed from it. Such a perspective aligns well with Judeo-Christian thinking. Frankl's ideas become widely circulated in his works "Man's Search for Meaning," "The Doctor and the Soul" and "the Unconscious God." Suffering is an emotional state. Depending upon how one thinks about suffering, it can be debilitating or empowering. But, as a state, suffering can be modified, relativized or overcome. In the discussion above we discussed changing behavioral preferences, defining positive outcomes, reframing and transcendence as strategies aimed at overcoming or reducing suffering for the sake of survival and living.

Jesus embraced suffering, his own and that of others. He did not indulge in suffering or recommend suffering to others. But he was willing to suffer for the sake of something greater than that suffering; something that suffering was necessary for. And he was not overwhelmed by that suffering. He kept it in context with his vision of life, God's plan and his own life mission. He was ecological about his suffering. That suffering pointed

to the worthiness of his goal. His goal was salvation and bringing about a just society or better world. Indeed the avoidance, evasion or avoidance of suffering is the cause of failure, both psychic and behavioral. The counselor can assist the client in facing life and life's challenges rather than in avoiding suffering. The way that Jesus embraced necessary suffering can serve as a model of how to embrace suffering without being overcome by the suffering. A purpose for suffering can carry one a long way. A vision of eternity or posterity that values mortality can also provide a frame that contextualizes the suffering. A definition of self that includes ancestors and descendants or connection with human community, past, present and future, even a world community, and a relationship with a God who strengthens me, can provide one with reason and motivation to persist against difficulty and believe that I can. Suffering is part of the human journey; the human story. The outcome of the story can be changed. The suffering can be mitigated. The idea of life after death can be employed in a strategy to provide hope for a long suffering person who is currently suffering. Hope for the future can be generated in the present, thereby increasing the client's capacity for success in achieving the desired outcome. The idea of the return of Christ or coming of the Messiah can also be employed as a strategy to generate hope, motivation and benevolent action. The idea of the war ending and being freed from the consecration camps and returning home, of seeing surviving families or developing new families can offer hope. One can find meaning in the small things and moments of beauty, light and humor in the midst of darkness. One can occupy one's self with plotting to escape or even of revenge. And one can remember back to before the crisis, trauma and imprisonment to days of peace, love and happiness and realize what of all one

possesses is vitally important and what is not. One can reframe the situation and put in a more useful light, plus find the resources you need to accomplish everything you need to accomplish. Rather than a morbid fascination or preoccupation with the past, the client can redeem that past. He can become a new creation as he slowly but surely fast-tracks into a new life in the present that is cast in the image of a better-future.

Indeed Paul says:

“I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified” (Romans 8:18-39).

Of primary importance to Frankl’s approach is his positive outlook on the human psyche. Human beings have the capacity to choose a response when faced by stressful, even catastrophic circumstances. They can change their strategy for coping with their situations. Human beings maintain in their unconscious depths a deep religious sensibility (Frankl, 1976). Human beings are not isolated but live in an integral connection to the world and God. For Frankl, the ego or the self is not mechanistic as it is for Freud, but is active and purposive. While influenced by its past it is not predetermined by it. It maintains volitional freedom (Frankl, 1976). It is like the NLP idea that human beings possess the resources or capacities to be able to cope with the most difficult circumstances (Bandler and Grinder 1979; Bandler and Grinder, 1975; Dilts, 1998). I sometimes say that Jesus believes in his disciples more than they believe in themselves and that God believes in people more than they believe in themselves. People generally are more capable than they believe. And while human beings make the best choices available to them they have the potential to make better choices (Bandler and Grinder, 1979; Bandler and Grinder, 1975; Dilts 1998). The

counselor can maintain than hope and belief in the client until that time that the client comes to believe that for himself and realize his capability.

Jesus, seeing what was in store for him should he continue his life mission, set his face toward Jerusalem (Luke 9:51) and continued his mission of proclaiming the Kingdom of God/Heaven and seeking a just and inclusive society. Jesus was willing to suffer as he did on account of his aim and his hope. Jesus saw his suffering as a necessity because his spirit was more important than his flesh (Matthew 10:28). Jesus' body could be defeated but not his spirit, nor God's plan, nor God's people. Jesus was free because he did not give in to fear including fear of death. He aligned his own personal will with a will greater than his own that he called his Heavenly Father's will. He made God's will his own (Luke 22:42). To make God's will fully your own, such that there is no other will in you is the highest state. It is an ecological resource state and the highest motivational indicator (Dilts and McDonald, 1977). Not even the threat and reality of death could keep him from achieving his aim. In fact, Jesus defied the evil powers of the world and the threat of death. Jesus matched his will with God's will. He came to believe that doing what God wanted him to do was the right thing to do. Thus, he waited to be arrested rather than avoid being arrested. Jesus matched God at the logical level of belief (Dilts, 1998). But Jesus' belief was spiritualized belief. The spirit of God was in Jesus completely, at every level, including the level of belief. He realized his ability to do what God wanted him to do and then proceeded to do what God wanted him to do; wait to be arrested, face trial and be executed. The counselor can assist the

client in aligning their own will, with the greater and more powerful will of God and make God's will the client's own.

Exercise: Gethsemane

The following exercise is based upon Jesus' struggle in Gethsemane on the night that he was arrested (Luke 22:39-36).

Take a seat in your easy chair. Close your eyes, stretch your arms upward, take a deep breath and relax, bring your thumbs and index fingers together and drift. Now see before you on your screen Jesus in Gethsemane, suffering, struggling with his call and life mission. He knows that he has been betrayed. He has disciples with him but they are weary of the waiting and the stress and falls asleep. He must face this moment alone. He is kneeling in the garden against a large rock and he is tormented. He calls out to God "Father, take away this cup of pain." And he waits. There is a deep silence. And then there is an inner knowing. And he responds to God, "Not my will Father, but yours." And the Holy Spirit fills him again and he is willing and ready to continue his mission . . . Now take your remote and change the station. A blank screen is before you. Project yourself onto the screen. See yourself, experience yourself accomplishing a huge task. It is becoming very important that you do so. Many people are counting on you performing this task. The task is involving suffering on your part. There are people who are doing everything they can to deter you from your goal. You have friends who are standing by you and helping you but the stress is overwhelming to them. They are not understanding the importance of the task, but you understand the

importance of all that you are doing. They are also not as strong as you nor are they as motivated. You are awaiting your hour of truth and wanting them with you, but they are not abiding the stress and lose consciousness and drift off to sleep. You are alone turning to God and praying fervently. You are opening yourself up to God like you are opening yourself to a perfect father. You are clarifying how important this task is to God. But you are aware that the road ahead to its realization is fraught with difficulty and pain. You are crying out to God, God if there is another way let it be so. And you are waiting for an answer and finally you are knowing the answer and you are surging with power and crying out to God, "Not my will God, but your will. I am letting my will be your will. My willing is your will. I am willing. And now your hour is coming and you are ready. You are picking up your cross and carrying it. Before you is a huge cross that Jesus is carrying and you follow Jesus with your cross . . . other people counting on you . . . and experience yourself completing your task successfully . . .and you are welling up with a sense of accomplishment . . . a sense of your life mission being fulfilled . . . and you sense that despite what might seem a loss is accomplishment . . . is victory . . . is reward . . . and there is so much you have to do . . . so much you want to do . . . so much you are empowered to do . . . and somehow you are projected into the future and you are standing before Jesus and he is smiling at you and he is inviting you to sit with him and says to you "well done good and loyal servant."

The person of the counselor or psychotherapist is an essential and conscious component of the therapeutic process (Leslie, 1982). The counselor or psychotherapist's beliefs impact the counseling process and outcome and are actively

and consciously utilized to that end. Indeed, the counselor has to believe that the client has the resources and is capable of obtaining his goal, even imagine that the client is accomplishing the desired outcome

Jesus' belief in God, the Kingdom of God, himself and his God-derived mission, and his belief about people, Gentile and Jew played into his approach to life and religion, society, and other people. No matter how the world appeared and people acted, he had a vision of what life, society and people could be if only they were responsible for themselves in fulfilling that vision. No matter how hopeless or depraved people and society was, they had hope. They were salvageable and redeemable. They could be transformed from bad or weak or sinful to good, strong or saintly. Where there was illness there could be health. Where there was violence there could be peace. Where there was hatred and anger there could be forgiveness and love.

NLP-based counseling is an active, directive cognitive behavioral form of counseling that is appealing for pastoral and spiritual counseling because of its understanding of the multidimensionality of human beings and its ability to utilize the logical levels as defined by Dilts (1998), the personal unconscious (Jung, 1968) and the spiritual unconscious (Frankl, 1976). It can also be utilized to assist the client to master a developmental level and then proceed up a rung on the developmental ladder as discussed in the section about development of consciousness from the perspective of Wilbur and Marion (2000). It is a marvelous thing to watch a child become an adolescent and an adolescent become an adult. It is miraculous, as the young person makes a quantum leap from one level to another. His attitude, outlook, behavior and life

style are completely changed and the meaning of his life changes. It is just as amazing to watch the young adult mature, such that external achievements, so important, become secondary as inner, spiritual matters and altruism become more and more important.

Frankl's outlook is fundamentally optimistic. There is an area of freedom in every person's life however difficult that person's life may be. Destiny is determined by the person not the person's past or present environment. This optimism is evident in the German title of one of his books, "Say Yes to Life in Spite of Everything (Man's Search for Meaning) 1959).

Jesus was optimistic and hopeful even in the face of the improbable and impossible. The smallest amount of faith could overcome the most insurmountable problem. At the core of human personality and society is a powerful kernel of spiritual power, beyond fear and conditioning, beyond external resources and beyond the harshness or prosperity of the environment. It is like a piece of the divine is within the person being drawn out either by the enticement of love or the challenge of evil. A counselor's optimistic and hopeful attitude can go a long way in helping the client to perform a different self-assessment and assessment of their environment and increase the sense of personal power, choice and responsibility.

The counselor then is not a passive observer and facilitator, but an active participant in the client's therapy. The counselor consciously influences the client in the direction the client wants to go or would want to go if the client was healthy. This shows real

concern. If the client is heading in a harmful direction the counselor intervenes in the dysfunctional behavior to illuminate an alternate and better choice (Leslie, 1965). In counseling I contract with the client around the client's goal. I define with the client the desired outcome in as much detail as possible. I work with the client to determine how the client will realize his goal; what steps he will take when he takes them. That outcome is often defined in opposition to the problem the client brought to the counseling. The problem needs to be defined. The problem is the outcome of the client's faulty thinking and behaving. The problematic outcome exists because of distortions of positive intent and a faulty map of the world. The client changes his thinking and behavior in order to achieve the more desirable outcome. The client has to realize the he is capable of changing his thinking and behavior. The evidence of this is that the problem is not always present in his life. There are times that he is not experiencing the problem (Stone, 1993, 2001). At those times he is experiencing a different outcome, that outcome being the result of different thoughts and behaviors. When a client reproduces his problem I can confront the client, offering him feedback about his strategy and its outcome. I can point out the he is continuing to think and behaves in ways that produce the undesired outcome. I can design an intervention that involves identifying the problem behavior, experiencing it and anchoring it (Bandler, Grinder and Andreas, 1975) say touching him on his wrist while saying the name of the problem sand defining the solution, having him experience having obtained that solution as the result of thinking and acting in a certain way and anchoring that, perhaps touching him on the back of the same hand as before. I can touch him on the wrist and have him recall the problem state and then touch him on the hand and him recall the

solution. I can do this a number of times in succession in rapid fashion and then cease touching him on the risk and having him focus on the solution. The anchoring has to be deliberate and consistent, the same kind of touch, in the same location and with the same pressure and attack.

Jesus was not a passive observer of people in his life and the society in which he lived. He interjected himself into the lives of people. He put himself in places where people could find him. He called people to follow him. He went home with people to eat, including people who others judged and those people themselves judged as unworthy of him. He let sinners touch him and touched sinners rendering them clean (Luke 8:43-48). He let people know that they counted to God and to other people. He told people where they were right and where they were wrong, actively understood their predicament and directed and led them to change. He communicated that destiny was not predetermined but that it could be transcended and that they could actively participate in that transcendence. Present reality could be affected not only by the past but by the future. They could learn and grow and succeed. There is a better way, God's way, and it could be their way,

NLP can be used to engage the client in counseling. This makes it an ideal strategy for pastoral or spiritual counseling. The counselor brings a forward, future focus to the counseling rather than a backward, historical focus. There is little concern for why - like how the past determines the present. It is outcome-oriented. The "why" or reason for the counseling is to obtain a desired outcome. Any intervention is devised with a particular outcome in mind. The goal need not just be problem alleviation. It could be

for personal growth, spiritual growth or self actualization. I have been suggesting God-realization or changing the world as in establishing the rule of God on earth. This is not about establishing a religious kingdom or theocracy. God forbid! It is about developing our God-capacity; our capacity for being the best possible human beings and human society that we can be. It is about our realization of our individual and corporate human potential.

The counselor does not agree with everything the client says and does, but challenges the client in the direction of a favorable outcome. An empathic and compassionate listener, the Logotherapist interrupts the destructive attitude and behavior of the client and points the client in the right direction. Such an active interaction with the client leads to a briefer duration for the therapy. In doing so, however, the counselor never co-opts the client's responsibility for choosing.

The pastoral or spiritual counselor who uses NLP assists the client in discovering his power to change and grow and overcome obstacles to that change and growth. This challenge of the client is based upon presumptions of client capability that although dormant are present if the client can access and activate it. Whenever challenging a client, the counselor must believe that the client is capable of responding to the challenge.

Jesus went beyond forgiveness, as important as forgiveness was, to challenge people to a new way of perceiving, conceiving, being and living in the world. The old sinful patterns were no longer necessary. They could change. They could be co-creators, co-

redeemers, and co-sustainers with God, with him and the spirit and with other like-minded people. Change could be immediate and lasting. One did not have to uncover what they did in their past lives, in this life or what their family did to them that made them sin or become sick. They could choose what they thought, how they felt and how they acted. They could impact their environment and if not their environment their experience of it. And they could do it now. Jesus would say “Your sins are forgiven” or “your faith has made you well” then say “go and sin no more. Now during the time of Jesus sin and illness were associated. Today, where someone may not see a connection between sin and illness, the counselor may focus on responsibility: “Go and take responsibility for your condition or for your life. Choose how you will respond to your situation. Stop making excuses. Stop allowing your situation to affect your happiness and well-being.”

One way Jesus challenged people was to command them. Commands are challenges of will. The command must be congruent with the person’s highest or deepest values and must be understood by the person. In commanding his disciples to love God, neighbor and enemies Jesus presumes a preexistent human desire and capacity for love in the people he speaks to.

Sometimes the command is to be rid of some power that has been internalized such as a demonic state, a negative possessive state. Jesus commands the demon or the Satan in the case of Peter to leave the person it possesses.

Illustration: Brother Rat

A young man was haunted by an energy that would grab hold of him and swing and bounce him. He described the energy as being about the size and shape of a large rat. He never saw it or heard it but one time he wrestled the entity to the ground and that is what it looked like. The energy force seemed to attack at his head or his solar plexus. The counselor suggested that the young man take charge of the situation. While it usually happened in the hypnogogic state between sleep and waking, it occurred sporadically at other times and without warning. The young man imagined speaking to the entity and made an appointment to meet it in a meditation session a few days later. The young man decided to befriend the entity and named it "Brother Rat." He said in a meditative position on the floor and practiced a mindfulness meditation technique. He developed a certain degree of concentration by observing his breath in and out. Then he just observed his mind. Suddenly in front of him appeared a caricature of a rat. The image transformed into a three dimensional vampire figure. The young man was frightened but remembered his counselor's instruction to continue to observe whatever phenomenon he observed. The figure spread what looked like a cloak. Darkness engulfed the room. The figure transformed into something like a bat and flew off. The young man never experienced the symptom again. Rather than command the figure to leave, the young man faced the figure and his fear of it. It was a form of confrontation. The counselor and young man identified the energy and figure as an aspect of self that had been repressed and needed to be integrated. It was if the young man commanded

the entity to be gone and it did. A part of the young man had become split off from and was reintegrated.

NLP involves a process called “Parts integration.” Most systems of psychotherapy do some form of parts integration (Bolstad, 2002, 2012). Parts integration processes involve separating the parts and then relating the parts to one another. The client assumes a meta-position that allows her to synthesize the opposing parts into a single representation (Grinder and Bandler, 1976).

One example of parts that are worked with in counseling are unconscious and conscious minds. The subconscious mind can be broken down into further parts. For example, there can be a preconscious, a personal unconscious, a spiritual unconscious (Frankl, 1976) and a collective unconscious (Jung, 1968). Id, ego and superego are parts of the psyche (Freud 1933). There can be good and bad parts or objects. Object-relations theory identifies breakdowns in the cohesiveness of self such that the ego or self splits into part objects that conflict with one another (Kernberg 1976). This results in sequential incongruity. The person desires one thing at onetime and something else at another. The counselor helps the person manage the competing desires.

Fritz Perls, the founder of Gestalt Psychotherapy would do polarity work between conflicting parts of the personality (1973). He would also do work aimed at re-owning dis-owned parts of the self. Dis-owned parts are thoughts, feelings and even acts that are unacceptable to us. They are repressed parts. Dis-owned parts leave a person

with a loss of valuable pieces of themselves. Gestalt therapy aims to integrate dis-owned parts back into the personality (Perls, 1969).

Anima, animus persona, self and shadow are parts of the unconscious called archetypes that need to be integrated into the personality in a process called individuation (Jung, 1968). Through this process the person becomes more whole and complete.

Sub-personalities are parts. There is an integration of separate parts into one unitary whole in a process called psycho-synthesis. The aim of psycho-synthesis is organization of the various parts of the personality into a firmly organized whole. The process ultimately extends ordinary human consciousness into transcendent states of pure awareness, joy, peace and love and these become integrated into the personality. (Assagioli, 1976).

Psychodrama draws its understanding of parts from theatre. People assume and perform a variety of roles. Each role is a mode of functioning in situations involving other persons and objects (Moreno, 1977). Roles, their strategies and emotional states evolve independently from the person's interaction with the world. It is through the roles a person plays that a person's self emerges. Persons may function in multiple roles. Counseling aims to reduce role conflict, harmonize functioning of multiple roles and allow transition from role to role. New roles may need to be produced to respond effectively to new situations. In Psychodrama roles have five components: Context, Behavior, Belief and Feelings and Consequences.

Will and counter-will (Rank, 1936) are parts of the personality that come into confrontation. That confrontation leads to the development of the will in the personality and the maturing of the will. This occurs on multiple levels. One level is the personal level. As a child, while a toddler, the child begins to assert her will against the will of the parents. The clear sign of this is when the child says “No.” She has entered into a conflict with the parent. The parent does not want to break the will but to teach it. Over time the child learns to say “Yes.” The child’s will gets behind and aligns with the parent’s will. On the transpersonal level the same thing is happening between the human and God. God has some clearly established rules. At some point the human questions them and defies or disobeys them. Later, if it all works out, comes a reconciliation of the human with God, the human gets behind God and aligns with God’s will.

Reichian body-oriented psychotherapy is concerned with muscular tension that prevents contact between various layers of body tissue. The body houses a wide variety of experiences holding these experiences in various parts of the body as muscular tension. These experiences need to be activated and released to provide a flow of energy or life between a body part and the entire body or between body parts. The dead parts need to be brought back to life. Through breathing, touching and movement the relationship between the various parts of the person can be renewed and revitalized (Lowen, 1972).

Parent, Adult and Child are parts of ego (Berne, 1964). In Transactional Analysis, the goal is to have functional divisions between these ego states within the person and to

manage interactions with others so that communication is appropriate to the relationship. Issues of lack of intra-psychic integration of the parent, adult and child ego states are usually observed in transactions between people. Most of my relations now are adult to adult. In my relationship to my children, the transaction was parent to child. To my friends, colleagues and adult clients and congregants it was it was adult to adult. My adult children are assuming a more adult role with me, so we have a parent to adult transaction. The point is that there are parts that may need to be integrated.

A journaling method involves identifying parts in the personality, in the conflict or parties in interpersonal conflict and creates a written dialogue between them (Proffoff, 1992).

Satir used a psycho-dramatic method she called the "Parts Party". Different parts of the person or family are helped to overcome inhibitions, meet their needs and get along with each other. The aim is for the various parts to cooperate rather than compete. (Satir and Baldwin, 1983).

Bandler and Grinder developed a six step reframing technique that involves communicating with the part and asking the person's unconscious mind to think up effective and more acceptable ways to meet the positive outcome of that part.

The parts integration model itself is a development of an earlier process called the Visual Squash. Its advantage is that it connects two opposing parts together. The six-step reframe left the part that was of concern to generate new behaviors while still separate (Dilts, Hallbom and Smith, 1990).

Other NLP processes that have been developed to deal with parts issues include Core Transformation (Andreas, 1992) and Time Line Therapy TM (James and Woodsmall, 1988).

Primal therapy is a cathartic therapy aimed at releasing locked away pain. It involves the conscious re-experience of traumatic events in order to reintegrate them into the personality. Parts of the personality can become split off or disassociated from the personality at the age of the trauma. Those memories and associated memories need to be recovered. Until the part that is stuck, and its accompanying emotions are revealed it cannot grow beyond the time of the traumatic event (Janov, 1977). As in the other approaches mentioned, the aim is integration of the parts into the whole personality or self of the client.

Client-centered therapy brings into awareness experiences and feelings (parts) that are at odds with the client's self-concept. The aim of such counseling is unification and integration of the personality (Rogers, 1973). His idea of organismic self-regulation speaks of the person's natural desire to seek such resolution.

Frankl recognized a human propensity for transcendence. He saw in people the capacity to reach beyond themselves to others. He saw a therapeutic value in taking on social problems. He saw this as reducing any propensity towards egocentricity. For Frankl, the aim of the religious life is transcendence of a self-centered life to a God-centered life and from a pre-occupation with one's self and one's problems to a larger and more inclusive perspective. Indeed spiritual growth may be seen as a cognitive

developmental process that moves forward towards a more comprehensive and universal perception and conception of self and other. Such a conception is epitomized by the teaching of Jesus to love God and love one's neighbor as one's self (Matthew 22:36-40). Such an ideal self-hood is simultaneously well-differentiated, relational and empathic (Friedman, 1985).

Indeed, this was the propensity of Jesus. He transcended the world around him and how it impinged upon him. This is why he could carry the very cross that he would die on. He committed his life to a cause greater than his biological and sociological heritage and deeper than his personal, familial, tribal and national commitments. He made the problems of the world and humankind his own and determined to save humankind from its problems. He saw the big picture and how he fit into it. He saw himself as a vital player in the story of humanity, from its creation to its future, even to the end of the world as we understand it. He was trans-cultural, trans-gender, trans-generational in his identity and aim. Jesus epitomized the Universal, Gnostic human-being whose identity is forged in the fullness of God.

Transcendence is illustrated in a story where Jesus' disciples set forth across a lake (Matthew 14:22-33). The disciples are rowing in a boat in the midst of the lake while a storm is coming up. The winds are rising and waves are beating against their boat. In the distance they see a figure walking on the water. He is passing by the boat. The figure is Jesus, crossing the lake to meet his disciples on the other side. Noticing their fear – their thinking that he is a ghost – he is reassuring them, telling them that it was he. Not minding the weather conditions Peter asks Jesus to command him to walk on

the water like Jesus is doing. Jesus agrees and tells Peter to come. Imagine that scene, Peter climbing out of the boat, holding on to the side, one foot touching down on the wet water but not sinking, the other following, Peter then letting go of the boat, his looking at Jesus and walking towards Jesus. What an experience! Maybe it is like stepping towards mommy and daddy for the very first time, mommy and daddy waiting to catch you in their arms, so proud! You are doing it! You are walking! Peter is walking on water just like Jesus. Now Peter's full attention is on Jesus and walking. Suddenly he hears the wind and feels the waves washing up against him. He realizes where he is and what he is doing. "There is a storm! Oh my God! He looks down at his feet as they are disappearing into the water, the rest of him following. As he is buoyed in the water he cries out, help me! And Jesus reaches out and lifts Peter out of the water and walks him to the boat. After Peter dries himself, Jesus says to Peter, "You were doing it. Why did you doubt? You were walking on water." Believing in him-self the way Jesus believed in him when Jesus commanded him, Peter transcended his physical, human limitations and did what was humanly impossible. Peter had the capacity to believe. He also had the capacity to doubt. And the result in one case was walking on water. The result in the second was sinking. Now, I do not believe that the counselor should include walking on water as a goal for counseling with any client in any literal sense. Really the client has the power to command his or her self. The client assigns the counselor the role of director and tells the counselor to command the client. This can be done consciously or unconsciously. The counselor can encourage and guide the client to, figuratively, climb out onto the water; to leave the client's place

of comfort and set out to accomplish some goal, leaving behind the comfort of the boat in order to accomplish the goal (walking on water).

Wil Horton, an NLP Trainer had his trainees fly on a trapeze. I myself had a considerable fear of heights and falling from those heights. Wil and the people in charge of the exercise had me believing that I could swing on the trapeze and wanting to do it. What did it take? It took putting on a vest and fastening cords to it, climbing up a ladder to a platform, grabbing hold of the trapeze bar and stepping off the platform, swinging a few times and then dropping into a net. Standing on the platform the impetus for swinging off was the simple instruction “Go.” What made the trainees fly on the trapeze? Wil, as our trainer had the authority. The trainees were willing to travel with him to the circus training site. And the trainers he employed at the training site were recognized professional flying trapeze trainers. The qualifications of the trainers and the steps taken to ensure our safety were made clear. This activity was not on the first day of the training, but the last and all involved in the exercise had been trained in NLP by Wil at the Basic Practitioner, Master Practitioner and Trainer levels. We all belonged to Will’s training community. Wil had credibility with us and our trust.

Climb up to the platform or not, step off from the platform attached to the bar or not, each of us had the power to fly and even fly from one bar to the next. We had the same power as Peter who proved that he could walk on water.

According to Robert C. Leslie, “Jesus as Counselor,” (1955), the primary task of Jesus’ mission was to relate each person more directly to God and to include them in a

community of disciples, persons seeking the same outcome as they. That outcome is abundant or eternal life and realization of the kingdom or reality of God in their lives.

We can begin to model Jesus in Luke 4:1-13. Satan is tempting or testing Jesus. This narrative is demonstrating the principles by which Jesus is choosing to govern his life. It is represents a developmental milestone where are identified the basic choices faced by every person as they make the passage from their family home into their own independent life. Mastering the developmental tasks of this time Jesus will never have to be tested about them again. They are becoming foundational principals for living his life. Looking ahead we are seeing Jesus acting on the basis of the principles he is establishing at this time rather than the basis of expediency (Leslie, 1955).

“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished” (Matthew 4:1-2).

Jesus was prepared by his baptism at the hand of John the Baptist. It was in his baptism that Jesus received his identity as the Son of God. It was here that his mission of baptizing with the Holy Spirit and fire was initiated. In order to baptize with the Holy Spirit, Jesus needed to receive the Holy Spirit and he did in his baptism. His state was one of being “full of the Holy Spirit.” It was that state into which he would later initiate his disciples.

In Acts 1, Luke summarizes activities and teachings from Jesus’ beginning to his ascension. After his resurrection he taught his disciples about the Kingdom of God over

a 40 day period. He ordered them to stay in Jerusalem and wait for “the promise of the Father” (Acts 1:1-4). He told them that they would be baptized by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5). The disciples did just that. When the day of Pentecost came, the disciples were gathered in one place. The disciples heard a sound. It was like the rush of a violent wind and filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. And all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them the ability (Acts 2: 1-4).

They now would be able to initiate people into discipleship by baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire, such that the newly initiated would have their mission and be equipped by the Holy Spirit with spiritual gifts that could be used in service to the community. After his baptism, Jesus prepared himself for what would transpire next by isolating himself from others, going out into the desert and fasting forty days and forty nights. By doing this he prepared himself to overcome temptations involving the spiritual powers he had received through the Holy Spirit.

“The devil said to him (Jesus), ‘If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.’ Jesus answered him, ‘It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone.’” Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, ‘To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours. ‘Jesus answered him, ‘It is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’” Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the

pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.' Jesus answered him, 'It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time" (Matthew 4:3-11).

In this narrative, Jesus makes some conscious decisions (Leslie, 1995). He is responsible for his responses to Satan's provocations. There are certain pressures in this situation that seek to prevail upon Jesus, but Jesus does not give into the pressures. As a child Jesus had already learned some basic rules from the example and teaching of his parents. This prepares him emotionally for what is to come. He has already integrated certain values about life. He knows some things so well that at twelve years old he amazes teachers at the Temple (Luke 4: 39-52). As an adolescent Jesus had begun to make some basic decisions which would orient his adult life and the adult decisions he makes. He has made a decision in favor of God over secular concerns. And so Jesus has opened the channels between heaven and earth, spirit and matter, his consciousness developed as a psychic apparatus by which he transcends limitations of time, space and corporeality and even of reason to realize his potential as a human being.

This narrative is about the struggle for realization of one's God-given potential against the demonic forces that tempt Jesus to settle for a lesser life (Leslie, 1995). Jesus is at a turning point in his life. He is struggling within himself for mastery against forces that

would curtail his development. He must denounce these common temptations to establish the basic life orientation and values that will give meaning to his life.

What gave Jesus his power was his orientation to God. Jesus referred all matters to God. God was at the center of his being and provided him with his meaning. He was single-minded in his commitment to God and God's ways.

Jesus was tempted first with carnal pleasure (Leslie, 1995). For some this is the base principle. Jesus had developed the capacity to delay gratification of sense pleasure in order to meet his long-term goals. The desire to satisfy or alleviate hunger, lust, pain, cold, heat can be rather intense. Jesus opted to pass on utilizing his spiritual power to feed himself. There was something more important to Jesus than comfort or self-preservation. For Jesus it was the Word of God. To succeed in his mission, Jesus would have to rely upon the Word of God. Jesus, in his hunger, and later in conditions of extreme anguish and pain, would outlast his conditions in order to achieve his aim, an aim that made hunger and pain small in comparison.

Jesus was tempted next with power (Leslie, 1995). This involves putting status, prestige and domination above other factors. It involves exploitation of situations and people. Jesus is not seeking power. He does not want power. Jesus has power. Jesus is a servant; the prototypical servant. His own status will be derived from his relationship with God, in pleasing God and in helping others.

Jesus was tempted then to evade personal responsibility (Leslie, 1995), to expect salvation. Certainly he is not going to test whether God will save him or not. Jesus

assumes full responsibility for resolution of his problems and realization of his goals. He is not looking for rescue. God or somebody else is not going to solve his problem. In the end, Jesus takes full responsibility for his life, aligning his own will with God's will.

Jesus remembers his source, God. He remembers his identity; Son of God. He believes in God and God's Word. He is capable of being responsible and chooses to be so. He submits his will to God's will and acts on that basis. He interacts with the people in his environment on this basis, impacting their lives, influencing and persuading them to model their lives on his. As a result, they will affect the world through their relationships with God, him, the Holy Spirit, one another and people and institutions in the world.

The pastoral and spiritual counselor is in a powerful position in counseling relationships. The counselor can be tempted to utilize their power for personal reasons rather than for helping the client. The counselor can be consciously (exploitation) or unconsciously (counter transference) motivated to misuse their power. Boundaries are there for testing in the counseling relationship, not that they should be tested. The counselor could fail the test. Supervised training goes a long ways towards preparing counselors to utilize their power responsibly in counseling. Ongoing supervision throughout the counselor's career assists the counselor in being accountable to correct ethical standards. Being in counseling also prepares the counselor for counseling. The counselor can utilize personal counseling to work through their own issues so that these do not arise in counseling clients. The pastoral and spiritual counselor deals with both the conscious and unconscious minds of clients, like all counselors. They also

intentionally address the client's spiritual unconscious and the spiritual or transpersonal dimensions of the client. Spiritual energies are real and powerful. They can activate issues in the client, but also in the counselor. Just as the personal unconscious produces transference in the client, and counter transference in the counselor, the spiritual unconscious produces spiritual transference and counter transference. If the counselor is whole, having integrated successfully parts of themselves that were broken in the past, the counselor is less likely to have his own counter transference buttons pushed and will remain fully present to the needs of the client.

Jesus provides a model of preparation for entry into the counseling endeavor. He presents a model for becoming whole and for facing and mastering normal personal and spiritual temptations and tests. Imagine yourself now, as Jesus. You are going off alone into the desert. You are in the desert for forty days and nights. You are fasting, taking only water. You are praying and meditating while sitting, walking and sleeping and your mind is opening wider and wider. And right before you is a being called the devil. He is saying to you "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." Now you might not be thinking that you are the Son of God, but perhaps you are thinking of yourself as a child of God, being chosen by God for a particular purpose. And you are answering your tempter, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'" And you know that it is true. You are not living by physical bread alone. You are living by every word that is proceeding from the mouth of God. You can wait to eat until later. As a counselor you can wait to eat until after your client eats. You can work

on your issues in another time and place, in another venue. You cannot take the food that is meant for your client.

Now the Tempter is leading you up to a high place and is showing you in an instant all the kingdoms of the world and is telling you: “To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” And you are answering him, “It is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’” And you know that your kingdom is not of this world. Your glory and authority are coming from God in Heaven. The tempter has nothing you want or need. All you want and need is being provided by God. As a counselor your concern is what your client accomplishes and that for God’s glory. You do not need your ego stroked by the client. You are not there to prove your worth to your client but to serve your client and ensure that your client’s needs are met.

Now the Tempter is transporting you to Jerusalem, and is placing you on the pinnacle of the temple, and is saying to you, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’” You are answering the tempter, “It is said, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” As a counselor you do not want to test your ability to rescue or save your client or God’s ability to rescue or save your client. I, for one, am shy about showing the client who threatens suicide to my 34th story window with the best of paradoxical intentions.

There were many other tests as well, and you passed them all. Finished with you, the tempter departed until a more opportune time. Congratulations, you have passed. You are ready to counsel others. You will be tempted and tested again, but you have overcome major temptations and passed major tests. When you face them in the future you are able to overcome those temptations and pass those tests.

I was working with a forty-five year old Native American man. He had been hospitalized for depression with suicidal intention numerous times. He came to my outpatient office feeling depressed and with strong suicidal ideation. He had a plan that was fairly lethal. He had amassed a large supply of medication. As we began discussing the option of inpatient hospitalization he said, "No hospitalization. I feel like a caged animal when I go there. If I stay outside of the hospital I may kill myself. If you send me to the hospital I will kill myself." In California I had the ability to have him detained for observation in an inpatient psychiatric facility. At 45 years old the man was an elder by Native American standards. He had been examining his life and was experiencing despair about it. The only dignified thing to do was end his life. He explained to me that he wanted to go to Southern California to say goodbye to his adult children. I was in a dilemma about hospitalizing him or not. I told him that I would let him go if he contracted with me to contact me or a mental health agency and talk to me or to an equivalent professional before attempting to kill himself. About two weeks later he called me. He had met with each of his children. His intent had been to say goodbye to them. But as he spoke with them he realized how much they loved and appreciated him. He had done some good for them. The man became responsible for his condition, saying goodbye to his family

and his desire to kill himself. The result was that the client developed a will to live and new meaning for his life. A month later I received a request for release of his records to an agency in Southern California. He had determined to relocate and continue his treatment there, close to where most his family was.

Another rather detailed episode of encounter with Jesus involves the character Zacchaeus. It is found in Luke 19:1-10. This is a timeless story of alienation and isolation from community and the reintegration of the alienated person back into community (Leslie, 1995). The greatest punishment anyone can experience is that of being isolated from their community. Being shunned or banished from a family or community is shameful. Being put in jail, or in prison, leaves people feeling like they have no hope for a better life. Zacchaeus was a man deprived of relationships within the Jewish community. He was driven into complicity with the enemy Romans because he could not find a meaningful position in his own community. He bore personal responsibility for this, serving as a tax-collector for the Romans and charging an excessive fee for his own living. Yet he was not a Roman and was likely looked down upon by them both as a Jew and for betraying his own people. Zacchaeus was in a tough situation.

It was easy to look down on Zacchaeus because he was short. But perhaps Luke had him be short to belittle him. He had little or no stature among his people. He had to look up to everyone. Everyone looked down on him. And other than when he was delivering the tax he collected to the Romans, or receiving the tax from the Jews, he was invisible. He did not matter. He was ignored. He had no worth in the eyes of

anyone, not even God. He was a bad Jew. He could not meet people on their level, eye to eye. He put distance between himself and others and stayed in the shadows so as not to risk further rejection or even persecution. It was necessary for him to belong somewhere and find meaning, even if it was the negative meaning of tax collector hated by his own Jewish community

But Zacchaeus did not like his condition. He wanted to be able to stand up tall. He wanted to be treated with dignity. He wanted to belong, to be part of his community with a meaningful role. He wanted to be a good Jew, attend Synagogue and Temple. The capacity for change remained but not the means. Zacchaeus became motivated to change although he lacked any insight into why he ended up in the situation he did. Hearing about Jesus, Zacchaeus wanted to seek help from Jesus. He could not get close. He could not risk seeking out Jesus. He did what he did to observe Jesus from a distance. But he could not see over the crowd. The best Zacchaeus could do was figure out the route Jesus had taken and run ahead of him and climb a tree so he could see him. Zacchaeus found himself up a tree, caught in an embarrassing and helpless situation, in a tree that was in the direct route that Jesus was approaching from.

Now comes the ironic situation of Zacchaeus looking down at Jesus from a tree and Jesus seeing him up in the tree and inviting him to come down out of the tree. And not only does Jesus invite Zacchaeus down from the tree he invites himself to go home with Zacchaeus. As soon as Zacchaeus comes down from the tree the healing begins. And it continues as Zacchaeus accepts Jesus as a guest in his home and Jesus entrusts Zacchaeus to be his host, to provide him with shelter and sustenance and meet his

need for companionship. Ignoring the condemning attitude of the crowd he actively demonstrates his unconditional acceptance of the outsider Zacchaeus. It is as the result of this acceptance that Zacchaeus undergoes a remarkable transformation. It was acceptance not predicated on change but change that was anticipated by acceptance. This was an acceptance that accepted Zacchaeus for who and what he was but did not leave him there. Jesus did not take Zacchaeus for what he appeared to be but for who he truly was.

What transpired between Jesus and Zacchaeus in Zacchaeus' home is unknown. What is known is that change occurred. Zacchaeus accepted personal responsibility for the wrongs he did. He made reparations to those he cheated in an amount larger than he cheated them. His amends were the first step in his assumption of responsibility of future relationships with the Jewish followers of Jesus. Zacchaeus was restored as the result of this encounter with Jesus to a vital relationship with God and a human community of people of God.

Normally, the client seeks out the counselor on some basis such as referral or reputation. In this case, Zacchaeus was seeking out Jesus. He put himself in a situation to be noticed. Jesus noticed him as small as he was and up a tree, compensating for his smallness. The counselor needs to notice the client and to invite the client to come down out of the tree so they can meet face to face. The client has to let down the client's persona and defenses and be him- or her-self, however vulnerable the client may feel. Then the counselor needs to let the client know that the client is important and worthwhile. The client may not feel sufficiently worthy to invite the

counselor into the client's world. The client is vulnerable and does not want to be rejected. So the counselor needs to invite him or herself into the client's world, respectfully, realizing it is the client's world and the client's invitation. This sets up the possibility of change.

The college student has his head down on the table. He did this on a near daily basis. He lived at home with his mother but preferred to stay on campus. He was visibly depressed and lonely. Another student brought him to the attention of the chaplain. The next day, the chaplain found the student with his head down on the table. He asked if he could sit down and they began a conversation. After the conversation, the chaplain told the student that he enjoyed their conversation and hoped that they could talk again. He gave him his card and told the student that the student could call him or stop by anytime. When the student indicated that he would like that, he invited the student to come by the next day after his class. They met for the remainder of the school year. The student became involved in a variety of school activities and the depression, loneliness and attention-seeking behavior ended.

The biblical story of the rich young ruler depicted in Mark 10:17-22 depicts a young man who has achieved professional prestige and wealth but found his life lacking happiness and meaning. He has not found a life task from which to derive meaning. He was stuck (Leslie, 1995). In Jesus' eyes this young man was important. He had worth. It would be a waste if he did not find a purpose. That he sought out Jesus for help meant that he believed that he could be helped. He was willing to admit this to himself and Jesus. He had a sense of urgency in his request. He seemed ready to accept personal

responsibility for his life. Jesus recognized the stage of life this young man was in. Status and fortune were not enough for him. He was seeking purpose. The young man was thinking that Jesus would ask him to do more of what he was already doing: attend worship, study scripture, tithe, do good and avoid evil. But what Jesus prescribes is a God-centered life, a focus on ultimate meaning and values. He prescribes giving up his reliance on outer things, relying upon an inner dimension, trusting that God will provide for all of his needs as he fulfills the tasks God gives him to attend to. The invitation is really to give everything else up in order to follow Jesus in a life of service. In this way obedience to the commandments is not a duty but a response to God in relationship to God. All excuses for ignoring God's call are set aside and God's call is responded to without hesitancy. People and relationships now need to be pursued before money and power. Jesus saw the young man's need and the difficulty in his changing. Rather than reprimand the man, Jesus looked upon him and loved him. Jesus understood his predicament and his promise. It is from that place of love that Jesus challenges the young man; "Go, sell your belongings, give the proceeds to the poor and come be my disciple and follow me." Life is worth living when you find the life worth living and live it. You have found it. Now decide to pursue it. Do what you must to pursue it wholeheartedly. The task is for the young man, not for Jesus. He knew what he had to do. He had to decide and act. It was to pursue the task that awaited fulfillment by him. No longer would it suffice to make a good living and maintain a certain lifestyle. Jesus told him not what he wanted to hear, but what he needed to know and which on a deep, inner level he already knew. In this case, the young man could not say "Yes." He could not do what was required to do what was most meaningful to him. But the young man

was exposed to the truth, to a door that was possible for him to open if not immediately, then later.

Clients come to counseling challenged by a need to change. But they are resistant to pursuing their goal. Sometimes they need to clarify their goals. That can make it easier to pursue a goal. Other times they have to leave something behind. It could be leaving behind riches. It can be leaving home to go to school or take a job. It can be leaving a relationship or a career to pursue another relationship or career. It can involve abandoning a lifestyle or alcohol and drugs or smoking. And no matter how much they may want to attain their goal, they may choose not to. The counselor had best not consider this a failure. The counselor can empower the client to choose “Yes” or “No.” The client can learn what is necessary for change and not change. If the client chooses responsibly, then progress is made. The counselor can be available at a future date if the client desires.

Or the counselor can change his goals for the counseling by meeting the client where he is. If the client is not ready to change the counselor explore with him the exact nature of the problem that brought him into counseling in the first place. The goal may not be to quit drinking. Many alcoholism and drug treatment programs have insisted upon this being the client’s goal when, in fact, it was an imposed goal and not a voluntary one. The client was treated as resistant when they simply were not motivated to pursue that goal. The stated outcome was not the client’s most desired outcome. But it is usually possible to find a meaningful goal as long as the client is motivated to be honest. That goal may be to avoid going to jail. That is a perfectly acceptable goal.

Now, the client needs to determine how to stay out of jail. He needs to be motivated to do so. The client may not like what it takes to stay out of jail. The client may have to enter into a diversion program, probation program or drinking-driver program. He may have to pay a lawyer, fines, court costs and for the programs he participates in. He may have to participate in an educational, screening or counseling process. He may have to participate in AA or an acceptable alternative to AA. He may have to make changes in his drinking, his activities or the people he associates with. He may have to decide whether to do any and all of these things. He may have to choose counseling, acceptable to the court that best suits his goals. He will need to obtain resources that will help him in obtaining his desired outcome and gauge what he is capable of doing. He may have to learn new skills and develop new capacities. Not only may he need to make behavioral changes, he may have to change what he believes about himself, about alcohol and drinking, about acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, about what constitutes friendship and what is valuable. He may have to reconsider his identity, how he wants to be identified. He may have to consider his relationship to God, the Universe or a Higher Power (Dilts, 1998). Does he want to be identified as a criminal? Is his identity as a fun loving, party animal, his belief that drinking and getting wasted the best way to spend his recreational time, his ability to drink others under the table and his taking the risk of drinking the way that he always has going to help him meet his goal of staying out of jail? He has to perform an ecological check. What can I do? What can't I do? What am I willing to do? What am I unwilling to do? How are my changes going to impact my life for better and for worse (Dilts and Hallbom, 2012; Dilts 1990). The counselor needs to assess the client's readiness to change (Prochaska,

Norcross and DiClemente, 2007) and adjust his expectations and response to the client as appropriate. If the client does not what to think about the problem that has landed him in trouble he has to weigh the consequences of that and determine whether his goal is attainable in that way. If and when the client believes that his goal is worth pursuing and that he is no longer only avoiding jail, he is free and valuing that freedom, he may begin considering what he needs to do to stay out of trouble with the law, including thinking about what has to change about his life, including his drinking, activities, associations, capabilities around drinking, beliefs about himself and identity are consistent with his goal. Beyond this, the counselor may have to hold an image for the client of what is possible for him, despite all these past problems, what would he like his life to be like, what would he like to be like and have in his life that he has now and would like to have. He could consider what new behaviors he would like to demonstrate in his life, what new abilities, what new beliefs and what he would like to be known for other than the king of the hill of partiers. He could consider all of the various places he could resource himself from. What if his identity came from above rather than from below or from all around? How can he include more positive factors and people who valued the kind of person he wants to be in his everyday life? How can he better manage his cognitive, emotional and spiritual states? He may have to develop more of an internal locus of control so as not to be under the control of outside forces, such as drinking buddies or probation officers.

The Stages of Change Model (Prochaska, Norcross and DiClemente, 2007) is an important model for counseling. The model indicates that there are six discrete stages of change

- Pre-contemplation: No unawareness that change is necessary or desirable or is unwilling to consider it.
- Contemplation: Consideration of the possibility that change could be good.
- Preparation: Some kind of change is necessary and should begin shortly.
- Action: The changer is committed to a plan of action
- Maintenance: The changer no longer identifies with the problem behavior.
- Termination: The changer gets on with life without regard to the problem.

A most reliable predictor of positive change is the identification of a positive future that is incompatible with the problem behavior (Prochaska, Norcross and DiClemente, 2007). .

NLP-oriented counselors made certain assumptions about people who come for counseling. They have presuppositions about their clients (Gray, 2011):

- Most people already have the resources that they need.
- People are, for the most part not broken.
- All behaviors can be analyzed into their sensory components and by reassembling those components, we can recreate the behavior or perception in another person or in the same person at another time.

- By examining the submodalities, the finer grained structure, of each of those senses we can change the meaning or intensity of the experience.
- Finally, for the most part, choice is better than no choice.

They utilize a variety of counseling techniques. Three distinctive emphases are (Gray, 2011):

- Sub-modality analysis and manipulation. This involves noting and adjusting the fine structure of an sensory experience
- Anchoring. These are classically associated stimuli that are used to trigger desired responses. They are used to recall experiences.
- Well-formed outcomes. These are well-formed goals. These make goal attainment easier by aligning the conscious and unconscious parts of the mind and integrating conflicted parts. There is then congruence between the conscious and unconscious minds and the parts of the person. Characteristics of well-formed outcomes are:
 - They are stated in the positive
 - They are under the client's your control
 - The client can achieve the outcome on her own
 - The client can specify how she knows she has obtained the outcome and when
 - The outcome is not only available, it is desirable

Thus, the well-formed outcome is the most preferred outcome.

The overall goal of NLP-oriented counseling is to (Gray, 2011):

- Make proper answers available, more intuitive and more powerfully motivating than the focus of the problem behavior.
- Restore a sense of control, choice and mastery by opening options for new behaviors that are not focused in problems patterns associated with the problem.

There are three elements of treatment that consistently point to treatment success (Gray 2011):

- Self-Efficacy
- Futurity
- Self-Esteem.

Self-Efficacy (Bandura, 1997), describes the individual's ability to experience a degree of control about themselves and their environment.

Futurity is held out by as a crucial predictor of treatment success (Prochaska, Norcross and DiClemente, 2007). There is a necessary shift from focusing on the loss suffered by giving up problem behaviors to the perception of all that can be gained by moving on to a better future.

Self-Esteem flows from a true knowledge of the Self.

NLP-oriented counselors provide specific tools for the development of self-efficacy, emotional control/maturity, self-discovery and future orientation. They meet clients where they are and then lead them to more resourceful states.

The client had been attending alcoholism counseling for about six months under a court order. The client had made significant progress. However, for the counseling to have a successful outcome, the client needed to complete another three month round of group counseling. The counselor presented the client with the opportunity of continuing in counseling for three months, but the client decided “no.” The client admitted to the counselor that he intended to resume drinking. Despite his alcohol dependency the client thought with the counseling he had he could control his drinking. The counselor agreed to send a letter of completion of the required counseling to the judge indicating that the client could continue voluntarily. The counselor was disappointed in the client’s decision. Instead of indicating his disappointment, the counselor explained to the client that if he was truly alcoholic dependent, if he resumed drinking what the likely progression of the alcohol dependence would be. He told the client that he could resume counseling in the future with the counselor if there ever was a future need. About one year later the client called the counselor explaining that what the counselor predicted had happened. He had since quit drinking and started attending Alcoholics Anonymous. No future counseling was needed as the client made the necessary changes and had stabilized his life.

The story of the Samaritan Woman or the Woman at the Well, found in John 4:4-27 depicts an encounter between Jesus and someone whose life is characterized by

emptiness. The woman had a need to have her emptiness filled and to find personal meaning (Leslie, 1995). Every other need, whether to satisfy hunger, thirst, sex, status or power are secondary to the need for meaning. Finding meaning gives reason for living, maybe even reason to eat, drink, have pleasure, reproduce or obtain status and power. The Samaritan woman's life had become routine and dull. She went regularly to the well to draw water to sustain her life. It was from the well of Jacob, suggesting that her own spiritual search had become drudgery. But Jesus reached through her outer defenses and she cried out "Give me water that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." She was weary and her life had no purpose but survival. This aimlessness did not necessarily correspond with physical or mental impairment of any kind in her life, but a lack of essential value in her life. Jesus approached the Samaritan woman in terms of value conflicts in her life. That she drew water at noon rather than socializing with other town women suggests a serious rift between her and the women of the town. So Jesus is extremely forthright and direct with the woman. Rather than focus on the conditions or reasons for the woman's distress, Jesus focuses on her response to the conditions. There is no underlying illness in the case of the woman's immorality. It is a matter of personal responsibility. She can change if she accepts responsibility for her plight and changes her behavior. She can change by recognizing her values and living on their basis. Jesus confronts the woman with the truth about her life. He holds her accountable for her decisions and actions. It would be futile for this woman to continue to find happiness on the basis of sex. The pursuit of pleasure had not and could not fill her emptiness. Real pleasure would come through fulfilling the responsibilities of her place in life. The woman was defensive with Jesus about her moral failings. She

changes the subject with a question about the appropriate place for worship. She tries to move the discussion away from her personal failings to a religious one. Rather than respond defensively to the woman, he accepts her and her defensiveness. He does not attack her. Although she has rejected him and his entreaty, he does not reject her. However, he does not allow her to dictate the terms of their engagement. He refused to stay away from the subject of her predicament. He redirected her topic so that it was relevant to her situation. He connected it to the subject of God. If she was going to have a meaningful life, one in which she would drink of living water, she would have to clear up the moral issue that made a healthy relationship between her and God and her and other people possible. While Jesus did not hesitate to confront the woman directly with her problem, he did not do so until he was invited to do so by her. The outcome of this encounter was positive and therapeutic. The woman acclaimed his deep insight into her and took a new hard look at herself. So pleased was she with what she gained from the encounter with Jesus she invited others to meet him.

The aim of pastoral or spiritual counseling is helping a client to move beyond treating their symptoms to healing the broken heart or wounded soul. The counselor aims to help the client face the client's reality, choices and responsibility. It aims to help the client move beyond surface needs to deep, existential and spiritual needs. Such counseling is an art, moving a person level by level to encounter the truth in the client. It increases the client's responsibility for all aspects of the client's life including self-realization.

The song “It Stoned Me” by Van Morrison (1969) illustrates how transformation happens. In the song two young men just want to go fishing. It begins to rain and to their dismay they are getting soaked. They hope the rain will stop and that they can go fishing. Their encounter with water at this point in the story is an inconvenience. The only thing they want from water is fish. Then, the rain lets up and the sun comes out and they get dry. They hitch a ride to a swimming hole and jump in, letting the water run all over them. They are enjoying the water. Now it’s time to go home. As they make their way home their throats get dry from singing. They meet a man who gives them spring water and they learn to get it themselves from the mountain stream. Grace abounds in them, they are renewed, and able to obtain that grace from its source.

Half a mile from the county fair
And the rain keep pourin' down
Me and Billy standin' there
With a silver half a crown
Hands are full of a fishin' rod
And the tackle on our backs
We just stood there gettin' wet
With our backs against the fence
Oh, the water, oh, the water, oh, the water
Hope it don't rain all day

Chorus: And it stoned me to my soul

Stoned me just like Jelly Roll

And it stoned me

And it stoned me to my soul

Stoned me just like goin' home

And it stoned me

Then the rain let up and the sun came up

And we were gettin' dry

Almost let a pick-up truck nearly pass us by

So we jumped right in and the driver grinned

And he dropped us up the road

We looked at the swim and we jumped right in

Not to mention fishing poles

Oh, the water, oh, the water, oh, the water

Let it run all over me (Chorus)

On the way back home we sang a song

But our throats were getting dry

Then we saw the man from across the road

With the sunshine in his eyes

Well he lived all alone in his own little home

With a great big gallon jar

There were bottles too, one for me and you

And he said Hey! There you are

Oh, the water, oh, the water, oh, the water

Get it myself from the mountain stream (Chorus)

The counselor needs to recognize the client's need for spiritual nourishment and lead the client to deeper levels of spiritual nourishment. At an early stage, the experience of spiritual nourishment may be accidental and reluctant. At a middle stage, the experience may be external; something the client goes to or participates and enjoys. At a later stage, the client may receive spiritual nourishment from someone, something or someplace and learn to obtain it for them-self.

The client presented with a muscle spasm in the back. He had been suffering from depression, but on account of medication and counseling he was no longer demonstrating symptoms of depression. But while talking to the counselor he had a muscle spasm. He could hardly move. At the counselor's encouragement he lay down on the floor and relaxed, focusing on his breathing and rocking slowly side to side. The counselor and client were discussing at the time the client's need to understand and care for his body. They had just discussed the client's prior experience of Hatha Yoga. The counselor had demonstrated a posture that the client could practice. The client returned home. After a few days he saw a chiropractor who also discussed Hatha Yoga with the client. With enough relief from the chiropractor, the client went home and

completed a half hour Hatha Yoga sequence. He repeated the sequence on a daily basis. When he returned to the chiropractor and to the counselor his back was still tight but much better. Plus because of his Hatha Yoga and an additional meditation practice that he had been practicing a few months he reported feeling a deep sense of relaxation and overall peace, unlike he had ever experienced before.

The story of the paralyzed youth, found in Mark 2:2-12 demonstrates how Jesus deals with a person's value conflicts (Leslie, 1995). For the Jews of Jesus' day there was an essential unity and interdependence of mind, body and spirit. Sin and health were related. So forgiveness of sin could alleviate psychological and physical symptoms. Guilt could contribute to impairment of body or mind. Jesus recognized that the paralyzed man was suffering from a moral conflict. Jesus attended to the young man's moral issue. Unresolved moral issues can lead to compensatory behaviors. They also can lead to illness. In this case the young man's friends brought him to Jesus. Jesus approached the young man not about his paralyzed legs but about his spiritual problem. Jesus' concern was not with the young man's symptoms but with his attitude towards life. Jesus spoke directly to the man's inner condition, assuring him that his sins were forgiven. His unconditional acceptance of the young man, despite his sin, freed the young man from his paralyzed state. With encouragement he was able to return to a normal life. While we do not know details of any conversation between the young man and Jesus, the young man might have confessed his sin to Jesus to receive the forgiveness. He might have been bound by indecision or immobilized by self doubt. But now he no longer needed to be carried by his friends. He could stand on his own

two feet and transport himself. It is possible, too, that the young man was unaware of his guilt and his own spiritual unconscious. In this story the friends cared for the young man and treated him as a person of worth despite his shortcomings. It would not be lost upon him that they went to great lengths to help him. Jesus must have been caught by the young man's entry, lowered on a mat from a disassembled roof. But he regarded the young man warmly. He was accepted in his unique condition. Jesus, a significant person in the eyes of the young man, his friends and the community, provided the young man with encouragement. He provided a milieu that was conducive to healing. He did not merely show compassion to the young man, he challenged him, offering him a goal to pursue: "Take up your bed and walk!" There is authority in this command. Jesus believes that the man is capable of doing just that in spite of his condition and conveys his belief to the young man in such a way that the man responds positively. Jesus called the young man to take responsibility for his condition, his guilt, and induced in him a desire to act, to rectify his situation. Jesus reconnected the young man to the spiritual dimension of God and mobilized him to find his unique place and function in society.

The counselor needs to provide acceptance and encouragement, an atmosphere conducive to healing. Then the counselor needs to challenge the client to take responsibility for healing. To "take up your bed and walk" is for the client to take action in the direction of health or realization of the client's goal. While it is a good and a step in the right direction for a client to rely on others for help with problems, in the final analysis personal responsibility is necessary to overcome the problem. The client

needs to learn how to believe in the client's self and try out new behaviors, realizing or developing capabilities that the client has not used before.

The story of Simon the Pharisee, found in Luke 7:36-50, is a story of Jesus' engagement with a man who lacked self-awareness and self-responsibility. He did what he wanted without concern for the impact of his behaviors on others. He felt no need to be forgiven. He also experienced very little love in his life. Simon was committed to self-actualization and personal fulfillment through the observance of religious law. Consumed with himself and his desire for personal holiness, he had little room in his life for others. A conventionally good man, Simon had no sympathy for those who were loose in their observance of religious practices and mores. Morality was an end in itself for him. He was blind to the path that would allow him to realize his full potential. His condemnation of the woman in this story betrayed his own inner discontent established by his lack of relatedness to others. Preoccupied with his own self-reflection and spiritual progress, he failed to reach his lofty life ambition of spiritual perfection. Simon lacked any sense of what he ought to do with his life. He lacked the sense of obligation and responsibility to others. Jesus could not just tell Simon this because Simon is psychologically well-defended. So Jesus tells Simon a parable, a story in which Simon could see himself clearly via identification with characters in the story. Simon passes judgment on a character in the story only to find that he has passed judgment on himself. Jesus then points out how the sinful woman in the story responds to Jesus' needs as a guest in the house in ways Simon should have, but did not. Jesus uses the immediate circumstances of the gathering at Simon's house to point out in an

unmistakable way, the problem in Simon's life. He kindly, but firmly confronts Simon with the facts of his behavior. Jesus drives the point home, after skillfully leading Simon to pass sentence on himself. The whole scene also becomes an object lesson for the woman. Jesus tells her "Your repentance cleanses you from the past. Go in power into the future, no longer faced with the compulsion to sin but free to live a responsible and committed life (Leslie, 1995).

The pastoral counselor may be thrust into such a situation at a church event or gathering in someone's home. The Bible Study or small group, although not defined as therapeutic, may take on elements of group counseling as biblical stories and metaphors are utilized to engage the imagination of group members in identifying with characters in the story and applying dynamics of the story to their own lives and life situations. This may not be a form of deficit counseling or mental health counseling, but an educational, supportive, growth oriented counseling aimed at finding new models and establishing effective or more effective attitudes and behaviors.

Most commentators write of Jesus as the protagonist or hero of the Synoptic Gospels. It is possible to read them from a perspective where Peter is the protagonist or hero and Jesus is an ego ideal that Peter, and thus every disciple, aspires to. The story of Peter is a story of transformation. Jesus challenged Peter in many ways. He called him away from his fishing business to follow him. He encouraged Peter to try walking on water and rescued Peter after he became afraid when the winds and waves arose and Peter doubted and sunk. He affirmed Peter for realizing his true identity as Messiah and Son of God. He challenged Peter for rebuking him for saying he must die, calling Peter's

testing of him “Satan” and telling him to get behind him to support him instead of impeding him. This returned Peter to his position of disciple who followed Jesus rather than impeded Jesus. He convinced Peter to allow him to wash Peter’s feet in order to demonstrate that he was a servant and Peter and the other disciples were to be servants. He allowed Peter to boast that he would not deny Jesus and confronted him with a prediction that he would indeed deny him. He challenged Peter to stay up with him while he waited in the Garden to be arrested. And with all Peter’s failings he called on Peter to be his successor, telling him to feed and tend his lambs and sheep. Jesus helped Peter see that failure was not the last word (Leslie, 1995). Peter could redeem his past by changing himself. Jesus’ approach with Peter was supportive but forthright. This allowed Peter to overcome self-denial and see himself for who he really was. There would be no false sense of spiritual attainment in Peter because his Master Teacher would not allow it. Jesus would tell Peter what was hard for Peter to hear and accept. In doing this Jesus conveyed to Peter his belief in what Peter was capable of. It also helped Peter to discover his true self and overcome his egotism and false sense of self, the persona he aimed to project. Peter would come to a true self acceptance, an acceptance that showed him what and where he needed to learn and grow. Although it did not seem so to Peter and to readers of the gospels all the time, Peter proved up to the challenges Jesus presented to him.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Maslow posits a hierarchy of needs that are motivational in nature (1970a, b). In order for a person to move on to higher need they need to have sufficiently met the lower need. The lower need has priority over the higher need. The needs for survival, safety, love and inclusion and esteem and affirmation are basic. Maslow calls them deficiency needs because they motivate people when they are unmet. The longer they are unmet, the stronger they will become. These basic needs need to be met before higher level growth needs are met. Maslow calls the needs for knowledge and understanding, beauty or cohesiveness, self-actualization and transcendence growth needs or being needs. The ability and desire to self-actualize is in everyone but is often disrupted by the failure to meet lower level needs.

From bottom to top up the hierarchy the needs are (Maslow 1970 a, b):

- Physiological needs - air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sex, sleep, etc.
- Safety needs - protection from elements, security, order, law, stability, etc.

- Love and belongingness needs - friendship, intimacy, affection and love.
- Esteem needs - self-esteem, achievement, mastery, independence, status, dominance, prestige, managerial responsibility, etc.
- Cognitive needs - knowledge, meaning, etc.
- Aesthetic needs - appreciation and search for beauty, balance, form, etc.
- Self-Actualization needs - realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences.
- Transcendence needs - helping others to achieve self actualization.

Maslow identified fifteen characteristics of self-actualizing people (1970):

- They perceive reality efficiently and can tolerate uncertainty
- They accept themselves and others for what they are
- They are spontaneous in thought and action
- They are problem-centered (not self-centered)
- They have an unusual sense of humor
- They are able to look at life objectively
- They are highly creative
- They are resistant to enculturation, but not purposely unconventional
- They are concerned for the welfare of humanity
- They are capable of deep appreciation of basic life-experience
- They establish deep satisfying interpersonal relationships with a few people
- They have peak experiences

- They need privacy
- They have democratic attitudes
- They have strong moral/ethical standards

There are characteristic behaviors associated with self actualization (Maslow 1970):

- Experiencing life like a child, with full absorption and concentration
- Trying new things instead of sticking to safe paths
- Listening to your own feelings in evaluating experiences instead of the voice of tradition, authority or the majority
- Avoiding pretense ('game playing') and being honest
- Being prepared to be unpopular if your views do not coincide with those of the majority
- Taking responsibility and working hard
- Trying to identify your defenses and having the courage to give them up

The story of Peter and his relationship with Jesus allows us a glimpse of a long-term counseling relationship. This is not a mental health kind of counseling but pastoral or spiritual counseling. It is not a deficit kind of counseling but growth-oriented developmental counseling. NLP-oriented counseling is asset-based and resource-oriented rather than deficit-based and oriented. Jesus in this case is Peter's Pastor, Spiritual Master Teacher, Spiritual Director, model, counselor and friend. It is not an equal relationship but a loving one. Not only do we see the impact during Jesus' time with Peter, we see the impact of that time after Jesus is no longer around. Jesus future-

paced the disciples and Peter, telling them that after his death, resurrection and ascension to heaven they would receive the Holy Spirit or spiritual power that would enable them to do even greater things than he did.

Counseling does not have to be deficit-oriented. It can be growth and developmentally oriented. It does not have to overcome obstacles. It can take aim by a vision of the future. The counselor can work with two parallel universes in the client at the same time, the present and the future, the imperfect and the perfect, the unfulfilled and the fulfilled. If the client wants to become a college professor, the client can see the client's self as the client is now; attending graduate school and completing the client's dissertation. The client can see the client in the future having completed the dissertation, defending it and graduating and all the necessary fieldwork. And he client can see the client's future self with a Ph.D., teaching classes in a university, conducting research, publishing, reading papers, correcting exams and advising and mentoring students. The present self can be guided to merge with the future self. Later the client can see the future self moving on to a more desirable and prestigious teaching position, living the lifestyle of a full and tenured professor (Goldman, 2009).

In his relationship with Mary and Martha, Lazarus's sisters depicted in Luke 10:38-42 Jesus is again addressing life values (Leslie, 1995). Jesus was at the home of Lazarus, Martha and Mary. Martha was busy acting the role of hostess while Mary sat at Jesus' feet learning from him. Martha was irritated with Mary because she was not helping her wait upon their guests. Given the mores of the day, it would be expected that Mary would be in the kitchen with Martha slaving away. Martha would have expected Jesus

to commiserate with her complaint and order Mary to her duty. But rather than comply with Martha, Jesus utilized her complaint to help her reflect upon herself. Rather than focus on the external issue, Jesus responded, “Martha, you are anxious and troubled by many things.” Immediately Martha’s focus was redirected from Mary to herself. “Instead of being critical of Mary’s behavior, look more closely at your own.” Jesus was directing Mary to examine her own sense of purpose and meaning; her own choice of doing what she was doing. Was she doing it because it was expected of her or because she wanted to? What was her relationship with others; that of a servant or a disciple? Did she want to be one or the other? What was Martha seeking in her behavior; the love and approval of others? Is that where she found meaning? Or did she feel she could not abandon her role in order to pursue what Mary was pursuing and resented Mary for it? Jesus was leading Martha to a greater sense of self-awareness and personal responsibility. He was leading her to discover her personal power in this situation. The life of a homemaker and housekeeper could be meaningful, just as the life of a disciple or student could be meaningful. What was meaningful for Martha and Mary was different. Or their priorities were different. Next, Jesus guided Martha to see what she wanted from Jesus and from other people. He explained to Martha that Mary was choosing “the good portion; the one thing needed,” something not available to Martha because she was too busy working. Some values are more important than others. Mary was enjoying an encounter with Jesus, receiving something from the attention he gave her and she gave him. There was a meaningful exchange of teaching and learning in this encounter. Martha was missing out on such an encounter. Had she so chosen she could have had such an encounter, too. Jesus showed her this. She

could have a deeper relationship with Jesus. Indeed, she would have opportunity in the future as she did at the time of Lazarus' death, when Jesus revealed himself to Martha as "the Resurrected Messiah" even before his death. This made her the first witness of the resurrection of Jesus, a remarkable distinction! According to Leslie, experiential values are actualized via encounters with significant others (Leslie, 1995).

The pastoral or spiritual counselor meets the client where the client is in the complex set of client needs. Physical, emotional, psychological, relational and other spiritual needs must be met, possibly in that order, but they all need to be met. Spiritual needs are paramount. The counselor needs to be secure in his spirituality and on the spiritual path that is necessary for him to have spiritual knowledge; that is, active, experiential knowledge of the spiritual dimension and its realities and energies. This is more than conceptual knowledge. The counselor needs to be able to connect with the client from the spiritual level of the counselor to the spiritual level of the client and transmit spiritual understanding and knowledge. In a very significant way knowledge is power, truth is dynamic and love is all encompassing. The counselor needs to be at or above the cognitive developmental level of the client and to know who to refer him to that is at a higher spiritual-cognitive level. The counselor needs to be able to read the spiritual-cognitive map even if the counselor is not able to travel to all the destinations on it. To know that the destinations exist can help the client find another guide who can take the client there. At the same time, the counselor can be an explorer and even a trail blazer. The pastoral or spiritual counselor who is no longer seeking to be challenged and grow would be better retiring or seeking another career.

The story of the invalid at Bethesda, found in John 5:2-15, shows Jesus helping a man change his attitude towards life (Leslie, 1995). Jesus focused his attention not so much on the man's illness but his attitude towards his illness. His aim is not on alleviation of symptoms but on an inner state of wholeness. Correct someone's inner state and symptoms will be removed. They will resist removal if the inner state is not transformed. Jesus addresses the man directly when he sees him lying helplessly beside the pool: "Do you want to be healed?" It is a different question than "Do you think that you can be healed?" In fact it implies that the man can be healed and that the man's desire to be healed matters. It even implies that Jesus believes that the man can be healed. It is likely, given his experience, that the man does not believe he can be healed or he believes he can be healed under only some conditions, like getting into the water, which he believes is impossible: "If only I could get into the water; then I will be healed." The man had been looking outside of himself for help. Jesus confidently asserted that the man could help himself. Jesus activated a defiant power within the man to overcome his condition. Even if he proved unable to walk again, his outlook might have been changed. He might have been able to convince someone to place him in the water. Jesus did not focus on past experiences or causes, but on current outlook. Just think, the man could have responded to Jesus, "No, I do not want to be healed. I would have to work then and I have not worked in twenty years. I do not have any skills. At least now people throw me a bone out of pity." Meaning in life is found in the attitude one has to one's condition. Jesus' strong, direct presence mobilized within the man an attitudinal change. It may have been his attitude all along but he had not asserted it. Now that he did, he could respond to Jesus' next directive: "Stand up and walk. And

sin no more, that further misfortune will not befall you.” The maintenance of the change demanded action, too. He could not return to his previous irresponsible attitude. He would need to be self-aware and responsible for his thoughts, words and actions.

The pastoral or spiritual counselor needs to identify the motivational level of the client. Is the client ready to change or not? Has the client even contemplated change? Is the client ready to assume action? Is the client already in action mode? Is the client committed to maintaining the client’s gains? The pastoral counselor needs to have motivational counseling skills to assist the client in moving from one motivational level to another. The questions posed by the counselor can help the client to move from one level to another. If a client answers the question “Do you want to change?” by saying “No,” then the counselor has to inquire about what the client wants or why the client does not want to change. The client might not want to get up and walk because it hurts too much to stand and walk. Then the question might be “Do you want to reduce or eliminate your pain when you stand and walk? Maybe that pain alleviation is a prerequisite to walking.”

The man was paraplegic. He had been in a wheel chair for over twenty years. He had suffered a spinal injury that left him in great pain for which he was prescribed methadone. He wanted to work but when he worked for any sustained time he would injure himself. Medical records supported the claim that he was paraplegic. He was able to qualify as permanently disabled. He did have extreme upper body strength and was able to lift himself and move himself while holding onto the side of his truck. For over twenty years he did not even contemplate walking. For almost a year he

contemplated it. He opened his mind to a certain surgery that was risky but which possibly could help. The client was determined to walk again and shared that with his pastor. Sometimes he could not stand at all. The pain was simply unbearable. But he abandoned his wheel chair on better days for a walker and a year later could walk short distances slowly utilizing a tall walking stick.

Jesus saw dignity in each person (Leslie, 1995). He even saw it in people who had lost all sense of dignity such as the Gerasene Demoniac featured in Mark 5:1-20. Demonic possession is the predicament of feeling possessed by an outside influence or power. It is being outside of one's own control. Human beings pride themselves as having self-control rather than being driven like animals by their instincts. Human beings are characterized by conscience, freedom and self-control. No one liked being in the presence of this demoniac. He made them uncomfortable, if not afraid. But Jesus did not fear him. He did not recoil at the demoniac's appearance and demeanor. Jesus engaged him as a person of dignity and worth. And so his maniacal ravings were subdued by Jesus' patient understanding. The demoniac, overwhelmed as he was by his condition, did not even know his name. But he responded to Jesus desire to know him, calling himself "Legion." That is the normal thing to ask someone when you first meet him: "What is your name?" Behind Jesus' question was a communication: "You matter. I care to know your name. I am not repulsed by you. I see beyond your symptoms to who you are. I am here for you. You are worth my talking to you." Beyond that the communication Jesus was asking, "How did you come to this state? When did you begin to be and act in this way? What led to it? What is this power that

has dominion over you?” We do not know what past events conspired to bring this man to his current state. Perhaps he had been privy to atrocities committed by Roman legions. Perhaps he had lost his Jewish identity to legions of other identities that occupied him.

The scene ends with the demoniac sitting with Jesus as a normal man. What was important was that Jesus did not fear him; that he accepted and understood him right from the outset. That must have calmed the man’s fears. Jesus could confront the man, “You are angry, even enraged, but you do not have to be ruled by that anger. Come out of this man, you unclean spirit. You are not accountable for your condition. They are part of a sickness that you cannot control, but you are responsible for your attitude towards them. Together, you and I, have control over this situation now. You do not have to let outside forces get control of you again. You have power inside of you to handle your anger and forces that are even outside of you. Consider your life now in the light of God’s mercy and love. God cares for you. I care for you, too. Others have cared for you and will care for you as you take responsibility for yourself. Jesus would not allow the man to stay with him like he desired. He had found someone who cared and helped him get his mind right. He wanted to maintain this new approach to life and the meaning it provided him. But Jesus knew better. The test of the man’s health would be returning to the normalcy of everyday life among old friends and family. But he returns home with a new sense of self, of meaning and purpose, commissioned to tell of the changes God had made in him. He was no longer preoccupied with himself but with God.

The counselor needs to be able to embrace the client who is different without fear. Certainly there is a time to be afraid. The counselor needs to be able to assess violence and danger. The demoniac that Jesus confronted was not a dangerous man, just scary. I worked for a number of years with people who suffered from schizophrenia. One of my clients was catatonic. She sat silently staring into space. Attempts had been made to feed her by force. I was assigned to her. Part of my responsibility was to get her to eat. I was not about to force her to eat. My goal was to make a connection with her and help her to communicate. Since she was not talking I determined to do all the talking. I said to her, "You must be tired of people telling you what to do and trying to make you eat when you don't want to." She looked at me, opened up her mouth, and made a deep guttural scream. It took all of her effort. I asked her if she wanted to eat. She shook her head "no." The next day she began to talk to staff.

From Jesus' perspective, greatness comes from service (Leslie, 1995). Jesus saw himself as a servant and at that a suffering servant. Even as he hung dying on the cross Jesus served the thief hanging beside him. He even served those who crucified him asking God the Father to forgive them for their ignorance. In John 13:3-5, 12-16, Jesus took a towel, wrapped it around his waist, knelt down at his disciples' feet and washed their feet. He demonstrated to them, that as leaders, they should serve others, including one another. If he, their master, would do this for them, they not being greater than their master should wash one-another's feet. They need not be baptized again; that was already accomplished once and for all. Rather they should support one another, encourage one another and care for one another. Jesus' concern for his

disciples was that they have the right outlook on life. He wanted them to see their lives from other perspectives. He was not concerned about small changes in their lives but a major reorientation. He showed them the errors of their ways and pointed them to new pathways. He challenged them, shaking them out of complacency and routine to a fresh perspective, so they saw things not from their own perspective, but the larger perspective of God. Rather than be attuned to their own and the conventional voices of society, he directed them to hear the voice of God. Where their hearts were closed or hard on account of fear or anger, he prodded them to soften their hearts, even break them through compassion towards others. Jesus aimed, as he did with the story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:17, to lead people back to themselves (Leslie, 1995). He would challenge them to understand their own current identity and move beyond this to a deeper sense of self, one which is connected to God and human community. The prodigal son came to himself or his senses when he recognized the error of his ways and determined to find the correct way by being responsible. He does not expect anything in his return and would accept anything. How valuable now did he deem his relationship with God, family and community! Jesus saw the prodigal son from an ontological dimension, an existential level that was deeply spiritual. He saw the connection between mind, body and spirit and took aim at the spiritual level as foundational. He led people away from preoccupation with themselves to life with others within a framework where God was all important. He interjected into conversations the primary claim of God on people's lives. Ultimate meaning is found in relationship with God and God's values and through transcendence of everyday conditions and perspective.

People do change. A client can be resistant to change for long periods of time. Or perhaps the client is not interested in change or ready for change. The client was a 40 year old street alcoholic. He slept in a hobo jungle under a bridge by a waterway. He consumed large quantities of alcohol. It used to be beer. Now it was fortified wine. From time to time he would be referred to the clinic. He tried outpatient treatment, inpatient treatment, half-way houses, and long- term inpatient treatment. A late stage alcoholic he was considered by treatment professionals as having the worst prognosis. He was fifty years old when he quit drinking all together. He took a job guiding cars at special events at a college. Year after year he would be there, sober, happy. His family was happy. Their brother had returned. In this case, the counselor just looked on. Counseling never helped. He just changed. He returned home. He was welcomed.

However primary relationship to God was for Jesus, he began his relationship with people on a direct and personal plane, according to their needs. Even in the middle of a crowd he would single out someone and relate to them. He seldom ministered to people in the same way. He responded to their individual needs in natural and appropriate ways. He was relationship based. He gave himself fully to every relationship, utilizing the circumstances of the situation and available resources. Each individual was valued, irreplaceable, a life task awaiting that person that will not be fulfilled if not by that person. Lastly, Jesus sends out the people he works with to a life of service, for it is in service that meaning is found.

Pastoral Counseling, Psychotherapy and Jesus

When I approach training pastors for pastoral or spiritual counseling I begin with a particular premise, by being a healthy functioning Christian or human being, the student has the resources, internal and external, to become an excellent pastoral or spiritual counselor. And what resources the student lacks, the student will be able to obtain through pastoral or counseling training and through other resources. Indeed the student is responsible for the student's learning. I am responsible for the training.

To begin, the student must obtain a vision of what the student will be and do as a pastoral or spiritual counselor. In Proverbs (29:18) we read "Where there is no vision, the people will perish."

To provide pastoral and spiritual counseling the student needs a vision or model to guide the student's practice in the present and future. Every student brings to this learning endeavor a vision or model. It may be unconscious or intuitive but it is still there. That model can be drawn from one particular place e.g. behavioral or psycho-analytic; from a variety of places intuitively combined e.g. eclectic, multi-modal or from a variety of places united in an overarching perspective e.g. Integral, holistic, Christian, pastoral, spiritual, Buddhist, Yogic, etc . . .

I contend that the vision or model can be obtained from a person. Indeed, that has occurred with Freudian, Adlerian, Rankian, Jungian, Rogerian, Gestalt, Rational-Emotive, Logo and Ericksonian Psychotherapy, to name a few. The vision of model in this study is provided by Jesus of Nazareth and passed on to us through his disciples

and the Bible. There are alternate models of Jesus as well, from movies and from non-canonical scriptures like the Gospel of Thomas.

I find having an overarching perspective to be very helpful in succeeding in providing pastoral care as it provides a source from which you practice and an identity that expresses itself in capabilities, beliefs and behaviors. This overarching perspective is your paradigm. Jesus had such an overarching paradigm and described it in a variety of ways. His over-arching perspective is the Kingdom or reign of God. The transformation of the world and restoration of people who were spiritually lost, sick or dead to a relationship with God is a manifestation of the Kingdom. The restoration of unity between God and the people of the world is the end result of the Kingdom's inauguration.

Chapter 7: NLP Procedures for Effective Preaching

Changing States and Rapport

NLP is a powerful set of presuppositions and procedures that can be used by individuals to excel in preaching. It is common thought that NLP utilizes hypnotic phenomena. Some of the most important NLP texts make common reference to hypnotic phenomena (Bandler, 2008; Grinder and Bandler, 1979; Bandler and Grinder, 1975; Bandler, Grinder and DeLozier, 1975). Some Christians are opposed to NLP because of that (Bodenhamer and Hall, 2007). NLP presupposes that trance phenomena naturally occur in human communication (Grinder and Bandler, 1981; Bandler, 2008). I will suggest that Jesus utilized practices and procedures identical to those utilized in NLP. Of course, these practices were not bundled together in a package called NLP, and the procedures utilized by Jesus were not NLP. However, in modeling Jesus we will be learning NLP.

NLP was developed on the basis of modeling outstanding communicators in their respective fields (McClendon, 2013). Only one, Milton Erickson made almost exclusive use of hypnosis. His understanding of hypnosis, while influential, is unique and even revolutionary. It is often referred to as indirect or waking hypnosis (Erickson, Rossi, Rossi and Weitzenhoffer, 1976). NLP involves the conscious modeling of the practices and procedures of outstanding communicators. Modeling Jesus' person and preaching involves conscious imitation of Jesus' person and preaching.

One phenomenon that NLP makes use of is trance (Grinder and Bandler 1981; Bandler, 2008). Trance is a state where the critical function of the conscious mind is suspended to allow access to the unconscious mind. This is a voluntary suspension on the part of the person and is not imposed upon the person. Trance is an altered state of consciousness in which a person is more open and subject to suggestion, influence, and learning. It is a natural phenomenon of communication that is fostered in good communication (Crabtree, 1999). It is the result of generating rapport with a subject or audience (Dilts 1990; Dilts 1983; O'Connor and Seymour 2011). Rapport is the experience of connection with others. It is a state of openness to others based upon a feeling of familiarity. It is perhaps the most important state for Preachers to obtain from their audience and thus developing rapport is the most important skill for them to learn. Rapport was characteristic of Jesus' relationship with his audiences.

Rapport is characterized by everyday trance. Boundaries are lightened and loosened and there is an experience of flow between self and other (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008). Communication is completed when there is a sense of completeness and closure between Preacher and audience. While boundaries between the two people in the communication are loosened, the distinctiveness of self and other is maintained. There is a sense of agreement between self and other. Key to establishing rapport is putting oneself in the state one wants the subject in; calm, trusting, unafraid, and openly communicative. It involves meeting the subject on the subject's own terms. After meeting the subject and abiding with the subject in the subject's state one can then

lead, teach, or train the subject. Rapport is established between people. While initiated by someone it is, never-the-less, a collaborative effort.

The Learning State

The process of modeling used here is a learning process. To effectively learn to preach like a model like Jesus, using NLP modeling, it is necessary to utilize NLP. The first step in doing this is to establish in the learner a learning state (James and Shephard, 2001; Dilts and Delozier, 2000; Cheek and Rossi, 1994; Tart, 1972). This learning state facilitates the process of observation, imitation, internalization, incorporation, and implementation of the model's behavior. This learning state is best learned prior to learning something new and established at the onset of learning something new. It is a resourceful state for learning where you widen the use of your senses in order to increase your ability to take in, utilize and store information. You already have some key resources in your repertoire that you can use in your preparing to learn. These include your attention and your peripheral vision. You want to establish a learning state in order to optimize your learning abilities and take in more information from your surroundings. When you enter into this learning state you eliminate stress, anxiety or feelings of not being in control of yourself and your environment. You control your emotional-cognitive state so that negative thoughts and emotions are eliminated. If you happen to have performance anxiety you can neutralize your anxiety by extending your focus to the periphery of your performance space so that your vision encompasses the entire audience. This learning state will empower you as you discover and realize that you have all of the resources that you need to take charge of your own mind and body

in your life circumstances. Peripheral vision is also an excellent relaxation tool and an easy way to get yourself or your clients into trance and meditation. We will do this later in this paper, but because it so easy for you to learn I will take you through the process right now (James and Shephard, 2001).

Exercise: Learning State Preview

Now, find a spot in front of you and above eye level and direct your attention to it. Focus on this spot for 5-10 seconds before expanding your focus to the periphery whilst keeping your eyes still. Loosen the back of your jaw (this tends to rid you of any self talk that might be going on). Continue to expand your awareness. Notice any movement that is going on in your periphery. Become aware of the different sounds around you. You might feel the back of your chair against your back or your feet resting on the ground. Now, keeping your attention on the spot in front of you and above your eye level and with your peripheral vision, notice the space above and below that focal point and from that spot spread out the right and to the left. Notice the space from the back of the room, floor to ceiling, side to side, all the way to the front of the room. And with that same focus, using your peripheral vision, notice the space around you, above you, below you to the right and left of you. And with that same focus, notice a ball at the back of your head and the space above and below the ball and to the right and left of the ball all the way to the wall behind you... Now let your focus on the spot before you drop to eye level. And just be aware of the relaxation in your body and the stillness of your mind. This is The Learning State.

In teaching I will utilize modeling offering myself as a model. You will learn to preach better by utilizing the NLP procedures that follow. And you will learn how to preach like Jesus if you desire to preach like Jesus and follow the process provided here to model his preaching. Some keys for you learning how to preach better and like Jesus are for you to:

- Believe that you can preach better and like Jesus.
- Believe that it is permissible to preach like Jesus.
- Be comfortable being yourself when you are preaching.
- Utilize both your conscious and unconscious mind in preaching.
- Learn the basics of NLP as it relates to preaching.
- Apply modeling procedures in learning how to preach like Jesus.

Jesus is a complex character. You may already know a great deal about him. In the course of learning how to preach better and like Jesus you may learn a great deal new about him. Trust your powers of observation and imitation. Your unconscious mind will guide you in implementing what you learn. The process of modeling need not be perfect. Stick to the process to the end and you will preach like Jesus.

Well-Formed Outcomes

One principle of NLP is that you achieve better results when you start with an end-goal in mind; when you are clear about the reasons for achieving your goals and outcomes. This principle is called “the Well-Defined Outcome.” A well-defined goal will produce the

desired well-defined outcome (James and Shephard, 2001; Bodenhamer and Hall, 2001; Dilts and DeLozier, 2000). If your goal is to preach like Jesus be clear about that goal. And be clear about why you want to preach like Jesus. As a teacher you want a teaching plan with clear goals and objectives. As a counselor you want a treatment plan with clear goals and objectives. A well formed goal is (Dilts and Delozier, 2000):

- Stated in positive terms.
- Defined and evaluated according to sensory based evidence.
- Initiated and maintained by the entity who desires the goal.
- Made to preserve the positive byproducts of the state being changed.
- Appropriately contextualized to fit the ecology of the present system.

A Well-defined Outcome is S.M.A.R.T. (Bodenhamer and Hall, 2001):

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Realistic and Rewarding
- Timeable and Tangible.

Bodenhamer's and Hall's "The Well-Formed Outcome Model" (2001) follows:

1) State the goal in positive terms.

- Describe the Present Situation and compare it with the desired future goal.
- Where are you now?

- Where do you want to be?
- What do you want?
- State it in the positive (what you want to achieve).
- What are you going toward?

2) Specify the goal in Sensory Based Terms.

- What will you see, hear, feel, etc., when you have it?
- What steps or stages are involved in reaching this goal?
- Engage all of your senses in this description process.
- Break down your goal into small enough chunks so that each is do-able.

3) Specify the goal in a way that you find compelling.

- Is the goal compelling? Does it pull on you?
- Make it a compelling future representation that's dissociated
- When you see your goal make sure you see yourself having obtained it.

4) Run a Quality Control check on your Goal

- Is the desired goal right for you in all circumstances of your life?
- Is your goal appropriate in all your personal relationships?
- What will having your goal give you that you do not now have?
- What will having your goal cause you to lose?
- Is your goal achievable?

- Does it respect your health, relationships, etc?
- Make sure that your goal fits every part; that no part of objects to it.
- Observe how you respond to the goal in terms of images, sounds, words, and sensations.

5) Self-initiated and maintained.

- Is the goal something that you can initiate yourself and maintain?
- Is it something that you have within your power or ability to do?
- Is it within your control?
- Can you initiate and maintain?
- No dependency on others!
- Does it reflect things that you can directly affect?

6) State the Context of the goal.

- Where, when, how, with whom, etc. will you get this goal?
- Is the goal appropriately contextualized?
- . Readjust your goal to make sure that it fits.

7) State the Resources needed to achieve the goal.

- What resources will you need in order to get this goal?
- Who will you have to become?
- Who else has achieved this goal?

- Have you ever had or done this before?
- Do you know anyone who has?
- What prevents you from moving toward it and attaining it now?

8) Evidence Procedure.

- How will you know that your goal has been realized?
- What will let you know that you have attained that desired state?

So, what is your goal as a preacher? What do you want to accomplish as you apply the NLP techniques described in this chapter in your preaching? How will you know that you have accomplished your goal of being a better preacher and preaching like Jesus after applying these principles and techniques? What would constitute being a better preacher? How would you be a better preacher? What will you be doing better? What will you be doing more of and doing less of in your preaching? What would you being a better preacher look like, sound like and feel like? What about your current preaching do you want to maintain? What do you have to take into consideration in your current environment when you are preaching like Jesus? What obstacles exist in your environment that you will have to account for when you preach better and preach more like Jesus? I believe that the question why you want to preach better and like Jesus is important as the answer to that question speaks of your motivation to preach better and like Jesus.

I want to be a better preacher and to preach like Jesus because I preach on a weekly basis in a Christian church. I want to be effective in my preaching. I want people to

use and apply what I communicate in my preaching in their everyday lives. I want them to obtain their goals for living. I want their hearing of the gospel preached to be meaningful and worthwhile for them. I want them to keep coming back each week. I want them to experience what Jesus intended in his preaching through my preaching. I want people to experience the Kingdom of God as an active force in their lives. I want them to experience the reality, the love and power of God in their moment to moment life experience. I want them to manifest grace in their lives.

I want to have optimal rapport with the members of my congregation. I want them to feel that I am one of them and I want to have credibility with them so that I am able to lead them from their current state to a more desirable state in their personal lives and in their life as a church. I want them to formulate goals and to pursue those goals in a productive fashion and to evaluate their progress in meeting those goals. I want to speak comfortably and confidentially to my audience in ways that facilitate their own self-evaluation and empower them to take fruitful action on their own behalf and on behalf of the communities in which they serve.

I will know that I have achieved this when I have received positive and negative, constructive and deconstructive and supportive and critical feedback from my audience about my preaching and when I see, hear about and sense that members of my audience express interest, excitement and energy around my message and engage in productive activities, make necessary changes and report positive achievements in their lives and projects. Given that some of the members of my audience are comfortable with their lives and the life of the church as it is and are at different stages in their own

personal (Freud, 1905; Erikson, 1993), faith (Fowler, 1994) cognitive (Piaget and Inhelder, 1969), moral (Kohlberg, 1984) and consciousness development (Wilber, 1977; Wilber, 2000) and readiness to change (Prochaska, Norcross and DiClemente, 1994). I need to set my pace accordingly. I need to calibrate (Bandler and Grinder, 1981; Dilts, Grander, Bandler, Delozier, 1980) myself to the feeling of the room (the people in it) so as to not overwhelm the system while challenging it to take its next step.

Modeling Jesus

As you think about Jesus as your model for preaching wonder what made Jesus the ideal Preacher. Wonder how Jesus prepared to preach. Wonder what Jesus did when he preached, start to finish. Wonder how Jesus obtained the outcome of his preaching. Be curious about Jesus' preaching. Pray about it. If Jesus were here today you would ask him? What does the Bible say about Jesus' preaching? What do the researchers and authors in this study say about Jesus' preaching?

Exercise: NYN – Jesus Preaching

Now enter into a relaxed state. Sit back into your easy chair and take a deep breath, letting go into the cushiony support of the easy chair, with every breath relaxing more and more . . . In front of you is a television set. Turn on the television set and turn to the channel NYN, Next You Now. The program Jesus Preaching is on. Observe Jesus taking his place in front of a crowd of people who have come to hear him speak. Notice how his disciples help people to their seats as they prepare to hear Jesus speak. Notice Jesus' demeanor as he takes his place in front of everyone and prepares to

speak. Notice how Jesus calibrates himself with the crowd and enters in to his Preacher's State . . . how he gazes on a point at the back of the crowd and how in his peripheral vision scans the room, floor to ceiling, side to side, back to front, the space directly before him, to his sides and behind him. Notice Jesus looking at his audience, listening to his audience, even listening to the silence in the room, feeling the presence of his audience and relating to them, receiving their feedback in response to his speaking. Notice how Jesus speaks, how he moves his head, his mouth, and his hands, how he gestures and how he stands. Notice how fast and how slow Jesus speaks, how he raises and lowers his voice, which words and syllables of words he emphasizes. Notice the light in Jesus' eyes, the radiance of his face, the warmth of his tone and the expansion of his heart as he includes everyone fully and engages each one in his message. And notice what Jesus is saying and the impact of what Jesus is saying on his audience, what they look like, what they are thinking and assaying, what they are feeling and what they are doing as they listen intently to Jesus. Notice how Jesus tunes into those audience members whose attention is drifting and how he responds to them and brings them back to pay attention to what he is saying. Notice Jesus making his point and supporting his point in ways that his audience understands. Notice that they are motivated to respond to what Jesus is saying and how Jesus brings his message to completion and fruition. And now is time for a commercial break and a message from our sponsors.

Great welcome back, still in your easy chair, the television still on NYN, Next You Now, see yourself in the very program you just watched and this time transport yourself onto

the screen and into the program as Jesus the Preacher and see yourself, looking at your audience like Jesus, listening to your audience like Jesus, listening to the silence in the space like Jesus, feeling the presence of your audience like Jesus, relating to them like Jesus and receiving their feedback in response to your preaching like Jesus. Now, feel the presence of God and the Holy Spirit guiding your words from within, enlarging your heart, empowering your message. Notice yourself preaching like Jesus is preaching, with all the love and all the power that Jesus possesses, hear yourself preaching like Jesus is preaching, communicating the essence of God's word, and feel yourself preaching like Jesus is preaching . . . connecting to God, connecting to your audience, loving God, loving your audience, commanded by God, commanding your audience . . . And it is like God is speaking through you, using every breath, every word, every gesture and movement to accomplish God's purpose, for God's sake . . . Notice what is happening in your audience as God's word reaches out from your heart into their hearts, how it moves you as God touches them to their core, as awareness is awakened in them by the Holy Spirit . . .as bonds are being broken and the possibilities of freedom, responsibility and power are being owned. And now is time for a commercial break and a message from our sponsors.

Sit back in your easy chair and play back in fast motion on the NYN station, Next You Now, to the original program "Jesus Preaching." Now play that entire segment of "Jesus Preaching" fast forward but see it as if it is in slow motion so that you see every bit but quickly. Now play the second segment where you are preaching as if you are Jesus fast forward but see it as if it is in slow motion so that you see every bit but

quickly. Now turn the television off and sit back again in your easy chair and recall the entire episode of you preaching like Jesus, effectively as Jesus preached. Play that back 1, 2 and 3 times in your memory.

Open your eyes for a moment take a deep breath and stretch your arms up, up, up over your head, still breathing and drop your arms to your lap as you breathe out, relaxed in your easy chair. Follow me now down the hallway, stepping down 10, stepping down 9, relaxing more, stepping down 7, stepping down 6, traveling down the hallway 5, 4, 3, approaching a door way, 2, 1. You come to the entranceway of a large church. People have been gathering to hear you preach. They have been gathering to hear Jesus preach. An organ is playing a most familiar hymn (UMC 1989, 567):

Heralds of Christ, who bear the King's commands,
Immortal tidings in your mortal hands.
Pass on and carry swift the news you bring;
Make straight, make straight the highway of the King.

The worship leader greets the congregation and reads the Holy Scripture. As the service has proceeded you have rubbed your hands together and entered into your Preachers State and now you take your place in front of the congregation. The congregation is eager to hear you preach. The congregation is ready to hear Jesus preach. And you remember that Christ is in you and you are in Christ. And you look out at the congregation. Your eyes gaze at an object at the back of the church, just above eye level, and in your peripheral vision you see above that object and below that object, ceiling to floor and to the right and to the left to the walls. And you see every taken and

empty seat form back to front and the choir behind you and worship leader to your left. You place the index finger and thumb of your hands together and open yourself to the presence of God in you and in your congregation. Your eyes pass from one receptive face to another and you meet them for a moment. And then you begin to speak. They have been waiting for God to speak to them all week and hoping that God will touch them. They so much want to understand! They so much want to grow! And you have so much compassion brewing up in you for them, it almost overwhelms you. And the Holy Spirit lifts you because it is her moment and she has chosen you to channel her presence into each person in the room today . . . And you want to and you are willing to let yourself be transformed by the Holy Spirit and be the agent of the Holy Spirit of her transforming power being displayed in the lives of every person present today. And she calls the entire congregation to attention . . . and every word you speak smells holy to you . . . every word your speak tastes like manna from heaven . . . and every word that leaves your mouth is spun with power and grace . . . and delivers its promise to each recipient . . . the Kingdom is here now . . . God is present now . . . Christ is present . . . the Holy Spirit is in the house . . . fire is spreading one heart to the next . . . light is shining one mind to the next . . . and there is an experience of unity of God and congregation.

An offering is taken from the congregation and thanks is given for everything God has given them and before the closing hymn you give a blessing and release people from the service. The hymn follows (UMC 1989, 102):

Now thank we all our God,

With heart and hands and voices,

Who wondrous things has done,

In whom this world rejoices;

Who from our mothers' arms

Has blessed us on our way

With countless gifts of love,

And still is ours today.

In the above exercise I used an “As If” frame (Dilts and Gilligan, 2009). The “As If” frame is based on acting as if a desired state or outcome has been achieved or as if someone else is giving you information. In this technique, you act as if you have already achieved your outcome. In the case above you have accomplished preaching like Jesus with the impact of Jesus on your audience by projecting yourself into the image of Jesus on the screen and acting as if you are Jesus. By participating in the above exercise, participants would generate a new preacher self, a self that modeled Jesus as preacher. They would disassociate from their self and associate with another self, Jesus. They would internalize and integrate in themselves the characteristics of the model, Jesus, and then imagine themselves in the future preaching like Jesus as themselves with their own audience. The genius of Jesus as preacher is replicable.

People who are geniuses are able to tap more of their creative unconscious. They are able to listen to their own minds (Wender, 1995). Gilligan noted a phenomenon called the Raikov Effect (Dilts and Gilligan, 2009) that Wender also noted (1995). Under hypnosis, Vladimir Raikov made people think that they had stepped into the body of some master artist. If he reincarnated somebody as Rembrandt that person would demonstrate increased artistic skill, as if they had had more experience than they actually had experienced. It was a permanent change but required further practice in waking state to establish the progress in experience. Successive sessions provided further magnifications of the effect. Raikov's method proved a valuable tool for learning. It was later discovered that the effect could be achieved without hypnosis. The Raikov Effect is like the ancient practice by which prophets, oracles, and tribal shamans took on the identity of gods, spirits, animals, and inanimate objects, in order to gain knowledge (Wender, 1995).

According to some NLP authorities, the person is thought to have access to three minds: a somatic mind, a cognitive mind and a field mind (Dilts and Gilligan, 2009). This field mind is similar to Jung's collective unconscious (Jung, 1968). The field mind is a consciousness that exists around the person. There are co-existing dynamic fields of history, family, culture and environment that constitute the field mind. It is a mind that is created by relationships between multiple minds. It is a knowing that happens beyond the individual mind (Dilts and Gilligan, 2009). The field mind can be understood by applying an "As If" field. If a person acts as if a field mind exists that can be effective in achieving a desired outcome even if the person does not believe that a

field mind exists (Dilts and Gilligan, 2009). Dilts and Gilligan propose three levels of consciousness (2009). The first, the ego state, is the ordinary state of consciousness. The second, the generative state, is the highest state and the appropriate level to respond to life challenges. The third, the primitive state, is a regressive state that occurs in times of crisis or excitement. The problem comes when people are unable to access the ego or generative states. The somatic mind enters into the generative state when the mind is quieted and the body is centered such as is practiced in meditation and martial arts (Dilts and Gilligan, 2009). The cognitive mind enters into the generative state when it accepts its circumstances or parts and transforms them rather than rejecting and fighting them (Dilts and Gilligan, 2009). The field mind enters into the generative state when it opens beyond a problem and opens beyond that (Dilts and Gilligan, 2009). All three minds can be generative, non-generative or regenerative. All three minds, somatic, cognitive and field are at work in the exercise above and all three minds are employing generative states.

Management of States

A key to preaching like Jesus is learning how to manage your cognitive, emotional, and spiritual states and influence those of your audience. You are able to change your states at will, as well as alter the states of others by your preaching. Jesus affected his audience's states when he preached. Jesus' disciples were gathered in a room in Jerusalem following his death. They were experiencing states of despair and fear. When he appeared to them they were frightened by what he said to them "Peace be with you (Luke 24:33-37). After this they experienced joy and excitement.

NLP consciously selects and manages states (Dilts, 1998). There are three types of states: attentional, emotional and consciousness (Dilts, 1998). States are the complexes of ongoing mental and physiological conditions out of which we act (Dilts, 1998). They are constantly changed as different states are accessed. Normally states are outside of our conscious control. Something happens and we feel a certain way (Dilts, 1998). However, it is possible to choose our states. As we choose our states we become more flexible and creative and more control over how our lives turn out (Dilts, 1998). State management or state selection is the ability to choose the most appropriate state for a given circumstance or challenge. This is accomplished through consciously changing our thoughts and physiological patterns as these affect performance (Dilts, 1998). Some ways this can be accomplished are (Dilts, 1998):

- Taking a physiological inventory
- Taking a submodality inventory
- Taking an emotional inventory
- Dissociation
- Using submodalities
- Accessing and anchoring a resourceful memory

Anchoring involves establishing a cue or a trigger for a particular desirable state. To anchor you (Dilts, 1990):

- Remember a specific time that you experienced a particular state that you want to access now or in the future.

- Recover the state fully – see it through your eyes, hear it through your ears and feel it through your body.
- Select a specific color, symbol, other visual cue, sound, word or sensation to remind you of the state.

You can transfer a resourceful state. When you apply an anchor you stabilize a portion of primary sensory experience and are then able to access that portion of experience at a later time. Primary experience refers to the state underpinned by the immediate sensory experience. Any experience can be anchored. Positive and negative states can be anchored but normally the desire is to replace an undesirable state with a desirable one. A useful strategy is to move a desirable experience to a location (time and situation) where it serves as a resource in that situation.

Anchoring negative states is often considered unethical.

Here are steps you can take to transfer positive emotional resources from past experiences to the present situation where you want them to be available:

- Take some comfortable position in a chair, or stand where you can consider the process in an uninvolved way. Think of some specific situation in which you would like to be different, feel different, and respond differently.
- Choose a particular emotional state, from the many different ones you have experienced in your life, that you would like to have available to you in that situation.

- Choose a distinct and discreet kinesthetic anchor: some feeling you can associate to your chosen resource. You can touch your thumb and finger together or make a fist in a particular way.
- Choose a distinct and memorable auditory anchor. You can use a word or phrase you say to yourself internally that is attuned to your feeling. The way you say it, the particular voice tone you use, will have as much impact as the word or phrase itself.
- Choose a distinct and discreet visual anchor. You can choose a symbol, or you can remember what you were seeing when you did feel confident.
- Relive the situation in which you experienced the resource state by vividly re-creating the situation in which you experienced that state. Step forward or change chairs as you associate fully in the experience. Now, in your imagination, go back to situation where you experienced the desirable resource state. Remember where you were and what you were doing... As that becomes clearer, imagine that you are right back in it now and that you are seeing what you were seeing... hear whatever sounds you were hearing and re-experience those feelings that were so strong a part of that experience... Take some time and enjoy reliving that experience as fully as possible... You may want to put your body into that same position, doing the same things that you were doing (only if appropriate)... When those feelings have come to peak and start to diminish,

physically move back into your uninvolved position. You have now found out how best to recreate your resourceful state and how long it takes to do so.

- Anchor the resources. Step into your place for the resource state and re-experience it again. As reaches its peak, see your image, make your gesture and say your words.
- Now stand up or move around and shake.
- Use all three anchors in the same way and the same sequence and notice the extent to which you do indeed access your resourceful state.
- Think of a future situation where you are likely to want that resourceful state. What can you use as a signal to let you know you need that resource? Find the first thing that you see, hear, or feel that lets you know you are in that situation. The signal can be external or internal.

Exercise: Negative to Positive State Elicitation

Where is your present, your past and your future? In your imagination, turn to your past. You are going to go back to a time that you wanted to go to a party and have a good time, but you were feeling **down, depressed, stressed, and sluggish**. Not such a good state, so you are going to look at the state from above. You were feeling heavy, lethargic and slow. Likely you didn't feel very motivated to get up and go out to that party. Remember what you thought and said to yourself. Remember what you looked

like and how you held your body . . . **down, depressed, stressed, and sluggish.** Go back to the next time prior to that, when you were feeling good. Now turn around, face the future and come back to the present. That wasn't such a good memory. Now, take a breath and breathe out and as you breathe out let go of that memory. Now remember another time where you wanted to go to the party and enjoy yourself and you were feeling **bright, excited, and energetic.** Let's experience that tight now. Say those words out loud and feel their qualities in your body. Remember what you thought and said to yourself. Remember what you looked like and how you carried yourself . . . **bright, excited, and energetic.** Chances were that you were ready to tango! What you hold in your mind or what you think determines what you feel (James and Shephard, 2001, Ellis and Harper, R., 1975)?

Imagine a time when you received news that an application you made was rejected. What were you feeling? You were probably **feeling down in the dumps and disappointed.** Someone observing you immediately after you received the news would likely see you with your head down, walking slowly and dragging your feet, your facial expression flat . . . **down in the dumps and disappointed.** Imagine what you might have been thinking or saying to yourself or about yourself. Now take a breath and breathe out and as you breathe out let go of that memory. Now imagine receiving the news that they reviewed your application and decided to accept it. You would probably feel **happy and excited** and people would observe you walking head up, briskly, and smiling . . . **happy and excited.** Imagine what you are thinking and saying to yourself or about yourself (James and Shephard, 2001).

Exercise: Negative and Positive State Elicitation

Try this. Stand up, lower your head a little, hunch your shoulders, collapse your chest, breath shallowly, and frown. Maintain this stance. Just notice what you feel in this posture. Allow yourself now to get depressed. Say to yourself, “Poor me. Why does this always happen to me?” Shake out of that posture. Move around vigorously for a moment. Now stand tall, head up, looking straight ahead, pull your shoulders back, expand your chest, stretch all your muscles, reach high into the sky like you are praising heaven, look up like through the top of your head with your eyes, breathe deeply and smile broadly. Notice what you feel in this posture. Now with that wide grin on your face and say to yourself, “yes, yes, yes, yes, yes!” Now, maintaining this posture and facial expression try to get depressed. You can’t do it. Your physiology want allow it. These are just a couple of examples of how you can change your emotional states (James and Shepherd, 2001).

Performance State

One state that you will learn to enter is the preaching state. I believe that Jesus put his preaching face on before preaching. He put himself into a particular state of mind before preaching. To preach like Jesus you enter into that same state of mind that was in Jesus. You can utilize this Preacher state in your teaching and counseling. James and Shepherd (2001) call it the “presenter state.” It is a “high performance state.” I call it the trainer state and a performance state and in regards to preaching, the preacher state. You need be in the state you want your audience, students or clients to be in.

You will have to be in that state first and stay in it. Of course, your audience, students or clients are in all kinds of emotional states for all kinds of reasons. If someone's wife left him the night before or someone suffered a loss before your sermon, class or session don't expect them to have a joyful response if that's the state you're after for them. But that is an exception. Most people will follow you into a desirable state, if you meet them in the state they are in, enter yourself into the desired state, and convey to them the desired state (James and Shephard, 2001). Pacing is meeting people where they are in their process, matching them, coming along side of them and moving with them rather than ahead of them or behind them (Bandler and Grinder, 1979). You become like them. Leading is taking people where you and they agree to go, bringing them along with you (Bandler and Grinder, 1979). They become like you.

Now it is time to enter your learning state. You will want to enter the learner state when you are on the receiving end of someone else's teaching. This learning state is a highly active receptive state. After mastering the learning state you will learn how to enter the preaching state. The preaching state is a highly active expressive state. You will see how these two states are related as you use what you learn in the learner's state to perform in the Preacher state or counselor state.

Learning State Exercise

Let's enter into the learning state, now (James and Shephard, 2001). If you are reading this, you may have to follow the instructions by memory, or you can have someone read

the instructions to you, or you can record them and play them back as you do this exercise.

First of all, relax, get comfortable, preferably sitting down with both feet on the floor. Focus your attention on a spot up on the wall before you, about four feet above eye level. All you have to do is look at that spot. Just put your eyes up and look at that spot. Simply focus on that spot. And as you focus at that spot for a moment, while still looking at that spot, begin to expand your awareness. Let your awareness flow out to the periphery, into the space around that spot. You are putting your attention into peripheral vision. So as you keep looking at that spot, you may notice, even as you are looking at that spot, you can see the other things around in the room. While looking at that spot, you can see the walls, the ceiling, and the floor, and some of the other things in your peripheral vision, even though you are focusing on that spot. And continue to open up your awareness into the periphery. So even though you are looking at the spot, you can become aware in your periphery of any people on either side of you, and the furniture, the walls on either side. Then pull your awareness around even further so that you are also aware of what is happening behind you, even though you are still looking at that same spot on the wall. Now obviously you won't be able to see what is happening behind you, but you can become aware of what is happening behind you, or have the kind of sensations that you would have if you were able to see what is happening behind you. So pull your awareness all the way around, pull it all the way around behind you, so even though you are looking at that spot in front of you, you are aware of what is behind you, and you are allowing your peripheral vision to reach into

the corners of the room behind you. You may find this easier to do by imagining there is a ball just above and behind the back of your head. And while you are still looking at the spot, put your attention or your awareness on that imaginary ball, above and behind the top of your head, and you will find that it will open up your awareness. Now keeping your attention in front of you and still keeping your awareness in the periphery and on what is happening around you, bring your eyes down, so that your eyes are looking straight ahead, keeping your awareness in the periphery. You can see what is straight ahead of you, and yet your awareness is all the way around the outside, your attention now on the entire room.

You enter into the learning state whenever you are learning something new. It is the state of preparation for performance. It is a relaxed and open state. When in this state you are physiologically relaxed and open. You are positive and non-anxiously self-aware. Such a state is conducive to learning. Negative self-talk and stress counter your ability to learn, just as they interfere with application of learning in performance (James and Shephard, 2001; Dilts and Delozier, 2000; Cheek and Rossi, 1994; Tart, 1972).

Performance State

The Preacher state is similar to the learning state. You will enter the Preacher state whenever you first stand before a congregation where you will be speaking. As you enter your Preacher state, you become relaxed, open, aware of everything happening around you and able to respond to everything happening around you.

Exercise: Performance State

You enter the Preacher state by following these steps (James and Shephard, 2001):

Stand up. Find some space. Assume that you're standing in front of a congregation.

Stand in the position that you will be in and enter into your Preacher state. Put any concerns out of your mind, every single one, so that you are totally present and aware of what is happening right here and now. Now get physiologically comfortable. You may need to move a little from foot to foot, a little bit side to side, or a little bit backward or forward, until you find that point where you are balanced and the scales beneath your feet are reading the same exact weight . . . Allow yourself to extend slightly upward, so that you are totally aligned, hanging loose, physiologically comfortable, with your arms relaxed by your sides. Get your breathing under control. Take a deep breath in through your nose. Let it out through your mouth. Then just continue to breathe naturally. And now, go inside for a moment. Pull all of your attention inside and focus your awareness inside of you. Bring your attention back outside, to the room, and focus on a spot on the back wall. Put all your attention there. Concentrate on that spot. And, still looking at that spot, expand your awareness to fill the entire room, so that you are aware of everyone and everything in the room, even though you are looking at the spot.

Continue to expand your awareness and have your awareness roll into the far corners of the room. Bring it all the way down to the sides. Pull it around you. While still focusing at the spot, your awareness is in all four corners of the room, and all around it and you are aware of everyone and everything in the room. And notice that while you are in this state, every small movement of your congregation is making seems to be

very obvious or even exaggerated. And as you do this, allow the feeling of being one with all the people in front of you, and if there are people to your side and behind you, one with them, also. And being at one, now bring your eyes down and look at the group. Begin to experiment with making eye contact with certain people in the group, while remaining in peripheral vision. Even though you are looking at one particular person, your awareness is still in the entire room. And notice how much awareness you have of everything that is happening in the room, in peripheral vision, in this Preacher state.

Now, having completed this exercise, note what your experience was like. This Preacher state is one of being totally present, calm and balanced inside, ready for anything. If you arrive at your worship event nervous, anxious or fearful or disturbed and distracted in any way by doing each step completely you will enter the Preacher state. In this state you cannot experience negative feelings. The Preacher state is dependent upon the Learner state as the Preacher accesses what he learned about Preaching while he was learning. What the Preacher has learned is how to access his model, present like his model and obtain the same outcome as his model (James and Shephard, 2001; Dilts and Delozier, 2000; Cheek and Rossi, 1994; Tart, 1972).

Let's do one more thing. Stand up. Remember quickly all of the steps of Preacher state from beginning to end, going through them in rapid succession. Perfect! Now do that again three times. By doing this in rapid succession you will be able to quickly and easily enter this state whenever you want to. In fact, you can begin to enter this state, whenever you walk through the doors into a sanctuary, and turn and face the back of

your sanctuary from any place you will preach. If you have a pulpit you can enter this state when you take your place in the pulpit.

Embedded Commands

Within any sentence you preach you will have the opportunity to consciously make use of embedded commands (James and Shephard, 2001; Bandler and Grinder, 1978; Bandler and Grinder, 1975). You mark these commands by emphasis or tone. When you do this you highlight what you want your congregation to do. You are giving the command in the context of a sentence so that it communicates to the unconscious minds of your congregation. By doing this you are encouraging, and likely obtaining compliance with what you want as an outcome. For example, you might say, “I don’t know if **you want to attend all four weeks of our Summer crusade**, but if **you do**, you need to **register now!**” or “I was talking to someone the other day, and I told her ‘if **you want to get the most out of church you will come every Sunday** you can and **you will attend a Bible study.**’” To accomplish this I am framing the words in bold, setting them apart by inflection, tempo, or after a brief pause before saying them. In this text, I am using a pattern called “speaking in quotes” in the sentence “if you want to get the most out of church.” In this pattern you put a suggestion in either a direct or an indirect quote from some other person. Quoting what someone else said gives an indirect suggestion to the unconscious mind (Bandler and Grinder, 1975).

Below is a sermon that makes blatant use of embedded commands. Honestly, I was having fun with embedded commands in this sermon and with creating charisma. In

parentheses I indicated what I was doing to create charisma. My gestures towards myself include palms open and up, chest level, pulsating them gently upwards and highlighting my face by framing it. It was like I was gathering their attention towards me as I referenced Jesus and positive characteristics. In speaking to the congregation regarding who they are and what they want in a positive sense I gesture towards them. While the self-gesturing may seem grandiose, really what I am doing is identifying with Jesus or God in preaching God's word. It's not about me, but God, Jesus, and God's word. In preaching God's word I see myself, not as Jesus, but representing Jesus, mainly in preaching and celebrating the sacraments of Baptism and Communion. My gestures towards the congregation convey that they together constitute the Body of Christ.

Sermon: Come to Church

Why did you **come to church** this Sunday? Why do you **come to church** every Sunday that you **come to church**? How many of you have as your primary reason to **come to church**, obligation? You **come to church** because you're supposed to. Your **come to church** because your parents raised you to. You **come to church** because it's your duty? How many of you have as your primary reason to **come to church** to **connect with your friends, connect with your church family**? How many have as your primary reason to **come to church** to **worship God** and **hear God's word** (gesture towards myself)?

There may be many reasons why you **come to church**, but hearing God's word is an important part of the church experience. **Listen to God's word** for today, "See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking." Who is speaking? God is speaking. (Gesture to myself) You have not come to something that can be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them. "They could not endure the order that was given. 'If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death.'" Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear (gesture towards my right)."

How many of you just **come to this building** when you **come to Church** on Sunday (gesture to space)? How many of you just **come to this group of people** when you **come to Church** on Sunday (gesture to congregation)? How many **come to Jesus** (gesture to me) and **come to God** (gesture to me) when you **come to Church** on Sunday (gesture towards me)?

When you **come to church** (gesture to me) on Sunday you **come to Jesus** (gesture to me), you **come to God** (gesture to me); don't you? When you **come to church** you **come to an all awe-inspiring mountain** (gesture to me)? That's the experience that you want when you **come to church** (gesture to me).

How many of you, if you thought that you could stand it, would say "I want to **experience the presence of God** (gesture to me)?" How many of you, if you thought it

wasn't so scary, would say, "I want to **experience the presence of God** (gesture to me)?"

But you have **come to Mount Zion**. You have **come to the city of the living God**. You have **come to the heavenly Jerusalem**. You have **come to the festal gathering of innumerable angels**. You have **come to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven**. You have **come to God** the judge of all, **come to the spirits of the righteous made perfect**, **come to Jesus**, the mediator of a new covenant, and **come to the sprinkled blood** that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel (gesture to me).

Oh what a feeling! When you **come to church**, you **receive God's judgment**. Do you not? When you **come to church** you **find where Jesus stands**, the mediator of our covenant relationship with God and where you **experience the ultimate affect of the cleansing blood of Jesus!** You **come to Church** to **experience God** in Jesus Christ who mediates your experience of God and reveals to you the kingdom or realm of God. When you **come to church** you **avail yourself of the voice of God**, in the proclamation of the word of God. Human beings do not live on bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. Are you listening? (Throughout this whole section, I gesture towards me as I mention God and Jesus.)

Says the apostle Paul, "See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking," for if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, how much less will we escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven! **Accept the prophets.**

Accept Jesus. At that time his voice shook the earth; but now he has promised, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven.” This phrase, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of what is shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain.”

Will you be shaken or will you be unshaken? Will you remain or not? Let those who have ears hear! Are you listening? When you **come to church**, you can find that God is talking! Jesus says, “**Seek first the kingdom or the realm of God** and all the things that you truly want and need will be given to you!” What Jesus (gesture to me) is revealing to you is the way of the kingdom or realm of God (gesture to me).

The Apostle Paul continues, “And since we are receiving a kingdom or reality that cannot be shaken, let us **give thanks** and let us **offer to God an acceptable worship** with reverence and awe; for indeed God is a consuming fire.” You **come to church** for this (gesture to me).

Friends, when you **come to church**, you take your **stand on the word of God** (gesture to me). When you **come to church**, you **stake your life on the realm of God** (gesture to me). When you **come to church** you **bet your soul on Jesus Christ** (gesture to me).

Where do you **seek and find the kingdom of God** (gesture to me)? Will you point to it? Is it inside of you or outside of you? It is above you or in front of you? Is it near or far? Is it to the right or the left? What color is this kingdom of God? What are the activities taking place in this kingdom of God. What are the rules of the kingdom or

realm? What does God tell you about this kingdom or realm? What do you **see here in the kingdom?** What do you **hear here in the kingdom?** What do you **feel here in the kingdom?** What do you **smell here in the kingdom?** What do you **taste here in the kingdom?** Okay, now **step into this kingdom or realm of God. Discover** this kingdom, or realm of God, in you, and you in it. Wonderful! This is what you **come to church** for!

After you leave here today, sometime soon or later, and tomorrow, and all week, and for as long you desire, **see God's desire of you, hear God's message to you and follow God's direction for you. Experience God's kingdom** or realm in various places of your everyday life, and **notice what you receive.**

When you **come to church** you can, if you will **listen to the one who is speaking**, if you **listen to Jesus**, if you **listen to God**, if you **listen to the Holy Spirit** you will **know your purpose** and you will **do what God asks you to** (gesture to self).

Rapport

You will want to obtain rapport with your congregation at the start of the worship event or preaching or both. There are many ways of doing this. In my church I enter as people have gathered, the choir and praise band has taken their place and the organ prelude is playing. I take my place, facing the congregation, at the front center of the sanctuary. People at this point are praying, talking or just sitting quietly and listening to the music. I greet everyone, "Good morning and welcome" and then I engage them with a question. I sometimes have them repeat a phrase after me like "I am here today to

worship God . . . with all my heart . . . all my mind . . . all my soul . . . and all my will . . . and my life is better as the result.” We sing a song together, selected by the congregation, “Surely the Presence of the Lord is in this place.” We then have a call to worship, usually a poem. Sometimes, the poem is read to the congregation, but usually there is a part read by the congregation. And then a hymn is song. Two other hymns are sung by the congregation. Before praying I ask my congregation to join me in a moment of prayer. Rapport is generated by the common experiences shared by the congregation from the outset of the service. Note that singing a hymn or a unison recitation, require attending to the tone and pace of the others, breathing together, turning the pages together. Versicles and responses put me in the center, as the leader. They reaffirm the rapport and emphasize my leadership. It invites them further to experience the spiritual elements of the exercise by following my tone and attitude. You will discover that when you match your congregation members’ physiology, behavior, thinking and energy you will have that rapport (James and Shephard, 2001; Dilts, 1983; Bandler and Grinder, 1979; Dilts, 1990; O’Connor and Seymour, 2011). You are in rapport with them when you meet them in their model of the world. Matching another person works best when it is done without the other person’s knowledge. Indeed, people do it naturally when they are communicating well with another person (Bandler and Grinder, 1975; Bandler and Grinder, 1979; Dilts, Grinder, Bandler, DeLozier, 1980; Grinder and Bandler, 1981).

Although, it is best obtained via unconscious behavior, there are rapport building skills that you can practice for good effect. You will not succeed in communicating well

without rapport. The opposite is true also. You will succeed in communicating well with rapport. Before doing anything with your congregation it is necessary to establish rapport with them, and this involves taking seriously their perspective.

So, what is rapport? Rapport is the process that allows you to communicate and bond with your congregation's unconscious mind (James and Shephard, 2001; Dilts and Delozier, 2000; Cheek and Rossi, 1994; James and Shephard, 2001; Dilts, 1983; Bandler and Grinder, 1979; Dilts, 1990; O'Connor and Seymour, 2011). Remember why you want to communicate to the unconscious mind of your congregation. It is the unconscious mind of your congregation that is the primary engine of their learning, behavior and change. When you are in rapport with your congregation they will be in a receptive state and they will uncritically accept suggestions from you, sometimes even when they are consciously resisting what you have to say. Once you obtain rapport with your congregation they will likely be more open, less critical, object less to, and accept more of what you have to say (James and Shephard, 2001; Dilts and Delozier, 2000; Cheek and Rossi, 1994; James and Shephard, 2001; Dilts, 1983; Bandler and Grinder, 1979; Dilts, 1990; O'Connor and Seymour, 2011). When you have rapport with your congregation they believe that you are like them, so they like you more. Rapport is the process of creating likeness, familiarity, and a common ground of agreement.

If you fail to obtain rapport with your congregation, no matter how well designed your sermon is, how skillful your oratory is, and how biblical and true to the divine Word your sermon is, the congregation won't like your sermon or you as a Preacher. Failure to

obtain rapport with your students will render your teaching efforts unsuccessful. Lack of rapport with your clients will lead them to drop out of treatment or not follow through with the treatment plan.

When you preach, you are communicating, but what you say communicates very little of what you communicate (Mehrabian 1972). Indeed, only 7% of the emotional meaning of your sermon is communicated through the words you use. 38% of the meaning of your sermon is communicated in the way you say it; tone, cadence, pitch, speed, etc. 55% of the meaning of your sermon is conveyed through your body language; how you hold your body, your posture, the way you stand, your breathing patterns, your gestures, and your facial expressions. Your body provides a physiological context through which your words and language will be understood by the people you are addressing. The fact is that you can be silent and communicate.

If you are with other people you always are communicating (James and Shephard, 2001; Dilts, 1983; Bandler and Grinder, 1975). You build rapport with others through words, linguistics, and physiology; by matching the ways they communicate. You do this by using the actual words that they use. Use their jargon, preferred terms, and even their wrong words and mispronunciations. It's what their words mean to them that matters, not what they mean to you. And use the same tone they use. Say the words just like they do. And adopt the posture and gestures they use. Create shared experiences and build upon them. The result of you matching your congregation and creating rapport with them is they will like you and what you are saying and what to help

you obtain the outcomes you desire. Matching is a way of knowing your audience and becoming like them. Jesus became like those who populated his audience.

Matching and Mirroring

There are many ways of creating rapport. The first is called matching (James and Shephard, 2001; Bandler and Grinder, 1979). You will develop important skills by matching others through the following exercises. We will begin with matching physiology. There are a lot of possibilities for what to match. You only have to match one or a few to be successful in creating rapport. What you will do is pay attention to someone's posture, gestures and movements and match these characteristics. Some things you can observe and match (James and Shephard, 2001; Bandler and Grinder, 1979):

- The position of their head, shoulders, spine, arms, hands, torso, legs, and feet.
- How they are sitting, standing, or walking.
- Weight distribution, curvature or straightness of the spine.
- How are they sitting: upright, slouched, leaning right or left, legs crossed or uncrossed.
- Arms folded or open.
- Hands open, clenched, clasped, or relaxed.
- Head tilted to one side or angled front to back.
- Their motion: still or constant.

- Facial expression: frowning, smiling, animated, flat, eyebrow movement or showing teeth.
- Their gestures.
- Their breathing: deep, shallow, high up in chest or low in belly.

When mirroring someone's gestures you will want to do so when you are talking, not when they are talking or you will draw attention to what you are doing and you will lose rapport (James and Shephard, 2001; Bandler and Grinder and Andreas, 1979). It is easy to match someone's breathing. When someone is talking, the person is breathing out, so as they talk, breathe out. When the person pauses to breathe, you breathe in. Notice with your peripheral vision how their chest or shoulders rise and fall. As they rise the person is inhaling. As they fall the person is exhaling. Breathe in as the person breathes in and out as the person breathes out. Do this and you will obtain rapport.

Your physiology is directly related to the state you are in. So, if you adopt the same physiology of another person, you will experience the same feelings that person was feeling (James and Shephard, 2001; Bandler and Grinder and Andreas, 1979). What makes matching physiology effective is that people are not consciously aware of what they are doing with their physiology. Of course, you can make them aware of your mimicking them if you are too obvious. In these exercises you are aware of what the other is doing. But in actual life, if you follow the instructions above you won't be detected in your efforts to match the other. You will be quite natural at it. You can experiment with matching people you know or meet, over coffee, lunch or in any conversation.

Rapport can be relayed (James and Shephard, 2001; Bandler and Grinder and Andreas, 1979). If a person presents before you, the rapport or lack of rapport that person experienced themselves can be passed on to you. If, say I am a guest Preacher at another church, and the pastor or person introducing me is quite popular and charismatic, the rapport that person has developed and the control the person has over the congregation can be transferred to me, say if I stood where that person stood, adopted their posture and gestures and thanked them for their introduction and greeted the congregation. I would expect to get the same response from the congregation as they did. If, the person introducing me was not particularly popular and charming, I would create a break between that person and myself. If you did what I did, match your charismatic host's physiology, energy, words, tone, etc . . . you will naturally and easily accelerate your ability to establish rapport with the congregation, even a congregation you never met before.

Rapport is relayed through the NLP process of utilization (James and Shephard, 2001; Bandler and Grinder and Andreas, 1979). Utilization means that you use what is happening to further your purpose rather than trying to ignore or deny it. You can utilize the excellent presenter who introduces you. You can utilize anything, even interruptions like babies crying, cell phones and pagers ringing, things falling over, the lector reading the wrong scripture before you preach, simply by accepting them and commenting on them. On a number of occasions I have said after a wrong scripture has been read, that I am going to add a scripture that I didn't have time to add in the bulletin to today's readings to prepare for the sermon. This is the flexibility we discussed earlier.

Everything you do produces an outcome. By increasing your awareness you can adapt your presentation and calibrate to the results you are creating, the states that you are eliciting, the behaviors you are triggering, and the responses you are getting.

Calibration is a NLP process that involves becoming aware of the audience's or person's state and how it changes. It is helpful in connecting your state as a Preacher with the state your congregation (James and Shephard, 2001; Bandler and Grinder, 1981; O'Connor and Seymour, 2011; Dilts, Grinder, Bandler, DeLozier, 1980). Rapport is accomplished through pacing or staying with the congregation and in leading the congregation into the state you want them to experience when you are preaching (James and Shephard, 2001; Bandler and Grinder, 1981; O'Connor and Seymour, 2011; Dilts, Grinder, Bandler, DeLozier, 1980).

It is far easier to obtain rapport when you have agreement than when you have disagreement (James and Shephard, 2001). However, when you do match physiology when disagreeing, you will maintain your relationship with the other person. This has important implications for preaching because you may have a message to deliver that your congregation will disagree with or even dislike. However, if you are able to match your congregation even while you are saying what they will disagree with or dislike, then they will listen to you, even respect your perspective and points, and if not come around to agree with you they will give a little ground to find a place of agreement (James and Shephard, 2001). You will have to find a means of doing this beyond matching, but matching is a skill set that contributes to maintaining rapport in these situations.

As a Preacher, you will have better results preaching messages that are prophetic or challenging when you find a way to match your congregation. You want your physiology to communicate your solidarity with your congregation when you are presenting disagreeable, controversial or uncomfortable ideas and topics to them. You will have to find a way to appreciate the point of view of your congregation even when preaching a word contrary to their prevailing perspective. This is true when teaching a mandated class such as for convicted drunk drivers or providing counseling to such a mandated population. They may not believe they have a problem and therefore not want to change. If you can understand their position and convey that understanding to them, you have achieved a position from which you can ultimately find agreement. Honestly, if you present only what your congregation, class or clients agree with and lack rapport with them, your messages to them will not be effective.

There are times as a Preacher where you may wish to break rapport. There are times, even when I am preaching that I could go on and on. Certainly it has occurred in the classroom for me where a student will not stop talking or corners me after class and in counseling with a client who is particularly self-centered and talkative. In these cases you can mismatch the person to whatever extent necessary. Mismatching in NLP is using different patterns or contradictory responses regarding behavior or words to interrupt communication (Adler, 2002). You can simply say, "I would like to give someone else a chance to ask a question or join the discussion." Or, you can say, "Let's get on with the presentation or to the next point," or "we only have so much time." I might joke when I am preaching and say, "Gee, the Preacher sure can go on. Maybe

he can save some of what he has to say for next week!” Or if someone, like the lector or a person making an announcement has taken too long, you can say, “Wow! That is fascinating. I am sure that you have much more to say, but we need to move on. If you want to hear more about this, please see Joe during the fellowship hour!” You can do just what I did in the situation above, “Wow! That is fascinating! I am sure that you have much more to say, but . . .” The word “but” negates everything you said before. There are times, too, that there will be a mismatcher in your congregation. A mismatcher is someone who finds difference with most everything you say. It may seem to be on principle. To establish rapport with a mismatcher you can match the person’s physiology and utilize the person’s own words. Take what they say and put a twist on it. For example, “I don’t know that you will agree with me on this, but . . .” or “I don’t know if you want to do this, but . . .” adding what your message is. Chances are the person will now agree with you because unconsciously they are motivated to disagree with you. Certainly the mismatcher’s disagreement may occur outside the worship hour, and may have to be dealt with there. However, there may be a group or groups of mismatchers in your congregation, who you may wish to address in your sermon so as to obtain the result you want from your message. You can use your tone saying something like “You can’t do that!” is a display of disbelief, and the person will respond, “Oh yes I can!”

You might protest, “You are being manipulative!” Well, what I am trying to do is obtain the outcome I desire, which is consistent with the congregation’s statement of vision, mission, and values and the intent of the gospel. I assume that anyone who attends

one of the worship events I preside over and preach at has entered into a contract with me to realize their potential as a child of God and disciple of Jesus Christ and realize the goal that God has for them, the Church and Humanity. Anything I do to get them there short of deceiving them into doing something that they really don't want is within bounds. I am not afraid to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ that I have received; the gospel of the reign of God on earth. As a teacher I have a contract with students to teach them a certain subject. As a counselor or spiritual director I have a contract with the client to work towards a certain goal, even as they resist pursuing it. Often people want a certain outcome but they do not want to do what they need to get there and they need to get there. A prime example was the Hebrew people that Moses led out of Egypt (Exodus 12-40)... They wanted to get to the Promised Land, but they did not like the traverse through the Reed Sea and the wilderness. They hated being slaves but they hated their exodus from Egypt through the desert even more.

Many of the techniques that have been developed in NLP regarding rapport, matching and mirroring, and representational systems have been developed in the context of one-on-one and small group relationships. Public speakers, Preachers, teachers and group counselors have to be flexible and creative utilizing these principles. As you are speaking you may match the physiology of someone you may want to connect with more because you read them as being resistant to your message.

Some other ways to match include matching tonality, for example how high or low the pitch of someone's voice is. To obtain rapport it is not necessary to match pitch exactly, just in the direction of the person you are matching. If I have a low pitched voice, it is

likely that I won't be able to match someone's high pitched voice, but I could speak in a higher pitch. If you are a man wanting to develop rapport with a woman who has a high pitched voice, speak in a pitch that is high for a man or for you. If you are a woman wanting to speak in a pitch of a low pitched man speak in a pitch low for a woman. If you have a special guest attending your worship event where you are preaching you can approximate that person's pitch when you address them. Or if you are a man preaching at a woman's event or to a congregation of mostly women you can raise your pitch or a woman at a men's event, you can lower your pitch. Or you can strike a balance in a largely mixed group by finding a middle pitch. You can change your pitch by imagining that you are speaking from different parts of our body. To speak with a high pitch imagine speaking from your head. To lower it a little, speak from your throat. Lower it more by speaking from your heart, then from your solar plexus, and from your belly. Or lift your voice lower to higher depending on whom you are matching (James and Shephard, 2001; Bandler and Grinder, 1979).

You can match tempo, the speed or tempo of someone's talking, simply by speeding up or slowing down the tempo of your speech (James and Shephard, 2001; Bandler and Grinder, 1979). If you are from New York state and you are preaching in Alabama, you . . . might . . . want . . . to slow . . . down . . . your . . . speech . . . You . . . want . . . the congregation . . . to . . . under . . . stand . . . you. Or if you are from the South you might want to speed up your speech in order to be understood. I did this with a man I visited in a nursing home who had moved to New York State from Alabama. He was having trouble understanding me. He said, "You Yankees sure do talk fast." I slowed down so

he could better understand me and soon I was speaking with a Southern drawl. I came through loud and clear.

You can match the timbre or overall quality or resonance of the other's voice; whether the voice is crisp, clear with precise pronunciation, or breathy, sibilant or whispering, or harsh, grating, or scratchy, or rough, gruff, nasal, adenoidal or whiny. When matching timbre it is better to approach the sound of the person rather than imitate exactly as it will be too obvious to the other and likely insulting (James and Shephard, 2001; Bandler and Grinder, 1979).

You can match the volume of the voice; loudness or softness (James and Shephard, 2001; Bandler and Grinder, 1979). And you can match the content chunks of the communication; how much is said between breaths. There are people . . . who use small chunks . . . breaking up the communication . . . into small pieces. Other people use large chunks never seeming to stop to breathe between sentences (James and Shephard, 2001; Bandler and Grinder, 1979).

You can match the person's rhythm of speech, whether the speech is monotonic, sing – song or melodic. Sometime the rhythm is constant in a person's speech, sometimes it fluctuates. A person's mood can influence the rhythm (James and Shephard, 2001, Bandler; Grinder and Andreas, 1979).

You can match the origin of the speech in the speaker's body. Speech from the head tends to have a higher pitch, be slightly louder, quicker, clearer, penetrating, and light. Speech from the heart or upper chest tends to be warmer, resonant, middle frequency,

slower, and inclusive. Speech from the belly has a low pitch, is even more slowly, is larger with an airy quality, round and internal (James and Shephard, 2001; Bandler and Grinder, 1979).

You can match accents. It is better just to allow this to happen naturally. This is something that a person may feel insulted by. Insult someone and you will lose rapport.

Matching is an art. It takes practice to refine it. It's possible to be too obvious. Also, remember your context and the intent of your preaching or communication. Imitation is the highest form of flattery and thus will create rapport. Mimicking is insulting and will eliminate rapport. You learn best how to match in one-to-one relationships. If you are a pastoral counselor or spiritual director you have a lot of opportunity to practice this.

Matching is a natural phenomenon that can be learned. You want to learn how to match but be genuine doing so. Matching a group is a whole lot more complicated than matching an individual.

The Preacher has the challenge of calibrating the state of the group. Is the group worried? About what are they worried? How is the worry expressed? Is it preoccupied? With what are they preoccupied? How are they preoccupied? Is it tired or bored? What are they tired of or bored with? How are they expressing their tiredness or boredom? Are they excited or passionate? What are they excited or passionate about? How is their excitement or passion manifesting? The preacher needs to be active in his engagement of the congregation in his preparation for Sunday during the week, in his contacts with the congregation and during the presentation of the sermon.

He needs to be open to feedback about the worship service, about the sermons, about the music and every part of the worship ritual during the week between worship services, during the worship service and immediately afterwards. And he needs to be responsive to the feedback, not moving on from it prematurely.

I used to preach for three congregations, back to back in one day. I had a half-hour for travel time between the congregations. I normally would preach the same sermon with adaptations for each congregation. One week, I decided to use a sermon from the Rev. Bernice King, the daughter of Martin Luther King Jr., citing her of course. I thought that it was a perfect message for my congregation. My wife was present during the first service. She said to me that sermon did not work. She said “it is not you and because of that it fell flat.” I knew that she was right. I had not made the sermon mine. In making a sermon mine I considered my congregations when I was writing it. I had to be in rapport with my congregation while I was writing it. It was, from the beginning, a communication from me to them. They knew me. They didn’t know Bernice King. On the drive over to the second service I organized my thoughts, using the same scripture as I based the service. I told the congregation that I was going to deliver a different message from the one I had prepared because of feedback that I had received during the first service. I think that they were appreciative that I would not be replaying a dud sermon. The sermon was exactly what they were hoping before. On the way to the third service I prepared myself the way I did for the second. I explained to the congregation that this was something new for me and that sermon turned out to be just right for them as well. On other occasions, I referenced prayers raised up by

congregational members, announcements, music being performed and people and events occurring in the life of the congregation and community, increasing rapport with them in the process.

Why match? Why establish rapport? Because you can only lead someone where you want to go after you've met them and stayed with them where they are. Sometimes getting rapport for rapport's sake is good. But as Preachers, the purpose of obtaining rapport is to lead. Even God has to get rapport to get people to do what God wants! We read in the Bible that Jesus vacated his status in heaven when he came to earth, becoming human like humans, even being baptized when he didn't need it. God matched us in the person of Jesus (Philippians 2:5-8). Then God led us in the person of Jesus, Jesus saying "Come, follow me (leading)" (Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-34; Luke 5:1-11), and later "Go there and preach the gospel and heal and drive out demons (leading)" (Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16). And even later he told them, "You will do even greater things than me (future-pacing)" (John 14:12-14).

Smiling will help you build rapport. What do you normally do when someone smiles at you? You smile back. Smiling is a bridge. It invites rapport (James and Shephard 1991). On a good preaching day members of my congregation will tell me that they like my smile. On a bad preaching day I'm told that I seemed too serious. Once you establish rapport with your congregation you will find that they are very forgiving. You can make a mistake, forget what you were going to say, or misspeak and no one will mind. They may share a laugh with you or even poke fun at you for it; sure signs of rapport. Your congregation will give you time and space to recover and return your

attention to them. Establish rapport at the beginning of every worship program, or sermon, and given that you have prepared as well as you know how to prepare, everything will just flow!

Being Your Self

When preaching, less is more. You can be more effective in front of a congregation doing nothing than by moving around and working. Sometimes Preachers distract their congregations with all their movement. You are before the congregation because you belong there. Before opening your mouth to say a word you want to be comfortable being yourself in front of the audience. You want to be comfortable in your skin, simply being and breathing. And then, any move you make or word you speak, before a congregation of one or ten thousand can be done intentionally and for greater effect. Certainly, you will have done everything you need to prepare to lead worship and preach, before you enter the sanctuary. I enter into my preaching state while I am in the sanctuary prior to the service. I only have one service now. I also enter into my preaching state when I enter the sanctuary and stand before the sanctuary. It only takes me seconds. This creates a moment of anticipation in the congregation. When I step to the microphone it is as if they have been waiting for me to speak. The sanctuary grows quieter. Given that you are as well prepared as you can be, you will obtain the best results when you are spontaneously being who you are, rather than pretending to be someone or something else. What you need more than anything else is you. In fact, being you is all you will ever need to be an effective Preacher. When you are authentically you before your congregation your congregation will connect and bond

with you. They will be able to be who they are. You will be able to have a conversation with your congregation, even if you have the role of Preacher and offering a monologue sermon. Communication is much more than the words you convey. When you preach as yourself you convey your understanding of what you are preaching, not just your ideas about what you are preaching, not just your feelings about what you are preaching, but the impact of what you are preaching on you with all the excitement and meaning associated around that impact (James and Shephard, 2001). This is so in teaching and counseling as well. Keep it simple. Be yourself. Be present. You want your students to be genuinely interested in learning and let you know when they are struggling with the content and work in the class. You want your clients to accept themselves and be honest with you about who they are and what they think and feel.

When you model someone else you are studying that person and aiming to obtain the skill set they have. However your presentation is wholly yours. You are employing the skills you have observed in that other person. You have made them your own. You are not trying to become your model but use their model or map to obtain the results that you want. If you are learning a new skill set, practice that skill set until you have learned it and it feels natural to you and then apply it situationally as it naturally occurs for you to do so. The most spontaneous artists are often times the most practiced. When you have obtained rapport with your congregation they will be in the same state as you.

You probably have observed this for yourself: If you are uncomfortable or bored or anxious, that's exactly what your congregation will be feeling. If you are balanced, calm, matter of fact, excited, and totally yourself, they will be the same themselves.

Overcoming Fear

We have already discussed fear of preaching. Now it is time to overcome that fear. We will use an NLP Squash pattern to accomplish this. You can find instructions for the Visual squash on page 250. Fear of preaching is not a primal fear. Preaching is not something that threatens life and limb. It is an associated fear. It is an idea that has gotten hold of you that has produced anxiety and amplified that anxiety to the level of fear.

Exercise: Visual Squash and Future Pacing – Transforming Fear into Confidence

Let's assess your fear. Take a moment to relax. Find your easy chair and sit back in it . . . take a deep breath and relax . . . take another deep breath and relax even more, 10 times, 100 times, 1000 times more. Recall a time when you had to speak in front of a group of people and you were afraid. See yourself standing in front of you. Remember how you felt, so afraid of standing before the audience, too afraid to speak. Notice what you look like, what you sound like and what you feel like. You may even taste your fear and smell it. Notice your audience, the looks on their faces, what they are thinking and saying and what they are feeling. Notice the color of your fear and notice that color intensifying. Notice the cold temperature of your fear and notice the temperature dropping rapidly. Find a symbol for that fear and see that symbol growing in front of you. Find a word that describes your fear, a name that you are calling yourself and the audience is calling you. And as you feel this feeling peaking in you touch yourself with your right hand just above your left knee while you see the color, feel its temperature,

see the symbol and hear the name. Okay, open your eyes and close them, take a deep breath and release that breath and stretch your arms over your head.

Now I want you to remember a time you were relaxed, deeply relaxed and you were talking to someone you trust explicitly. See yourself over there. You can say anything to this person. You can make mistakes in front of this person. And you can be yourself. You are spontaneous and free with this person. Notice the look on your friend's face, the words he speaks, the thoughts he thinks and what he is feeling. Notice the color of your relaxed and spontaneous communication with your best friend. Notice the warm temperature increase in warmth. And find a symbol for that relaxed and spontaneous communication. And find a word, a phrase or a name that represents that relaxed and spontaneous communication and call yourself it and hear others calling you it, louder and louder. Now as this experience of this relaxed and spontaneous communication peaks touch just above your right knee with your right hand and see the color, feel the temperature, see the symbol and hear the word or name. Okay, open your eyes, close them, take a deep breath and stretch your arms up over your head and back down.

Now, relaxed in your easy chair, remember a time that you were happy. You were joyful and loving when communicating to someone. See yourself over there. You were experiencing a joyful, open flow of energy into you and from you. Experience yourself now happy, joyful, open, flowing and excited about what you have to say. Notice the color of your happiness, joy, openness and flowing excitement. Intensify that color. Notice the temperature of your happiness, joy, openness and flowing excitement. Find a symbol that expresses your happiness, joy, openness and flowing excitement and

watch it grow. And find a word, a phrase or name for your happiness, joy, openness and flowing excitement. Now touch that same spot over your right knee with your right hand as you see the color, feel the temperature, see the symbol and hear the word or name. Okay, open your eyes, close them, take a deep breath and stretch your arms up over your head and back down.

Now, back in your easy chair, look out in front of you and touch the spot above your left knee with your right hand as you recall the fearful speaking scene. Experience that for a moment. Notice the color, the temperature. See the symbol. Hear the name. Experience the scene in its fullness. Okay, open your eyes, close them, take a deep breath and stretch your arms up over your head and back down.

Now, back in your easy chair, look out in front of you and touch the spot above your right knee with your right hand. Recall the scene communicating with your best friend. Remember the color, the temperature, the symbol and the word or name. Okay, open your eyes, close them, take a deep breath and stretch your arms up over your head and back down.

Now back in your easy chair, look out in front of you and touch the spot above your right knee with your right hand. Recall the scene being happy, joyful, loving, and open and flowing... Remember the color, the temperature, the symbol and the word or name. Okay, open your eyes, close them, take a deep breath and stretch your arms up over your head and back down.

Repeat the last two steps in rapid succession two more times. Okay, open your eyes, close them, take a deep breath and stretch your arms up over your head and back down.

Now, touch the spot over your right knee as you see the two colors, feel the two temperatures, see the two symbols and hear the two words, phrases or names. Feel the colors intensifying and mixing, the temperature warming, the symbols combining and the names combining. Now take your right hand from your right knee and touch your left knee while recalling the positive colors, temperature, symbol and words. Okay, open your eyes, close them, take a deep breath and stretch your arms up over your head and back down.

Repeat the last step two more times in rapid succession.

Now return to your easy chair, take a deep relaxing breath and see yourself in the future preaching in front of a large crowd. See yourself, hear yourself and feel yourself preaching, communicating while deeply relaxed and spontaneous, happy, joyful, loving, open and flowing. Touch yourself on your right knee with your right hand, see your color, feel your temperature, see your symbol and hear your word as you effectively communicate your message to your audience. Notice the looks on your audience's faces, their thoughts, what they are saying and what they are feeling. Notice what you look like preaching, what you are saying and thinking about your preaching and what you are feeling as you deliver your message and when you are finished.

The psychologist Albert Ellis tells a story about being painfully shy as college student (2009). He decided to overcome his shyness by asking 100 very attractive young women out. He was rejected in every case. Before he did he was petrified. He had the irrational fear that rejection would kill him or crush him. What was the impact upon him? He was no longer afraid. He did not die. That was what he called an irrational idea. He was not crushed like an anvil had been dropped on him. As the result of his experience, he was no longer embarrassed. Rejection did nothing to him. Later in his life no one would ever accuse Dr. Ellis of not speaking his mind. I don't think that there was anything that Dr. Ellis would not say to anyone, as evidenced by the scathing criticisms that Dr. Ellis made of the greats in the fields of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy and anyone else he disagreed with or was bothered by.

Your congregation wants you to be the best Preacher you can be. It is usually the attitude of the Preacher that gets in the way of the Preacher being effective as a Preacher, not the congregation. This is true for teaching and counseling, too. These bad attitudes are experienced as limiting beliefs the Preacher, teacher or counselor has about themselves. Beliefs such as these are learned or established and they can be unlearned or replaced (James and Shephard, 2001).What beliefs do you have that impede you from preaching magnificently, from being an absolutely magnificent, perfect, brilliant master Preacher, teacher or counselor? You can rid yourselves of these limiting beliefs. If you have never preached before, there quite naturally will be fear about preaching. The same is true with teaching and counseling. Really, that fear is anxiety. And what that anxiety does, if you want to be a Preacher, a teacher or a counselor is

that it causes you to decide to take a class or pursue a degree, and to take opportunities where you can practice speaking and preaching before groups of people, practice teaching and practice counseling. This fear or anxiety will dissipate over time, with familiarity and education and training. The exercises presented here will give you the familiarity and confidence to preach magnificently. The more you practice the better you'll be. You will be prepared to preach, teach and/or counsel well, better than you did before, even superbly.

Limiting Beliefs

What you believe about yourself as a Preacher, teacher, or counselor is true. You want a healthy belief that is based upon realistic feedback (James and Shephard, 2001). You will only be an effective and magnificent Preacher by right effort, effort that can be a lot of fun. Let's explore your limiting beliefs. Take a moment now to think about and write down any limiting beliefs you have about being a Preacher. You can do the same for being a teacher or counselor. Some of these are in the surface of your awareness. Write them down. Some are further from the surface of your awareness. They will arise later and so add them to your list when they do. And if you don't have any limiting beliefs, write down the supportive beliefs you have about you preaching magnificently, or teaching and counseling excellently. Identify specific fears you have. Write them down even if they don't make sense. Now look back at the excuses you have for not being a magnificent Preacher.

Inventory: Limited Beliefs

Here are some questions to consider in eliciting your negative beliefs about yourself as a Preacher, teacher or counselor. What do I believe about:

- The physical setting where I will be preaching (teaching, counseling)?
- The people who make up the congregation (class, caseload)?
- The size of the congregation (class, group)?
- My past performance as a Preacher or presenter (teacher, counselor)?
- My capabilities as a Preacher or presenter (teacher, counselor)?
- What is possible and not possible for me as a Preacher (teacher, counselor)?
- Myself as a Preacher (teacher, counselor)?
- Who I really am before a congregation (class, client)?
- Who I really would be if I revealed more about myself when preaching (teaching, counseling)?
- What am I assuming about the kinds of people there are in the congregation and world (class, caseload)?

As you consider these beliefs determine what it is that triggers anxiety or fear about preaching (teaching, counseling) in you? And then, identify your primary fear. This is the fear that if you faced it and overcame it, its removal would have the greatest impact on your ability to demonstrate your magnificence as a Preacher (teacher, counselor). Having identified this key limiting belief, reflect upon it with these perspectives:

- This is just a belief. There have been good reasons in the past to hold this belief. It has served me well.
- I have learned from this belief.
- Having learned from this belief, I can let it go now.
- I can have other beliefs that will support me and allow me to become more of who I am and be the magnificent Preacher (teacher, counselor) I can be.
- Take a moment now and consider what those beliefs can be. Write these down.

A strategy for overcoming unresourcefulness and achieving competence and even greatness is called the Circle of Excellence (Dilts, Grinder, Bandler, DeLozier, 1980).

The NLP presumes that people have all of the resources that they need. Powerful internal states can be gathered from our unconscious and made available when they are needed. The Circle of Excellence is a powerful type of NLP anchoring that we can apply to ourselves. It provides a means to gain control over our emotional states.

Some keys to creating a Circle of Excellence (Dilts, Grinder, Bandler and DeLozier, 1980):

- How well you can act “as if” to elicit the state.
- How much you can intensify the state.

To create a Circle of Excellence (Dilts, Grinder, Bandler and DeLozier, 1980):

- Decide on a resource state you want to experience more often.
- Imagine a circle on the floor in front of you, big enough to step into.

- Take a moment to relax, clear your mind and breathe deeply.
- Elicit a strong resource state of your own choosing and intensify it. Stand, breathe as if you had that state intensely – feel the sensations.
- Project an image of yourself, having those intense feelings, into the circle in front of you.
- What color, texture, qualities and size symbolize this state? What sounds and feelings come from the circle. What tastes and smells?
- Step into the circle, and into the image of yourself, when the feelings are at their peak. Intensify them even more. Feel that powerful emotion surrounding you and flowing through your body. Breathe in the feeling. Enjoy it fully and completely.
- Anchor with some natural gesture that seems related to the state – a word or phrase, a facial expression, some aspect of physiology.
- Before the intensity fades, step back out and shake out the feelings (return to a neutral state)
- Repeat the steps with the same resource state seven times. The circle becomes more and more powerfully resourceful. Rather than create a new anchor, fire or trigger the identical anchor.
- Repeat the steps with the different state (or the same state) seven times. The circle becomes more and more powerfully resourceful.
- How does having this resource affect all aspects of your life (or a particular context)? Notice how different your perspective is, how the feeling changes the way you go about things.

I personally like to project an image of someone who emulates the resource or resources that I want for myself. Jesus is someone I like to emulate. I imagine Jesus on a mental screen before me. I see him sitting or standing in front of a crowd. I hear him speaking; expressing his experience of the Kingdom of God and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, his voice echoing in the hearts of his listeners and touching his listeners at the core of their being. Even from where I am sitting and watching I feel his presence, his passion and Holy Spirit power filling up in me. And then I am transported onto the screen and enter into Jesus, his presence, passion and Holy Spirit power of God building up in me and pouring out of me into the hearts and heads of the people listening to me. And at the height of this experience, I project this image of me into my circle of preaching excellence. I transport myself back to where I was watching the screen and look into the circle at the powerful image of myself, pulsating with Christ's presence, passion and Holy Spirit power, pushing up against the edges of the circle, pouring out love and meaning into the hearts and heads of people listening. And I step into the circle and into the image of me preaching with power and persuasion, each person feeling the Kingdom of God pressing up against them and percolating in them as divine presence, passion and Holy Spirit power, manifesting in them as Kingdom of God consciousness, Kingdom of God character, Kingdom of God conviction, Kingdom of God capability, Kingdom of God creativity, cultivating a new creation. The color of this experience is red like fire. The temperature of the experience is hot like fire. The shape of the experience is a ball of fire. The phrase for the experience is Baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire. I repeat the steps as above.

To use the Circle of Excellence to collapse unresourceful states (Dilts, Grinder, Bandler and DeLozier, 1980):

- Choose a resourceful state powerful enough to collapse the unresourceful state.
- After repeating the association between stepping into the circle and the resource, after it has become automatic.....
- Imagine an unresourceful state in a particular context.
- Determine what triggers that state.
- As you pay attention to those triggers and context imagine your circle in that context and step into it.
- Experience the resource state arising in the previously troublesome context and repeat until the resource state becomes your natural response in that context.

When I first was becoming a Pastor I had very little public speaking experience. I had spent twenty years in the counseling profession. Most of the counseling I did was one-on-one and in small groups. Most of the clinical supervision I provided was one-to-one and small group. I offered training groups of up to twenty-five people. I read most of my lessons. I had a great deal of knowledge about counseling and my alcoholism specialization. After I made my career shift into church leadership I was insecure about my preaching. Through my seminary education I became proficient in preparing a sermon. However, I was very nervous about my sermon delivery. I was especially anxious about extemporary speech. Over the years I continued to preach but anxiety remained about preaching especially without a manuscript. I receive NLP training as a

step towards becoming a better preacher. Since I was already preaching I was in a position to act “as if” I was a better preacher even an excellent one.

The resourceful state that I wanted to experience was confidence as a preacher. I imagined a big red circle in front of me, large enough for me to step into. I entered into a deep sense of relaxation, clearing my mind and breathing deeply. I recalled the confidence that I had as a counselor, clinical supervisor and clinical director, program director and writer of poetry. I had supreme confidence when I communicated in these roles. I projected this confidence into the circle in front of me. And the circle bubbled and gushed with hot golden lava deep down to the center of the earth and rising up like a volcano to the sky. I could hear the rush of the lava carving its impression in the earth, smell its strong sulfuric odor and smell the cooked vegetation it overran. I stepped into the circle feeling the lava rush up my spine and down my front and golden light shot off of my head, from my eyes, my throat, my heart, my solar plexus, my belly and tailbone and pour out of my pores. Confidence pervaded all my being and filled the room around me. I inhaled, filling my belly, lungs, my face and eyes as I smiled broadly and enjoyed the experience thoroughly. Then I stepped out of the circle, shook off the feeling and returned to a neutral state. I repeated the exercise multiple times until I felt the experience was integrated in me.

Back in my easy chair, I take a deep breath and relax and take another breath and relax ten times, one hundred times and one thousand times. Now, I see before me on NYN, Next You Now television, Bishop Violet Fisher preaching to two thousand people. Bishop Fisher is supremely confident, filled with the Holy Spirit, life flowing through her.

The audience is standing, cheering, responding verbally as the Bishop preaches.

Golden light streams from her and tongues of fire are falling on the heads of the audience members. I close my eyes, open them, take a deep breath, stretch my arms over my head and drop them by my side.

I look up at the television and there on NYN, Next You Now, I see myself preaching like Bishop Fisher, supremely confident, filled with the Holy Spirit, life flowing through me. The audience is standing, cheering, responding verbally as I preach and golden light is shining from me and tongues of fire falling on the heads of the audience members. I close my eyes, open them, take a deep breath, stretch my arms over my head and drop them by my side. And all the confidence I have from preaching like Bishop Fisher is put into the circle of excellence along with all the confidence that is already there. And it is like the surface of the sun exploding in light. I hear the sun bursting and a burning smell. I step into the circle and confidence, the Holy Spirit and life is flowing from me like I am the fountain of life. Then I stepped out of the circle, shook of the feeling and returned to a neutral state.

Back in my easy chair, I take a deep breath and relax and another and relax ten times, one hundred times and one thousand times. I see myself in the future preparing to preach in a large Cathedral, each pew, front to back and side to side filled with enthusiastic faces. And at the front of the sanctuary immediately before the elevated pulpit is the luminous red Circle of Excellence full of supreme confident and Holy Spirit power. And I step into the circle and feel all of its accumulated confidence and power rising up in me. And as I breathe, filling my belly, lungs, face and eyes, I smile and

climb up from the red circle, up the steps to the pulpit and smile again and preach the Holy Spirit pouring out of me onto every person in the audience.

Time Line

We will be experimenting with time, utilizing a technique developed called Time Line Therapy (James and Woodsmall, 1988). With this technique you will travel along a time line to release any emotional factors that interfere with you preaching magnificently. When you use this technique you use conscious activities to affect your unconscious mind.

The timeline is a metaphor for thinking about how you experience your life. It is an imaginary line that includes all of the events that happened in your life in the order they happened. You can think of it as beginning with your physical birth and ending with your death. As an imaginary line it can go back before your birth and extend out beyond your physical death. You can imagine past lives or your ancestors. If you imagine the existence of an afterlife you can extend your timeline beyond death.

Exercise: Time-line

The first thing you need to do is find where your time line is located. For me my future is out in front of me, my past in behind me and my present is right where I am. You always want to ask the person because they may configure their time differently.

Now, Time-line therapy can be used to rid your-self of negative emotions like fear and anger

Fear is the result of an event. It occurs after an event rather than before it. You can generalize that fear by associating it to a possible outcome of a future event, but it originates as a response to a previous event in time.

The next thing you want to do is determine what negative emotion you have that you want to get rid of. In this case let's say that it is the fear of speaking to groups of people. You are afraid of speaking in front of people and you are a pastor. You make your living preaching once a week.

An important question to ask is, "Do you want to get rid of your fear of speaking in front of people?" If your answer is "yes," then we will continue with the process. If not, we'll go back and see if there is another negative emotion that you would like to be rid of.

Now, find your time line. Identify where the present is, where the future is and where the past is. Now imagine turning around and face the past, while floating up above your timeline and identify your latest experience of fear of speaking to other people are. How far back is it?

Now, float up over your timeline and travel back to just after that latest experience of fear of speaking to people, so that you are above it and it is right before you. You are in position 1. Recall your experience.

Now, staying above your timeline, travel back to the next previous time that you experienced fear of speaking to others. This is position 1b. Recall that experience.

Staying above your timeline, travel back to each previous time you experienced fear of speaking to others. These are positions 1a – until you have visited each one. Recall each of those experiences.

Still above your timeline, travel back to just before the first time you experienced fear of speaking to others, so you are looking down at the experience and it is just before you. It may not have been a speaking incident but it is integral to your fear of speaking to others.

Now, still floating above your timeline stop just above that first incident. This is position 2. The goal is to learn from the incident and having learned from it, let go of the fear easily and effortlessly. Ask yourself what you need to learn from this incident so that the fear is eliminated.

Now, still floating above your timeline, travel back to fifteen minutes prior to that initial event. This is position 3. Turn and face the present and future. Notice if you are experiencing any fear of speaking to others here. If you don't, return to position 2. Looking down at the incident notice if you feel any fear of speaking there. Now drop down into the incident and notice if you feel any fear of speaking to others.

Float back up over your timeline and return to each incident, the earliest to the latest. Drop down into each incident fully aware of the wisdom and experience that you have gained since then and notice if there is any fear of speaking to people. Float back up between each and finally come to incident 1. Drop down into that incident. Do you feel any fear of speaking to people?

Float back up over your timeline and return to the present. Face the future and go forward to the next time you need to speak to a group of people. Drop down into the situation. Do you feel afraid of speaking to people? Come back to the present and describe what you are feeling now about speaking to people,

When you think of changing your experience of public speaking and preaching, you will realize that this process makes perfect sense, because you have done something like this process many times already. You have encoded certain events in your past as negative memories and others positive. You have made those decisions of how you encoded those events. And you can change how you encode them now. And you know that this is true because what you think determines what happens in your model of the world. As you have heard it said, “Hindsight is 20/20.” Now your hindsight of today is your foresight for tomorrow. You can make useful changes by recoding negative memories as learning opportunities.

Energy for Preaching

Energy is a resource that you can use to assist you in preaching. You can use energy to change what is happening in you and in your congregation. Kinesthetically you know what energy is. You feel it in your body. You know that energy increases and decreases in you and it does in the members of your congregation as well. Imagine if you could utilize energy and control and manipulate it. You also know that you affect others with your energy and that others affect you with their energy.

Exercise: Energy Impact

Take a moment now to relax. By now you know how to enter into a state of deep relaxation. You can just breathe in and breathe out as you are doing right now, relaxing with every breath. Rub your hands together, take a deep breath and relax deeper than ever. And as you relax your mind drifts back to a time when your energy affected someone in a negative way. Recall what you were feeling. Assign a color to that feeling. Intensify that color. Make it deeper and darker. Notice what you are feeling in your body. Where are you feeling it? Notice the shape of that feeling. Let that shape get larger. Remember your interaction with the other, what you are thinking and feeling, what you are saying and doing and what that other person is thinking and feeling and saying and doing. Intensify your thoughts and feelings so they are clear, almost overwhelming and your words and actions and the experience of the other so they are haunting. Now put a deep, dark blue frame around this memory and slide it to the left.

Open your eyes, close them, take a deep breath, rub the palms of your hands together and relax deeper than ever. Now recall that very same situation. Notice your feeling, the color of your feeling, the shape of your feeling and the experience of the other. Change the color, seeing it fade and lighten until it disappears. Change the shape of your feeling, seeing it shrink, smaller and smaller until it disappears. Let the memory of your thinking and feeling, saying and doing and what the other is thinking and feeling, saying and doing disappear like you are driving in a car and looking through the rear view mirror, it falling further and further behind until it is out of sight and lost. Now put a lighter medium blue frame around this memory and slide it to the left.

Open your eyes, close them, take a deep breath, and rub the palms of your hands together and relax deeper than ever. And as you relax your mind drifts back to a time when your energy affected someone in a positive manner. Recall what you were feeling. Assign a color to that feeling. Intensify that color. Heighten and brighten it. Notice what you are feeling in your body. Where are you feeling it? Notice the shape of that feeling. Let that shape get larger. Remember your interaction with the other, what you are thinking and feeling, what you are saying and doing and what that other person is thinking and feeling and saying and doing. Intensify your thoughts and feelings so they are clear and your words and actions and the experience of the other so they are exciting. Now put a mother of pearl white frame around this memory and slide it to the left.

Open your eyes, close them, take a deep breath, rub your palms together and relax deeper than ever. And as you relax your mind drifts back repeat the last part of the exercise as your energy affects someone positively. Recall that feeling. Recall that color. Intensify, heighten, and brighten that color. Recall the feeling in your body. Recall the location and the shape. Let the shape become even larger than before. Recall your interaction with the other, what you are thinking and feeling, what you are saying and doing and what that other person is thinking and feeling and saying and doing. Intensify your thoughts and feelings so they are clear, clearer than ever, and your words and actions and the experience of the other so they are exciting, more exciting than ever. Now put a luminous mother of pearl white frame around this memory and slide it to the left.

Open your eyes, close them, take a deep breath, rub your palms together and relax deeper than ever. Your energy is always with you and it always impacts your relationships with others. You have power and choice over the quality and intensity of your energy. You can choose to manifest negative energy and influence, but you can choose to manifest positive energy and influence. You can choose to intensify and de-intensify the intensity and size of your feelings.

Open your eyes, close them, take a deep breath, rub your palms together and relax deeper than ever. And as relax you can project an image of yourself into the future to the very next opportunity to affect another person with you energy. You can see yourself with that other person whom you want to influence positively by what you think and feel and say and do. You can remember the color of that positive energy, its brightness and its shape and size and the impact of your thoughts and feelings and words and actions as you engage that other person, your positive energy influencing their thought and feelings and words and actions and your excitement and their excitement building. And you construct a luminous and glowing mother of pearl frame around this event and slide it the left. Then repeat this last step three times. Now open your eyes, stretch and move your body as you attend to the external realities of the present moment.

You certainly have experienced entering a venue or room that was bustling with excitement and anticipation or have been in the presence of an exciting and energetic performer or presenter. Simply remember such an event. Remember what you thought and felt and said and did and imagine what others were thinking and feeling as you

remember what they looked like, what they said and what they did. Give that experience a name and smile as you remember it. Remember the best part of the experience and how much you want the experience to continue. Rub your hands together in glee. It's an alleluia moment! As you continue to relish the moment, rub your hands together Alleluia!

Exercise: Swish –Replacing Bad Vibes with Good Vibes

And you have experienced entering into a venue or room where the atmosphere was dark, dour, depressing, or angry or hateful or been in the presence of someone anxious, depressed, or angry. The atmosphere of the room or mood of the presenter had a significant impact upon you. . Remember what you thought and felt and said and did and imagine what others were thinking and feeling as you remember what they looked like, what they said and what they did. Give that experience a name and frown as you remember it. Remember the worst part of the experience and how much you want the experience to end. As you look at the experience exclaim “Bahumbug and dismiss it with a dismissive hand gesture, “Get out of here.”

You can control your energy; the energy in your body, the energy you put out, the energy in the space around you, and the energy within the group you are presenting to. Do you want to control this energy? Of course, you do, and you can. You can set up the room to cultivate any feeling that you want. Think about going into a funeral home. What mood has been set up there? The setting is quiet, solemn, subdued, and peaceful. What mood has been set up in a high class night club? The setting there is

likely light, energetic, buoyant and positive. If I am teaching a class I want to set up an environment that cultivates curiosity, interest and excitement. If I am a guru I would want to set up the meditation hall for silence, reflection, and enlightenment. You can work with the energy of your church sanctuary and the members of the congregation. Whether the room is light or dark makes a difference. The colors and decorations contribute to atmosphere. The music you select to have played at the start of the worship service sets the tone, as do the attitudes, words, and actions of the greeters and ushers. The bulletin you pass out and the images and words projected on the walls and screens effect the mood of the congregation as they enter the room. You have a choice over the tools you use (James and Shephard, 2001). You can set up your classroom to suit the mood and energy you want and your counseling office for this purpose.

Begin by controlling the energy in your own body and your own mood and state of mind. There are times that you will not have as much control over your environment as you want. You can do this by utilizing the energy that is around you. Wouldn't you want to have more energy after preaching, teaching or presenting, even after hours of preaching, teaching, or presenting than when you began?

Exercise: Balancing with Energy

Stand up. Put your attention in your right earlobe. What would happen if someone pushed on your shoulder? You'd likely lose your balance. Now, put your attention in

your belly. Imagine a large ball of energy there. What would happen if someone pushed on your shoulder? You probably would hold your ground (James and Shephard, 2001).

When you are preaching or teaching and someone interrupts you by asking a question, taunting you, or by getting up and leaving, a cell-phone goes off, or a baby cries the disruption can throw you off balance. When you notice that you are going off-balance, you can bring your energy center down and focus it in the center of your body near your belly and look out at the congregation or class from there. A client can throw you off kilter in a counseling session by what they say or do or by their feedback to you. At this point you can take a deep breath, feel yourself centered in your posture, and reenter your preaching, teaching or counseling state. Allow the congregation (class, client) to wait for you. And when you have regained your balance, you can respond to the interruption. Let's prepare for such a disruption to your speaking.

Exercise: Responding to Disruptions

Remember a time that you were interrupted by a member of your congregation, audience or class or a client interrupted you. What happened? Did someone say something or do something? What did you feel? Feel the disruption to your attention, your energy and flow. Name that feeling "Disruption." Now walk away from the disruption, defocusing your attention away from it as you turn your back to it and step to your right. Inhale deeply, filling your belly and chest, smile inwardly and exhale, emptying your chest and belly and then breathing into your belly, touching your belly with your right hand as you name that experience "Centered." Breathe into and out of

that center as you focus your attention back out on your audience, class or client and then step back into the place where you were speaking. Now step back to the left and think to yourself “disruption.” Step back to the right, deep breath, belly, “centered,” return to your speaking place “centered and refocused.” Step back to the left, disruption. Step to the right, “centered and refocused.”

You can generate energy through your breathing and through movement. In Yoga there are breathing practices called Pranayama. Prana means energy. Yama means practice. Common to many yogic breathing practices is a process called diaphragmatic breathing. As you breathe in your stomach will expand. As you breathe out your belly will contract. In this variation you will open your mouth while placing your top teeth against the bottom teeth. Your inhale will last twice as long as your exhale.

Exercise: Leveler Communications Stance

Stand with your feet placed firmly on the floor, shoulder width apart, knees slightly bent, hands hung loosely at your side, weight equally distributed onto each leg. This stance is called the leveler stance (Satir and Satir, 1988). Breathe in deeply through your nose, your belly first, and then your chest filling with air. And breathe out through your mouth, through your clenched teeth, making a forceful rapid choppy repetitive “ha” sound. Your energy will increase as you do this. Energy will increase after a few minutes, but twenty minutes will produce a surplus of energy that lasts for hours. There are variations of this where you make the sound hu-hu or ha-ha or OM.

I've learned these practices in Hatha, Raja, and Maha yoga settings and in singing classes. You will experience as the result of this practice an increase in personal charisma or magnetism (James and Shephard, 2001).

Try this for five minutes right now. Breathe in deeply through your nose, your belly first, and then your chest filling with air. And breathe out through your mouth, through your clenched teeth, making a forceful rapid choppy repetitive “ha” sound. Your energy will increase as you do this. “Ha!” Feel your body and quality of the energy in your body, energy increasing with every five times, twenty times, fifty times, one hundred times with every “Ha!” The next time you do this exercise, “Ha!” your energy will immediately increase building on the energy you accumulate now, “Ha!” from the moment of your very first “Ha!”

Tai Chi or Chi Gung is a tool that you can use to manage your energy (James and Shephard, 2001). Tai Chi utilizes movements initiated from a central point below your belly. The practice that follows is technically a Chi Kung exercise found in a Tai Chi form I learned many years ago (Stone 2009).

Exercise: Tai Chi Chi

Place your feet a shoulder's length apart, with equal weight on each foot. Make sure your knees are unlocked and bent slightly. Focus your attention on a spot one inch directly below your belly. Place your left foot one step straight ahead of your left shoulder. Now, look straight ahead. Extend both arms forward, your palms forward like you are gently pushing. Now, breathe in fully through your nose, and at the same time

imagine pulling in energy with both of your hands. Grasp lightly, forming a fist as your pull your hands into your chest where they form loose fists. And as you do this, slowly shift your weight to the back leg. Imagine energy entering into you through your nose, filling your belly and your chest. Then, begin to extend your arms forward, palms forward, leaning forward, shifting your weight onto the forward leg, as you breathe outwardly in the direction of your hands, expanding the energy field around you, filling that energy field with your breath. Then rotate your wrists, begin to close your fingers, ready to start again. Repeat this cycle for 20 minutes or if you don't want to keep time, 9, 18, 27, or 36 times (traditional Taoist time cycle). Remember, when you breathe in draw in energy into your chest and store it in your body, and when you breathe out expand your energy field around you. You can do this practice five minutes every morning and every evening to increase your daily energy supply.

When preparing to preach do this for at least ten minutes. Should you become dizzy doing this practice move your energy center down your body into your belly.

Remember, your energy will follow your attention. You can insert desirable qualities of energy into your energy field by thinking about them as you practice. Some qualities to mix in are love, joy, peace, excitement, and curiosity. Just imagine these qualities. As you breathe out push the energy from within you out into the room. Your energy will follow wherever you place your attention. That can be an object, place or person. You can use this or other Chi Gung or tai Chi exercises to produce the same effect; a calm, poised energy and distribution of energy throughout the nervous system. This would

provide an increase in your charisma. You can call the energy produced, chi, ki, prana, libido, energy or flow. It is all the same.

Long-term practitioners of meditation or tai chi often enter quickly into meditative or energetic states that they desire. This is because they have established anchors that when activated provide access to the state they desire to enter into. Often times they have established multiple anchors. It is often recommended that they have special places and times to practice and that they consistently practice in those places and at those times (LaShan 1974). The places and times are anchors. The place may be equipped with a meditation bench or pillow or special chair and with an altar with meaningful artifacts on it. A candle or incense may be lit. The practice may begin with an invocation. The meditators may wear particular garb when they practice. They may chant or use a particular mantram or sacred word or phrase each time they practice. They may begin with a bell or gong or special music. They may begin by assuming a particular posture, closing their eyes, taking a deep breath, observing their breath or reciting something. All of these serve as anchors. Tai Chi begins with an opening stance, a soft focusing of the eyes and an opening sequence (Stone 2009). Every movement is grounded in a particular principal and breathing is coordinated with movement. The practice called meditation or tai chi is not the same as the experience called meditation or chi. These anchors are unconsciously chained together. But meditators can enter into the meditative state by activating any of these anchors.

Exercise: Energy Pushing

Stand in an empty sanctuary, auditorium, classroom, or room and imagine the room filled. Stand before the imaginary group in the leveler posture (feet your shoulder's width apart, equal weight on each foot, hands at your side, looking directly at the audience and enter your preacher, teacher, counselor state or presenter state (eyes on a point at back of the room just above eye level, scan with your peripheral vision above and below that point from point to the ceiling and point to the floor and left and right of the point to the left and right walls. Scan the space in the room from the point in the back all the way to you and behind you, above you and below you and to the wall to the right and left of you. Then let your gaze drop to eye level). With your eyes open, imagine your energy and push that energy out from your chest into the group until it reaches beyond the farthest person. Put that energy out beyond all of the people before you and out behind you. In your peripheral vision include every person in the group. When you do this your energy will be upon and flow to every person in the group. Now, imagine pulling that energy in just a little bit such that the energy forms a ring behind the group, and now, tighten it just a little. As you stand in front of the group, remain still and centered thinking and directing your energy. Stay calm and centered in your preacher state, attentive and receptive and viewing the group in your peripheral vision, doing nothing other than the exercise and smiling. This is a technique you can do sitting at a table in a meeting or talking on the telephone imagining being in the room with the person you are talking with. I have done this exercise along with the preaching

state exercise as I sat in my church's worship service as my liturgists performed their roles. The congregation merely sees me sitting there (James and Shepard, 2001).

What do these exercises have to do with preaching? Well, leading worship and preaching takes energy. I used to lead worship and preach three times over a four hour period with up to a half hour between worship programs, a half hour that included a fifteen minute drive. I'd be pretty wiped out every Sunday afternoon. And over Christmas Eve and Christmas Day I would have three services; one year four. And during Holy Week there would be five services Holy Thursday through Easter Sunday. Using these exercises I had an abundance of energy throughout the time periods described and afterwards. You can direct energy to the members of your congregation, performing the same exercises prior to or when you are preaching to your congregation while maintaining a high level of energy throughout. And when you get distracted, have your microphone pack fall loudly to the ground, spill water or grape juice, trip up or down a step or over your stole, drop some papers, lose your place in your notes, outline or manuscript, you can simply stop, breathe, center, reenter your preacher state, and smile and go on with your preaching or speaking. I have taught back to back classes, led back to back counseling groups, and had as many as six counseling sessions plus a staff meeting and counseling group on the same day.

Why are people coming to hear you preach? Why, you are the Preacher. They come to participate in worship, and they are coming to hear you proclaim God's word. They are interested in what you have to say. And if they are not expecting excellence (which they ought to be) then you can surprise them (not yourself) by preaching magnificently.

The words you use to preach what you preach are important. You want to make sure that the words you use drive your point across so everyone hears what you have to say and sees your point clearly. Why do they come to your class? They want to learn from you? Why do they seek counseling from you? They want your help.

Incident-Point-Benefit

This exercise is called “Incident – Point- Benefit” (James and Shephard, 2001). In this exercise you are going to tell a short story. You are going to tell a very short story, an anecdote that lasts less than a minute. And this story is going to be beneficial to your congregation. For your congregation to obtain the greatest benefit from your story you will organize your story starting with telling of an incident, making a point, and explaining the benefit of hearing the story. This structure will help you stay to the point and get your message across clearly, so that your congregation knows what is in store for them. Before telling your story you will enter into your Preacher state and establish rapport. Stand in front of your group and tell them about a particular incident. You can practice with an imaginary group or form a small group for this purpose. In a workshop this would be a group exercise. You can also use this technique to organize a small speech, an announcement or even your sermon. It can be something that you were involved with, you heard about it, or you make up; only there has to be a point that you want to make in telling the story. Tell them the point you want them to get. “And the point of this is . . .” Finally, tell them the benefit for them of getting the point. “And the benefit for you is . . .” You have one minute to do all of this. Describe the incident. Make your point. Tell the benefit of your audience getting your point.

When I arrived at the room being used for worship at the nursing home, I was greeted by the new activities director. When she that I had a chalice, juice and bread with me she told me that I was wasting my time bringing communion; that most of the people attending the worship service were so out of it that they would not appreciate it. I told her that I have been bringing communion to nursing homes services for years and that it was always appreciated. She shook her said and said "I don't think so." As the time was approaching for communion, one of the residents went by the communion table with her walker. She bumped the table and the chalice fell to the floor and shattered. A member of the team went to find a cup I could use. A few moments later he returned with two little paper cups from the restroom. I lifted the bread, blessed it, broke it and said, "Take, eat, this is my body broken for you." I took the cup, lifted it and blessed it and said, "I am sorry that I don't have a vessel worthy of the blood of Christ." Then something struck me and I said, "But this is the precious blood of Jesus Christ and it makes any vessel worthy." An old woman who had been sitting with her eyes closed and rocking back and forth through the service cried out "That's right! And we don't get communion enough around here!" Everyone on my team laughed. I distributed communion to everyone there. Everyone whose eyes were closed opened their eyes and looked longingly at me and opened their mouths as I dipped the bread in the juice and placed it on their mouths. Those unable to swallow allowed me to touch their lips with the moistened bread. Afterwards, I approached the Activities Director and she acknowledged that everyone of the residents appreciated the sacrament. The benefit of realizing this is that you will not underestimate the self-awareness, understanding and spirituality of others based upon appearances. The ability to tell a story is valuable to

spiritual teachers and to counselors who may want an indirect way of communicating a lesson or gaining a therapeutic outcome.

Installing Patterns

In leading training or teaching a class about NLP and Preaching, having advanced a certain time into the training, I might say, “You have learned a lot up until now. You have been installing patterns of behavior that will work for you as long as you just do them. Once you have installed them you will utilize what you have learned automatically whenever you stand up to preach in front of any congregation. In fact, simply walking into a sanctuary or auditorium or place where you will be preaching and facing the seats and the members of your congregation and the back of the room, you will enter into your preaching state, center, obtain rapport, and be ready to preach.” Teachers can enter their teaching state, center, obtain rapport, and teach. Counselors can enter their counseling state, center, obtain rapport, and engage their clients in counseling.

Exercise: Installation

Find your easy chair, sit down, make yourself comfortable and take a deep breath. Fill your belly and chest and then breathe out, relaxing 100, 500 and 1000 times more with each breath. Find your time line, where your present is, your past and your future. Turn to face your past. Go back in the past to the start of this workshop/class and come fast forward in the class reviewing everything you have seen, heard and felt and all that you have learned and accomplished right up to the present. Now turn to face your future.

See your-self at a future time in a congregation walking into a sanctuary or auditorium or place where you will be preaching and facing the seats and the members of your congregation and the back of the room. Now, as you have done before, enter into your preaching state, center, obtain rapport and begin to preach. Notice your audience, how they look, the sounds that they make, how they sit and move and notice yourself standing, moving, thinking and feeling as you deliver your sermon easily and effectively using everything that you have learned.

Representational Systems

Representational systems are sometimes also known as sensory modalities. This model examines how the human mind both takes in data and then processes information. Information can be treated as if it is processed through the senses when taken in and then internally analyzed, coded and stored in ways that can be understood in terms of sensory representation (Bandler and Grinder, 1976).

There are five possible sensory modalities and in NLP these are known as VAKOG (Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic, Olfactory and Gustatory) (Bandler and Grinder, 1976). Smell and taste are rarely used except in association with powerful memories. For practical purposes the representation system model was reduced to three components V-A-K. A further distinction has been made between two types of auditory processing and sensing:

1. Processing and coding of information in the form of imagined sounds which is pure auditory (A).

2. Processing of data by talking to oneself internally, known as internal dialogue or 'ID' (sometimes represented as A^{ID}).
3. Also called auditory digital.

The representation system model becomes V-A-K-ID and this is referred to as the 4-tuple in NLP (Grinder and Bostic St. Clair, 2001).

In the past it was asserted that individuals preferred one representation system over other representation systems. They possessed a “preferred representational system” (Bandler and Grinder, 1976). There were visual, auditory or kinesthetic thinkers. In the 1980's it was found that for internal processes, individuals use all representation systems to varying degrees (Sharpley, 1984; Sharpley, 1987). There is no single sense preference that is used for thinking or analyzing information internally. However, there is a preferred representational system for receiving information. The representational systems can be internal or external, the internal having to do with thinking and analysis (conception) and the external with receiving information (perception). Visual and auditory representational systems can be constructed (imagined) or remembered.

An awareness of representation systems can be used in pacing and leading cues to build rapport and improve communication (Ireland, M. E., Slatcher, R. B., Eastwick, P. W., Scissors, L. E., Finkel, E. J., & Pennebaker, J.) This is especially important in relation to the use of preferred representation systems for taking in data.

A visual representational statement is “Look at the preacher.” An auditory representational statement is “Listen to his speech.” A kinesthetic representational statement is “Stand like the preacher.” Effective communication and understanding

involves the adaptation of a presentation to match an individual's preferred way of receiving data (Grinder and Bostic St. Clair 2001).

This is an example of the use of representation systems in modeling and applying different mental strategies. The way in which someone does or thinks something can be modeled as a series of external and internal representations. It is possible to elicit a person's strategy in this way as well as then change or copy the strategy as required (Grinder and Bostic St. Clair 2001).

Exercise: Deciding What Color to Paint the Wall

A question was asked "Which color do you think the wall should be painted? I am thinking blue or yellow? How can you process your reply to the question?"

Step	Activity	Notation	What it is being used for.
1	Auditory external	A^e	Hear the question
2	Visual external	V^e	Look at the blue swatch.
3	Visual constructed	V^c	Create a mental image of the wall painted blue.
4	Kinesthetic internal	K^i	Get a feeling from looking at the image
5	Auditory internal dialogue	ID	Ask yourself "do I like the wall painted blue?"
6		$V^e - V^c - K^i -$	Repeat steps 2-5, for the yellow color.

		ID	
7	Auditory constructed	A ^c	Create an answer to the question
8	Auditory remembered	A ^r	Remember the verbal response to previous uses of this answer
9	Kinesthetic internal	K ⁱ	Remember the feeling of that response
10	Auditory internal dialogue	ID	Ask yourself “do I like that feeling?”
11	Auditory constructed	A ^c	Modify the answer accordingly
12	Auditory external	A ^e	Reply

If a given strategy for one person is effective it can be used by others. An ineffective strategy can be modified either by modifying individual steps, testing alternative approaches or, eliciting and operating other people’s strategies (Grinder and Bostic St. Clair 2001). Steps in a strategy occur extremely fast and often out of conscious awareness (Grinder and Bostic St. Clair 2001).

Your preaching in your congregation will be more effective when you learn to communicate effectively to each representational system. Below is a chart that includes predicates you can use when you practice. You will want to branch out and develop representational systems that are not your preferred on, in order to best reach members

of your congregations, students in your classes and clients whose representational systems are different than yours.

Predicates

The following lists are predicates in language (verbs, adverbs and adjectives) that are associated with specific representational systems (Horton 2006). A way of detecting the primary (most commonly used) representational system a person has in consciousness is by listening to the language, the sentences generated, and noticing the predicates used (Horton, 2006).

<u>Visual</u>	<u>Auditory</u>	<u>Kinesthetic</u>	<u>Unspecified</u>	<u>Olfactory/Gust</u>
See	Sound	Feel	Think	Smell
Picture	Hear	Relax	Decide	Fragrant
Perceive	Discuss	Grasp	Understand	Stink
Notice	Listen	Handle	Know	Reek
Look	Talk	Stress	Develop	Aroma
Show	Call on	Pressure	Prepare	Pungent
Appear	Quiet	Smooth	Activate	Sour
Clear	Inquire	Clumsy	Manage	Sweet
Pretty	Noisy	Rough	Repeat	Acrid
Colorful	Loud	Hard	Advise	Musty
Hazy	Outspoken	Grip	Indicate	Fresh

Observe	Articulate	Warm	Consider	Bland
Flash	Scream	Rush	Motivate	Stale
Focus	Pronounce	Firm	Plan	Fresh
Bright	Remark	Euphoric	Anticipate	Bitter
Scene	Resonate	Clammy	Create	Salty
Perspective	Harmony	Touch	Generate	Nutty
Imagine	Shrill	Calm	Deduce	Delicious
View	Oral	Dull	Direct	Salivate
Vista	Whimper	Burning	Achieve	Spoiled
Horizon	Mention	Stinging	Accomplish	Sniff
Make a scene	Tongue-tied	Get the drift	Initiate	Smokey
Tunnel vision	Ring a bell	Boils down to	Conclude	Bitter pill
				Fish notion
Plainly see	Loud and clear	Hang in there	New knowledge	
See eye-to- eye	Idle talk	Sharp as a tack	Creative option	
Mind's eye	To tell the truth	Slipped my mind	Aware of	
Bird's eye view	Word for word	Pull some strings	Intensify	
Catch a	Rap session	Moment of	Incorporate	

glimpse		panic	
Bright future	Unheard of	Smooth	Differentiate
		operator	
In light of	Call on	Get the drift	Represent

People who prefer the visual representational system will tend to process information visually (Bandler and Grinder, 1979). When preaching to, teaching or counseling visually oriented people you will want to paint a picture with your words, utilizing visual predicates and adjectives. Help people see what you are saying. Show them pictures, images, and graphics. You might say, "When you look at this, what do you see? You know, you will see it my way if you view it from this perspective?"

People who prefer the auditory representational system will tend to process information auditorally (Bandler and Grinder, 1979). When preaching to, teaching or counseling to auditory oriented people you will want to make sure what you say sounds right and that you speak their language. You will want to tell stories, live or on tape. You may want to use music or poetry. As they are attuned to tone, you want your words to be music to their ears. Or you can nuance your words, changing tone and talk using words having to do with sound. You might say, "Now listen to the sound of my voice, how softly or how loudly I am talking. You might want to tune into what I am about to say."

People who prefer the kinesthetic representational system will tend to process information tactilely or kinesthetically, by the sense of touch or feel (Bandler and Grinder, 1979). You will want to provide them with the feel of what you are saying or

use a hands-on approach where they can grasp your meaning. You can reach them by touching them and using words that are touchy-feely. You might say, “And when Jesus did that, you wanted to jump up out of your chair and reach over and touch him. What must that feel like to you?” You could utilize blocks, clay, or scissors or a tool in as you preach, teach or counsel these persons.

People who prefer the auditory-digital representational system will process information by self-talk about the logic, sense, or rationality of that information (Bandler and Grinder, 1979). You will want to utilize neutral non-sensory words, provide factual data and logical analysis and structured argument with them. You will want to use neutral, non-sensory words. You might say, “You probably would like to think about this and consider the implications of it for your life.” You could use charts, diagrams, and graphs to explain your point.

In NLP these sensory words are called predicates (Bandler and Grinder, 1979). When communicating one-to-one with people you will more likely and more rapidly build rapport with them if you speak their sensory representational language. You want to use predicates and tools that match their preferred representational systems. You need to do this on a one-to-one basis to improve your communication skills and as practice for utilizing all four types of predicates in your communication. Congregations will be made up of persons from all four of these representational system types. Certainly, you cannot know the representational systems of all the members of your congregation. One strategy for preaching is to utilize neutral, non-sensory words in your sermon. In doing this members of your congregation will make sense of what you say in their own

preferred representational system. This approach shows respect for the models of the world represented in your congregation and maintains rapport. This is a Milton Model technique (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). This Milton Model pattern is called nominalization. Nominalization involves the concretization of verbs into nominal abstractions. A verb or an adjective is transformed into a noun (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). It is “noured.” Nouning turns an action into a thing. It focused on the end result of an action, the outcome produced by the outcome (Janks, H., Dixon, K., Ferreira, A, Granville, G., Newfield, H. 2013). It is the derivation of a noun phrase from a clause (Leech 2006). When a speaker uses a nominalization, audience members search their own minds, remembering or imaging the expression of that nominalized noun. They perform a trans-derivational search and imagine the means, mode and manner of that expression on their own.

The Milton Model is a model based upon the work of Milton Erickson (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). Erickson, a hypnotherapist was conversational and natural in his practice of hypnotherapy. His techniques created trance states. His aim was to access his clients’ unconscious mind and its resources. These trance states made these resources more easily accessible. Often these Milton Model language patterns were combined. They were isolated by Bandler and Grinder so we could more easily observe them. The Milton Model uses vague language to access the unconscious. Some Milton Model patterns are Bandler and Grinder, 1975):

- Simple deletions – Remember a time ...
- Ly Adverbs – Fortunately you know how to relax

- Cause effects – Feeling your feet on the floor makes you comfortable
- Complex equivalences – Breathing in and out, becoming more relaxed
- Lost Performatives – Relaxation allows your creativity to flow
- Mind reading- I know you are curious to ...
- Modal operators – You should begin to feel a tingling
- Nominalizations – You may feel a certain sensation.
- Linguistic Presuppositions – Do you realize you are already in trance?
- Comparative deletions – Which allows you to go deeper
- Unspecified Verbs – That relaxes you
- Universal quantifiers – Every breath takes you deeper into trance
- Unspecified Nouns (or lack of referential index) – Everyone feels curious when they see this
- Negative Commands – Don't go into trance just yet.

Another strategy is to utilize visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and auditory-digital words so that everyone in the congregation receives the information you are preaching in their preferred system some of the time and they are helped to increase their flexibility by using their non-preferred senses. I prefer the second strategy because utilizing only neutral words is only speaking to one group and in my estimation will elicit boredom or disinterest in members of the congregation whose preference is one of the sensory representational systems. The congregation I serve now has a significant number of physical scientists, computer scientists and technicians, and engineers. Therefore

utilizing auditory-digital language is important. This is so when I preach, teach, lead and provide spiritual direction and counseling.

Exercise: Representational Systems

Here is an exercise (James and Shephard, 2001). The goal of this exercise is for you to increase your facility with all of the representational systems. Have a list of words in the four groups we discussed above; visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and auditory digital. Then begin to write a story, the first two sentences utilizing visual predicates, the next two auditory predicates, the next two kinesthetic words, and the last two auditory-digital words. Continue the story in the same manner for two more rounds. You can perform this exercise with one or more partners, alternating so that each partner uses each representational system. If alone, read your story out loud as if you are telling it to a group.

Remember your Incident-Point-Benefit story. Present that same story in each one of the representational systems. If alone, write out your story in each representational system and read it aloud as if speaking to a group. Try it from memory. If you form a group, begin by going into your Preacher state. Then get connected, obtain rapport from the group and present your story, first visually, then auditory, then kinesthetic, then auditory-digital. In a workshop or class everyone gets a turn. Notice if it makes it easier to do certain representational systems if you change your physiology or things you do inside yourself. As you do this, concentrate on how you are representing the story within yourself. Notice which one of the representational system you are using.

Instructions: Sub-modality Management

NLP strategies can be used to increase the awareness of the person's internal states.

Such self-awareness can be used to facilitate, in a person, dissociation from negative states and association with positive states (Wake, Gray and Bourke 2012). Dissociation can be accomplished through the manipulation of sub-modalities (Wake, Gray and Bourke, 2012; Bandler and Andreas 1985; Bandler and MacDonald, 1989).

Submodalities are the characteristics of our sensory experience. By changing a submodality we change our internal experience. We, therefore, are capable of changing our self-perception. The meaning is changed and then our state is changed. Submodalities exist within each of our representational systems. Submodalities that we can work within each representational system are (Bandler and MacDonald 1989):

Visual: brightness, size, color/black and white, shape, location, distance, contrast, focus, clarity, movement, speed, three-dimensional/flat, perspective, associated/disassociated, framed/panoramic, orientation, density, transparency.

Auditory: pitch, tempo, volume, rhythm, timbre, digital, duration, clarity, location, distance.

Kinesthetic: pressure, location, frequency, texture, temperature, intensity, vibration.

Olfactory and gustatory: the fading in and out (changes in intensity and/or duration) of particular tastes or smells that you identify as relevant in someone's experience can be quite useful. Odors and tastes are very powerful anchors for States.

Imaginal Practice

NLP makes use of imaginal practice (Wake, Gray and Bourke 2012), particularly in goal setting, future pacing and generating new behavior (Andreas and Andreas 1989; Bandler and Grinder 1975 a, b; Epstein and Dilts, 1991; Dilts and DeLozier, 2010). It has been demonstrated that future performance is enhanced by the imaginal performance of that process, behavior or activity (Driskell Driskell, J.E., Copper, C., & Moran, A., 1994; Martin and Hall, 1995; Pham and Taylor, 1999). Many of the neural pathways used in actual performance are activated when that performance is practiced in the imagination.

Instruction: Goal-Setting

NLP goal setting (Wake, Gray and Bourke 2012), involves two steps:

- First, imagine from the first person, first position or self perspective what you will see, hear and feel upon achieving your goal. What do you see, hear and feel?
- Next, imagine from the second person's, second position or other person's perspective what they will see, hear and feel upon you achieving your goal. What do they see, hear and feel?

Instruction: Future-Pacing

NLP future paces. Future pacing (Wake, Gray and Bourke 2012), is a process by which an audience or individuals imagine performing a role or a task in an imaginary context where they hope to perform that role or task.

Instruction: New Behavior Generator

NLP generates new behavior. In the New Behavior Generator (Wake, Gray and Bourke 2012, Bandler and Grinder, 1975; Bandler and Grinder 1979; Bandler and Grinder, 1981; Andreas and Andreas 1987; Bandler and Grinder 1989) the audience or individual imagines performing a new, resourceful behavior in place of a less resourceful state. They repeatedly imagine themselves in a context where that new behavior is needed. They perform the desired behavior in front of themselves in an attractive and motivating manner.

Exercise: Maximizing Representational System

Now you are going to bring up one representational system to the maximum. Before telling the story, rehearse it in your mind. When telling the story in visual mode, think of it in pictures. Then illustrate what you can see in visual terms. When telling the story in auditory mode, think of how it sounds to your mind's ear. Then describe how it sounds using auditory words. When telling the story in kinesthetic mode, think of it in terms of feelings, bodily and emotional. Then use kinesthetic words to communicate those feelings. When telling the story in auditory-digital mode, think of your story in terms of the logic of the story, and the supporting factual, statistical, or numerical evidence, argument or pros and cons. Deliver the story like you're delivering a technical or business report. What happened when you told the story in these different modes? Each time you told the story you told it from a different vantage point. Even though the

story is the same it has a different effect. Get feedback from group members if you have a group. If alone, do this out loud as if you have a group and notice the difference.

You can tell a congregants' preferred sensory representational system through the predicates they use, their posture, their body type and movements, their breathing, their vocal tonality, speed and volume, and eye elevation. We have explored the use of predicates above (James and Shephard, 2001).

Visually-oriented congregants (James and Shephard, 2001) stand or sit straight, upright, and with head up and shoulders back. Their body types are thin, bony, and angular, although they can be obese. Their breathing is shallow and high up in the chest. They move quickly with tight, jerky, and abrupt movements. Their voice tonalities are high, clear, fast, and loud and originate high in their bodies, from throat, upper chest or head. They speak quickly. They tend to look up, seeing pictures in their heads, remembering visually, or creating new pictures in their minds.

Auditory-oriented congregants (James and Shephard, 2001) stand or sit with a telephone posture, head tilted to one side, as if they are holding a telephone to their ears. They may turn their good ears to you rather than look at you when talking with you. Their bodies appear either relaxed or uptight. Their breathing is full, ranging from high in the chest to low in the abdomen. Their vocal tonalities are melodic, rhythmic, and vary in source from the throat to the abdomen. Their eyes are level and move side to side, often diverted down or away when listening.

Kinesthetic-oriented congregants (James and Shephard, 2001) stand or sit with curved or bowed backs, heads and shoulders down. Their body types are soft, full, rounded, loose and flowing or athletic, like body builders. Their breathing is centered low in the abdomen with the diaphragm. You can see movement in the lower abdomen. Their voice tonalities are low, airy, slow and soft, coming from the abdomen. They speak slowly as feelings arise slowly and use few words. Their eyes are elevated below others, looking down, quite often to the right.

Auditory-digital oriented congregants (James and Shephard, 2001) stand or sit with their arms folded, erect, heads up, often with one hand on the chin. Their body types are full with rigid tension in the neck, shoulders and jaw. Their breathing is rigid, shallow and tight. Their voice tonalities are monotone, clipped and consistent. They gaze over others' heads and appear detached and disassociated. They fold their arms when they are interested. When they appear detached and disassociate they are processing information internally.

This is a lot to focus your attention at once. After you have trained yourself by examining the above oriented persons, one characteristic at a time, you will be able to unconsciously size up the person. However, be flexible and open to feedback because these characteristics may be the result of other factors. My breathing may be shallow because of an illness. My stance may be the result of an injury or defect. My vocal pattern may be cultural or regional. Body type may or may not correspond with your personality theory. It is necessary to consider the package of characteristics audiences or individuals display and discover who the person is, what they are about and how they

operate by interacting with them. Generalizations can lead to prejudice. Take the time to get to know your audience or the person before you.

As a Preacher you might ask, what is the importance of knowing how to determine a person's preferred representational system? Remember that you will be paying attention to your congregation and reading their behavioral responses back to you, determining whether or not you have rapport. This isn't something that you process consciously while you are preaching. You do it unconsciously. You have to focus on this consciously to learn how to do it, but once you learn how to do it you do it unconsciously and automatically. You are able to utilize conscious or unconscious feedback you get by shifting how you are communicating while you are preaching (teaching, counseling). You may be able to change your predicates as you are speaking, but if you are not facile enough to that, you can change your physiology to match certain members of your congregation. This will increase your rapport with your audience (students, clients).

Effective performance comes as the result of consciousness or knowing and competence or doing. It is possible to know or understand some activity or skill but be unable to do it. In that case you are consciously incompetent. It is also possible to perform an activity or demonstrate an activity, but not know how you it. In that case you are unconsciously competent. Many of the behavioral and psychological elements necessary for our success are accessed unconsciously and intuitively (Dilts, 1998). One of my favorite teachers of all time was Ray Vespe, a professor at the California Institute of Integral Studies during the 1970s and 80s. Ray was an amazingly effective

teacher of psychotherapy, particularly group psychotherapy. Ray would show up and facilitate our learning. We could not see what he was doing and he could not explain it. Yet, his students learned to do what Ray did. Over the years his students pleaded with him to describe his work and he did as well as he could. Ray was unconsciously competent. Ray implicitly modeled his approach to the class. In order to learn from Ray, his students needed to move to second position in relationship to him and build subjective experience about his internal experience. Students who did this implicitly modeled him and became like him. Later, students as Ray attempted to explain what he was doing moved into a third position to describe or explain what they had learned from Ray and were able to use that as a map they could follow in order to do what Ray did when working with their own clients.

The following sermon illustrates the use of representational systems as I use visual words like imagine, the auditory activity of singing, and kinesthetic words and activity. I am also creating rapport by having the audience participate with me in singing and the clay activity. And I am creating charisma in me through my utilization of my hands, as if my hands were God's hands.

Sermon: The Potter's Hands

Hold your hands out before you and sing with me, "God's got the whole world in his hands, he's got the whole wide world in his hands, he's got the whole wild world in his hands, he's got the whole world in his hands."

He's got you and me brother in his hands, he's got you and me sister in his hands, he's

got all of us together in his hands, he's got the whole world in his hands."

What mighty hands they are! (Hold up my hands) God can crush us with these hands.

Yet, what loving hands they are! God can save us with these hands. What gentle hands these are!

You've all been given a piece of clay this morning. (Hold up piece of clay) I'd like for you to hold that piece of clay in your hands. And just follow my instructions as you listen to my voice and shape that piece of clay, like the Potter in our scripture shaped the clay he held.

Imagine if you will, holding like God does, your life in your hands, like the piece of clay you're now holding. Imagine, this clay is you, and it is being shaped into who you are and who you are going to be. And imagine now, as you continue to shape the clay, your own negative thoughts and actions being added into the mix as you continue to shape the clay; imagine wrong decisions you've made, wrong actions you've taken; feel your guilt, your shame, your imperfections, your sins being shaped into the figure; feel your disconnect from God and from others mixing into the substance of your life, all your most ugly thoughts, feelings and actions; your anger, your blame, your hatred, your impatience, your intolerance, your anxiety about yourself and others. Ugh! Now break down that clay, roll it into a ball into your hands. Crush that clay! Roll it up! That's it! All done!

Now, let's start over again, like the Potter in our scripture did today. Take that clay in your hands, holding it again, just like God does. Imagine now, as you shape that clay

into some form representing you, your own positive thoughts and actions being added into the mix; imagine your right decisions and ethical actions and mix them in; feel your positive pride, your goodness and mix that in; feel your connection by love to God, to yourself, and to others, being mixed in by those firm and powerful caring hands and delicate and nimble fingers; all your most beautiful thoughts, feelings, and actions are part of the mix; and now you are loving, and forgiving, and accepting, and tolerating, and are creating feelings of peace about yourself and others. Yes!

Now, just hold that figure in your hands, like the Potter, like God is holding you in God's hands. You are nearly a finished project.

You only need now to be placed into the finishing fire, where your imperfections will fall away, your uniqueness will be preserved, and you will take your place in the eternal display of the Potter's handiworks. Each one of you is beautiful. Each one of you is useful. Each one of you is perfect. Each one of you manifests the artistry of the entire creation. And what the Potter, what God, said was good in the beginning, is perfect in the end.

God created you in the first place because he loved you. God loved the idea of you, and now God loves the "you" of you. You matter to God. God wants you to turn out good, even perfect. Otherwise God wouldn't have created you in the first place.

Otherwise God would have thrown you away when you were tarnished. In the Potter's House there is no waste material. In God, there are no children left behind.

Hold your creation in both your hands and lift it up towards the sky and sing. "God will

raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of God's hand." And sing "God will raise me up."

"God will raise me up on eagle's wings, bear me on the breath of dawn, make me to shine like the sun, and hold me in the palm of God's hand." And sing again, "God will raise us up." "God will raise us up on eagle's wings, bear us on the breath of dawn, make us to shine like the sun, and hold us in the palm of God's hand."

God will plant us so we will grow, build us up so that we are able, and renew us for life that is worthwhile.

God has us, and our world, in his hands. That is good news to me, though I know that the Lord can start all over with me, plucking me up, breaking me down, and destroying me to make me over again. But as I stand in the palm of God's hand I declare, "Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me." Hold your hand out and sing with me, "Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me; make me, mold me, fill me, use me. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me"

Charisma

Charisma in an outcome of the presence of congruence (Grinder and Bandler, 1976).

Congruence involves agreement and alignment. All of our behavior is communicative.

It expresses outwardly what is going on inside of us. Our words, tone, gestures, body language eye gaze and facial expressions all communicate our internal experience.

There is congruence when all of our expressions communicate the same things. There is no conflict between internal parts. All parts of me are communicating the same thing

(Grinder and Bandler, 1976). A congruent communicator believes what he is communicating. There is no ambivalence in his communication about his message. If I tell my wife I love her, my gaze is intent and tender and directed at her. I am smiling at her. I am attending fully to her. I am relaxed and excited being with her. My behavior including my tone and physiology match my words and actions. My words and actions match. I am in rapport with myself. There is internal and external consistency whereby I am perceived by others as sincere and certain. There is a fit between my inner feelings and outer display (Rogers, 1961). I am genuine, real, integrated, whole and transparent. I am not playing a role, pretending or wearing a mask. Congruence is associated with 'awareness' and constitutes the state of a person who is genuine, whole, integrated, without façade and adjusted (Rogers, 1961).

Earlier, you learned how to increase your charisma by utilizing specialized breathing and movement practices to increase your energy. Now you are going to learn patterns of speech that are common to charismatic speakers. NLP modeled the speech patterns of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. (James and Shephard, 2001). William Horton modeled those of Bill Clinton and Barack Obama. This common pattern of speech is called in NLP as the "charisma pattern" (James and Shephard, 2001).

Charismatic speakers begin speaking in a kinesthetic manner, (I feel your pain) proceed to speaking in an auditory manner (I hear you), and finish their pattern by speaking in a visual manner (I see you). They start by speaking slowly in a low pitched voice, with long pauses, almost hesitations in their speech. They may begin by saying nothing. They then proceed to speak in an auditory manner, utilizing tone, rhythm, pace, melody,

and poetry. And then proceed to speak in a visual manner, painting a picture for the audience.

The key to this charismatic pattern is accommodating the representational systems of everyone in your congregation. Begin by engaging the kinesthetic people in your congregation, matching their feelings and physical experience. Having attained rapport with them, shift to the auditory people. Speed up the pace of your delivery, vary your tone, and raise your pitch, so you are matching the auditory people. The kinesthetic people will follow you, because once you have established rapport with a particular group in your congregation they will follow where you lead. In this case they will begin to process auditorally. Then lead everyone into the visual, bringing your voice up higher in the body, speaking faster, and using more visual words. At this point all the kinesthetic, auditory, and visually oriented members of your congregation are processing what you say in the same way, visually. The congregation now experiences you as having charisma. The congregation now feels an experience of unity with you as the Preacher. Once you have arrived at this place or state with your congregation you can lead them anywhere you want and they will follow you. And as you bring them through the various representational systems you will enrich their experience. Do that at the beginning of any of your sermons and you will have the rapport you need to preach a magnificent sermon and have your congregation receive and respond to it as you desire. The formula for this is $K \rightarrow A \rightarrow V \rightarrow K$, “K” indicating kinesthetic, “A” indicating auditory, and “V” indicating visual (James and Shephard, 2001). You can produce charisma in your teaching following these principals.

When you look at something, say a photo or painting, it is more interesting when it is asymmetrical. When sitting on a stage or a platform sit or turn to an angle. You will appear more visually interesting.

Anchoring

There is an important concept in NLP called anchoring. An anchor in NLP provides a connection between what you are saying and a state that you want to elicit. When you consistently do the same activity in the same place in the area you are preaching, teaching or leading worship from, then the people in your audience or class will make a connection between your position and the activity (James and Shephard, 2001, Dilts; 1990). This is a spatial anchor.

A behavior anchor that I have used before preaching has been the sign of the cross. I touch my forehead as I say “In the name of the Father”, touch my chest as I say “And of the Son,” touch my right shoulder as I say “Holy” and left shoulder as I say “Spirit.” This is a kinesthetic and auditory anchor.

Immediately prior to preaching I bow my head and lift my hands and say “Let us pray.” I invoke the Holy Spirit and invite the congregation into a prayerful-meditative state. For me this is a kinesthetic and auditory anchor. For the congregation it is a visual, auditory and kinesthetic one.

After establishing the anchor at that place I elicit or fire the anchor and the congregation or class experiences the emotional state I anchored at that place. For example, every

Sunday morning I invite the children of the congregation to come forward and sit with me on the steps leading up to the chancel area in the front of the sanctuary. That place is set aside just for them and me. And when they walk, run or skip to their place with me, they expect to hear a story or a lesson. It is something they look forward to. And while I am clear that this time is especially for the children, the congregation understands that they are children of God also, and that only if they become like little children will they enter into the Kingdom of God. So, everyone is waiting on my words. The state I have elicited is anticipation and excitement.

At the start of every worship celebration, I step down from the pulpit and stand at the foot of the chancel steps in the center aisle. I stand there silently for a moment and then greet the congregation. As soon as I take my place there in that spot, the congregation knows we are ready to begin our worship. I never greet them the same way week to week, so they wonder how it is I am going to begin the worship program, although they anticipate that I will begin with a question. What I say engages them to respond to what I am saying, whether by repeating what I say or reflecting upon what I say. My aim is to create rapport by obtaining agreement, cooperation and action from them. My words always relate to the point that I will be making in the sermon I am preaching during that worship program, and prompts them to look forward to what I will be saying in the sermon or what I want them to experience, realize, discover, learn or do during or as a consequence of the sermon. This is a very intimate moment between the congregation and me. I stand in this position only two other times during the worship event. The second time is during the prayer time. Members of the

congregation hand me prayer cards which I read from that central position. I then lift up a prayer that summarizes the prayer requests given to me. At the end of the program I return to this place and offer the congregation a benediction which briefly summarizes the point of the sermon and directs the congregation to a particular action. Each time I stand in this place I enter into intimacy with my congregation. As I step to any of these places there comes anticipation and expectation on the part of members of the congregation

During the sermon, I step up to the pulpit to preach immediately after the reading of a scripture or following a hymn or song that follows the scripture. When I step into the pulpit I look out at the congregation without saying a word, scanning the congregation, the back of the sanctuary across and all the way from the back to the front, row by row. I recall my preaching state. This takes seconds. I then invite people to enter into prayer with me. I take a few more moments of silence and invite the congregation to be open to receive God's Spirit and Word. Then I invoke the Spirit's participation in the congregation's further openness, readiness and remove any barriers to receiving God's message. I pause again, looking at the congregation and begin to preach. The pulpit is the place that the primary message of the worship program is delivered. When I preach I invoke the presence and mind of Christ and represent Christ as Preacher to the congregation.

One exercise I do, "Circle of Excellence" (DeLozier and Grinder, 1987) involves my drawing an imaginary circle behind the pulpit that I step into immediately before speaking or preaching. The circle is a florescent red. Prior to this, I have placed inside

that circle preachers and speakers I wanted to model my preaching on. Jesus is one of those Preachers. So is Bishop Violet Fisher, the preacher who ordained me. I have placed other outstanding public speakers there – Presidents Barak Obama and William Clinton, and Cleo Dollar, Joel Osteen and William Horton. They are associated with my Circle of Excellence. My image of myself preaching at my best is contained in that circle. I imagine the circle behind the pulpit or before the audience, step into that circle and experience the excellence of the preachers and speakers whose characteristics I have placed in the circle. I created my Circle of Excellence long ago and recall it each time I speak before a group. The steps of creating the Circle of Excellence were (DeLozier and Grinder, 1987):

- Imagining a luminous red circle on the floor in front of me, large enough to step into it.
- Relaxing and clearing my mind.
- Recalling Bishop Fisher preaching, seeing what she looked like when she preached, hearing what she preached and how she preached and feeling what it was like to be her preaching. Seeing myself preaching as above like Bishop Fisher.
- Project the feelings of preaching like Bishop Fisher in the circle.
- Note the characteristics of Bishop Fisher's preaching. Assign a color, texture and size of Bishop Fisher's state when she preaches. What sounds and feelings come from the circle? Note the intensity and power of Bishop Fisher's preaching.

- Step into the circle when the feelings are at their peak. Intensify them even more.
Feel that powerful emotion surrounding you and flowing through your body.
Breathe in the feeling. Enjoy it fully and completely.
- When you feel like you have reached that peak open your eyes wide, smile and say to yourself “Preach it!”
- Step outside of the circle and return to feeling neutral.
- Recalling Bishop Fisher’s impact on the audience by her preaching, seeing their responses, hearing their responses back to her and feeling what it was like to see and hear her preach. Seeing the audience responding as above to me preaching like Bishop Fisher.
- Project the feelings associated with impacting an audience like Bishop Fisher in the circle.
- Note the characteristics of Bishop Fisher’s impact on her audience. Assign a color, texture and size of Bishop Fisher’s impact on her audience. What sounds and feelings come from the circle? Note the intensity and power of the impact of Bishop Fisher’s preaching on her audience.
- Step into the circle when the feelings are at their peak. Intensify them even more.
Feel that powerful emotion surrounding you and flowing through your body.
Breathe in the feeling. Enjoy it fully and completely.
- When you feel like you have reached that peak open your eyes wide, smile and say to yourself “Preach it!”
- Step outside of the circle and return to feeling neutral.

- Recalling Jesus preaching and speaking in the gospels, imagining what he looked like when he preached and spoke, hearing what he preached and how he preached and feeling what it is like it to be her preaching. Seeing myself preaching as above like Jesus.
- Project the feelings of preaching like Jesus in the circle.
- Note the characteristics of Jesus' preaching and teaching. Assign a color, texture and size of Jesus' state when he preaches. What sounds and feelings come from the circle? Note the intensity and power of Jesus' preaching.
- Step into the circle when the feelings are at their peak. Intensify them even more. Feel that powerful emotion surrounding you and flowing through your body. Breathe in the feeling. Enjoy it fully and completely.
- When you feel like you have reached that peak open your eyes wide, smile and say to yourself "Preach it!"
- Step outside of the circle and return to feeling neutral.
- Recalling Jesus' impact on the audience by his preaching, seeing their responses, hearing their responses back to him and feeling what it was like to see and hear him preach. Seeing the audience responding as above to me preaching like Jesus.
- Project the feelings associated with impacting an audience like Jesus in the circle.
- Note the characteristics of Jesus' impact on his audience. Assign a color, texture and size of Jesus' impact on his audience. What sounds and feelings come from

the circle? Note the intensity and power of the impact of Jesus' preaching on his audience.

- Step into the circle when the feelings are at their peak. Intensify them even more. Feel that powerful emotion surrounding you and flowing through your body. Breathe in the feeling. Enjoy it fully and completely.
- When you feel like you have reached that peak open your eyes wide, smile and say to yourself "Preach it!"
- Step outside of the circle and return to feeling neutral.

The next time you enter an auditorium or sanctuary to preach or speak see the place where you are going to speak, imagine the luminous red circle in which you will speak, step into the circle, open your eyes wide and think "Preach it!"

Earlier, I introduced energy work that can be used in preparing to preach. I do a routine of energy work about an hour to a half-hour before I preach or present. I do not need to spend much time doing this. All I need to do is sit down, close my eyes, lift my tongue to the roof of my mouth, take a deep breath through my nose and breath out "hu." I begin to enter an energetic or spiritual state as soon as I do one of these things.

Once a month I stand behind the communion table. It is the only time I stand behind the communion table. Here is another spatial anchor. It is a visual as well. The members of the congregation are awaiting my presentation. I go to the center of the table and stand there quietly for a moment. I offer an invitation to the congregation to participate in the communion. Sometimes parts of the liturgy are sung by the congregation and

me. When I speak the words of institution I enact them, lifting the bread, blessing it, breaking it, and offering the bread to the congregation. I then lift the cup, bless it, and offer it to the congregation. My actions match my words. I speak for Christ and assume the role of Christ in this liturgy and charge the congregation to be Christ's body redeemed by Christ's blood. I then invite the congregation to come forward to receive the communion elements. The states of anticipation and reverence are elicited in my congregation at those times.

The Eucharist or Holy Communion is a trans-temporal, trans-spatial and trans-personal event (Bulgakov 1997). It conveys through its enactment a holy moment, sacred time, God time, *kairos* (Frier 2014) or *in illo tempore* (Eliade 1959). It is a coded event where symbolic objects and actors perform symbolic actions in order to invoke or arouse an experience of the numinous (Otto 1958). The human being is transported into an experience of the divine with other human beings and there is a sense of collective being. It is a present recollection of something described as having happened thousands of years ago, the impact of that initial occurrence being felt in the present. The communion table serves as an anchor as does the bread and the cup. The wine or chalice serves as an anchor. The liturgy serves as an anchor. The celebrant serves as an anchor. The words of institution and acts of lifting, breaking, blessing and giving the bread serve as anchors. The smell and taste of the bread and juice or wine serve as anchors. The activities of distribution become anchors. The choral responses provide an anchor. The presence of others approaching the communion rail in silence serves as an anchor. The entire sanctuary is charged with a solemn excitement and the

windows, walls, altar and communion rail become anchors. There is a complex of anchors that together arouse the spiritual sentiment of those present.

If I am going to make a plea for something from the congregation I stand in one of two places, that central place at the bottom of the stairs to the chancel where I speak my heart to theirs and listen to their needs and concerns or in the pulpit where I will lead them to an experience, state, realization or action that I consider to be God's will for them as individuals and as a congregation. When I stand there they anticipate that there is something important that I am about to say, even if it is only to set the tone for what is about to happen next.

While in the pulpit, if I want to disassociate from an idea, a person, a state, or something negative, I will point to it as if it is on my left, or step over to my left, and leave it there, pointing or stepping over to my right to present an idea, person, state or something positive I want to associate with. I am at the center of the pulpit when I want to drive a point home or elicit an experience, state, or response from the congregation. In that place to my left I send everything I want no part of being associated with me or my congregation. I want to be able to consciously associate with desirable ideas, people and states and disassociate from negative ideas, people and states

(Overdurf and Silverthorn, 1995). This latter strategy is effective in counseling as anything negative in the client's experience can be discarded over to the left, and left behind in the past, or even be made to disappear through diminishing it or imagining it fading.

The suggestion here is that experience can be engineered (Bandler and LaValle, 1996). It can be transformed. Each sense has dimensions called submodalities (Bandler 1985; Andreas and Andreas, 1987; Bandler and MacDonald, 1987). They are the dimensions of sense experience. These dimensions control impact, meaning, motivation and emotion. They include magnitude, intensity, texture, complexity, source, movement and distance. They can be digital,—present or not—or they can vary along a continuum.

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, “The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat; therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach. They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them” (Matthew 23:1-4). In a sermon on this passage, I pointed to the left as I referred to the scribes and the Pharisees and people like them. I told my congregation to heed their teachings but ignore their behavior. I described what they did, teaching one thing, doing another; tying up heavy burdens and laying them on others; watching other people struggle with their burdens and not helping them. Look at what they are doing. I spoke about them in a questioning tone. Now over here (reaching and gesturing towards the right center) are people like us. I said this with excitement. We practice what we preach. We guide people by the truth. We help them with our burden. We follow Jesus. His yoke is easy and his burden is light. (Point to the left): Stay away from them. (Gesture to the right center): Come along with us. (Point to the left): Their way is so hard. And you are on your own. (Gesture to the right): Our way is easy. And we will help you. (Point to left): Their way is meaningless.

It's useless. It's futile. It goes nowhere. (Gesture to the right): Our way has purpose. It's useful. It gets you to where you want to go. When I referenced them, I kept them at a distance. I spoke down about them. I made them the heavy. My voice lacked joy as I referenced them. But when I spoke about "us" my voice was lilting, enthused, hopeful and joyful.

When you go to a location like the ones I cite above in your sanctuary the group will be prepared for you to do what you usually do in that area. The congregation will enter into the state that you have elicited while in that location before and they will be ready for what comes next without you having to tell them. When you make a connection between a location in your preaching space and what you are doing you are establishing a special anchor (James and Shephard, 2001).

When you preach you can deliberately establish anchors with particular states with your congregation. The anchors I utilize are the chancel steps, the pulpit, the communion table, and the space in the center aisle right below the chancel steps.

These same principles apply in the classroom. When I walk to a podium or the front center of a classroom I am ready to deliver a lecture and my students are ready to listen. When I walk over to the newsprint or whiteboard and pick up the marker or walk forward towards the middle front of the class I am ready to elicit discussion and my students are ready to participate in that discussion. When I fold over the newsprint, put down my marker and walk away from the newsprint my students know the discussion time is over. When I walk to the center of the room and rub my hands and say "Okay

here's an exercise." I am ready to initiate an exercise and my students are prepared to break up into small groups and participate in that exercise.

Anchoring offers a way that you can establish expectations regarding the kind of things you are about to do. To establish anchors you will want to know what your anchors will be and how you will deploy them. You will want to be consistent in how you use them until it becomes habitual for the congregation (James and Shephard, 2001; Dilts 1999).

In addition to using spatial anchors you can utilize vocal anchors (Dilts, 1999). You can utilize different tones of voice to establish different states and different expectations.

States are easily anchored and associated to certain tones of your voice. Using a microphone you may have more flexibility in how you utilize vocal tone. For dramatic effect, I might utilize a loud whisper to make a point, say to teach something that only a select group might be interested in, saying something like, "I'd like you to draw in closer and listen carefully. This is very sensitive information, very confidential, and secret, so make sure you guard every word I tell you. It's a teaching that Jesus gave to his innermost circle of disciples. It's been passed down to an elect group of disciples and I have chosen you to share it with because you are ready to receive it." This might be something I might say to students in a discipleship class. Or in preparing to give new information, I might start speaking quickly and brightly, and do this every time I was ready to present new information, causing my audience to perk up and pay attention.

When you preach it is better to have an excellent presenter serving as your liturgist than a poor one; someone who is excellent at securing rapport with the congregation. This is

because the rapport obtained by your liturgist can be transferred to you the Preacher.

After you have finished preaching you can transfer the rapport you have generated back to the liturgist or the person who is following you in the worship program by shifting your physiology and voice tone so that it matches or approximates that person's (James and Shephard, 2001). If your liturgist or person who has spoken or if a performer or group of performers hasn't done so well and the congregation isn't in such a good state you don't want to take up the same position in the chancel as that person or adopt the same physiology or vocal tone of that person. If you do you will get the same response as that person did. Adopt a completely different posture, stand somewhere else from where that person stood, and use different gestures. Or do something to break the continuity between you and that person and do something to establish rapport for yourself (James and Shephard, 2001).

You may, on occasion, misspeak when you are preaching, and the congregation may become unsettled. Your rapport with them has been broken. You can take a step to the side, like you are stepping out of your body. In this case I step to my right. From this apart position, indicate the place where you were standing before where you said that, "Can you believe he said that? I'd never say anything like that! I'm glad I'm not him!" Of course, you will need to find your own words and words appropriate to your situation. Then carry on standing in the new position (James and Shephard, 2001).

Your congregation will remember those words coming out of someone's mouth other than yours. Standing in the same place and trying to justify and explain away what you said will just cause you more trouble. Step away, change your physiology, alter your

tone of voice, and display a sense of humor. Remember, your words provide only a small part of your communication. If you are in rapport and you disassociate from something you don't want to be associated with your congregation will disassociate from it as well.

The pulpit is a tool that you can use to your benefit as I described above. It will become a problem if you clutch on to it, lean on it like it is holding you up, or hide behind it. Depending upon who stood behind it before it may have mainly good associations, mainly bad ones, or something in between. You don't want the pulpit to present a physical barrier between you and your congregation. As you become more and more comfortable as a Preacher you will be able to let go of tools that constrain you like pulpits, manuscripts, outlines and notes, even as you use them. Teachers can get hung up with flipcharts, blackboards, whiteboards, overheads and Power Points and students can become hung up on papers, tests and reading such that actual communication and learning can be inhibited. Bible teachers often rely too much on commentaries and Study Bibles such that the commentaries and notes have more value than the actual Bible text. Students do not take risks. They do not try out what they have been presented with in lectures and readings. Teachers focus too much on the "experts" rather than on what they know. The way a classroom is set up can dictate limitations on learning. Counselors get hung up on their approaches, theories, assessments, diagnoses, steps and practices and miss out on what emerges in the present in the counselor-client relationship. One group counseling room had a table that people sat around. It kept the members in their heads and upper bodies. It robbed

them of the opportunity for intimacy with their counselor and with each other. It was very safe. Every tool needs to be used intentionally or it will control or limit you.

There are occasions where I have had to preach or speak after a series of other presenters. Fortunately on those occasions where this occurred, I followed excellent Preachers and could build on the rapport of the prior preachers. On one occasion I followed a speaker on a panel regarding universal health care. The speaker immediately before me alienated the audience with his ridicule of and hostility towards certain government officials. It was rather embarrassing to the other members of the presentation team. I was the last speaker. I simply took my place behind the podium, commented on it being a long night, and had everyone stand up and stretch and sit back down again. I disassociated with what had occurred prior to my speaking without commenting negatively about him and by having everyone stand and stretch I created rapport with everyone. My speech went off without a hitch. You can always change a congregation's state. In this instance I interrupted the audience's pattern of tuning out the speaker. Some of them were bored and others irritated. I acknowledge their state without referencing the prior speaker. In this way I paced them. Then through the standing and stretching I led them from that state into another more desirable state. I successfully removed their resistance to listening. I blocked their ability to continue their boredom and irritation and diverted their attention from their previous experience. Blocking and diversion are two examples of pattern interruption (Erickson, 1967; Bandler and Grinder, 1975; Dilts, Grinder, Bandler and DeLozier, 1980). The pattern interruption disrupted what they were thinking and experience, eliminated their

resistance to me and placed them in a position of behavioral limbo where they were receptive to my suggestions and then available to listen to me (Erickson 1967; Bandler and Grinder, 1975; Dilts, Grinder, Bandler and DeLozier, 1980).

Owning the Preaching Space

As a Preacher you want to own the space you are preaching in. This is true for teachers and counselors as well. You have to feel at home like it is your own. I want to know the room I am preaching in. And I want the area I am preaching from to be comfortable and set up exactly the way I want it. What can you do? You can have a sound check. Make sure the microphone works and the sound is right. Make sure you have a glass of water where you can reach it. Make sure you have room to roam or move. Make sure your seat is situated the way you want it. If you need a watch or clock where you see it arrange for it. Get a sense of who will be on the dais with you; note their appearance, physiology, tone of voice. Set it up to have the lector, and other laity, take on roles in the worship program so you're not doing more or less than you want to. If something is in the line of sight between the congregation and you, you may have to move yourself to where you can be more comfortable and effective. In a new or strange place, familiarize yourself with the sanctuary or room so that you are at home in it. Stand in the chancel area, behind the pulpit, in the locations where you want to stand during the sermon and the program. Stand in the back or where the congregation sits. Stand in the places from where you will be preaching and speaking and using your imagination fill the sanctuary with your energy. Enter into your preaching state before you begin and after you enter the sanctuary and while the program is beginning. Make

the entire sanctuary and the various parts of it part of you. I personally never sit on the far left of a panel. I prefer to sit to the right. The person on the right is the first person seen and seen most often. The person on the left is the last and is noticed least often.

You aren't likely to use flip charts or white boards in worship events like I do in the classroom, but I have during children's time. Put the flipchart or board on the congregation's left and have it slightly elevated so people are looking up to it. Do the same if you are projecting to a screen (Bandler and Grinder, 1975, 1979; Bostic St. Clair & Grinder, 2002; Dilts, Bandler et al., 1980; Dilts & Delozier, 2000; Lewis and Pucelik, 1990; O'Connor and Seymour, 1990). This will help your congregation remember pictures, diagrams or words that are placed on the medium. For most people in your congregation (right-handed persons) this will put them into a visual remembered mode. If you want your congregation to be in a visual constructive or creative mode engage them in a discussion where you are having them imagine a future reality, realization or happening and use a flipchart or screen that is to their right (Bandler and Grinder, 1975, 1979; Bostic St. Clair & Grinder, 2002; Dilts, Bandler et al., 1980; Dilts & Delozier, 2000; Lewis and Pucelik, 1990; O'Connor and Seymour, 1990). Leave the flipcharts or projections up with the message you want them to receive and the flipchart or screen will serve as a visual anchor that helps them recall what is on the flipchart or screen. If you are utilizing projection, put bullet points up one point at a time on the screen (Gallo, 2009). Limit the content of what you put on a flipchart or slide to what you want the congregation to remember. Rather than put up all the information you can, put up just enough to stimulate their memory. What is on the flipchart or slide should serve as a

visual trigger or reminder of the information, not the information itself (Gallo 2009).

Provide handouts if you need to provide a lot of facts and figures (James and Shephard, 2001). In counseling I always sit so that I can see the person's face and whole body and where they can see mine. I sit so that we can see eye to eye. I have water and tissues visually accessible and in reach without leaving our seats. I have a clock situated behind the person or on a table adjacent to where the client is sitting.

Non-Verbal Communication

Your non-verbal communication is important. 93% of what you communicate about emotions is without words. 38% is how you say what you say. 55% of what you say is said by your physiology (Albert Mehrabian, 2007). The expressions on your face, your physical gestures and movements, sounds, intonations, etc . . . communicate what is in your unconscious mind.

Satir Patterns of Communication

Virginia Satir described five patterns of communication (Satir and Satir, 1988). When you adopt the physiological postures and gestures of each Satir category you will elicit a state in you and in your congregation (Bandler and Grinder, 1976). This will show you that whatever non-verbal display you make communicates something to your audience. You want to take charge of your non-verbal behavior and use it intentionally.

The first pattern is the placater (Satir and Satir, 1988). When you are placating someone you are seeking to please or appease them. The placater employs a symmetrical open physiology, palms up, moving in an upward direction communicating, “I’m open and I want to please you” or “Help me.” Try this and note what you feel as you do this.

Exercise: Placater

Stand, palms upward and open, hands moving upward, your head slightly bowed. In this posture you are open and vulnerable. You are agreeable. You talk in an ingratiating way. You are trying to please. Kneel down on one knee, both hands up, one higher than the other and ask “Please help me. I want to do the right thing. I want to please you. Tell me what you want me to do so that you will be okay.” When you are preaching you may use the placater when you want to feel open and vulnerable or identify with a vulnerable character or population. Note that you don’t use the words described here. Rather you assume the posture and movements of the placater to obtain the results of placation. You might employ this posture when you want to please or appease an audience, you want to issue an apology, or to bring calm and control when there is a crisis where there is fear or anger, even panic or rage. A more positive term for this might be peace-maker, peace-keeper, or manager. The placater pattern could be used in prayer and meditation utilizing an open posture towards God or the Universe, palms upwards and open, vulnerable and willing to receive from God.

The second pattern is the blamer (Satir and Satir, 1988). The blamer makes accusations or assigns responsibility. When blaming someone you employ an asymmetrical physiology, leaning forward and pointing the finger, communicating, “It’s your fault.” Try this and notice what you feel.

Exercise: Blamer

Stand, leaning forward, your dominant leg and arm forward, arm raised, pointing your finger. In this posture, you are inquisitorial, although not interested in answers. You feel superior and like to throw your weight around and make others feel wrong. You might say when you are blaming, “Why are you so ____? You never do anything right? What’s wrong with you? Didn’t you know? Why didn’t you get me to help? I’m the boss around here. What I say goes!” In preaching you likely won’t use the full blamer posture. If you pointed at someone in this way you might trigger memories of being bullied at home or in school or maybe even trigger a confrontation. Remember John the Baptist’s statement: “You hypocrites! Who told you to flee the wrath of God! You brood of vipers!” Not a rapport generator! You can use the blamer to punctuate points in your preaching. You can push your pointer finger forward as you say “point”, “the first point I want you to get is _____, and the second point _____ etc . . . You add emphasis when you do this. Remember the U.S. Army Recruiting poster that depicts Uncle Sam pointing and the poster reads “I want you for the U.S. Army.” And you can encourage the congregation when using the blamer, pointing to congregation or a person in the congregation, “You can do it. Or you good and faithful servant! Look at what you’ve done! Don’t you feel good having accomplished that! Can you imagine

what you will think and feel about yourself once you have finished the project! I'm looking forward to seeing what the final product looks like. I can just hear the community talking about what an amazing job you have done!" Remember that when you point you are directing energy. So direct your finger above people if you point. Utilize two fingers instead of one. Curve your fingers a little like a beak. This is less confrontational. You're not a prosecutor in a courtroom trying to vilify a defendant and convince a jury to find him guilty and punish him. A place where I might adopt this posture is when I am vilifying an action by a group that has unjustly harmed another. When I do this I will be careful not to point directly at the congregation. "Imagine a group of religious teachers over there to the East . . . (point aggressively to the left of the stage area). What they teach is true. Listen to them. But don't do what they do; those hypocrites. (Use a harsh tone and facial expression). They make it harder and harder for you to obey the law and don't lift a finger to help you (Have a serious look on your face and an angry tone). Look at them, wearing fancy robes, their chests puffed up in self-importance. Look at them! (Have a disgusted look on your face and tone of voice)." Then turn from them and look at your congregation, pointing (at them) but gently, "but you (smile warmly) . . . you practice what you preach (maintain a conversational tone). You live according to the teachings you have received (smile). You will be rewarded, good and faithful servants." You might call this the pointer or punctuator.

The third pattern is the computer (Satir and Satir, 1988). When you communicate like a computer you are logical, methodological, and stoic. In the computer posture your

stance is asymmetrical; your hand may be on your chin or arms folded. This is the “thinker pose.” You are communicating “I’m the authority. Here are the facts. I’m reasonable, logical, and sensible.” Steve Jobs of Apple often utilized this stance (Gallo, 2009). Try this and note what you feel.

Exercise: Computer

Stand like the computer, one hand across your chest, your elbow in that palm, and your hand on your chin. Speak in a monotone voice. Use abstract words. You are like a college professor or a dispassionate scientist – cool, calm, aloof, “Let me see how we will go about fixing this.” You are thoughtful, analytical, calculating. As a preacher you might assume this posture when you want to get your congregation thinking and wondering. You might induce a light trance this way, assuming the posture above, “I wonder how you are going to do this, once you’ve figured it out, once you’ve learned how to do it.” You might get a conversation going this way. This posture might be used where there needs to be negotiation or a decision made where pros and cons or options are weighed. This posture might be called the analyzer.

The fourth pattern is the distracter (Satir and Satir, 1988). The distracter distracts from the point. When you are distracting someone you assume an asymmetrical physiology, angular, disjointed, and incongruent and you communicate “I don’t know. It’s not my fault.” The distracter involves total asymmetry. Your spine is angular, your arms at different angles and heights, your body going off into different directions simultaneously. Your voice fluctuates between high and low, loud and soft, and different pitches. And all

this movement of body and voice serve no point. A common version of this is the “tea pot.” In the tea pot pose, have one arm up pointing out, the other down pointing in, head twisted to one side, and the shoulders uneven.

Exercise: Distracter

Imagine that you are the comedian Steve Martin playing Jesus in a movie. He has just delivered a marvelous sermon. Everyone is speaking highly of Jesus when a few begin asking, “Well, isn’t this the carpenter’s son? How can he be talking like this?” Respond to them in a herky-jerky motion, moving your head in a circle and his hands all around, and exclaim “Well excuse me for being born of a virgin in a stable. A prophet won’t be heard in his hometown, will he?” The crowd is shocked still and silent, and Jesus saunters by them into the night.

As a preacher you might use this in the telling of a story or a dialogue from the scripture or real life to distract or deflect statements made by an opponent to what you have to say, just like in the example given in Jesus’ exchange with the crowd in his hometown synagogue, Capernaum (Luke 4:20-30). Or perhaps this posture can be used to divert people’s attention from a disaster or crisis and provide them some respite from the stress characterizing a particular situation, such as in a war or disaster zone, like when entertainers fly into a war or disaster zone to entertain troops or relief workers.

The final pattern is the leveler (Satir and Satir, 1988). The leveler takes control and keeps everything on an even keel. The leveler employs a symmetrical physiology, upright, moving hands, hands down and moving down and spreading, communicating

“This is the way it is. This is true.” You are already familiar with the leveler as you employed it in practicing the Preacher state. Let’s try it.

Exercise: Leveler

Stand in the leveler posture. Have your feet shoulder width apart, weight evenly distributed on both feet. Have your hands palm down and flat, and move in a symmetrical pattern mid-chest down to your belly and outward. Begin to speak, “The Lord is your shepherd, you shall not want. He makes you lie down in green pasture. He leads you beside still waters. He leads you along paths of righteousness for his own sake. . .” Speak with a falling quality, slowing down as you move your hands. Pause at the end of your statement. This opens up the space with your congregation. Your congregation knows that there is more to come. They are going to hear how it goes. So pause. And when you speak you speak slowly and deeply (pause). And you tell them the point (pause). “. . . and he cares like you like you are as valuable as any other sheep in his flock.”

When you employ the leveler you are asserting authority and calming down your congregation. You are bringing everything down to earth. What your audience receives this message from you, “Okay, this is what you need right now.”

Exercise: Satir Categories

Here is an exercise using these Satir categories (James and Shephard, 2001). Stand before an imaginary group. Assume each of the postures. Have fun acting out each of

the postures. Notice your state when you do this. Now, tell your Incident – Point – Benefit story. Adopt each of the postures and tell your story from each of the postures. Tell the story from each posture and then tell a part of the story from one posture and switch, including all of the postures in a single telling of the story. Have fun with this exercise. What happened to your state as you did this? What states did you go into as you told the story? What categories were easier for you and did you like better? Which brought your presentation more to life and enabled you to get your point across best? Likely you will find that leveler is the most effective category to utilize when preaching or even speaking in general.

Let's say I want the congregation to give more or attend worship more and participate more in Bible study. I might say, "I was at a conference the other day and the Bishop was preaching and he was talking about the financial situation of the church. He said, 'You have to give more. Our church members are giving less than 2% of their income. The Bible says that they should give 10%. You have to give more of your income to the church. You have to increase your giving in the direction of the tithe. Each year give 1% or 2% more.'" As I make this statement I point towards the congregation, actually above and beyond them. What Satir category did I utilize in the Bishop's statement? I used the blamer category. When you do this you disassociate the congregation from yourself, but the words go in. You can punctuate your statements pointing (gently with two fingers, slightly curved) to the congregation accusing them of not giving enough, by saying "You have to give more than what you are giving. Here's what you are giving. Here's what you should be giving." It's the Bishop who is saying this, or a speaker you

heard, someone with authority on the subject. “When you are a Christian you give as much as you can.” My goal here as a Preacher and leader is to get my congregation to be motivated to give more and then to give more. This is an excellent way to get a congregation to do more of what you want them to do and enjoy doing it.

Satir developed these patterns in her family counseling practice. She would identify family roles based on these categories. She would also utilize them in human sculptures, where different family members would stand in these postures in relationship to one another and feel what it was like to be in the posture. She would guide them in putting words to the family sculpture. This aided family members in understanding themselves, each other and their family dynamics and freed them from patterns that had bound them before. Teachers can utilize these patterns in teaching especially about family life or communication. Counselors can use them to learn about themselves and their own families and free themselves from patterns they are stuck in and then as Satir did in working with their clients.

Inflection

Tone of voice makes a difference. One aspect of tone that impacts communication is inflection (Erickson and Rossi, 1980a; Erickson and Rossi, 1980b; Gilligan, 1987; Rosen, 1982; Bandler and Grinder, 1976; Bandler and Grinder, 1979; Grinder and Bandler, 1981; Gordon, 1978). When we speak there are three types of inflection. There is the question, the statement and the command. These have an upward, even and downward inflection respectively. Depending on the inflection that one uses, the same

statement can be given nuance. For example, as you read the following statement out loud, consider its internal effect on you.

Let's explore solutions? (Questioning, Upward Inflection)

Let's explore solutions. (Statement, Even Inflection)

Let's explore solutions! (Command, Downward Inflection)

The upward inflection tends to seed doubt whereas the downward inflection tends to seed compliance.

If I am preaching and I want to drive a point home, "You will want to attend our Christmas pageant," if my inflection rises at the end of the sentence I am no longer making a statement. I am asking a question, "Will you attend our Christmas Pageant?" But if I keep my inflection at the same level at the end of the sentence I will be making a statement. If I drop my inflection when asking the question what I have is a command, "You will attend our Christmas Pageant." Even if it is framed as a question, "Will you attend...?" the downward inflection turns it into a demand. If I add the statement, "I'm sure you will be there," and drop my inflection, I am offering a command, "You will be there." If I raise my inflection at the end of the sentence I am asking if the congregation will be there. The raising of inflection at the end of a sentence is a distracter characteristic. The dropping of inflection at the end of a sentence is a leveler pattern. Depending how the teacher tells his students that there will be no late assignments (rising, level, or descending) the teacher will receive no late assignments or some.

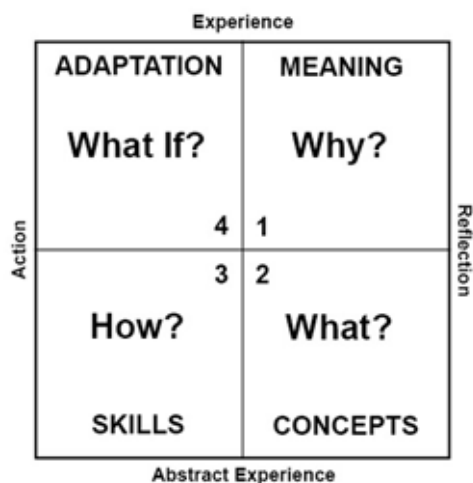
At issue here when you are preaching is what you characteristically do. Many people habitually have a level, rising, or falling inflection at the end of their sentences. It will do you well to examine your patterns of inflection so that the intent, words, and effect of your words are what you want them to be. A rising inflection communicates that you are asking or that you're not sure of what you are saying. A middle or level inflection merely means these are the facts. I want you know this. A falling inflection indicates a command. This is what I want you to do or what you will do. I might be preaching to a declining church and say, "You need to decide what you want to **do**, whether you will keep this church **open** or close this church's **doors**." Saying this with a rising inflection after the bolded words will communicate a question; do I need to decide? Keeping inflection level will make this a statement. Making the inflection fall would make the statement a command. If the first two statements ended level and the last falling, you'd be directing or motivating the congregation to give up and close the church. And so, I'd prefer to take greater control of the message stating instead. "What will you do (rising inflection)? Will you opt to close the doors of the church (rising inflection)? Or will you keep the church open (falling inflection)? You may want questions, comments, or congregational participation in your sermon. If you do, utilize a rising, questioning tone, raise your eyebrow, or raise a hand a little and ask. Keep your eyebrow raised until you get a response. You are creating expectation and your congregation will respond. You may not want a response or many responses. In that case you can use a level tone, bring your eyebrows down, and drop your hand, perhaps utilizing the leveler hand movement across your chest and step to the side. You can do this simply by subtly

lifting your hand palm up eliciting responses or dropping your hand palm down discouraging responses. This works equally in preaching, teaching and counseling.

4MAT and Meta Programs

Bernice McCarthy, an educator, came up with a format for making presentations that takes into account different listening and learning styles. She calls it the 4MAT System (McCarthy and McCarthy, 2005). 4MAT provides a way for you to format your sermons.

Bernice McCarthy's 4-Mat system describes the learning process in terms of the way people perceive and process information. She takes two primary meta-programs and placing them at ninety degrees to each other on an axis.



(Eagle, 2014).

Perception is the way people take in new information. It involves experience and conceptualization. Experience is sensory-based and present time. Feeling is preferred to thinking in experience. Conceptualization is a step up from experience. It involves the abstraction of experience into concepts and ideas. Flexibility is necessary in

abstracting up from experience to conceptualization and down from conceptualization to experience.

It is important to have the flexibility to abstract up and down, that is from global to specific; and have the flexibility to shift from options to procedures, from thinking to feeling, from the mind to the heart, from thinking about the concept to physically experiencing and putting the idea into practice.

Perception

Experience	Conceptualization
Feeling	Thinking
Specific	Global
Procedures	Options
Heart	Mind
Incarnation, Action	Ideas
Earth	Heaven

Processing is what people do with information. It involves on the reflection and action. Reflection is thinking about information, conceptualizing and giving it a structure and an order. It involves exploration and probing. Action is the application of conceptual information to the physical world through doing. We reflect upon the information and then when ready we take action. At some point we need to make a decision to test the

ideas in the real world and see what result we get. This is the Reflective/Active Meta program, otherwise known as the decision Meta program (Hall, 2006).

Part of the process of reflection is to weigh pros and cons, determine what can be gained or lost by a particular action and what are the possible consequences and rewards of the action. This involves the Away-From/Towards Meta program Hoag (2014). Some people spend so much time reflecting that they never quite get around to taking action. Whereas others may be too quick to act and need to learn to slow down and spend more time reflecting upon things before they act. What actually creates the energy to take action is the Motivation Meta program - that is moving away-from what you don't want versus moving towards what you do want.

Processing

Reflection	Action
Pros and Cons	Risk
Gain or Loss	Action
Movement Away	Movement Towards

4MAT

McCarthy describes four categories of learners (McCarthy and McCarthy, 2005). She organizes them according to the question that drives or motivates their learning:

The first are the “Why Askers” (McCarthy and McCarthy, 2005). They want to know the reasons why for doing anything. They ask, “why should I learn something, attend worship, study the Bible, tithe or give to the church, and serve in ministry?” They need a good enough answer to their question. They seek meaning, they want reasons, they want to understand the relevance of the information to their outcomes and they want to know the benefits. Part of the process involves the interaction with others, holding discussions, finding out what others think, bouncing ideas back and forth. The 'why' person is good with people but is reluctant to take action. Answering the 'why' question builds in motivation to learn. They need the facts, need to learn how to do it and how to apply it in the world. 'Why' people probably have a preference for the following Meta programs: Toward versus Away From, People, Extroversion, Reflection, Imagination, Difference and Internal Reference with an External Check (Cameron-Bandler 1985). They comprise 35% of the population.

The second are the “What Askers” (McCarthy and McCarthy, 2005). They want information and facts. These are your note takers. They want information orally, projected, and on paper. They learn best by starting with an idea, reflecting upon it, analyzing it and thinking it through. The 'what' learner is good with facts, sequential thinking and planning but not so good with creating the vision of the outcome. The types of questions that a 'what' learner has in mind are: "What is this about? Give me the essential information. Give me the details. What do I need to know about this topic so that I can understand it? What is the context?" They ask what are we doing during worship, what are reading and studying, what should I give, and what will I be doing in

this or that ministry. “What Askers” may be good at taking notes and know a lot about a subject, but they have no idea what to do or how to apply the information. The 'what' person probably has a preference for the following Meta programs: Reflective, Introversion, Analytic Thinking and Procedures (Cameron-Bandler 1985). They comprise 22% of the population.

The third are the “How Askers” (McCarthy and McCarthy, 2005). They are pragmatic. They want to know how things work and how to do things. They start with an idea and as soon as possible want to put the information into practice to see what result that they get. They very much prefer action to talk. They need coaching and mentoring. They ask “how do I get the most out of worship, Bible study, how can I give, and how can I best serve or be effective or reach this or that goal.” You want them participating and you want to show them how to do what you want them to do. If you want them to do something have them do it. They are not so good at working with or conversing with other people, although they have a great deal of common sense. They learn best by experimenting, building, testing theories and putting ideas into practice. The types of questions that a 'how' learner has in mind are: "How does this work? Show me how it works. Show me how to do it. What are the steps? Let me see if this works or not?" The how person probably has a preference for the following Meta programs: Action, Introversion, and Options (Cameron-Bandler 1985). They comprise 18% of the population.

The fourth are the “What If Askers” (McCarthy and McCarthy, 2005). They want to know future consequences. They like to experiment. They need to discover things for

themselves. They need to take action and learn by trial and error and discover new possibilities. They want to improve on plans and processes. They ask what if I do or don't worship or pray or study the Bible, or give or serve; what's going to happen; or what if we saw something or did something differently; would I get the same result?

The 'what if' learner is dynamic and brings a lot of energy to the learning process, they are highly creative, big picture thinkers, take risks and are quick to action. However, they have difficulty in sticking to a plan and following procedures. The types of questions that a 'what if' learner has in mind are: "What result could I get with this material? What could be the consequences of using it or not using it? What are the possibilities of using this information? How could I apply the material in other contexts that others have not even dreamed of? "What if" learners need to have their imaginations stimulated. They need to be motivated, inspired and empowered. The 'what if' person probably has a preference for the following Meta programs: Global, Options and Active (Cameron-Bandler, 1985). They comprise 25% of the population.

Even though people may have a preference for a particular learning style they still need a balance between the four ways of perceiving and processing information. The most logical way to

Keeping in mind that some people will want to know the 'why', others the 'what', others the 'how' and others the 'what if'? The intention is to gain rapport, have the material accepted, understood, and acted upon as seamlessly as possible.

When you are preaching you want to be able to speak to all four types of congregational members in the same sermon. To do this you want to speak to each of the four different types in a particular order. You want to begin with the “Why Askers.” Until you give reasons, the Why Askers won’t be interested. They won’t listen very much or at all to the remainder of what you are saying without a reason to listen. They’re going to be distracted as they search through the question “Why am I here listening to this Preacher preach?” So, give them a good reason to listen or participate or do what you want them to do.” Then attend to the “What Askers.” They need information. They want to know, in precious detail, what you are asking them to do. Then address the “How Askers.” Tell them how to utilize or do what you told them about. Finally address the “What If Askers.” Tell them what will happen if they do this, what will happen if they don’t, and what will happen if they try something different. Of course, your answers to their questions have to be adequate to their needs. In counseling you simply used the preferred style of your client.

Setting the Frame

When you are preaching, it is helpful to set the frame (Dilts and DeLozier, 2000). The frame provides context and is multi-layered. Some kinds of frames are outcome, ecology, evidence, as-if and backtrack (Dilts and DeLozier, 2000). The outcome frame focuses what you want to achieve, the effects of achieving it and the resources required to receive it. The ecology frame provides regard for the presence of systems and their impact. These include body systems, families, employment settings and communities. The evidence frame provides a perspective on whether an outcome is achieved or not

or whether progress is being made in attaining to that outcome. The as-if frame creates an environment of perceived success. The backtrack frame checks for agreement and understanding in order to keep a project on course. This provides a box to hold the whole worship event, sermon, or lecture in.

Exercise: Why, What, How and Consequences Format Sermon (4MAT)

Present the why, what is, how to, and consequences that apply to what you preached about. Inject content into the process. Choose a religious or spiritual topic or passage from the Bible that you wish to preach or teach about in the future. Select a segment that will take you five minutes to present. Because our concern is about how you put yourself and your message across it is best that what you preach be something you are familiar and comfortable with, even something you know by heart.

Here are four questions to help you prepare your sermon. Answer these four questions from the perspective of your congregation or the congregation you imagine yourself preaching to (James and Shephard, 2001). Or prepare a lecture based on the answers to the questions for your class.

1. Why would I want to know about this? Why would I want to hear about it? Why should I care? What's in it for me?
2. What is it all about? What is the message? What's the information, the facts? What details should I be aware of? What do I need to know or be aware of in order to understand and make sense of what you are communicating?

3. How will it work for me? How can I use it? By what process can I use it? How can I immediately put it to use?

4. What if I do use it? What will be the outcome of me doing what you are saying? What might the repercussions be for me if I use the information you are giving me? What if I don't use the information you give me? What will happen in the future if I continue to use it?

So, why do I want to structure my sermon in this way? Why? There are people in your congregation who are asking these questions. What? What you will find is that some people prefer one of these questions, and others the other questions. How? Some will want to know what to do with what you are preaching and how to do it. What if? And some will want to know what will result from doing what you are preaching or not doing it or doing it differently. In a workshop, class, or training I would have each student or trainee make a five minute presentation along these lines. You can make your presentation to an imaginary group or to an individual or group you select. Or you can even devise a sermon or presentation that utilizes this structure and present it in your church. When you make your presentation make sure you enter into your preaching state, center yourself in the leveler posture, connect with the congregation and talk. You can have your audience write down these responses to your presentation:

1. What did the Preacher do well?

2. What could the Preacher do even better?

3. What could the Preacher do in addition to what the Preacher did to make the sermon even better?

You can video or audio record and later play back your presentation. First, go do something else, and then return to play the recording and respond to it. Feedback should be focused on these three points and not include any reference to what you did poorly. Now make your presentation to an actual or imaginary group utilizing what you have learned in making the presentation.

Consider now how to deliver a ten minute sermon upon demand. Let's say, you walk into a church event. And someone approaches you and says, "Pastor, we are about to start and our opening speaker got caught in a snowstorm on the way here and won't be here to make his address. Would you please say something? You have ten minutes. What do you do? First of all, you go directly to leveler, and respond, "Now exactly what do you want me to speak about?" She responds, "He was going to say a few words about Jesus' preaching about the Kingdom of God." Then, when it's time, you stand up, go into the Preacher state, connect with the congregation, pause and begin.

Sermon: Kingdom of God

(Overview) "Good evening. It's good to stand before you and see so many smiling faces.

(Frame) I was invited tonight to share a few words with you about the Kingdom of God as we understand it from the New Testament.

(Why) It's important that you understand what the Kingdom of God is because the primary content of Jesus' preaching to us is about the Kingdom of God. Preaching about the Kingdom of God is more important to Jesus than healing the sick and exorcising demons. In fact, Jesus did these things to show that the Kingdom of God had arrived.

(What) Jesus said a number of things about the Kingdom of God: He said that the Kingdom of God was near. It is within your reach. It is here and now, a present reality, and it is approaching. It is still coming into reality and will completely appear in the future.

It is within you. If you look within you will find it. It is among you. If you look around you in the people and world around you, you will find it. It is all around you, everywhere you look.

Seek and you find it. It is past, present and future. It is eternal. It is upon the earth and being developed on the earth. It's not a place. Rather it is a state or a condition of consciousness.

(How) And you can experience this Kingdom of God right now. You do it by paying attention to Jesus, to what he preached, to the words he spoke about it and to the stories he told about it; listening to the stories, seeing the stories enacted, feeling your responses to them, and putting yourself into the stories he tells.

(What if) If you understand the Kingdom of God you will understand the main focus of Jesus' preaching, his intended message for you. You will want to put it first in your life because it will become more important to you than anything else.

And because when you do this you will receive everything else worthwhile that you need or want for your life. You will experience the power of God in your life and the world you live in will change for the better. You will have hope. You will have a rule to live by that makes sense to you.

If you don't, you'll live like your life is limited to your body and the years your body inhabits this world, like there is no hope for the future, and like everything that is important is only transitory.

When you understand the Kingdom of God you have discovered what is real about life, if you don't . . . well, you've missed out on that.

I had to do this at the seminary where I teach. The professor I co-taught with had an emergency and needed me to fill in. He called and I headed right over. I outlined what I would present in my head on the way over. I plotted three mini lectures based upon what I knew we had not covered in the course but would be useful. As the course was about pastoral care and counseling, it was second nature to me. The class went better than if I had spent my normal hours preparing it.

Changing States

States are integrated conditions of the body-mind system or representations of those conditions in terms of problems and outcomes. They are often defined in terms of internal states (moods, feelings, and emotions), external states, problem or present states and desired states.

States, in NLP are the mental and physical processes we experience at any moment. There are cognitive, emotional, physical, attentional and spiritual states. States are dependent upon our interaction with the world we live in, how our bodies are functioning and our thinking (Dilts, 1998).

States change naturally and according to the changing circumstances of our lives. All kinds of factors influence our states, internal and external. Physiological phenomena are affected by our states (e.g. heart rate, breathing, posture, etc.). It is possible to influence and change states for particular reasons. Some states are better for different situations (Dilts, 1988).

Whenever you preach, members of your congregation are in physiological and emotional states (James and Shephard, 2001). These states affect how they listen to you. But is your congregation in the state you want them in? As a Preacher you want your congregation to be in the ideal state for listening to your sermon. You can, if you want to, take action to elicit the state you want them to be in. If you know what state your congregation is in, you can match their state, create rapport with them and lead them into the state or states you want them to be in. You can maintain the interest of

your congregation by leading them through a variety of states. Imagine being able to readily elicit interest and excitement in your congregation whenever you preach, and a desire in your congregation to know Jesus better and to utilize their gifts to serve God through the church and other areas of their lives. Consider what states you want your congregation to be in and why you want them in those states. Take a moment and write these down. This is true for teaching and counseling. It is possible to manage your own, your audience's, your students' and your clients' states.

There are a number of states that I want to lead my congregation to be in. There are times that I want them to be in quiet, contemplative, meditative, and thoughtful states. At other times I want them in states of curiosity, wonder, excitement, and great motivation. Sometimes I want to move the congregation into states of anxiety, fear, sadness, discouragement, grief, despair, and anger but usually to lead them to experiences of calm, peace, courage, happiness, joy, encouragement, comfort, hope, forgiveness and love. By doing this I assist them in developing emotional acuity and flexibility; the ability to be aware of and feel their emotional states and move freely from one state to another.

By eliciting the states you desire in your congregation while you are preaching you will become an entertaining and captivating Preacher. You may believe that you are not up in front of a congregation to be entertaining, but by being entertaining you increase the likeliness that your congregation will attend worship events, hear your sermons, and respond in ways that you want them to. You will also help your audience to learn how to change their own states at will or with some effort. This is more difficult with persons

who are suffering clinical affective disorders or have low ego strength such as with personality and psychotic disorders. If you are not specifically trained and experienced with this I don't recommend it. For some people I would rule it out altogether. Exceptions might be in calming someone, increasing their self-control, and managing their crisis.

Metaphors, Anecdotes, and Stories

Metaphors, anecdotes, and stories will be an important tool for you in your preaching. They are useful for eliciting states in members of your congregation. I want to invite you now to write down some metaphors and stories that you can use in your preaching.

I remember being in a poetry workshop. The instructor gave us the assignment to create or find metaphors that we could use in our poetry. My initial reaction was "Oh no! I'm not a storyteller. I don't know any stories. There were about twelve of us sitting around a large table. I was relieved when the person to my left volunteered to begin and the instructor indicated that we would go around clockwise from her. This would give me plenty of time to wrack my brain to find a story. The woman to my left came up with a great story. Then the person to her left told an equally amazing metaphor. And as we carried on with this exercise around the table, every story and metaphor was surprising. They were all so good. I wondered how I would come up with a metaphor that matched their quality. As I listened to others tell their stories, my mind wandered, my attention went inside and I started day-dreaming while listening to the other

students. I jotted down some notes as people spoke; ideas that I would share. And when it came my turn to share I was able to share my own story.

Below are four ways to elicit states in within your congregation (Dilts, 1990; Bolstad 2002, O'Connor and Seymour, 1993). Make sure that you obtain rapport with your congregation (class, client) first.

First, go into the state you want your congregation (students, client) in yourself. Given that you are in rapport with them, when you enter the state you want them in, they will enter that state. It is essential that you demonstrate the state in your person. You cannot fake this. Talking about a state you are in when you are not in it will not work (Bolstad 2002; O'Connor and Seymour, 1993).

Second, ask the congregation (students, clients) to remember a time in the past when they were in the desired state. As soon as the congregation remembers the time they experienced that state they will get the feelings along with the memory that happened (Bolstad 2002; O'Connor and Seymour, 1993).

Third, ask the congregation (students, clients) to imagine a time in the future when they will be in the desired state. You may have to present an image of what this would look like to help them do this. A past experience is preferable because it has connection to an actual event and has more impact as the result (Bolstad 2002; O'Connor and Seymour, 1993).

Fourth, tell the congregation (class, client) a story or metaphor. Every story or metaphor will elicit a particular state within each member of your congregation (Bolstad 2002; O'Connor and Seymour, 1993).

There are some universal experiences that you can use to elicit the states that you want in your congregation (students, client) (James and Shephard, 2001). A universal experience is one that you can reasonably guarantee that 80% of your congregation has experienced at some time. The parables that Jesus utilized made use of universal experiences of the people he sought to reach with his message.

Universal Stories

It is worth your time to stockpile stories and metaphors about universal experiences (James and Shephard, 2001).

Exercise: Story Stockpile

I want you, now to brainstorm; that is, to come up with as many examples as possible during the brainstorming time. No editing or censoring. List them all. Think about your congregations (students, clients). What are some experiences that 80-90% of the people in your congregation have experienced. Write them down. After you write them down, write next to or under it what state would this story elicit or metaphor elicit. The effort here is to come up with common stories.

Jesus told stories that related to the common experiences of the people of his time. He used images from everyday life.

We live in a story-based society (James and Shephard, 2001). There is of course literature, movies and television, but we are employing story and metaphor all the time. Stories are essential to our lives. We employ them in learning. We even think of science in terms of stories. And as preachers you utilize stories and metaphors in your preaching. The book you base your preaching on is full of stories, from beginning to end. We have Bible characters who tell stories and we have stories about Bible characters. Jesus utilizes story and metaphors in his communication including his preaching and teaching. There are stories about Jesus, and the story of Jesus is set in the context of other stories and an overarching narrative. Telling stories relevant to your task as a Preacher is an essential part of preaching. It is also part of Christian teaching and biblical counseling.

There are many stories available to you in your preaching from your own life, the Bible, the news, literature, television, movies, other scriptures, and the life experiences of others. When telling stories you have to know what you want to achieve when you are telling a story. You can alter the emphasis, frame or context you put on or around the story, so that it accomplishes what you want it to with your congregation. And this is true with your overall sermon, too. What do you want to accomplish in and with your sermon (teaching, counseling)?

The stories that you use, and how you use them, will elicit different states in your congregation (students, clients). You can elicit different states in the same story depending upon how you tell it. Or you can sequence a series of stories that can lead your congregation to a variety of states. On the Sunday prior to Holy Week, Palm

Sunday I begin by eliciting a celebratory state in my congregation. I recall the story of Jesus entering into Jerusalem like a King and being greeted by the crowds as a King and I present music that rejoices his entry into the city. Everyone in the congregation is happy and excited. But then, I switch, and we present the story of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, his betrayal and arrest, his trial and Peter's denial of knowing Jesus, his sentencing, scourging, carrying of his cross, and his crucifixion. This story and the music accompanying its telling, evokes grief, powerlessness and despair. On Thursday and Friday of that Holy Week we continue to wallow in despair and hopelessness. Then on Easter Sunday, as the sun rises we remain in that dark state until the story begins to unfold that Jesus is no longer in the tomb but risen from the dead. And as the story unfolds and joyous strains of music begin, spirits are lifted, voices cry out "He is risen!" and the choir leads us in a joyous rendition of "Jesus Christ is Risen Today, Alleluia!" All the chocolate that the Easter Bunny brings Easter Sunday cannot produce the number of endorphins experienced by a Christian congregation Easter Sunday morning.

When telling your stories or using your metaphors, make sure that you can accurately predict that the majority, that is 80% or more in your congregation will have the response you want. Make sure that you are in the state that you want to be in and that the story you use is calculated to evoke the state you desire. You will want to embed your metaphors in your sermon and in the elements of worship that precede and follow your sermon. These elements include the musical prelude, your greeting and introductory remarks, the choral introit, the call to worship, the opening prayer, the hymns or songs, the children's message, the choral anthem, the scripture readings, the

prayers of the people, the offertory and offertory prayer, the Eucharist or Holy Communion Liturgy, the closing hymn, benediction, choral response and postlude. All of these provide opportunities to supporting your overall message and obtain the outcome or outcomes you desire. The metaphor can run through the entire worship event, organizing it, and creating a coherent experience that brings your message home into the hearts and minds of your congregation on both a conscious or unconscious level.

Nested Story Loops

To maintain your congregation's (students', client's) interest, you have to give them a taste or prelude of what is to come, enough to keep them in a high state of interest and anticipation, and keep them in that state by conveying that there is more to come. You do this by creating open communication loops (Bandler, 2008). Close these communication loops prematurely and you will risk losing your congregation's interest, so keep them open. You can keep these communication loops open through the use of stories in a specific way called embedded metaphors or nested loops. You start by telling a story, metaphor or anecdote, but you don't complete it before starting another story. And then you only tell part of a second story, metaphor or anecdote before moving on to a third and so on. This is what is called opening nested loops. You close the loops later, finishing each of the stories in reverse order. A good number of nested loops for a sermon are three. A teacher could use more, perhaps five. You want to finish 75-95% of your story before breaking off and initiating the next story. Make sure that you don't reach your point, resolution, punch-line or conclusion. Go on to tell three

stories, but leave all of them incomplete. You can use more than three stories but be mindful of your time. By doing this you will create in your congregation states of anticipation, attention, curiosity and wanting to know more.

Open the loops at the beginning of your sermon. Leave them open throughout the body of the sermon. Close them at the end of the sermon. If you are in charge of the whole worship event, you may want to open one or more of the loops during the onset of your worship during your greeting and/or call to worship or children's message, pick them up during the sermon, and leave one or more loops open at the end of the sermon to close at the end of the service say in the prayer time and benediction or closing statement. Although there is time between the opening of a loop, other content may be presented in the interim, but when you pick up the loop to continue it or close it, it will be like your congregation is back with you in that story as if you never left them. Closing the loop at the end of the sermon or end of the service seals in everything you have spoken about, packaging the experience, and installing the content of your sermon within each person (Bandler, 2008). This process is not just to keep an audience's attention. It engenders a state of openness and heightened curiosity in the audience. While the loops remain open, information can be inserted in the midst of the story and will be remembered.

You want to come up with five short stories, metaphors or anecdotes that you can use in a sermon. These can be actual experiences that happened to you or someone else or made up. They can be from literature or from the Bible. Keep the stories short, about one minute each. All successful preachers tell stories because stories are ways of getting messages across that bypass the conscious mind and therefore have more

effect. Also, by telling stories, appropriate for your message, your sermons will be more entertaining and memorable. Now, get a piece of paper and note down whatever stories come to mind now. Jot down key words or a brief description that will serve as a trigger for you to remember the story. Make a note of the point of each story because there must be a good reason for telling the story (James and Shephard, 2001). You can become a collector of stories that appeal to you. If you utilize the idea of collecting stories as a filter for your on-going experience you will soon have in your possession a repertoire of stories ready to put into your sermons as and when you need.

Now stand before your actual or imaginary group. Choose three of your five stories. Decide the order you will tell them in. For each story decide where a good place to break the story will be. About three quarters of the way through is a good place. When you are ready, go into your preacher state and begin telling your first story. Utilize what else you have learned about non-verbal gestures, tone, Satir categories, and so on. Begin story one. When you are three quarters through, begin story two. When you are about three quarters through begin story three. Even if you don't have an audience before you, imagine that you do. Make sure that your group is fully engaged in the story before breaking it off. This is the point in your sermon to place your content. If this is the first time doing this you will not put in any content. Rather, just say "content" or "blah, blah, blah" or walk away from where you are preaching and then return. When you are finished with the content or body of your sermon go back to your nested stories and complete them in reverse order. Resume the posture and state you were in with each story. Complete story three, then story two, and finally one.

Remember when you restart your story there is no need to remind your congregation of where you left off. Your stories will be more effective if you continue your stories as if there has been no break in telling them. Simply stand in the same place and same way you did in starting the story and continue with the next line in your story. If you elicited a state when you began that story, enter back into that state. When you start off like you never stopped, your congregation will return to the state they were in when you broke off the story. They may experience a brief moment of confusion that is quickly followed by memory. You can be smooth in your transition from story to story or be abrupt and obvious that you haven't finished a story (James and Shephard, 2001 and Bandler, 2008). A soft loop is a smooth transition from one story to the next. You take an element from the story you are moving on from in the succeeding story. A hard loop is an abrupt transition where you start a new story with no connection to the previous. This creates a greater trance. When closing the loops in the reverse order as they were opened an experience of amnesia is created such that the interruption of the stories are not remembered (Mee 2008).

Use stories that are relevant to your congregation and the content that you are preaching. In the case of a church environment you will of course be utilizing stories from the Bible and other texts that church considers relevant and stories from real life that illustrate the points made in those stories. Some churches may make use of writings outside the canon of the Bible as we have it now. Others like the Unitarian Universalist church may make use of all of the world's sacred writings and literature. If your gathering is of a political nature your source material will, of course, be relevant to

political discourse. Here is a sermon, “Faith Works,” I delivered. It illustrates the utilization of storytelling and nested loops. In it I utilize four stories from my ministry career about healing and two stories Jesus used. Notice how I open the loops and keep them open until after I enter my sermon content, and how I close them in reverse order at the end of the sermon.

Sermon: Faith Works

Faith works. Healing happens. It may be unbelievable, but faith really works. Let’s talk today about faith and healing.

This happened back in 2000 while I was Pastor in Odessa. I received a call about 1:00 am from a frantic church member. Her granddaughter, a junior at Elmira College, had been assaulted and suffered a head injury. She was being rushed from Watkins Glen to Arnot Hospital in Elmira. I was asked to meet them there.

When I arrived she was being wheeled into the emergency room. Shortly after we learned that she had suffered a fractured skull and severe brain trauma. And although the doctors said that she was unlikely to make it through the night they decided to remove a flap from her skull to reduce some of the pressure on the swelled brain. It would be three months before they would be able to return the piece of skull to her head. But likely she wouldn’t make it the night.

An hour later the doctors decided to remove part of the brain, 1/8th its total size, the part responsible for speech. The doctors also decided to keep her in a coma to allow time for the brain to heal.

This happened back in Odessa in 2011. The mayor of Odessa knocked on my door. She had been trying to call me but I had been on the dial-up email. There had been an accident. Mary Jones, a 74 year old member of the church had been hit by a car on Main Street, while exiting her car. She had been thrown into the air and carried thirty yards. She was badly hurt. When I arrived she was barking orders to the ambulance crew and instructed me about what wanted to do about her car and who in her family to contact.

I followed the ambulance from Odessa to Arnot Hospital in Elmira. The doctors were not hopeful that she would make it through the night, but prepped her for surgery. Her injuries were severe: broken ribs, collapsed lung, broken pelvis and leg, broken collarbone and a concussion.

In Gouverneur, I was called to the hospital to visit a woman who was unable to attend church services. She had a strong faith but her health had declined over the last few years. She was unconscious when I came to see her. I prayed over her, anointed her with oil, and laid hands over her.

About seventeen years ago, I served my first church as Pastor, over in Adams Basin. I have to confess that I was fairly skeptical about claims of spiritual healing or faith healing. I had read biblical accounts of healing, stories of healing attributed to saints of

the church, and contemporary claims of healing mainly by televangelists. I had an open mind about these claims, but there had been cases of falsification. I figured that the reports of healing in the Bible and among the saints were metaphorical or symbolic. At the same time, I took the Bible and the healing liturgies found in our Book of Worship seriously. So, whenever the lectionary Bible reading for a Sunday referred to healing, I would conduct a healing service as our regular Sunday worship. People came seeking healing for themselves and others, of all kinds of conditions from colds and laryngitis to heart disease and cancer.

The scientific evidence about the power of faith and prayer in healing is convincing. People who practice religion over the course of their lifetime and who are active participants in faith communities are less likely to die of cardiovascular disease than non-believers. Hospitalized patients, who draw on faith practices, including prayer, cope better with illness than those who don't. People who pray or meditate as part of their overall treatment had lower breathing rates, heart rates and blood pressure than those who did not. They are less susceptible to stress-related diseases like heart disease, stroke, peptic ulcers, and inflammatory bowel disorders. And when prayed for, even when they and their medical team don't know they are being prayed for, are less likely to need medications, ventilators, and tubes for breathing, develop pulmonary edema, or die. Weekly church attendees have 50 percent fewer deaths from heart disease, 53 percent less suicides and have lower blood pressure than non-attendees.

Dale Matthews of Georgetown University School of Medicine in his book, "The Faith Factor: God, Medicine and Prayer, Proof of the Power of prayer" reviewed 200 studies

linking religious commitment and health and found that people who pray are less likely to get sick, are more likely to recover from surgery and illness and are better able to cope with their illnesses than people who don't pray. Also sick people, who are prayed for, fare significantly better than those who aren't prayed for. In fact, some physicians report that people who are prayed for often do better even if they don't know they're being prayed for.

In today's gospel we read two accounts of healing: The first, Jairus' daughter was presumed dead and Jesus raised her; the second, a hemorrhaging woman had gone to healer after healer in hope of help for many years to no avail, but after she touched Jesus' garment, she was healed.

In the first case, Jairus sought Jesus' intervention for his daughter. He believed that Jesus could help his daughter. Jesus removed all the doubters from access to the girl, who had died, and commanded her to get up and she did.

In the second case, the hemorrhaging woman sought help for herself. She thought that if she could just touch the edge of Jesus' cloak she would be healed. Jesus felt power leave him and asked who had touched him. Seeing the woman Jesus told her, "Your faith has made you well."

So, I conducted healing services at Adams Basin. One of the members of the church came to me a week after one of the healing services. She had been suffering from chronic laryngitis. Immediately after the healing service that condition went away. Sometime after a healing service where she prayed for her sister who had a severe

heart condition, a woman stood up one Sunday morning to reveal that her sister had gone to her doctor and to his surprise the heart condition was gone.

I prayed with Mary at the accident site, at the hospital, and with the congregation on Sunday morning. And do you know there was no doubt in Mary's mind, in my congregation's mind, or my mind that Mary would recuperate. It was a long, painful, and tiring course of recovery and physical rehabilitation, but Mary made it all the way back.

I was visiting the woman in Gouverneur. Her home attendant was with her. She introduced me as the pastor who had saved her life. She recalled my visiting her and laying hands on her, and although unable to respond, felt her life restored to her.

The waiting room at Arnot Hospital over-spilled with family and friends from Watkins Glen, Odessa and Elmira College. There was a lot of concern and care. I listened to people and prayed with them. Finally, I invited everyone to a special prayer service at the Catherine Church for the young woman. Everyone was relieved to get out of the hospital.

The church and its fellowship hall were filled. However, the atmosphere was heavy with despair. There was guilt and anguish over what had happened. There was hopelessness. During my sermon I challenged the group to not give up. And while I was preaching, suddenly, the despair lifted. There was a feeling of lightness and relief. We prayed for the young woman and a baby who we were told would not likely make it home from the hospital.

The very next day, the young woman woke from her coma. She asked for the chalkboard and wrote on it, "I want to go home." The neuro-surgeon was amazed. This was not expected. They were keeping her in a coma!

The original thought was that if she survived she would need a month on their brain trauma unit, plus three months inpatient rehabilitation, plus aftercare. Within a month she was home, with outpatient occupational therapy, and she was able to complete her academic work over the summer, and the next year she graduated with her class. And one month later, she had regained her ability to speak, the parts of her brain not responsible for speech assuming that responsibility.

I was with the family when they spoke to the neuro-surgeon. He remarked to them, "I am not a man of faith. But there is no other explanation for what happened here by faith. Your prayer made the difference." The young woman remarked that it had nothing to do with God, but her will. I said to her, "God sure gave you strong will."

Faith works. Healing happens. When you come forward for communion, if you would like prayers and anointing for healing, come to the railing, and Bob Kuder and myself will come and pray with you.

I had been Pastor of this church for just under one year. In a previous worship event where I invited people to come forward for healing, two people came forward. In this worship event eight people came forward and the entire congregation closed their eyes and leaned forward in prayer as I extended healing to them at the end of communion.

You know, I don't remember how I learned those prayers, back then in the second grade, but they allowed me to receive First Holy Communion, and I know those prayers by heart today. In fact, on the basis of learning those prayers, I can pray my own prayers. Back then, in the third grade, standing on the stage in front of that audience full of people, I realized that all I had to do was stop thinking, and do it, sing. And I relaxed and did just that, finding my pitch as I reached the first high note. I was perfect. The audience settled in wondering if that first high section was that high, how in the world would I hit it the next higher note. The audience was like putty in my hands as they wanted me to do it. I approached that higher part and nailed it perfectly. The audience was with me as I continued through the remainder of the song. And as I finished they launched up out of their seats to give me a standing ovation. And today, I love to stand before an audience and sing or preach. Back then in the third grade, when Sister Miriam Birchman required everyone to memorize "the Charge of the Light Brigade," even though she had everyone stand up in the class and recite it, I don't remember anyone doing it. Not a single person! And this went on all semester long! And all of us graduated sixth grade! And most of us high school, technical, college and even graduate school. Some of us are even teachers. It's amazing now that when I preach everyone listens. They're most all awake if they have their hearing aids in. And if I go long nobody complains. People usually tell me my last sermon was my best sermon. Hey, I'm even teaching people to preach.

The next thing for you to do is preach, utilizing the knowledge you have amassed during your study of this text. The more you apply what you learn, whether through these

exercises or through experimentation in your sermon preparation, the more you will succeed in that application. You already have the skills and capacities needed accessible to you whenever you need them. What we have done up until now has been preliminary. What I have presented to you has been about preaching in general. Now I will guide you in utilizing what you have learned to preach like Jesus, who the authors we have considered earlier consider the “Prince of Preachers,” “Greatest of Preachers,” the Great Exemplar,” and the “Ideal Model for Preaching.”

Chapter 8: Introducing Jesus as Our Model

Everyone has a map of reality which guides how they perceive, experience, remember, conceive and act in the world. This would include how to preach. Jesus had such a map. What does a map do? It provides guidance and direction. To preach like Jesus you need to perceive experience, remember, and conceptualize like Jesus did when he preached. You need to get into his head and experience the world the way he did when he preached. You have to assume his perspective. Your perspective is what leads you to how and what you think and feel about life, self, others, God, the world. You get into Jesus' perspective by stepping into his inner world. You put on the mind of Christ. And you live from his perspective.

You accomplish this by observing Jesus as he functions in his environment. First, you observe the source of Jesus' identity, his origin, or where he is coming from. Jesus' source forms his identity. You have to study where Jesus came from, where he got his authority as a Preacher. Second, you observe Jesus' identity. Who does Jesus say he is and who do others say Jesus is? Third, you observe what Jesus believes and values. Fourth, you observe Jesus' capabilities and skills. Fifth, you observe Jesus' thoughts, behaviors, and statements. Sixth, you observe Jesus' interaction with and impact upon his environment and world (Dilts, 1998).

To model Jesus you have to observe his perspective at each of these levels. You may know Jesus' perspective at some of these levels but not all of them. The key to knowing Jesus well and being like him (identity), uniting with his source, believing and

valuing what he believes and values, assuming his capabilities and skills, thinking, speaking, and acting like him, and having the same impact on your congregation, community and world as he, is matching your perspective at each of these levels with his perspective.

When you look to model at each of these levels you need to ask the right questions and seek the right information. I will proceed with our modeling of Jesus through the Bible, in particular the Gospels, starting with Mark and proceeding with Matthew, Luke, and John, the order the gospels are widely thought to have been written in.

Modeling Jesus in the Gospel of Mark

In Mark, Jesus is early identified as the Christ or Messiah and Son of God (1:1). Mark casts Jesus in the light of Isaiah's description (Isaiah 40:3) of the Lord whose way is being prepared and who will reveal God's glory (1:2-3). John the Baptist, popular and influential as he is, describes Jesus as more powerful than he and as having a greater message than he. John's message is one of a baptism of water for forgiveness of sins. Jesus' message is one of a baptism by the Spirit (1:4-8). Jesus' favor with God is dramatically illustrated as he emerges out of the water following his baptism. The heavens are depicted as tearing open, the Holy Spirit descends upon him like a dove, and a voice from heaven, says to Jesus, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased (1:10-11). After a time of testing in the desert by Satan where Jesus is attended to by angels, Jesus emerges in Galilee. John has been imprisoned and Jesus begins to preach where John left off, that the time had come, the Kingdom of God was

near and to repent and believe the good news of the Kingdom (1:14-16). Jesus selected a few disciples, Simon, Andrew, James and John, and went on to Capernaum (1:16-20). There Jesus began to teach in the synagogues to the amazement of those there, who contrasted his authority (greater) with that of the scribes (1:21-22). He further amazed them by ordering a demon out of possessed man, leading to him becoming famous throughout Galilee (1:23-28). The demon in this case as it was being cast out by Jesus acknowledged Jesus as the Holy One of God. He went on to heal many people and drive out many demons in a single night (1:29-34). Early the next morning Jesus slipped away by himself to an isolated location to pray. The disciples hunted for him and upon finding him, told him that everyone was looking for him. But rather than respond to the demands of the crowd for more healing Jesus told the disciples that it was time for them to leave there and go to the neighboring towns to proclaim his message to them because that was what he came to do (1:35-38). Then Jesus went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message and casting out demons (1:39).

The source of Jesus' identity and message is depicted in Mark as God. The most obvious depiction of this is in Jesus' baptism when the voice from heaven addresses Jesus directly calling him his Son and the Beloved and expressing his pleasure with him (1:11). It is further depicted on the lips of the possessed man by the demon that refers to Jesus as the "Holy One of God" (1:24). His identity as Christ or Messiah and Son of God is simply stated by Mark in his opening verse and in light of the prophecy of Isaiah (1:2-3). John further stipulates who Jesus is and goes further to describe what he is

capable of. Jesus is capable of baptizing with the Holy Spirit (1:4-8). The service of the angels to him at the end of his time in the dessert testifies to his identity as the Son of God (1:13). Jesus is capable of preaching about the Kingdom of God and healing and driving out demons. Jesus goes about teaching and preaching, impacting his audience by what he says, such that they realize Jesus as being an authority greater than those they normally learn from, the scribes (1:21-22). Jesus was not a formulaic preacher. He did not preach what he heard from the other Rabbis like the Pharisees or in their manner. He also did not rely on the literal scripture but spoke on his own authority.

And Jesus impresses his audience by the power of his words. When the demon in the possessed man challenges him, Jesus rebukes the demon telling it to be silent and depart (1:23). This impacted his audience greatly and led to his fame throughout the region. So impressed are people by Jesus healing of Simon's mother-in-law, that the same evening of that healing, all of the sick and demon possessed were brought to him, and the whole city was gathered outside his door (1:29-34). But Jesus didn't allow this to get to his head or cause him to lose focus on why he had come, and he determine to leave that place and go about to proclaim his message of the Kingdom and exorcise demons.

Mark offers an outline that allows for a modeling on Jesus. Mark has provided adequate information about Jesus' source, identity, beliefs, capabilities, behavior and impact on his environment in the passages above to model Jesus.

Modeling Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew

In Matthew, Jesus' identity is established from the start. In 1:1 Jesus is identified by Matthew as the Christ and the Son of David and Abraham. His ancestry is traced forward from Abraham through David to Joseph his father. In 1:18 and 1:20 Matthew identifies the agent of Jesus' conception as the Holy Spirit. The source of the information in 1:20 is an angel of the Lord in a dream. Jesus would be God's son. In 1:21, in the same dream referred to above Joseph is told what to name the child, Jesus, and that he would save his people from their sins. The very name Jesus means "God saves." So, through Jesus, God would save his people from their sins; their sins being the result of their alienation from God. In 1:22-23 Matthew references a prophecy and applies it to the situation of Jesus' birth where the child is to be named Emmanuel which means "God with us." So, in Jesus, God is present in the world. In 2:2 the Magi, holy men from a distant land, come looking for this new born "King of the Jews," in order to pay homage to him. Herod learns of this and seeks substantiation from the Chief Priests of whether such a birth of the King of the Jews is prophesized. They find reference to it in a prophecy by Malachi. Hearing of this Herod is incited to destroy Jesus and orders the mass killings of two year olds living in Palestine, causing Jesus' family to flee with him into Egypt, fulfilling another prophecy about the Messiah of Israel. Jesus' identity as the Christ and Son of God is further supported in Matthew 3, the account of his baptism at the hands of John. John himself is referenced by Matthew in the context of a prophecy of Isaiah in 40:3, where John is written about in the context of the "one who cries out in the wilderness and prepares the way of the Lord." John

references the one to follow him as greater than he and as bearing a baptism, unlike his baptism of water, of the Holy Spirit and fire (3:11). John further relates the importance of Jesus, relative to himself, by responding to Jesus' request to be baptized, saying that Jesus should be baptizing him, not he Jesus (3:14). When Jesus was baptized, immediately upon his rising from the water, Jesus saw the heavens open to him and saw the Holy Spirit of God descend like a dove and land on him. And a voice from heaven announced that he, Jesus, "is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased" (3:16-17). Jesus is anointed of the Holy Spirit as the Christ and endorsed by God the Father as the Son of God. The Holy Spirit then led Jesus up into the wilderness to be tested by the devil after a period of forty days and nights of fasting and prayer. He was challenged three times by the devil, the first two times his challenge issued after the phrase, "If you are the Son of God," (4:3, 5-6), the last calling upon Jesus to worship him, the devil (4:8-9). Jesus overcame the devil's temptations, each time countering the devil's contention with a statement of scripture asserting his fidelity and reliance upon God (4:4, 7, 10). Then in an affirmation of his identity Matthew describes the devil leaving and angels coming and waiting on him. This passage affirms Jesus' identity as Son of God in his overcoming and banishment of the devil. Upon learning of John's arrest, Jesus returned to Galilee, also to fulfill a biblical prophecy. He immediately commenced with his ministry of preaching, his message, like John's, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near" (4:12-17). He called his first disciples who followed him (4:18-22) and traveled throughout Galilee where he taught in the Galilean synagogues, preached the good news of the Kingdom of Heaven and healed sicknesses and diseases of the people (4:23). He was particularly effective and

his notoriety was widespread, reaching throughout Syria. This led to people with all kinds of sicknesses and afflictions being brought to him, including people with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics. Great crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, and Judea and beyond the Jordan. To this point we have not been treated to an example of Jesus' preaching and teaching.

Matthew presents here what is thought by others his greatest sermon; the Sermon on the Mount. Likely, it is a series of teachings that have been organized in an extended narrative. However, in the narrative, it functions as a sermon and shall be taken here as an example of his preaching. I will present it separately so that we can model Jesus first as a person and then as a preacher.

The source of Jesus identity, authority, power, and influence is early established in Matthew. The primary authority is God. God speaks to Jesus identity as his Son, first through an angel in a dream to Joseph, then through the prophet John the Baptist, then through God himself. The Holy Spirit is involved with Jesus from his conception, through his Baptism, in his ordeal in the wilderness with the devil, and in his preaching, teaching, healings and exorcisms. This is affirmed through his lineage, going back to Abraham, Moses, and David among others. He is a Jew and a key Jew, the chosen people of God, and a son, child, or blood descendant of all of these, out of which the Christ was promised to come. His very name, Jesus, and reference Emmanuel, indicate what he is destined to do and what he is capable of, saving his people from sin and destruction. It is affirmed by scripture, particularly by biblical prophecies, which Matthew carefully casts episodes of Jesus' life as the fulfillment of. The statements and

activities of the angel, Herod, John the Baptist, and the devil further affirm Jesus' identity as the Christ and Son of God.

What Jesus believes is not obvious in the text as we are not privy to what he thinks or says about himself. But where he does speak he does so confidently. When John is hesitant to grant his request to be baptized, he responds, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness (3:14-15)." When challenged by the devil in the wilderness about whether he is the Son of God, he doesn't argue and insist that he is, nor does he provide signs to prove who he is, rather he answers like he is the Son of God, citing scripture that he obviously believes to be true: "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the word of God'" (4:4); "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test'" (4:7); and "Away from me Satan! For it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him'" (4:10). When he begins his preaching career he proclaims "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven has come near." When he is walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee he sees Simon, Andrew, James and John. He invites them to follow him and tells them that he will make them fish for people.

There are certain beliefs that go along with being the Christ and the Son of God and Jesus expresses these in his words and actions. What Jesus is capable of is quite evident. The angel introduces the subject of his capability saying that he will save his people from their sins (1:21). John the Baptist says of Jesus, "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with

unquenchable fire (3:11-12). The Devil, in his challenge of Jesus, admits what Jesus, as Son of God, is capable of. If he wants to, Jesus can command by his word stones to become loaves of bread (4:3). He can jump off the pinnacle of the Temple and command the angels to keep him from hitting ground (4:6). The prophets say that he can bring light to people who live in darkness and in the shadow of death (4:13-16). He was capable of drawing a crowd, even great crowds, of recruiting people to follow him, of teaching in the synagogues, of preaching, of healing every kind of sickness imaginable, and of driving out demons and evil spirits (4:18-25). Jesus did a lot. Some of it was quite ordinary in that many people had done it. He was born and raised in a family in Bethlehem, moved to Egypt, and moved to Nazareth in Galilee because of life circumstances. Nothing is said in this gospel about his childhood, although presumably he was an obedient child and raised on the Torah and Prophets (Tanakh). He obviously had interest in religious things and was well educated regarding the scriptures. By the time of his baptism, Jesus' spiritual demeanor was impressive enough, that as great a spiritual figure as John the Baptist deferred to his greatness. When told that he shouldn't be baptized by John, Jesus humbled himself to allow it to happen, and stuck to his decision to approach John to be baptized. He had somehow prepared himself to have the spiritual experiences that he had including his visionary-mystical experience in the River Jordan at his Baptism. He allowed himself to be led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness. He spent forty days and forty nights there to the point of being famished. Presumably he was fasting and praying, although the text doesn't say so. Hearing of John's arrest, he withdrew from Nazareth and made a home for himself in Capernaum in Galilee, in order for another prophecy to be fulfilled, and there he began to preach

about the Kingdom of heaven, teach in the synagogues, and heal and exorcise people. His impact was quite impressive. People were being healed. Lives were being changed. Great crowds of people were coming to hear what Jesus had to say and to be healed by him.

For the purpose of modeling Jesus, Matthew is ideal. In this case, it is even more ideal because I will be utilizing Matthew's Sermon on the Mount and Kingdom Parables to model Jesus' preaching.

Modeling Jesus in the Gospel of Luke

It takes Luke twenty nine verses of chapter one to establish Jesus' identity. There he is described by the Angel Gabriel to his mother Mary, "And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of your ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his Kingdom there will be no end (1:31-33). Gabriel goes on to explain to Mary that her son Jesus will be the Son of God (1:35). This revelation is punctuated by Elizabeth's greeting of Mary during their visit together. The baby (John) in Elizabeth's womb leapt with joy at Mary's greeting (1:41-44). Zachariah, John's father, refers to Jesus as a "mighty savior" to save his people from their enemies (1:69-71) and "the rising sun" come from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide his people on the path of peace (1:78-79). As the time of Jesus' birth angels appeared to shepherds to announce to them the good news that a savior had been born in Bethlehem to the

people of Israel (2:8-14). Upon seeing Jesus in the Temple, an old man Simeon proclaimed to the Lord that he could finally die for his wish of seeing the savior of the world had been fulfilled (2:25-32). On the same occasion, the old prophetess Anna, upon seeing Jesus rejoiced at the presence of Israel's redeemer (2:36-38). When he was twelve years when his parents brought him to the Temple, finding him there after he was thought lost upon their leaving, Jesus referred to the Temple as "my Father's house" (2:41).

In Chapter 3, John the Baptist answers a question about whether he, John, is the Christ, the anointed or awaited one. He answered negatively and told those who asked, about one, who would be Jesus, who is coming. He told him that Jesus was more powerful than he. And he contrasted their baptisms, referring to his own as being by water and Jesus' as being by the Holy Spirit and fire. He described Jesus as holding a winnowing fork to clear the threshing floor and gather wheat into the granary, and as burning the chaff that remains with unquenchable fire (3:15-17). Jesus is baptized along with others, but when his baptism was done and he was praying, the heaven opened, the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came from heaven saying to him, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased"(3:21-22).

Luke inserts a genealogy of Jesus that shows his ancestry, going back from Joseph, all the way to Adam. Full of the Holy Spirit Jesus returned from the Jordan where he was baptized and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he fasted and was tempted by the devil. At the end of those days the devil tempted Jesus. The temptation narrative occurs in an order different from Matthew, although the three are

identical. Jesus responds similarly to the way he did in Matthew, only after the offer of the devil to give him rule over all the Kingdoms of the world, Jesus doesn't banish him but responds with the words of the scripture he used in Matthew. When the devil was done testing Jesus, the devil departed from him to await a more opportune time to test him (4:1-13). Fresh from his experience in the wilderness, Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit, returned to Galilee. Already news was spreading about him. He began teaching in the synagogues and was praised by everyone (4:14-15). Luke inserts here what many say is Jesus' first sermon (4:16-21). According to Luke, Jesus had already been teaching and proclaiming the Kingdom of God, so this probably isn't Jesus' first sermon. But it is the first prolonged engagement of Jesus with an audience in Luke. Jesus has come to his birth town, Nazareth to preach in the synagogue there. It was customary for him to go to synagogue on the Sabbath. On this occasion Jesus stood up to read and the scroll of the Prophet Isaiah was given to him. And he read, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all who were in the synagogue were upon him. Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (4:18-21). It is likely that this text does not include everything that Jesus said, just his main point. Jesus was talking about himself as the Christ and Savior of his people in this sermon and he was proclaiming that the time of the Kingdom had come in him. The initial response to this message was positive. It was very well received. "All

in the audience spoke well of him were amazed at the gracious words that came out of his mouth” (4:22a).

The source of Jesus’ identity is established by Luke as God. It is first established through the pronouncements of the Angel Gabriel. He shall be named Jesus which means “God saves.” He will be “great” and the “Son of the Most High” and the “Son of God” (1:31-35). Elizabeth refers to Mary as the “mother of my Lord” (1:43). The Holy Spirit is involved in Jesus’ birth (1:35) and he shall be holy. Zachariah refers to Jesus as a “mighty warrior” who will rescue his people from their enemies and a “rising sun” who provides light to a people who live in darkness and set his people on a path of peace (1:69, 78-79). The angels announce to the shepherds that a savior has been born to the world (2:8-14) Simeon and Anna testify that he is the Christ, the long awaited one (2:25-38). Jesus himself refers to God as his Father (2:41). John states that he himself is not the awaited one referred to in Isaiah but that Jesus is (3:15). At his baptism a voice, God’s, speaks to Jesus calling him his beloved Son (3:21-22). The temptation narrative with the devil establishes Jesus as the Son of God. What Jesus believes is established in his own words, in his statement that the Temple is his Father’s (God’s) house and in his statements to the devil in the wilderness. What Jesus believed is discernible in his words and behaviors. That he believed that he was the Son of God, and not only the son of Mary and Joseph, is evident in his statement as a twelve old boy that he was about his Father’s business in the Temple, his Father’s house. This was indicative of Jesus’ spiritual maturity and insight. Jesus understood his spiritual nature (of God) and his physical nature (of Mary). It is also evident in his response to the devil

in the wilderness as he utilizes his command of scripture to cause the devil to depart to test him at a more opportune time. It is evident in his beginning his teaching, preaching and healing career filling the vacuum presented with the arrest of John the Baptist. And it is evident by his sermon in his home town synagogue as he identifies himself with the words of Isaiah, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." This is no mere reading, but a declaration that the "me" this scripture refers to is me, Jesus, of this very town, to do the very things the scripture says. He drives home his point when he says "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (4:21). This is what Jesus believes about himself and his mission. Early on the Angel Gabriel, his mother Mary, Zechariah, Simeon, and John the Baptist have all said what he was capable of. He demonstrated what he was capable of in his responses to the devil, even though he didn't do what the devil enticed him to do. And he is telling the people in Nazareth what he is capable of, even if it is something they don't believe is possible. And he demonstrated what he was capable of in the healings and exorcisms he performed, all as evidence of the Kingdom of God that he had proclaimed as coming.

Like Matthew, Luke provides much of Jesus to model. Depending upon what one wants to model of Jesus, and what message of his one wants to model, Luke might be an appropriate choice. If I wanted to focus upon Jesus' approach to the lost, Luke chapter 13 with his emphasis upon the "Prodigal Son," "Lost Coin" and "Lost Sheep" would be

could source material. If I wanted to emphasize loving one's neighbor his story of the "Good Samaritan" would be worth emulating.

Modeling Jesus in the Gospel of John

John introduces Jesus as the Word of God made flesh. He says, "And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son (or the Father's only Son), full of grace and truth (1:17). This Word that became flesh in Jesus was present in the beginning, with God, and was God. And all things came into being through him; apart from him nothing came into being. And what came into being in him was life, life that was the light of all people, a light that shines in the darkness and is not overcome by the darkness (1:1-5). John the Baptist was sent from God himself, came to witness to this light, so all people might believe through him, although he wasn't himself the light (1:6-9). Jesus, to whom the author John is referring, was in the world, and while the world came into being through him, it did not know him. He came to his very own people and was rejected by them (1:10-11). But of all who did receive him and believed in his name (to believe in his name is to believe in his power), he gave power to become children of God (as he is a son of God), born not of the flesh or human will, but of God (1:12-13).

Of this Jesus, John the Baptist said "He who came after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me" (1:15). He is John the Baptist's creator and Lord. The author John says of Jesus, "from his fullness all have received grace upon grace. The law was given through Moses. Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (1:16-17). Of Jesus,

John the author says, “It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made him known (1:18). John the Baptist was asked if he was the Messiah, Elijah or the prophet. He answered that he was not. Rather he cast himself in the light of Isaiah 40:3 that he was the voice calling out in the wilderness whose role was to prepare the way of the Lord (1:23). Asked why he baptized if he wasn’t the Messiah, Elijah or the prophet, he answered that there was one among them that they didn’t know who was greater than he (John) (1:26-27). The next day John saw Jesus coming, and said of him, “Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (1:29). John said that Jesus ranks ahead of him (John) because he was before John (1:30). John said that the reason he baptized with water was so that Jesus could be revealed to Israel (1:31). Then John reported what he had witnessed; the Spirit descending on Jesus like a dove and remaining on him (1:32). Then the one who had sent John to baptize, God, told John that Jesus was the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit (1:33). Then John told them that he himself had seen and realized that Jesus is the Son of God (1:34). In this way John testified to what he had seen and how Jesus was revealed to him as redeemer of the world’s sins and Son of God.

The very next day John told two of his disciples as Jesus walked by them, “Look, here is the Lamb of God.” Two of John’s disciples followed Jesus, one of them Andrew, who brought Simon to him (1:35-42). Next Jesus found Phillip and Nathaniel who followed him. Phillip explained to Nathaniel that they had found him who had been written about by Moses and the prophets. When Jesus declared to Nathaniel how he knew that

Nathaniel was a man with no deceit, Nathaniel replied, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel (1:43-49).

Here is the full story of Nathaniel meeting Jesus (1:43-49). “The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, ‘Follow me.’ Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, ‘We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.’ Nathanael said to him, ‘Can anything good come out of Nazareth?’ Philip said to him, ‘Come and see.’ When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, ‘Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!’ Nathanael asked him, ‘Where did you get to know me?’ Jesus answered, ‘I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.’ Nathanael replied, ‘Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!’ Jesus answered, ‘Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.’ And he said to him, ‘Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.’” This story may be supernatural, but it also may demonstrate a capacity available to human beings. When Jesus found Philip, it was like Jesus had gone to Galilee intent on finding Phillip. Upon finding him, Jesus said to Phillip, “Follow me.” Jesus carried himself with authority. He knew who he was. He commanded Phillip to follow him and Phillip immediately did as he was told. Phillip recognized Jesus as the Messiah and shared with Nathaniel about what he had encountered in Jesus. Phillip seems excited about his find. But Nathaniel does not match Phillip’s excitement when Nathaniel shares with him about Jesus. Rather he

expresses skepticism and scorn. Nothing good can come out of Nazareth. It is nothing but a small town. But Phillip, undeterred says to Nathaniel, "Come and see." His statement is a command of Nathaniel. He issues his command with confidence and Nathaniel goes along with him to where Jesus is. But Nathaniel has not changed yet. His demeanor is one of skepticism and doubt. Jesus sees him coming and calibrates to him. He tunes into him. He senses Nathaniel's foul mood and disbelief and says within Nathaniel's earshot, "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!" Jesus recognizes and reflects Nathaniel's demeanor. Nathaniel is transparent. He is not hiding his contempt. He challenges Jesus, "Where did you get to know me?" When Jesus responds, "I saw you under the fig tree," Nathaniel confesses Jesus as Rabbi and Son of God. At this point they are in full rapport. Then Jesus provides Nathaniel with a faith promise, that he will see greater things yet.

In chapter two, John narrates a story about a wedding feast in Cana where Jesus and his mother were guests. When the wedding host ran out of wine Mary told Jesus about it. Jesus responded that it wasn't their concern and that his hour had not yet come. Mary instructed the servants to follow Jesus' instructions. Jesus took a large amount of water and turned it into wine, wine that was better than the wine they first served. This was the first of the signs Jesus did to reveal God's glory and his disciples who believed in him (2:1-11). He goes on to narrate a second scene, this one close to the time of the Passover in the Temple. Jesus entered the Temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. In dramatic fashion Jesus drove all of them out of the Temple, poured out the coins, and overturned their

tables. As he did this he exclaimed, Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" His disciples remembered what was written in the scripture, "Zeal for your house will consume me." The Jews asked for Jesus to provide them with a sign to explain why he did what he did, meaning by what authority he had done this. Jesus replied, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews misunderstood Jesus, thinking he meant the destruction of the Temple edifice, while he meant his own physical body. It was after Jesus was raised from the dead that they remembered what Jesus had said. As the result they believed the scripture and the word Jesus spoke (2:13-23). While Jesus was in Jerusalem during the Passover festival many believed in his name (his power) because they saw the signs he was doing, Of himself, Jesus had no need to entrust himself to anyone because he knew what was in everyone (2:24-25).

From this perspective Jesus, the Son of God is God; God made flesh, one with God yet differentiated from God. His identity is eternally God and from God. He is the sacrificial Lamb of God who will redeem the people of Israel from their sin. John knew who Jesus was both by what he had seen and by direct revelation from God the Father. He also described Jesus as the one who baptizes by the Holy Spirit. Nathaniel realized that Jesus was the Son of God and King of Israel by Jesus being able to know him. Philip referred to writings in the Law and the prophets about the awaited one who turned out to be Jesus. Jesus appeared to believe the things that were said about him. This led to him to comfortably call people to come and see where he resided and what he had to offer. At the wedding in Cana Jesus expressed this self-understanding in telling his

mother that his time had not yet come. In the Temple before the Passover Jesus referred to the Temple as his Father's House and took control to drive out those who were turning it into a marketplace rather than a place of worship. He also referred to his own body as a temple, equating it to the Temple, God being within his body as God was in the Temple. Jesus believes himself to be the Son of God, the son of God being God in the flesh, the flesh being the temple of God. Jesus was capable of great things. He was capable of seeing people as they were and to see them at other times and in other places like he did with Nathaniel. He was capable of turning water into wine. He was capable of bringing the Temple to order. He was capable of rising from the dead. Jesus looked at people and saw them for what they were and who they could be. He could see who was with him and who was against him. Jesus has a finely tuned sensory acuity that allowed him to calibrate to others and intuit about them. He was flexible. He could change his plans for himself to please his mother when she wanted to lend a helping hand. He displayed godly power. He was courageous enough to take a stand and assert his righteous will where evil was being done in places it had no place being. And what he did led to his disciples believing more in God and taking on his own godly values for themselves.

The Jesus of John presents a different kind of model from Mark, Matthew and John as the Jesus of John is unmistakably the Son of God. To model the Jesus of John is to model God.

Really, it is possible to model any of these portraits of Jesus to good effect. At this point Jesus' identity and source have been established. As each of these gospels go on

more of who Jesus is, where he came from, what he believed, what he was capable of, how he acted and behaved including what he said, and the world he lives in becomes evident.

Chapter 9: The Sermon on the Mount through the Lens of NLP

The Sermon on the Mount, Matthew chapter 5 through 7, is the first recording of Jesus' preaching or teaching in the Gospel of Matthew. Jesus was living in Capernaum of Galilee at the time. Shortly after John the Baptist had been imprisoned Jesus began his preaching career. His proclamation was the same as John the Baptists, "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven has come near (Matthew 4:17). He had just recruited his first disciples, Simon-Peter, Andrew, James and John (Matthew 4: 18-22). The Sermon on the Mount was not Jesus' first sermon. He had been preaching throughout Galilee, teaching in the synagogues there and proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom, while curing every kind of sickness and disease. He had been preaching long enough to develop great notoriety throughout Syria, and all the sick were being brought to him. These included people afflicted with various illnesses and pain, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics whom he cured. Great crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and beyond the Jordan (Matthew 4:23-25). It is against this background that the Sermon on the Mount is set. As discussed in the introduction, the Sermon on the Mount is not a single, historic sermon, but a composite of statements attributed to Jesus and placed into a narrative as a single sermon by the author of the Gospel of Matthew.

Matthew 5

5 "When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:"

The audience in this sermon are the crowds referred to in the introduction above. Great crowds had been following Jesus. Jesus' audience included his disciples but also this large gathering of people. The crowd was a varied lot, gathered from near and far, some perhaps wanting to hear his message of the Kingdom, but most drawn to him because they desired to be healed of what ailed them or had been so healed.

Capernaum, being a commercial fishing village and set along a trade route, the crowd consisted largely of Jews, but likely also Gentiles. His audience and the world they lived in constituted the environment that Jesus aimed to influence or impact by his preaching. Who was it that Jesus was speaking to in this pericope, the disciples or the crowds? Many have concluded that his audience consisted of the disciples; others the church. Yet, Jesus had only called four disciples by this time and the church had not yet been established. As you consider this text, consider your own congregation.

In your case, your audience is likely to consist of Christians; devout, nominal, and in-between. And it is likely to consist of pre-Christians, persons who join your Sunday morning crowd with an interest in Jesus and his gospel and what the Christian Church may have to offer. Consider where members of your congregation may come from; what Christian denominations they originated in, their ethnic-racial background, and whether they grew up and live now in rural areas, urban areas or suburban areas.

Think of yourself as a Preacher. Where did you come from; your denominational history, your ethnic-racial background, and whether your background growing up was rural, urban or suburban? Now think of Jesus. Where did he come from? What was his religious background? Did he hail from a rural, urban or suburban area? Imagine Jesus preaching in your environment with your congregation?

³*“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.* ⁴*Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.* ⁵*Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.* ⁶*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.* ⁷*Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.* ⁸*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.* ⁹*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.* ¹⁰*Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.* ¹¹*Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.* ¹²*Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”*

This section of the sermon is called the Beatitudes. The term beatitude is derived from the Latin “beatus” and means happy, fortunate, or blissful. It would be acceptable to substitute any of the following into the text for the word “blessed,” “happy,” “fortunate,” or “blissful” (Louw and Nida, 1988). Eight or nine characteristics; “poor in spirit,” “grieving,” “meek,” “hunger and thirst after righteousness,” “merciful,” “pure in heart,” “peacemakers,” “persecuted for righteousness,” and “reviled, persecuted, and spoke against evilly and falsely on Jesus’ account,” could be understood as the qualities of people who qualify for the Kingdom of heaven and what comes along with it. In this understanding one would have to possess all of these qualities to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. I wish to introduce an alternate interpretation of my own. They could be the qualities of the various people who make up Jesus’ audience, qualities that

motivated them to seek after and listen to Jesus' message and receive what he had to offer. Some of the people in the crowd Jesus addressed were down-trodden, hopeless, and lost. Some were poor in spirit. Likely some were materially poor as well. Some didn't think too highly about themselves. Some were sick. Some were possessed by demons and evil spirits. Some were blind, deaf, dumb, lepers, and lame. Some were outcast. Some were mourning. They were grief-stricken. Some had lost loved ones or families. Some were lonely. Some couldn't find work. Some had lost status. Some were meek. Some were weak. Most were dominated by the powerful of their society. Some had been brought to their knees by the stresses and demands their world imposed upon them. Some hungered and thirsted after righteousness. They had been maltreated or saw the mistreatment of others. They were committed to seeing justice done for themselves or others. Some were not satisfied by the mores of the world they lived in. Some were merciful. They cared about others, forgave them their sins and debts, and sought to help others. Some were generous to the needs of others. Some were peacemakers. Curse at these, even raise a hand to strike them and they smile at you. Where conflicts existed they sought to reconcile differences. Some were persecuted for righteousness. They did what was right even as others did wrong and paid a price for it. Still, they stuck to their convictions. Some were reviled, persecuted, slandered, and accused falsely because they were true to God. Jesus empathized, right off the bat with each one of these groups of people in the crowds. In doing so he generated a feeling of rapport with his audience. He connected with each one of them right where they were in their existential condition. He loved them and they felt that he loved them, that he was speaking directly to them. He brought them hope. He led them

from their present state to a vision of a future more desirable state. He made them a faith promise (Lewis and Lewis, 1989). He stated that those who are poor in spirit now will later possess the Kingdom of heaven. Those who were mourning now will later be comforted. Those who were meek now would inherit the earth. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness will be filled. Those who are merciful to others today will receive mercy. Those who are pure in heart will see God. Those who are peacemakers today will be called children of God. Those who are persecuted because they do the right thing will possess the Kingdom of heaven. Those who are reviled, persecuted, slandered and falsely accused for their beliefs and relationship with God are going to have much to rejoice about when they receive their reward in heaven. Jesus created in his audience a propulsion system (Hall 2001). A propulsion system is like putting heaven in front of you and hell behind you. It drives and pulls you forward away from an undesirable state to a desirable state.

What's clear in this passage is that Jesus spoke to his audience about their internal states and led them to change their states. The states we are referring to here were a complex, a mix of emotional, cognitive and existential states. These were states of consciousness. And they changed while Jesus spoke to them. They were entranced by Jesus' surprising message of hope and hung on his every word. Jesus made faith promises to his audience, promises that would be realized as they continued to listen to him. Jesus spoke to his audience's identity; the different identities of his audience members. They had identified themselves with their conditions. By sleight of mouth Jesus reframed his audience's present conditions and wants into something quite

positive. And he generated motivation in them for something better. Consider now your own congregation. What life conditions do you find them in? What emotional-cognitive-existential states are they experiencing? In my congregation there is a family who just lost a member a mom and grandma; a woman whose husband is institutionalized with severe Alzheimer's Disease; a couple, where the wife has left her husband and taken their daughter; a young man who recently lost his job and after two months of searching has found a new and better job; older members trying to get by, in bad economic conditions, on fixed incomes; financial difficulties such that the membership is having difficulty meeting expenses because of economic conditions; an older woman who has recently needed to move into a supervised living situation; a church member who is undergoing chemo-therapy to combat her cancer; some families with infants who have started attending the church; and half the church wanting a traditional worship hour, half a contemporary worship event. These are just a few of the conditions existing in the lives of members of my congregation. How have you as a preacher addressed your congregation's conditions? How have you as a preacher addressed their emotional-cognitive-existential states? How can you move them from one condition or state to another condition and state by your preaching? How can you do this as a Christian educator in classes, small groups and special events? How can you do this as a counselor, meeting people where they are, empathizing with their condition, kindling in their imagination hope for a better future, providing them with a glimpse or taste now of what is possible later, and providing them with opportunities to move step by step in the direction of their desired goals?

Recall how Jesus addressed his congregation in this passage of the Sermon on the Mount. Inject yourself in this pericope into the role of Jesus and experience yourself preaching as Jesus did. Imagine yourself, as Jesus, addressing Jesus' congregation like Jesus did. See yourself, hear yourself, feel yourself addressing Jesus' audience like Jesus. Now imagine Jesus addressing your congregation with their complex of conditions and states. See yourself preaching like Jesus did to your own congregation.

Throughout this chapter, feel free to read each section aloud as if you are Jesus preaching first to his audience and then to your own. This will accelerate your identification with Jesus as a Preacher and your modeling on him.

¹³*"You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled underfoot. ¹⁴You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lamp stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶In the same way let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.*

Jesus made use of two simple metaphors in this pericope; those of salt of the earth and light of the world. Salt was a symbol of social status in the ancient world. The term "salt of the earth" meant a person of great worth and reliability. Such a person was characteristically very kind, honest and trustworthy. Roman soldiers were paid an allowance of salt called a *salarium*. Similar statements are "worth one's salt," or "true to

one's salt," salt referring to one's character. When you salt a mine you add valuable ore that raises the value of the mine to prospective buyers. When you salt an account you raise its value. To add salt to a situation is to make the situation better. So Jesus was appealing to the high character of his audience, valuing them in the process. Not everyone in Jesus' audience was "worth their weight in salt," but he spoke to them like they were or could be. Jesus showed his audience respect in speaking to them in this way. Perhaps, if you treated your congregation like "salt of the earth," members of your audience would rise to the occasion and act like they were "salt of the earth." Jesus led his audience to comply with his expectations of him. He challenged them to not lose their saltiness; because once they did it would be difficult for them to become salty again. He issued them a warning. If they lost their integrity of character they would become worthless and might as well be thrown out and walked over.

The second metaphor Jesus used was "light." Light, in the ancient world, was a symbol of goodness. To be light to the world is to bring hope to a situation marred by darkness. This light was to be displayed for all to see for the benefit of all. Light was intended to be shared rather than held back. In holding such a high opinion of his audience Jesus was generating greater rapport with them and also giving them feedback that reinforced the image he had of them such that they assumed that image for themselves.

As the audience listened to Jesus they were transformed. It was like they could taste their own saltiness and feel their light beaming out from deep within them. Whatever they were before this moment they were now salt of the earth and light of the world. Having obtained this saltiness and luminosity they didn't want to lose it.

Jesus was speaking to the identity of his audience in this pericope. He said of his audience “You are ‘salt of the earth’ and ‘light to the world.’ You are a ‘city on a hill’ visible to all.” Jesus, too, like the members of his audience was “salt” and “light,” but he was the epitome of saltiness and light. As Jesus preached he transmitted that saltiness and light to his audience. He enabled his audience, through their new identity, to believe that they were “salt of the earth” and “light of the world.” This is what Jesus believed about his audience and he conveyed that belief to his them uplifting them by it and into it. “Salt of the earth” and “Light of the World” are states of consciousness and ways of being. Jesus demonstrated his capability of being “salt of the earth” and “light of the world,” and led his audience to realize that they were capable of influencing the world for the good by their attitudes, thinking and behavior and of making the world a better and brighter place for themselves and others. They could have what he said they could and do what he said they could. Consider your own congregation and how they are “Salt of the earth” and “Light of the World.” Likely, they don’t consider themselves as such, but speak to them like they are and challenge them to maintain their saltiness and luminosity and watch what happens. Assume the state of saltiness and light in yourself. What is it like to be salt of the earth? What is it to be light of the world? How did Jesus increase the saltiness and luminosity of the people in his audience? Imagine Jesus now preaching this portion of the Sermon on the Mount to your congregation. Imagine yourself now doing the same just like Jesus. What is the impact on your congregation? How can you do this as a teacher in a Bible study, perhaps this very Bible study serving as a model? How do you in your counseling hold for your clients the

understanding that they are “salt of the earth” and “light of the world” and until they realize for themselves just how true this is.

¹⁷“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. ¹⁸For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the Kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of heaven. ²⁰For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of heaven.”

In this pericope, Jesus presented himself aligned with the Law and the Prophets rather than opposed to them. That he needed to speak to this issue suggests that he was either capable of, or perceived as capable of, abolishing the Law and the Prophets. Perhaps Jesus provided reassurance to those in the audience who are threatened by his power. Jesus recast the Law and the Prophets, extending them so that their intent is accomplished or fulfilled. He took the Law and the Prophets to their next logical level of expression and attainment. In this he acted the part of Moses and the Prophets, but removed all excuse from perfect adherence to the Law and Word of God. He demanded of his audience obedience that exceeded the most pious people of his day, the Scribes and Pharisees. Jesus presented himself as authoritative without being threatening. His audience looked up to him without being intimidated by him.

Jesus' impressed the importance of the Law and Prophets on his audience. And he impressed upon them his own importance relative to the Law and the Prophets. Jesus defined himself in the light of Moses and the Prophets and emerged as the present full expression of the Law and the Prophets. There was no greater authority than Jesus to this audience at this moment. In doing this Jesus generated godly charisma. To frame himself in terms of Moses, Jesus framed himself as next to God.

Jesus provided us with a hint of his identity in this passage. He was a type of Moses, a prophet, leader, and law-giver, but he was more than Moses. He was establishing the standard by which his audience could enter into the Kingdom of God. And when Jesus spoke about righteousness Jesus modeled it. Jesus was the epitome of the righteousness of which he spoke. This made him credible to his audience and authoritative.

Jesus spoke to his audience like they were his disciples; people who trusted his word and obeyed it. He spoke to what his audience's belief in the law and the prophets was. And he spoke to their ability to uphold and keep the commandments and maintain a high degree of righteousness. Presumed in everything Jesus said to this audience was that they understood the source of the Law and the Prophets. God was the source. God was the Law-giver. Moses brought the Law to the people. The prophets addressed the people and their adherence and lack of adherence to the Law. Jesus was speaking to a Jewish audience who believed in God, believed in the Law and the Prophets, and who realized, however difficult it was, that they were expected by their covenant with God, to adhere to the Law and the Prophets. They also realized from

their own history that their fidelity or lack of fidelity to God and the Law had implications for their lives and the world they lived in.

Consider your congregation. They are not Jews but Christian and pre-Christian. By pre-Christian I mean that they are exploring what Christianity is and considering a decision to become Christian. But, for all intents and purposes, there is no essential difference between Jews and Christians in Jesus' day, save belief in Jesus. There are two definitions of Jew to consider. The first relates to membership in the Jewish religion and all that entails. It is derived from membership in the tribe of Judah and relation to David. The second is most important here and relates historically to Abraham. In this sense a Jew is anyone who acknowledges the existence of God and submits to God's authority. Incidentally, that is also the definition of a good Christian and a good Muslim. A really good Jew is one who would sacrifice their own life for the glory of God. Both kinds of Jews constitute Jesus' audience, and of the latter some are better than others. This relates to the earlier pericope about salt and light. Jesus is speaking to the ego ideal of his audience and expecting his audience to reach into that ideal.

Consider how you can address your congregation as a Preacher who is a type of Moses and type of Christ, who draws upon the scripture, Law, Prophets, and Gospel, and extends the logic of God's Word, to bring out the very best of your congregation in how they live their lives as disciples of Jesus. In doing so, you assume the charisma generated by Moses and Jesus in your preaching.

Exercise: Transfiguration

Enter into your easy chair, take a deep breath and relax, with every breath relaxing 100, 500, 1000 times more. Let your eyes raise up slightly above you and to the right and see before you rising from the plain a mountain. And Jesus is there and three other disciples. Jesus has invited you to come along. And you follow Jesus up the mountain, ascending step by step to the top of the mountain passing through a cloud to a place above the cloud where the sun is shining. And when you are there you take your place beside the other disciples and Jesus says, "Close your eyes and take another deep breath and lift your eyes slightly up and to the right." And suddenly you see Jesus like you have never seen him before. Bright white light is streaming from every pore of his body. He is surrounded by brilliant white light. And in that light appear to other figures, Moses and Elijah, Moses to the right of Jesus and Elijah to the left. The bright white light emanating from Jesus is emanating from Moses and Elijah, too. And everything else around you disappears such that there is only Jesus, Moses, Elijah and you, four figures in one bright light. You enter into the space of Moses and into his body so that you are one with Moses and you feel what it is to be Moses now, recalling all things Moses, thinking like Moses, feeling like Moses, seeing and hearing like Moses, acting and moving like Moses. And you think to yourself "I AM Moses!" And you place around you a light white robe and say to yourself, "I AM Moses! And you step away from Moses. And Jesus says, "Open your eyes. Close the, Breathe deeply." And you enter into the space of Elijah and into his body so that you are one with Elijah and you feel what it is to be Elijah now, recalling all things Elijah, thinking like Elijah, feeling like

Elijah, seeing and hearing like Elijah, acting and moving like Elijah. And you think to yourself “I AM Elijah!” And you place around you a light white robe and say to yourself, “I AM Elijah! And you step away from Elijah. And Jesus says, “Open your eyes. Close them. Breathe deeply.” You enter into the space of Jesus and into his body so that you are one with Jesus and you feel what it is to be Jesus now, recalling all things Jesus, thinking like Jesus, feeling like Jesus, seeing and hearing like Jesus, acting and moving like Jesus. And you think to yourself “I AM Jesus!” And you place around you a light white robe and say to yourself, “I AM Jesus! And you step away from Jesus. And Jesus says, “Open your eyes. Close them. Breathe deeply.” And Jesus says, “Put on the robes.” And you put on the Moses robe and as you secure it you say “I AM Moses! And you put on the Elijah robe over the Moses robe and as you secure it you say, “I Am Elijah!” And you put on the Jesus robe over the Elijah and Moses robes and as you secure it you say, “I am Jesus!” And Elijah and Moses disappear. And Jesus lays his hands on you and smoothes our robes and you are wearing only one robe now, the one robe of Moses, Elijah and Jesus. And Jesus says, “It is time to integrate your experience of “Who I AM is.” It’s time for you to come down with me and the other disciples from the mountain and to carry down from the mountain your mountain top experience, coming down from the sunshine, coming down through the cloud, coming down the mountain path, stepping down, finally down onto the earth where you live. And you take off your Moses-Elijah-Jesus robe and hang it up in your special closet to put on whenever you are called upon to lead people as Moses, Elijah and Jesus led people. Take a deep breath, stretch your arms up, yawn widely, open your eyes and say “I AM here now!”

Exercise: Preaching Like Jesus 1

Imagine Jesus preaching this portion of the Sermon on the Mount to your congregation and the impact of his preaching on your congregation. See Jesus in his white robe preaching and teaching. Hear what Jesus is saying and how he is saying it. See the expressions on Jesus' face, how animated he is as he speaks. See how he gestures and he moves. Watch how he breathes, his belly filling, his chest rising, his chest falling and his belly emptying. See the glow around his head and face and heart. Now put on your white Moses-Elijah-Jesus robe and while sitting in your easy chair, observing the whole scene, taking it all in and integrating it, see yourself approaching Jesus, your being merging with his being so there is one being you-Jesus, Jesus-you. See yourself-Jesus preaching to your congregation. Hear yourself, what you are saying and how you are saying it. The audience sees the expressions on your face and feels your penetrating gaze and the warm embrace of your tone as they feed on your every word, your every word from the mouth of God. Feel your-self gesturing and moving as you preach, yet being centered and still. Feel your breathing, your belly filling, your chest rising, your chest falling and your belly emptying without a worry or a thought, easily and fully. Now see the effect of your Moses-Elijah-Jesus presence, of the "Who I AM, that I AM Is, Who You Are."

²¹*"You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not murder'; and 'whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.' ²²But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, 'You*

fool, you will be liable to the hell of fire. ²³So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you,²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. ²⁶Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.”

In this passage, Jesus exploited time, drawing his audience back to ancient times, lifting up what was preached to people by Moses after his descent from Mount Sinai. Jesus obtained his audience's assent as he did this, which increased both his rapport and credibility with them. Having obtained agreement he led them into uncharted territory, upping the ante for them; “Okay, I know that you know this Law and are obedient to it, but I say to you, don't even get angry or insult someone. Don't even think something or say something bad or hurtful.” And “It's great that you come to worship and make your offering to God, but if you're not right with your sibling you're not right with God. God wants you to reconcile with your sibling (biological or faith) or your neighbor, so that your heart is pure when you worship.” And “don't wait to face your accuser before you end up in court. You don't need the judge to rule over you. Collaborate with the other and work out a solution together.” Jesus redefined the Law as he spoke and his audience changed in response. Jesus' way of ethical reasoning was becoming theirs. When Jesus said, “but I say” he established himself as an authority higher than Moses.

Jesus assumed that his audience consisted of his disciples. In a sense they were pre-disciples. They were Jews; people of the Law and the Prophets. The people of Israel were the people of the Covenant of God and God's people. Jesus represented God to the people and restored God's Covenant with them. Jesus' part was to preach to them and teach them how to go to their next cognitive-ethical developmental level.

Preaching, as Jesus preached, is not talking to or talking about something to people. It is the conveying knowledge of the Kingdom of God (the Reality of God). It is the eliciting of meaning and comprehension of being. It is an initiatory act, preacher as initiator, of the audience into a new way of being human, according to their preparation and readiness. His audience was a select group, chosen by God to take this new evolutionary step. That's why they were there. They may not have known this consciously at the level of their personality, but they did on the level of their self, their spiritual identity. Jesus also presumed that his audience believed the Law and the Prophets, and that they were capable of adhering to the Law and the Prophets. Now he was addressing them at the behavioral level, directing them to conform to the essence of the Law and the Prophets behaviorally, which is by how they think, feel and act. He addressed them at a level of responsibility for their thoughts, feelings, and actions. This reflected his high level of respect for his audience.

Consider your own congregation, as you meditate on this passage. What is your covenant with them as preacher and congregation? Is it not to relate God's expectations of them as persons and people? Is it not to up-level their ethic-moral-spiritual reasoning to one consistent with the commandments of God? Is it not to help

them to own up to and become accountable for their lives and responsibilities as children of God? Is it not to come to a more comprehensive understanding of the Kingdom of God and rule of God and a more total compliance with that rule? As a spiritual teacher what is your contract with your students? As a pastoral counselor, what is your contract with your clients? Who are you representing when you preach? Are you not like Moses, Jesus, and the prophets in between; the mouth-piece of God? Where is your authority from as a Preacher? Imagine Jesus before your congregation preaching this portion of the Sermon on the Mount. Imagine your congregation's response. Now imagine preaching this part of the Sermon on the Mount to your congregation, being like Jesus, with all of his authority as you do so.

²⁷“You have heard that it was said, ‘you shall not commit adultery.’²⁸ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰And if your right hand causes you to sin cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell. ³¹“It was also said, ‘whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ ³²But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.”

Jesus' audience knew that adultery was wrong. Jesus obtained their agreement about what he said, but then Jesus led them to generalize their moral understanding and

extend it to how they looked at others and what they held in their heart. He led them to a moment of self-examination where they uncovered the root of adultery, and in general sin, in their own hearts and minds. He led them to assert control over how they perceived and experienced the world, and to assume responsibility for all of their behavior. It didn't pass muster with Jesus to say "I was just looking. What harm does that do?" Jesus future-paced his audience; he led them to see the possible long-term consequence of a wandering eye or foray into the imagination, highlighting the gravity of consequence for adultery, lust, and divorce. Even better, Jesus led them to change the way they thought and lived. He transferred his value system to them.

Jesus did not change the Torah or the Law of Moses. He raised the bar of fidelity in marriage. Rather than simply demand a surface compliance with the Law, Jesus demanded removal of the root cause of adultery. He intended to put the axe to adultery's root. Jesus spoke with authority here; the authority of a New Moses, a new Law-giver. He drew his authority, like Moses did, on the mountain-top. He drew his identity from the God on the mountain-top. He was the "some-one like a human" or the "Son of Man" from the Old Testament Book of Daniel chapter 7. He believed what he taught about adultery and was able to convey that belief. He was capable of obeying the commandment about adultery and believed that his audience was capable of this new level of fidelity to the Law. He demonstrated his own adherence to the Law by being celibate. And his teaching on adultery had long standing impact on the church.

As Jews, the people of God, Jesus' audience knew the law about adultery and believed that the law was right and binding. They were capable of adhering to the law forbidding

adultery, but for many, their behavior didn't reflect this. Jesus operated upon his audience's belief about adultery and expanded it to include imaginative wanderings and flirtations. In doing so he enabled them to assert greater control over their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and as a result better adhere to the law. The impact of this intervention on Jesus' part was to reduce the occurrence of divorce in members of his audience. You can apply this to a class on marriage or to marital counseling. Jesus directed his audience to take responsibility for their own behavior not the behavior of others. He did not advocate for a repressive regime among his disciples but a responsible one.

Consider your own congregation and their attitudes towards sexuality, adultery, infidelity, flirting, prostitution, pornography, and domestic abuse. Some are going to say one thing and mean another, maybe even do another. Some might have hard and fast rules and become condemnatory of others. No matter what members of your congregation may think or do, a hard standard is established here by which to guide their internal and external behavior. There is what the scripture says, here meaning the Law. But Jesus said, "consider what I say."

Imagine now Jesus preaching in this way about these subjects, this very passage, to your congregation. Imagine your congregation's response. Imagine now you preaching this very passage to your congregation with all the authority and integrity of Jesus. Imagine the response. I remember a congregation member coming to me, week after week, during a sermon series I gave that addressed adultery and divorce, confessing to me his discomfort and dilemma as he dealt with his decision to have a covert extra-

marital affair. He wasn't as honest as he could be about this and consequently, a lot of damage resulted to his family and his church. But how many others have steered away from the dangerous waters flirting with adultery was leading them to?

³³*“Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.’ ³⁴But I say to you, ‘Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, ³⁵or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. ³⁶And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. ³⁷Let your word be ‘Yes, Yes’ or ‘No, No’; anything more than this comes from the evil one.”*

Jesus' audience knew that swearing falsely or perjury was wrong. But Jesus led the audience to see the folly of swearing at all and to determine to always be living in the truth. If you gave your word or made a vow honor it. If you were asked a question, answer it truthfully without explanation or defense.

As Jews, Jesus audience knew the law about swearing falsely. He presumed their knowledge this law and their understanding that it is wrong. For them, it didn't matter that they actually adhered to the law only that they believed that they should. Given the rapport Jesus had with his audience and the authority he carried, by obtaining agreement from his audience about the law and conveying his presumption of fidelity by his audience to the law, Jesus generated in his audience fidelity to the law. This principle applied to every presumption Jesus made about his audience regarding their

fidelity to the law. Jesus presumed in his audience the ability to not swear, falsely or otherwise, and give straight affirmative or negative answers, and he directed them to a new behavioral standard. As Jesus spoke he modeled direct, non-defensive answers to questions without resort to vows and oaths.

Consider your own congregation; the commitments of its members or lack-there-of; the follow through on those commitments; the contracts and vows, official and unofficial, made, maintained, and broken; the excuses made for the above.

Exercise: Preaching Like Jesus 2

Sit back down in your easy chair, close your eyes, take a deep breath and relax. With every breath relax even ore, 10 times, 100 times, 1000 times more. Go back, back into the Sermon on the Mount, to Jesus preaching. Observe Jesus preaching, what he says and how he says it, what he looks like as he speaks, his facial expressions, his gestures, his tone, his pitch, cadence, his volume and his points of emphasis. Notice his breathing, his belly filling, his chest rising, his chest falling and his belly emptying. Notice the reaction of the audience as Jesus speaks; what they look like and sound like, the impact upon them. What does that impact look like it and feel like? Now open your eyes and close them and relax even more than before. Sitting in your easy chair, project yourself into the image of Jesus so that you are preaching like Jesus. Now feel your-self being Jesus, preaching. Feel your belly filling, your chest rising, your chest falling, your breath exiting your belly as you face your audience. Hear what you are saying and how you are saying it. See you face, its expressions, its glow as you preach

as Jesus. Feel the movement of your body, large movements, small movements, fine movements. Take in the feedback from the audience. See the impact of your words, on their faces and bodies. Listen to the silence, the laughter and the sighs.

Like the previous passage, this teaching could be applied to a pre-marriage or marriage-renewal class or to marital counseling. The teacher and the counselor could, like Jesus, be authorities about how to divorce proof marriage. Not only can they convey what Jesus taught, they can do so like Jesus did, and empower people to take responsibility for their commitments and for preventing marital trouble.

³⁸“You have heard is aid that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ ³⁹But I say to you, ‘Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; ⁴⁰and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; ⁴¹and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. ⁴²Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.”

Jesus has appealed up to now to the Law of Moses to obtain agreement from his audience before leading them to a deeper and more expansive understanding and application of the law. Here Jesus gets that agreement but then makes a radical departure from it. No longer shall his audience exact revenge according to the nature of the crime, however legal it was for them to do so in the past. Now Jesus is stating a moral that is radically non-resistant and non-violent. If they strike you, assist them in striking you a second time. If they want your coat, give them your cloak, too. If they

force you to go somewhere else, go there, and then ask them where else they want to take you. If someone asks you for something give it to them or lend it to them, without interest, of course. Jesus does not return like with like. He returns abhorrent behavior with love. This is a new law. He doesn't get caught up in the violence of the other but forgives. He is not bound by the sin of the other, but is free to be, think, and act as he wants. His response is always decisive rather than reactive, even if his response is "yes," "no," or silence.

Jesus strikes at the very identity of his audience as Jews and their belief in Moses and the Law. By now he has generated great rapport and authority with his audience. Jesus has established credibility for himself as a lawgiver to the people, like Moses was the lawgiver, but has established himself as a lawgiver, greater than Moses. His audience now has to believe in him and does. And believing in Jesus they are now prepared to trust him and obey his commands. Having obtained this stature with his audience Jesus can command them. In this case Jesus presumes capability in his audience to carry out the behaviors he prescribes of non-resistance to evil-doers, and non refusal and over-compliance with requests. The impact of such behavior by his audience creates a different cultural climate from what is normally seen in the world.

I worked in an agency under two different Executive Directors. The first employed a model of trust of her employees. She presumed that the people she hired were trustworthy. She didn't monitor their time. She expected certain results and received them. There was little turnover of the staff. What turnover there was had nothing to do with work conditions. People completed tasks even if it demanded they work over-time.

Little sick time was taken. Staff morale was high. The second employed a model of distrust. She presumed that employees would take advantage of their employer if not actively monitored. She monitored their time and questioned use of sick time. Staff did not, like they did before, put in extra time to complete tasks. Work was incomplete. People began to exhaust their sick and personal time rather than use them when needed. Staff morale was low. The staff turned over one hundred percent over a two year period and did so mostly because of work conditions. Expectations produce results in accordance to them.

As Jesus speaks to his audience he models states of non-resistance and non-violence to his audience. He models love. He models a high expectation for good behavior on the part of people. And as he acknowledges a certain status-quo and does it without disdain for those who hold it, he overturns what was normative and replaces it with a new ethic of love, acceptance and cooperation.

Consider your own congregation and their normative response to the violence of others. It is likely to be a violent response; not necessarily a physical response, but retributive none the less. Consider violence here as violation. That's a much broader category. How does your congregation respond to the member who beats his wife or children or leaves his family; or the church organist who stole money from the school district and public library; or the boy and his family who were involved in assault of another child that resulted in injury or death; or a couple in church who are always running into financial emergencies and turning to the church to bail them out? These are things that happen in the life of a church community. Imagine Jesus now preaching to your

congregation this portion of the Sermon on the Mount to address circumstances like those provided above. Now imagine yourself, preaching like Jesus, this same passage relating to these kinds of circumstances.

⁴³“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴But I say to you, ‘Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. ⁴⁶For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

Jesus again makes his appeal to the Mosaic Law, obtaining assent from his audience. And again he leads his audience to a higher commitment, which is to be like and love like God, perfectly. In this way he is not at the effect of the world, but in charge of his self, and leading his audience in the same.

Jesus presumes belief in the law and ability to abide by it. But then he presents as a greater aspect of the law, love. If one exacts revenge from an enemy or persecutor one is not being loving. Jesus presumes, too, that his audience is capable of enacting this higher law of love. They are capable of approximating the love of God in their lives and by their thoughts, feelings and actions of love transform the world in the process. Jesus

challenges his audience at the level of their identity. Tax collectors and Gentiles love those who love them. That's to be expected. But Jews are God's people. They need to love like God loves. They need to be like God. To fall short of that is to sin.

Scripture presents the human being as being distant from God incapable of approximating the nature of God. But here, Jesus appeals to his audience to be perfect as God in heaven is perfect. He is leading his audience to a new understanding of themselves as children of God and new belief in them-selves and what they are capable of and a new standard of behavior, behavior that can change the world for the good.

Generalizing from this passage and some of the others, you can see how Jesus is holding up perfection as a normative standard. Less than perfection has come for most everyone acceptable, and excuses for imperfection have become standard fare in discussions in church fellowship halls and even conference centers; the little white lie, or avoidance and dancing around the truth to keep the peace and avoid tension and disagreement, deferring responsibility for action and inaction the result.

Consider your own congregation and the extent and limitations of their love. In reality, no matter who they are, individual Christians and congregations come up against boundaries when it comes to love and forgiveness. Who does your congregation love? Who don't they love? Who is inside and who outside your congregations circle of love? Your congregation may even have members who are unloved by some, maybe even most other members. There may be people from your community who will never be welcomed in your community, or if welcomed it is done so conditionally. There may even be whole classes of people who are directly or indirectly, partially or fully, barred

from participation in your church. Imagine Jesus now preaching from this passage in the Sermon on the Mount in your congregation concerning its limitations on love, acceptance and forgiveness. Now see yourself preaching like Jesus is preaching in your congregation about these issues.

Matthew 6

6“Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. ²“So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ³But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

Jesus turns very practical in chapter six. He presumes that piety including alms-giving and prayer are important to his audience. They are part of what Jews do. They lead to eternal reward. But the desire for earthly notoriety and reward for one's alms-giving and prayer is problematic. It accomplishes nothing but prop up one's ego, self-image and reputation. Here Jesus challenges his audience's belief of what is important. He commands a change in behavior or adherence to a form of behavior, and promises reward for that behavior. The impact of that behavior is greater humility and sincerity and a community based not on appearance, but compassion and generosity.

Jesus creates a contrast. On one hand are the pious. On the other are the hypocrites. He invites his audience to join the ranks of the pious. He future-paces his audience so that they can see the long-term consequence of their piety, reward in heaven and the long-term consequence of hypocrisy, no reward. He contrasts the rewards of the pious and the hypocrites. The pious are building up treasure in heaven. When they die they have treasure in heaven. The hypocrites are getting their ego polished, their self-image stroked, and their reputations told about. When they die they have nothing. One can imagine the humble pious person going about his business of almsgiving in secret, nobody noticing but himself and God, not even praising himself for his giving. One can imagine the hypocrite, trumpet blaring, announcing to the world how generous he has been. Jesus likely is a model of almsgiving. His generosity is evident in what he says. Jesus gives but in a selfless or egoless sense.

Consider your own congregation and its attitudes about giving and serving and how their attitude and practice may differ from that of the world around it. Are there members for whom appearance is important and for whom giving is tainted by desire for recognition and accolade? Are there members whose giving serves to provide them with a sense of entitlement, privilege and special status in the congregation and community and even in their perception of the eyes of God? Imagine Jesus as he Preachers in his own situation guiding his audience in self-reflection and discernment of the difference between piety and pomposity and sincerity and hypocrisy. Imagine Jesus addressing your congregation on this topic and clearly delineating the difference.

Imagine yourself preaching like Jesus and providing your congregation with the clarity they need to be generous without being self-serving.

⁵“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ⁶But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ⁷“When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

Jesus contrasts the pious Jew with the hypocrite. It is important to pray. Both do. But the prayer of the pious is internal, secret, personal, and relational. It is genuine, meaningful, and to the point. It is respectful towards God. On the other hand, the prayer of the hypocrite is for appearance sake, public and pretentious, even irrelevant and contrived. It is disconnected from God and disingenuous.

Jesus presumes that his Jewish audience believes in praying. It is part of their Jewish identity and heritage. But they need guidance in prayer. After all, the hypocrites, some of them counted among their teachers and elders have modeled inferior, even useless prayer. Jesus presumes his audience knows about the power of authentic prayer. Jesus addresses their practice of prayer and how their prayer can be more authentic and as the result more effective.

Consider the prayer practices of your congregation. Is it authentic, genuine and effective or is pretentious, irrelevant and contrived? Does it betray incongruence between inside and out? Imagine Jesus addressing the issue in his own audience. Now imagine Jesus confronting such incongruity and hypocrisy in your congregation. Now imagine yourself addressing the same in your congregation the way Jesus did.

⁹“Pray then in this way: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.¹⁰ Your Kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread. ¹²And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one. ¹⁴For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; ¹⁵but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

There are common beliefs shared by all Jews. Jesus touches on many of them in his instruction on prayer in this pericope. Jews believe in God as Father. They believe in the Holy of Holies. They believe in God’s Kingdom and desire that it come. They believe in the Messianic age and want it ushered in. They believe in the will of God and desire that it be done, on earth as it already is in heaven. They believe in reliance of God. Not only is God creator, God is sustainer. God feeds the people of God physically and spiritually. They believe in forgiveness; spiritual forgiveness of sins and material forgiveness of debt. They realize that life is fraught with trials and tests and desire deliverance.

Here Jesus is introducing guidelines for the practice of prayer. This is a behavioral practice. His audience is being directed to address God as Father, in a personal way, and not only as Father, as our Father. This is a personal God and a corporate God. They are directed to praise God's name and its holiness. There is a certain reverence in this approach to God. They are directed to pray that the Kingdom of heaven come. This is what they have been waiting for. It's also something immediate as Jesus has already been preaching that the Kingdom of Heaven is near. They are directed to pray that God's will be done as in heaven. They are directed to petition God to provide them with their daily bread and thus to state their reliance upon God. They are directed to seek forgiveness of their debts and the already realized condition that they have forgiven the debts of others to them. They have been further directed to ask God to keep them from times of trial and deliverance from the evil one. Jesus' emphasis on forgiveness of others' trespasses is paramount in that it is conditioned on the audience's forgiveness of others. Forgiveness is a condition for entry into heaven, forgiveness of one's own sins, but this is conditional on one's forgiveness of other sins. The impact of praying this prayer is bringing into realization the Kingdom of heaven on earth, a Kingdom where God's will is being done, where daily needs are being provided for, where debts are forgiven and people are debt free, where there is absence of tests, where evil is banished, and where no grudges are held.

The prayer is an active one where the creature defines God and God's relationship to humans (Our Father), locates God in a particular location or state (Heaven), directs that something in God's location or state be experienced on earth, directs God actions to

humankind, commits humankind to a certain action, and declares that the Kingdom, power and glory belong to God. In essence this prayer declares a covenant and collaborative relationship of Creator and creature.

Consider what your own congregation needs to know about prayer and the questions and concerns about how they should pray. Likely there are members of your congregation who are concerned with the right way to pray and even with what to pray for. Listen to Jesus as he addresses his own audience's desire to get prayer right. Now imagine Jesus addressing your congregation on their questions about prayer and instructing them about how and what to pray. And imagine yourself being like Jesus addressing your congregation about this important topic and teaching them to pray like you do.

¹⁶“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

Fasting is one of the practices of the pious Jew. Again Jesus contrasts the pious Jew with the hypocrite. The pious Jew fasts but keeps quiet about it. He doesn't look like he is fasting. The only one who needs to know that one fasts is God. The hypocrite, like he does with almsgiving and prayer, calls attention to him-self so as to appear spiritually superior to others, or uses his fasting as an excuse for not doing other things. Jesus

recognizes the importance of fasting for Jewish piety. He himself fasted. It is an excellent way of preparing for some spiritually significant moment or to approach God. Jesus wants the ego out of the equation during the fast so he directs the audience to fast in the manner he prescribes. The impact of such behavior is that the emphasis is on the spiritual attainment of the fasting rather than how spiritual one is.

Consider what your own congregation needs to know about fasting and the questions and concerns they have about fasting. Listen to Jesus as he addresses his own audience's questions about fasting. Now imagine Jesus addressing your congregation on their questions about fasting and instructing them about how and when to fast. And imagine yourself being like Jesus addressing your congregation about this important topic and teaching them to fast like you do. Of course, if you don't fast, just like if you don't pray or give, you can't preach or teach about fasting.

¹⁹*“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. ²²“The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light; ²³but if your eye is unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! ²⁴“No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”*

Jesus recognizes the dilemma most people face. Heaven is their true or ultimate home. It is spiritual and eternal. Earth is where they are for the time being. It is physical and temporal. The spirit and spiritual (eternal) have priority over the body and physical (temporal). But the demands and desires of the body and physical world are quite consuming and seem all important. People want comfort, pleasure and luxury. They want treasures. They want things. They come to love the body and the physical and the things of the world and their own worth is determined by what they have. And while this is happening, the value of the spirit and spiritual is lost. One's eyes are not on heaven and life there, but on accumulating comfort, pleasure, and luxury here. One's vision is clouded by the material and desire for it. One becomes a slave to sense desire and material accumulation, neglecting.

This is a passage full of imagery that captures the imagination of Jesus' audience. It is built around the dichotomous imagery of treasure in heaven versus treasure on earth. Treasure in heaven is defined by Jesus as the more desirable of the two and the more secure and lasting. It follows with the dichotomous imagery of the unhealthy eye and the healthy eye. The healthy eye is posed by Jesus as more desirable. Health of the body, and the experience of light or darkness, is determined by the health of the eye. The third dichotomy is that of the two masters, God and wealth. God is the more desirable master of the two. Jesus presents his audience with the choice and leads them to arrive on their own at the logical conclusion. Jesus' own values carry through the choices he presents for his audiences. Because of his rapport with his audience

and the way that he relates his own values to them even as he poses choice points for them, his influence is likely to prevail upon his audience.

Jesus is addressing the identity of his audience. Are they citizens of heaven or earth? Are they children of God or biological parents. Yes, they are both, but which identity is primary to them? He is addressing their belief about what is important and worthwhile. Is it the spirit and spiritual or the body and the physical? He is addressing their capability. It is possible to live without these indulgences and things. It is possible to store up treasures in heaven by one's priorities and behaviors on earth. It is possible to place one's interest and desire on heaven first and foremost, if not entirely. It is possible to serve the spirit and spiritual. One can behave on the basis of such an outlook, displaying love of others by one's behavior, giving to others and serving others for the sake of God's Kingdom and plan. And the outcome of this is freedom in this life and reward in heaven.

Consider your own congregation and their identity, attitudes and behaviors around earthly wealth and heavenly wealth. Imagine Jesus preaching to his audience, seeing, saying and feeling as Jesus does about these issues of wealth, health, and masters. See, hear, and feel yourself as Jesus preaching to his audience. Now imagine yourself as Jesus preaching on this subject to your congregation.

²⁵*"Therefore I tell you do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?"* ²⁶*Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor*

reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? ²⁸ And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin ²⁹ yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. ³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? ³¹ Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ ³² For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But strive first for the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ “So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.”

Jesus builds here on the previous section of this sermon saying “therefore I tell you . . .” Jews as God’s people are reliant upon God. They believe that God provides for them. They are capable of trusting God and relying upon God. Yet, at the same time they are capable of worry and complaint. This was true during their journey out of Egypt through the wilderness to the promised land of Canaan. Jesus addresses the psychological state of worry of his audience and leads them to generate a more desirable state of faith and trust within themselves. He builds that state throughout this passage.

Jesus directs them to act on their belief that God is reliable. Likely they are worried about their physical survival, but Jesus leads them to imagine their lives free of

concerns regarding what they will eat and wear. He has them disassociate from their own situation and condition; “Look at the birds, and how they neither sow nor reap, yet your Heavenly Father feeds them.” Disassociation is a process of removing a person’s or audience’s consciousness outside of their body. He associates them by what he says next, referring to them as God’s children, “are you not of more value than they (the birds)?” Association is the process of bringing consciousness into the body. Their answer, unless they are mentally diminished can only be one thing; “yes.” Their self-definition is as “children of God.” Disenfranchised as many of his audience have been because of illness, demon possession, uncleanness or poverty, Jesus is reestablishing in them an awareness of themselves as children of God. Jesus leads his audience to disassociate a second time when he ask them to consider the lilies of the field and how they neither toil nor spin. Then he re-associates them telling them that as beautiful as the lilies are, they are impermanent and not worth as much as they, Jesus’ audience, is to God. He continues through the rest of the passage to challenge their state of worry and increase their state of faith.

Jesus emphasizes his audience’s identity as children of God and privileged by God as his children. He seeks to build in them a state of faith in place of worry, strengthening their belief in God as their Father and trust in him. He seeks to ingrain in them a sense of capability to trust God and to maintain a proper priority such that they put the Kingdom of God and his righteousness first. Putting the Kingdom of Heaven first all things his audience needs, food and clothing included will be provided. The importance of the Kingdom of God and its righteousness is emphasized by Jesus. It is primary to

him. The reality of the Kingdom of God is the context in which Jesus thinks talks and acts.

Consider your own congregation and its worries and anxieties about life. How, as a Preacher can you move them from a state of worry and anxiety to a state of faith and peace?

Exercise: Preaching Like Jesus 3

Sit back in your easy chair. Close your eyes. Take a deep breath. Relax. With every breath relax then times, 100 times, 1000 times more. Now listen in on Jesus preaching his message of releasing worry and increasing faith to his audience. Hear what he says and how he says it. Notice what he looks like and what he does as he preaches. Note his gestures and movements. Watch his breath fill his belly, lift his chest, lower his chest and contract his belly. See the impact of his words on his audience as they release their anxiety and worry and increase their faith. Notice their breathing slowing and deepening, their jaws dropping open, their eyes opening wider and their mouths curling up into a smile. Take a deep breath. Open your eyes. Close them. Relax deeply. Firmly rested in your chair, project yourself into the image of Jesus. See yourself, breathing into your belly and into your chest and out of your chest and out of your belly as you look compassionately upon your audience, smiling at them and loving them. Hear yourself speak, how you articulate every word, illustrate your point and drive your message home into the hearts of your audience members. Receive feedback from your audience about the effectiveness of your message as they release

their anxiety and worry and experience faith and peace just by the way they look and the aliveness in the air of the sanctuary.

Matthew 7

7“Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. ²For with the judgment you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. ³Why do you see the speck in your neighbor’s eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? ⁴Or how can you say to your neighbor, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ while the log is in your own eye? ⁵You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor’s eye. ⁶“Do not give what is holy to dogs; and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under foot and turn and maul you.”

Jesus has long before established rapport with his audience. No longer is he appealing to the identity and beliefs of his audience. Now he is addressing their behavior, that of judging others and focusing on the flaws of others. He directs them to stop judging others. He presents faith consequences for judgmental behavior. If someone judges, they are judged. If someone doesn’t judge they are not judged. If someone gives, they receive in the measure they give. He directs them to not focus on other’s flaws, at least not until one has addressed one’s own flaws. The impact of not-judging is that one isn’t judged in return. He directs them to not focus on the speck in their neighbor’s eye, but on the log in their own. Rather than judge others, put your own house in order.

The statement about giving what is holy to dogs and throwing one's pearls to swine seems out of place here. The Kingdom of Heaven is important. Here it is for the Jews, not for others. The teaching of the Kingdom of Heaven is holy. It is precious like pearls are precious. It's not meant for Gentiles. It's not meant to be given to people who are ill-prepared for it. But it is possible for someone to become a Jew; that is God-fearing and obedient to God's will and Law.

It is possible to hold the polarity and its accompanying tension before the congregation as a measure of where they are currently in their own behavior and guide them to shift their identification, adjust their belief, realize their capability and take action based upon new realization to accomplish their new aim as children of God, to bring forth God's Kingdom reality in everyday earthly life.

Consider your congregation and its members criticizing and judging others. How can you, as a preacher, interrupt this predilection and focus their attention on their own attitudes and behaviors?

Illustration: Conflict Resolution

Conflicts can occur between and among members of a community, family or group. Members of the group can have animosity towards others born of judgments they hold. To resolve such conflicts a common positive intention has to be defined. The members of the group who are in conflict need to define their positions. A meta-position needs to be defined. This position is disassociated from the parties of the conflict. Each party of the conflict needs to express their perception of the other. This process can be helped

along by a mediator. The positive intention and purpose of each party needs to be identified. From the meta-position a common-intention on a higher level that the conflicting parties share needs to be identified. Resources and capabilities that each party has, that would help the other parties accomplish their positive intentions and the desired goal, need to be identified. A solution needs to be identified, represented and integrated by each party. The solution can be imagined in past and future conflicts, interjecting the solution into the new situation and experiencing how it positively influences present events of the community's life.

We were in a conference in a local church. We began to speak about an older parishioner's severe criticism of children's behavior in the church. She was frequently complaining about children and their seeming unsupervised movement inside and outside of the church. After she was done with her complaint another woman exclaimed, "I am tired of your attitude towards the children of the church. All you do is complain about the children. I want children in the church." Both women were upset. I felt both of their frustration, anger and pain. The two women sat across from each other. I said to the first. You seem frustrated and angry about this." She replied, "I am not angry. I am worried. We have a lot of older people here who might be knocked down and get hurt. And the children could get hurt, too! They can fall from the balcony or run out into the street and get hurt." The second woman said, in a softer tone. "I didn't understand your concerns. I thought that you didn't like the kids. I responded, "I think what you have in common concern for the people in the church, the older members and the children. Both women nodded their heads. The first woman said, "I just don't want

to see anybody hurt. The second woman said, “We have such few children. I don’t want to see families with children discouraged from coming to church.” I asked the first woman what she thought. She said “I want kids in the church, too. I asked, “So where do we go from here.” The first woman said, “I’d like to see some more rules. I don’t think the kids should be running through the building. And when they go outside they should be supervised.” The second woman said, “I can accept some rules. And watching the kids more closely makes sense. But I don’t think anyone should be yelling at the kids like you do. The first woman responded “When I was a child . . .” The second woman laughed “When were you a child?” I said “Why don’t we turn this issue over to the Safe Sanctuary, Children’s Ministry and Senior Ministry teams and ask them to come up with some rules, supervisory guidelines and some guidelines for how the adults of the church talk to the kids and address problems? Everyone at the meeting thought that this was a good idea. In the meantime, let’s talk to the children about running in the building, make sure that we have enough supervision next Sunday and agree not to yell at children. If there’s a problem with a child talk to the child’s parent or the children’s program staff. Do you think that you can live with that this Sunday? The second woman responded, “I think that might work out for the long run. Let’s pray about this. O Holy God, Betty and Janet were so frustrated and angry with one another. The situation was red hot. They were actually yelling at one another! I didn’t know that these women could get so angry! But they sat down with one another. Betty shared her concern for the welfare of the seniors and the children. Janet shared hers about the children. And immediately after sharing their frustration the situation began to cool down. Both realized that they had similar concerns and both came to understand the

other's needs. And now a solution is in sight that meets both of their concerns and takes care of our elderly and our children. (Rub hands together). I look forward to seeing the steps the Safe Sanctuary, Children's Ministry and Senior Ministry take to make this church a safe place for children and seniors and a place where families with children are happy to attend. Amen.

. ⁷*"Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. ⁹Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? ¹⁰Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? ¹¹If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!"*

Jesus is talking here about access to the Kingdom of Heaven and knowledge of the Kingdom Heaven. He is telling his audience that if they search diligently they will find what they are seeking. If they knock on the door of heaven, the door will be opened to them. If they ask God for what they need, God will give them good things. And he will do this because they are God's children. Here Jesus is talking about the source of the Kingdom and the good things of the Kingdom. He is talking about God. He is talking about the identity of his audience as children of God. He is talking about their belief as children of God in God, in Jesus, in the Law and in the Prophets, and about the Kingdom of Heaven. He is talking about what his audience is capable of. They are capable of asking, searching, knocking, receiving, finding, and entering the Kingdom of

Heaven. And Jesus directs his audience what to do. Lastly he assures them that if they do these things God will provide.

The key to leading people to access the Kingdom of God as a state or a realm is to access it yourself. You need to know of what you speak. You need to live in the Kingdom of God. Otherwise you won't have any credibility. Jesus speaks to his audience as one who knows of what he speaks. Having been in the Kingdom of God you can describe it to others. You can speak of having asked, searched, knocked, received, found and entered. The map that you are giving to others has been followed and brought people to where it points.

Exercise: A Hero's Journey

Sit back in your easy chair. Close your eye, take a deep breath and relax. With each breath relax ten, twenty, fifty, one hundred times more. Now you have been on a journey. It has been long and arduous. There have been challenges and hardships along the way and there been accomplishments and awards. Recall those hardships and challenges. Give them a color and a word, "hard." Now watch the color fade and disappear falling further and further behind, so far behind that when the word "hard" is shouted it is silent. Yours has been a hero's journey. You have reached one summit after another and at the top of the summit you have enjoyed the perspective. You stand upon the peak and can see for miles and miles and your direction is clear. Now you have been promised a gift, a diamond studded golden cup, a cup not fashioned by the hands of man. The cup is perpetually filled by a golden elixir. And you are search for

this cup, looking forward to holding it in your hands, and lifting it up your lips, and sipping it and swallowing its warm liquor, down your throat, and into our belly until you are satisfied. The cup is near, it is here and it is within your reach. You can almost taste the elixir as it passes through your lips, into your mouth, down your throat, down your esophagus and into your intestines and your stomach. You anticipate its nourishment entering into your blood stream and traveling throughout your body and to your brain, activating the glands in your head and throughout your body. And you know as you are searching, you are finding, as you are knocking, the doorway is opening and everything you are asking, everything that is needed is being provided to you and experienced now.

¹²*“In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.”* ¹³*“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it.”* ¹⁴*“For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it.”*

Jesus addresses his audience here on the behavioral level, giving them to what is called the “golden rule;” “Do to others what you would have them do to you.” He contextualizes this statement “as the Law and the Prophets.” In sum or in a nutshell it’s the whole thing. Treat others the way you want to be treated. The impact of such behavior is that one is treated better and the world is made a better place. Jesus presents dichotomous imagery of two gates, one narrow and the other wide. The narrow gate includes a road that is hard, but it leads to life. The road that is wide includes an easy road, but it leads to destruction. Jesus provides his audience with a

choice, but the gate he values is obvious to his audience who want to follow him through it. The audience is privileged by Jesus as those who have found the narrow way, and presented by Jesus with the opportunity to enter through it. The impact of taking the narrow gate and doing the right thing is entering into the Kingdom of God.

The Preacher can emulate Jesus, holding up to his congregation a standard by which to live, and prodding them to actualize the standard in their lives. He offers them a choice of two roads, defining one as right and attractive and the other wrong and disastrous. He is taking advantage of a tacit agreement with his audience. Those who are there want to hear his message and make the right choice, however difficult that choice is and however reluctant they may be to take the steps necessary to get to where they want to go.

Exercise: Crossroads

Once upon a time, you came to a crossroad. To the left was a busy highway, bumper to bumper, speeding cars, trucks, buses and motor cycles, everyone in a hurry to get where they are going, everyday of their lives. There are signs along the highway but there's no time to stop and you ignore them. Above the tollbooth there is a sign "Highway to Nowhere," and there is a sign "Toll: Your Life." To the right was a highway, narrow, well-paved and less traveled. The sign on the toll reads "Highway to Heaven." The sign reads: "Toll-free." And there are stops along the way: Peace, Love, Joy, Kindness, Gratitude, Generosity and Self-Control and time to stop and enjoy these states. And you are able to take your time and enjoy each moment.

¹⁵“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸A good tree cannot bear bad fruit nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰Thus you will know them by their fruits.”

As Jesus nears the end of his sermon he issues a warning. Jesus’ audience obviously consists of seekers. When he is done with them they well may be attracted by other teachers and prophets. Jesus doesn’t say not to listen to other teachers and prophets. He tells them to beware of false prophets. He distinguishes between good prophets and bad prophet by their fruits. Good prophets produce good outcomes like good trees produce good fruit. False prophets produce bad outcomes like bad trees produce bad fruit. Jesus is addressing them on a behavioral level telling them to beware. These false prophets will come trying to appear like good ones, but they aren’t sheep but wolves in sheep’s clothing! Jesus is telling his audience that they have the capability of discernment and to use it.

As a Preacher you want to guide your audience to discern correctly, providing them with the guidelines by which to make their discernment. Their discernment is theirs to make, not yours. But you want to equip them to choose those who will help them forward on the righteous path the gospel prescribes. If they can internalize the standards Jesus, and you, give them, they will show appropriate distrust for those who are not trustworthy.

²¹*“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.”*²²*On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many deeds of power in your name?’*²³*Then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; go away from me, you evildoers.’*

²⁴*“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock.”*²⁵*The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock.*²⁶*And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand.”*²⁷*The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!”*²⁸*Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching,*²⁹*for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.”*

Words are obviously important to Jesus, but words without action are nothing. Jesus describes two kinds of followers, one who says “Lord, Lord” and does the will of God. The other says “Lord, Lord” and doesn’t do the will of God. The latter group may even prophesy, cast out demons, and do many things in Jesus’ name, but not do God’s will. It is those in the first group who will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but not the second. The first group will include those who heard what Jesus said and acted on them, whether immediately or after a while, the second those who heard Jesus’ word and didn’t act on them, even if they said at first that they would. The first group consists of

the wise people who build their houses on rock. When the rain fell, floods came, and winds blew and beat against the house, they stood. The second group consists of the foolish people who build their houses on sand. When the rain fell, floods came and the winds blew and beat against the house, it fell. What a way to end the sermon! Jesus leaves his audience with a faith choice. Apply what they just heard in their daily life and reap the benefits. Or fail to apply what they just heard and suffer the consequences.

Consider your own congregation. Are they putting into practice what they hear in your sermons or in their Bible Study? Are they incorporating the gospel in their everyday life? Are they the “Yes, yes, do nothing group” or are they the group that applies what they’ve heard and studied? Are they wise or foolish?

The source of all that Jesus taught was God. It was the Kingdom of Heaven, God’s Kingdom that Jesus was preaching. It was God’s Law. God was Jesus’ God; Jesus’ Father. And God was the audience’s God; the audience’s Father. Jesus presented God as the ultimate authority in everything he said and did. Jesus identity in this sermon was Messiah or Christ. Jesus was the law-giver; like Moses was the lawgiver and the prophets after Moses were law-givers and definers. The audience consisted of crowds of Jews from all over the region in a variety of states of being and need, all of whom were children of God, and all of them seekers after what they had not found elsewhere and found in Jesus. Solid in his own identity, Jesus addressed the identity of his audience, facilitating in them an increased self-identification as children of God.

Jesus believed in God, in himself as the Son of God and David, a Prophet and Messiah, and he believed in the law and the prophets and the Kingdom of God. The audience believed in God, that Jesus was a Teacher and a Prophet, in Moses and the Law and the Prophets, and had some inkling to what the Kingdom of Heaven was. Jesus believed in his audience. Jesus expressed his own belief in everything he did and addressed the beliefs of his audience, helping them to a stronger and productive belief in God, himself, and themselves

Jesus was a capable speaker, teacher, Preacher, healer and exorcist. He knew the Law and the Prophets and was able to extend its meaning and apply it and lead others to understand and apply it. He was capable of great rapport, compassion, empathy and connection with audience. He was capable of leading his audience to discover new insights. He was able to direct his audience to change states and behaviors. The audience was capable of listening, understanding, changing states, discerning, and applying what they heard. They were cable of trusting Jesus once he had rapport with him. Jesus' capability was expressed in everything he said and did and was really limitless. He addressed his audience own sense of capability, increasing their sense of capability to do what they needed to do to better live according to God's will.

Jesus spoke plainly, directly, and confidently in language his audience could understand. He presented his audience with choices and directions for living their lives consistent with God's will. He led them away from negative, less desirable states, toward positive, more desirable states. The audience listened attentively and respectfully throughout the sermon.

Jesus' sermon was quite impactful. When Jesus was done speaking, the crowds were astonished for he had spoken with authority unlike their scribes.

Overall, throughout the three chapters that constitute the "Sermon on the Mount," Jesus utilized a particular sensory language which spoke either to his own representational system. Jesus used 332 predicates in this sermon, 226 or 68% of them were kinesthetic or tactile, 57 or 17% were auditory, 23 or 7% were auditory-digital or neutral, 20 or 6% were visual, and 6 or 2% were gustatory. Note that for Dilts, most of the predicates Jesus used were auditory, the second most were visual, and only a few were kinesthetic (Dilts 2010). My count of predicates occur in similar amount in Luke's version of the Sermon on the Mount, the so called Sermon on the Plain. It is possible that Dilts (2010) was counting different speeches of Jesus other than the Sermon on the Mount.

Chapter 10: Applied Modeling

Modeling Jesus' Delivery of the Sermon on the Mount

So far we have considered a number of models of Jesus, any one of which would suffice as an adequate model. There are the models of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. There are models provided by Paul and writers of other biblical books. There are the Dilts, Gonzalez, Lewis, Bailey, MacArthur, Abrendorf, Brosend, Warren models, and now my model. In reality, the model you come up with will be yours. We are modeling Jesus' sermon delivery, not his content, although it is not truly possible to separate content from delivery. It is easier to explain this by emphasizing message delivery rather than sermon delivery. When I preach I want to deliver a particular message. My aim is to communicate that message. So how I construct the sermon matters, the sermon being the means by which I deliver the message. What words I choose matter. The linguistic and rhetorical devices I utilize matter. What stories I use matter and I construct them matters. The types of predicates I use matter. How I use conjunctions matter. Dilts in his modeling approach would break down the components of Jesus' preaching and consider them one by one and then bring them together in a systematic way. If I were to offer a course on preaching I would do that very thing. Here I want to emphasize however a holistic approach to modeling. In fact, Jesus' preaching has been broken down into chunks in the previous chapters. Now, it is time to bring it all together.

The Sermon on the Mount, Matthew chapters 5 through 7, is the first recording of Jesus' preaching or teaching in the Gospel of Matthew. Jesus was living in Capernaum of

Galilee at the time. Shortly after John the Baptist had been imprisoned Jesus began his preaching career. His proclamation was the same as John the Baptists, “Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven has come near (Matthew 4:17). He had just recruited his first disciples, Simon-Peter, Andrew, James and John (Matthew 4: 18-22). The Sermon on the Mount was not Jesus’ first sermon. He had been preaching throughout Galilee, teaching in the synagogues there and proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom, while curing every kind of sickness and disease. He had been preaching long enough to develop great notoriety throughout Syria, and all the sick were being brought to him. These included people afflicted with various illnesses and pain, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics whom he cured. Great crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and beyond the Jordan (Matthew 4:23-25). It is against this background that the Sermon on the Mount is set. We begin here by utilizing the first part of the Sermon on the Mount, the sections called the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12), the Similitudes (Matthew 5:13-16), and Relation of Christ to the Law (Matthew 5:17-20) to model Jesus as a Preacher.

Exercise: Acting As-If You are Jesus

I want you, in your imagination, to “act as if “you are Jesus. You are an itinerant Jewish Rabbi (teacher) in the first century Galilee. You can be a male or female version of Jesus. Notice what you look like, what you are wearing and how you are traveling around Galilee as Jesus. Find your sources and feel your connection to those sources as Jesus: God, Judaism, the Temple, the Law, the Prophets and the Writings, Joseph and Mary, David . . . Determine your identity as Jesus: Child of God, Child of Man,

Messiah, Rabbi, Preacher, healer . . . Consider what you are believing about God, yourself, others and the world . . . Consider, as Jesus, what you are capable of: preaching, teaching, healing the sick, driving out demons, raising the dead, walking on water, manifesting food and drink . . . You are only beginning your ministry as Jesus, but you are amassing a great following; at first, mainly people who are sick or possessed by demons or their family members; needy people. But now, many more from all over the region are following you most everywhere you go, some thanking you for what you had done for them, some hoping for what you might do for them, or say. Great crowds are gathering today. You are making your way up the mountain, your disciples following right behind you, the crowd settling down around where you were heading. And finding a spot where most everyone can see and hear you are sitting down. You take your seat and settle in, feeling yourself solid in that place, poised, prepared, anchored. You don't have many disciples as of yet; just Peter, Andrew, James and John. There will be eight more later, men, then women, then ninety more, and after you die, millions down through the ages. Disciples are coming to you each time you are speaking.

Your disciples are taking their seats just as you are prepared to take yours. You close your eyes, and you settle yourself, and then you open your eyes and are looking out at the crowd, seeing them all at once but like you are looking into each of their eyes, their hearts and their minds. You are studying them intently and as you do you are confidently understanding their needs. They are waiting in silence anticipating what you are about to say. The crowd is a varied lot, gathered from near and far, some wanting

to hear your already famous message of the Kingdom of Heaven, most drawing close to you wanting to be healed. They are sick, injured, or possessed of demons . . . physically ill, mentally ill, spiritually uneasy . . .

Then you break the silence. You say, “Blessed are you who are poor in spirit, for yours is the Kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you who mourn, for you will be comforted. Blessed are you who are meek, for you will inherit the earth. Blessed are you who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for you will be filled. Blessed are you who are merciful, for you will receive mercy. Blessed are you who are pure in heart, for you will see God. Blessed are you peacemakers, for you will be called children of God. Blessed are you who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for yours is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

As the people are listing they are hearing you speaking to them in the very condition of life they are finding themselves in. Some in the crowd are down-trodden, hopeless, and lost. Some are poor in spirit. Some are materially poor. Some don’t think highly of themselves. Some are sick. Some are possessed by demons and evil spirits. Some are blind, some deaf, some dumb, and some lame. Some are lepers and unclean. Some are outcast. Some are mourning, stricken by grief, suffering the loss of loved ones or families. Some are lonely. Some can’t find work. Some have lost status. Some are meek. Some are weak. Most are being dominated by the powerful of the world. Some are being brought to their knees by the stresses and demands their world

imposes upon them. Some are hungering and thirsting after righteousness. They have been maltreated or have seen the mistreatment of others. They are committed to seeing justice done for themselves and others. Some are not satisfied by the mores of the world they live in. Some are merciful. They care about others, forgive them their sins and debts, and seek to help others. Some are generous to the needs of others. Some are peacemakers. Curse at these, even raise a hand to strike them, and they smile at you. Where conflicts exist they seek to reconcile differences. Some are persecuted for righteousness. They do what was right even as others do wrong and pay a price for it. Still, they stick to their convictions. Some are reviled, persecuted, slandered, and accused falsely because they are true to God. You are empathizing with each person in your audience, feeling their pain and understanding their circumstance. They know that you are loving them and understanding them. They are feeling that you are speaking directly to them. They are feeling hope. You are leading them from their present state to a vision of a future more desirable state, a faith promise. Those who are poor in spirit now will later possess the Kingdom of heaven. Those who are mourning now will later be comforted. Those who are meek now will later inherit the earth. Those who are hungering and thirsting after righteous now will later be filled. Those who are merciful to others today will later receive mercy. Those who are purifying their hearts now will see God later. Those who are peacemaking today will later be called children of God. Those who are suffering persecution because they are doing the right thing now will later possess the Kingdom of heaven. Those who are experiencing revilement, persecution, slander and false accusations for their beliefs

and relationship with God now will have much to rejoice about when they receive their reward in heaven.

You are talking about them and to them about the very same time. And you are saying to them now: "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled underfoot. And you are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lamp stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

You have their attention now as you are stating your belief about them, about their identity, about their worth and about what they are capable of when they realize their identity and worth and goodness and act on that basis. You are generating great rapport with them, greater than any rapport that you felt before and that rapport is increasing. You are feeling a powerful flow of energy between them, like golden white energy is streaming out of your third eye to theirs and bursting out of your heart to theirs. And you are imaging them, even if they have not imaged them-selves before, they are now, an image in line with the image you have of yourself, as a child of God and inheritor of the Kingdom, as a self-actualizing, God-realizing human being, golden light gathering at the crown of your head, light pulsating down into your third eye, violet, pulsating down to your throat, blue, pulsating down into your heart, gold, pulsating down into your solar plexus, green, pulsating down into your belly, coral, and pulsating down to you perineum, red and rising up your spine to the crown, a complete circle of white

light surrounding you. And as the result they are transforming. It is like they are tasting their own saltiness and seeing and feeling their light beaming out from deep within them. Whatever they were before this moment they are now salt of the earth and light of the world. This is who they are in this moment and they don't want to lose their saltiness or cover their luminosity. This is what they are becoming more of. Your very consciousness, your very self is salt of the earth and light of the world and as you speak that consciousness is transferred to your audience. You are salting the earth and lighting the world, salting your audience and salting your audience.

And they, being impacted by you and your preaching as they are being impacted, are realizing that they are capable, too, of being just like you, salt of the earth, light to the world, a city on the hill that cannot be hid, capable of influencing and transforming the world for the good. They can have what you are saying and do what you are doing, just as you are having what Jesus is saying and Jesus is doing as you are saying and doing.

And then, referencing your own mission as Messiah you are saying to your audience: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the Kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of heaven."

Your authority is clarifying as you speak, aligning as you are with God's Law and God's Prophets, consistent with them rather than opposed, congruent. You feel yourself, strong like a rock, energized like there is energy gushing up in you like a stream of eternal life, one with God, God's Law, God's Prophets and Christ Jesus, connected, anchored. And at the very same time you are establishing yourself as above the Law, as the Law itself, capable of changing it or abolishing it. And you are reassuring those in the audience who are concerned and even threatened by your authority, that you are indeed respecting and heeding the scripture, the history and tradition, and the law that has been handed down to you and them and is being handed down to you and to them. You are recasting the Law and the Prophets and extending them so that their intent is being accomplished and fulfilled, taking them to their next logical level of expression and attainment. And in the part of Moses and the Prophets who preexisted as a type of you and as a type of Christ, you are removing from your audience all excuse from perfect adherence to the Law and word of God, obedience that exceeds the most pious people among them. You are expecting, even command, perfection from your audience, something they don't believe possible to attain, yet they are not intimidated by you because you believe in them and what they are capable of when they believe in who they are and whose they are. You see them for who they are as transient human beings but you see them for who they really are becoming and in the end are. You are holding that image of them, for them, before them, the finishing line that they are starting towards, approaching, reaching and passing, that trophy being a new experience of themselves wearing the golden crown, Child of God, all-grown-up inheritor of God's Kingdom.

The audience is being impressed, with your message of the importance of the Law and the Prophets and by your presenting, embodying and modeling God's Word made flesh; the Law and the Prophets. You are defining yourself as the present and full expression of the Law and the Prophets. You are generating credibility and authority. Your charisma is becoming Godly.

You are, to your audience, a type of Moses; a Prophet, a Leader, a Law-giver, but you are greater than Moses and all the Prophets that came before. You are establishing for your audience the standard by which they can enter into a new consciousness, a new way of being human, that being the Kingdom of God. And in speaking of the righteousness characteristic of the Kingdom of God you are epitomizing of it, modeling it as you speak, so that the audience attracted to it can be receiving it, experiencing it, and replicating it in their lives. There is power in your presenting and in your speaking, the presence and power of God the source of your credibility and authority. And as you are sitting, you are feeling your identity, a type of Moses: Prophet, Leader, Law-giver and a type of Christ: Teacher, Messiah, Child of God, believing that God's Kingdom has come and is coming, God's will is done and is being done in you and those to whom you are speaking.

Exercise: Peter Becoming a Christ

Take a break in your easy chair. Close your eyes. Breathe deeply with every breath relaxing ten times, one hundred times, one thousand times more. Now, imagine now that you are a type of Peter, seeking after truth. Feel yourself like Peter, a rock. Touch

your left knee with your left hand and keep it there. You are a disciple, following Jesus. You are on the path, becoming, stepping forward, falling backward and seeking guidance from scriptures, from teachers, from authorities, in prayer and consultations. What color is Peter? Let us say that Peter is green, four-leaf clover green. You are a green four-leaf clover rock. You believe but sometimes you doubt. You say that you will do something but sometimes you don't do what you say you will do. You discover a truth but fail to apply it. You have good intentions but . . . Release your left hand from your left knee. Open your eyes, close them. Take a deep breath. Now imagine that you are Christ. Touch your right knee with your right hand and keep it there. You might put on your Moses-Elijah-Jesus robe and feel yourself like Christ, a lighted lamp. You are a spiritual master, one with God. You have found what you are looking for and are found. Your will is God's will. You are steadfast on the path having had reached its end but returned to help others find their way. You have integrated all that you have ever learned from scriptures, traditions, experiences, teachers, authorities and from prayer, meditation and conferences. You continue to learn easily and effectively from every source. What color is Christ? Let us say that Christ is yellow, sun yellow. You are a brilliant sun yellow lit lamp. You believe and live your beliefs. You say what you mean and mean what you say. If you say you will do something you will do it. You successfully apply gospel truth in every life situation. When you intend something you manifest it, one hundred percent of the time. Release your right hand from your knee. Your intentions are all good. Open your eyes, close them. Take a deep breath . . . Now touch your left knee with your left hand. Release it. Recall Peter. Four-leaf clover green rock, disciple, seeking, path, good intention but . . . Open your eyes. Close them.

Breathe. Touch your right knee with your right hand. Release it. Recall Jesus. Brilliant sun-yellow lit lamp, master, found, end, all good. Open your eyes, close them. Take a deep breath . . . Now touch your left knee with your left hand. Release it. Recall Peter. Four-leaf clover green rock, disciple, seeking, path, good intention but . . . Open your eyes. Close them. Breathe. Touch your right knee with your right hand, Release it. Recall Jesus. Brilliant sun-yellow lit lamp, master, found, end, all good. Open your eyes. Close them. Breathe. Touch your left knee with your left hand and hold. Think Peter, clover green rock, disciple. Touch your right knee with your right hand and hold. Think Jesus, brilliant sun-yellow lit lamp, master. Release both hands. Touch your left knee with your left hand. Think Peter, clover green rock, disciple. Release your hand. Touch your right knee with your right hand. Think Jesus, brilliant sun-yellow lit lamp, master, found, end, all good. Release your hand. Touch your left knee with your left hand and think Peter. Release your hand. Touch your left knee with your right hand and think Jesus, brilliant sun-yellow lit lamp, master, found, end, all good. Touch your left knee with your left hand and think Peter. Release your hand. Touch your left knee with your right hand and think Jesus. Release your hand. Touch your left knee with your right hand and think Jesus. Jesus! Now as you are ready return from your break as we continue our journey through the Sermon on the Mount.

As you are speaking to the crowd you are speaking to them like you know them, and like you are choosing them to follow you and be your disciples, like they are capable of trusting you and what you say and they are capable of obeying what you tell them to do. You are speaking to their current level of belief in God's Word, in the Law and the

Prophets, and to their ability to uphold and keep the Law and live a righteous life, yet with absolute faith in their ability to believe and act in perfect accordance with what you are telling them. You are knowing that you are telling them something that they already know deep in their hearts, as what they know exists already in their hearts, written their long ago.

As God's people, they know God, know that God is their source, and know that God is their Law-giver, and they have a covenant with God, and that their identity as people of God lies in their acknowledgement and submission to God and God's authority, even to the extent of sacrificing their lives for God's glory.

In the above section you have been observing the characteristics of those who comprised Jesus' audience. In looking back at this section you are, as Jesus, generating rapport with your audience. You are connecting with each member of your audience in their existential condition. You are loving them and they feel you loving. They are experiencing you speaking directly to them. You are bringing them hope. He are leading them from their present state to a vision of a future more desirable state, a faith promise. Those who are poor in spirit now are possessing the Kingdom of heaven, those who were mourning are being comforted now, those who were meek now are inheriting the earth, and those who hungering and thirsting after righteous are filling with righteousness. And those who are being merciful to others today are receiving mercy. Those who are pure in heart are seeing God. Those who are peacemaking today are being recognized as children of God. Those experiencing persecution because they are doing the right things are possessing the Kingdom of heaven. Those who are

experiencing being reviled, persecuted, slandered and falsely accused for their beliefs and relationship with God are rejoicing and they are being rewarded in heaven. Jesus is creating a propulsion system in his audience in which his audience is internally motivated to move forward from undesirable states to more desirable states. And they are experiencing what they are promised now. And as they are progressing in realizing this Kingdom heaven on earth, as it is being incarnated in them, they are experiencing the Kingdom reality more and more fully. They are discovering who they are and who God is more and more.

Exercise: Generating the Kingdom of God

Let's take another break. Be seated in your easy chair. Sit back, close your eyes, breathe and relax ten times, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty times more than before, one hundred times, one thousand times . . . put the index fingers of both of our hands to your thumbs . . . one million times relaxing . . . deeply . . . perfect . . . now. Release your index fingers. Recall your being in the Kingdom of the world, your current life. Touch your left knee with your left hand. Keep your left hand there on your left knee. Recall the conditions of your life, the stresses, the worries and the concerns of your life, the injustices of this world, your level of debt, the sickness and diseases of this world as you experience them. Feel the burdens of this world weighing heavily upon you like a ball and chain, limiting your movement and your options. What color is this kingdom? Let's say "Dark Gray." It is a dark grey, cast iron ball and chain weighing you down and restricting you. And you hear a song in the back ground:

Sittin' down by my window,

lookin' out at the rain.

Lord, Lord, Lord,

sittin' down by my window,

lookin' out at the rain.

somethin' came along,

grabbed a hold of me

and it felt just like a ball and chain.

That's exactly what it felt like,

just dragging me down.”

Now open your eyes, close them and take a deep breath, release. Imagine now the Kingdom of God, your future life. Imagine an ideal world, stress-free, worry-free, just, debt-free, sickness-free and fear-free where the yoke is easy and the burden is light like a feather. You are being lifted up on the back of a giant eagle. What color is this kingdom; this new reality? Let's say that its color is “Brilliant Sun-Yellow.” You are being lifted up on the back of a giant brilliant sun-yellow eagle that is symbolized by a brilliant sun-yellow eagle's feather. You hear a song playing in the background: “I'm

gonna fly like an eagle... to the sea, fly like an eagle let my spirit carry me, I'm gonna fly right into the future. Time keeps on slipping ... slipping ... slipping into the future."

Open your eyes, close them and take a deep breath. Touch your left knee with your left hand and hold it as you think "Kingdom of this world, dark grey, cast iron ball and chain, burdens, weighing you down, stresses, worries, concerns, debts, injustice, sickness and disease, dragging you down." Release your left hand from your knee.

Open your eyes, close them, take a deep breath. Touch your right knee with your right hand and hold it as you think "Kingdom of God, giant brilliant sun-yellow eagle feather . . . 'fly like an eagle,' ideal world, stress-free, worry-free, just, debt-free, sickness-free, fear-free, yoke easy, burden light like a feather, lifted up on the back of a giant eagle. Release your right hand from your right knee.

Open your eyes, close them, take a deep breath. Touch your left knee with your left hand and hold it as you think "Kingdom world, dark grey, cast iron ball and chain, burdens, down." Release your left hand from your knee.

Open your eyes, close them, take a deep breath. Touch your right knee with your right hand and hold it as you think "Kingdom God, giant brilliant sun-yellow eagle feather, burden-free, light, lifted . . . Release your right hand from your right knee.

Open your eyes, close them, take a deep breath. Touch your left knee with your left hand and hold it as you think "Kingdom world, dark grey, cast iron ball and chain," Release your left hand from your knee.

Touch your right knee with your right hand and hold it as you think “Kingdom God, giant brilliant sun-yellow eagle feather. Release your right hand from your right knee.

Touch your left knee with your left hand and think “world, grey ball chain.”

Touch your right knee with your right hand and think, God, gold feather free.”

Touch your left knee with your right hand. Hold it there and say ““Kingdom of God, giant brilliant sun-yellow eagle feather . . . ‘fly like an eagle,’ ideal world, stress-free, worry-free, just, debt-free, sickness-free, fear-free, yoke easy, burden light like a feather, lifted up on the back of a giant eagle. Release your hand.

Touch your left knee with your right hand and think. “Kingdom God, giant brilliant sun-yellow eagle feather, burden-free, light, lifted.” Release your hand. Touch your left knee with your right hand and think. “Kingdom God.”

You are speaking to your audience about their state and you are leading them to change their state. They are changing as you are talking. They are entranced by your surprising message of hope and hanging on your every word. You are making faith promises to your audience; promises that they are realizing if they continue to listen and heed what you are saying. You are speaking to your audience’s identity; the different identities of your audience members. By sleight of mouth you are reframing their present conditions and wants into something quite desirable and positive, and generating motivation in them for something better.

We turn now to the remaining sections of Matthew. In these sections, Matthew 5:21-26, 5:27- 32, 5:33-42, and 5:43-48, we observe how Jesus engages ancient Jewish Law in contemporary situations that are relevant to his audience. We continue in the style we began above, you assuming the role of Jesus, preaching to your audience. Remember how you look, sitting as you in front of your audience, wearing your Moses-Elijah-Jesus white robe, radiating divine energy and light from both beyond you and deep within you outward to your audience.

You are saying to your audience: “You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not murder’; and ‘whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.’” The audience is nodding their heads in approval. It is true. That is the Law. You have taken your audience back into their collective memory, into their common life story, to that time long ago when Moses brought them the Law from Mount Sinai. And as they are remembering Moses and the Law he proclaimed, your rapport and credibility with your audience is increasing, and you are leading them into uncharted territory, like Moses led their ancestors out of Egypt, through the wilderness and towards the Promised Land. And you are saying “But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the Council; and if you say, ‘You fool,’ you will be liable to the hell of fire. So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser

may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.” This isn’t what your audience expected. You have lured them in. But now, you are redefining the rules of life. You are telling them that not only must they not murder, they are liable for judgment for being angry, for holding grudges, and for insulting others. You are telling them that before they can make their sin offering to God and obtain forgiveness for their sins they must remedy their relationship with whomever they have conflict. And you are authoritative in saying this. When you say, “but I say” you are establishing yourself as an authority higher than Moses. You are acting the part of the definitive and final Law-giver.

Exercise: Finding Your Authority

Be seated in your easy chair. . Put your index fingers together with the thumbs of both your hands. Sit back, close your eyes, breathe and relax. Find your authority as a preacher of the gospel of the Kingdom of God. What is the source of your authority? God, Jesus, the Spirit. How do you find your authority? Imagine a holy mountain in front of you, the Mount Sinai of Moses, the Transfiguration mountain of Jesus and go up that mountain with Moses and Jesus. And at the top of the mountain encounter God in all God’s glory as a burning bush, as naked Being and Loving Father and receive your authority. Take your authority. Receive it from Moses. Receive it from Jesus. Receive it from God. Moses and Jesus are laying hands on you and telling you “receive the Holy Spirit” and “take your authority.” And they are placing a red stole over your shoulder and saying “my yoke is easy my burden is light.” Who are you that is receiving this

authority? And you say to yourself: “I AM a child of God. I AM a chosen one. I AM a disciple of Jesus. I AM a preacher of the Gospel of Jesus. I AM a teacher of the Gospel of Jesus. I AM one with Jesus and one with God. I AM in the Spirit of Life. I AM who I AM. I am authorized to preach this gospel of Jesus. I am authorized to teach it. I am empowered to preach and teach it. What do you believe about yourself as preacher, disciple, Child of God? I believe that I am authorized, empowered and capable of preaching and teaching the Gospel of Jesus . In fact, it is what I am doing.

And although the crowd gathered before you is not a crowd of disciples, but seekers, you are treating them like they are disciples and friends. And you are assuming that you are covenanted with them to preach to them and teach them how to reach their next level of consciousness, their next stage of cognitive-moral development, and bring them into this reality you call the Kingdom or Reign of God. That covenant was made with you and God when you went up the Holy Mountain. And you are believing that your audience is capable of taking this step and conform their thinking, feelings, and behaviors to this new way of being.

And you are saying to your audience, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’” Your audience knows that adultery is wrong. They are nodding their heads in agreement while they consider all the exceptions to the Law. And having obtained agreement from them that adultery is wrong, you are saying, “But I say to you that every man who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart and every woman who looks at a man with lust has already committed

adultery with him in her heart.” And where before the physical act of adultery was wrong now the very thought of adultery is wrong. And they have a new sense of responsibility for their thinking, feelings, and actions. And in case, they are unaware of the consequences of their thoughts, feelings and actions, you are saying to them “If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.” And you are taking this a step further. You are saying to your audience, “It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce. Whoever divorces her husband let her give him a certificate of divorce.’” Again, your audience is nodding their head in approval. This is the Law. But then you say to them “But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of infidelity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries divorced woman commits adultery.” Your expectations of your audience are higher than Moses’ expectation of his. And your authority over them is greater. You are establishing yourself as greater than Moses. You are commanding them to stay married. This is something that they can do and you expect them to. They are responsible. The consequences of a wandering eye and lustful heart are adultery and divorce.

And you are saying to your audience, “You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.’” Your audience knows that swearing falsely is wrong and against the law. They

are nodding their heads again in agreement. You are saying to them, “But I say to you ‘Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Yes, indeed, do not even swear over your own mother’s grave. But I say to you, ‘It is folly to swear at all.’” And then, with full confidence that what you are directing them to is right, and in their ability to follow your command, you are telling them what you expect of them; “Let your word be ‘Yes, Yes’ or ‘No, No’; anything more than this comes from the evil one.” Their word is good enough. And they answer, “Yes, Yes” or “No, No.”

You are saying to your audience “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’” And everyone in your audience agrees with you one hundred percent. They are nodding their heads. But then, having obtained their agreement, and as the result even greater rapport, you are saying to them “But I say to you ‘Do not resist an evildoer.’” You are taking them to a new way of dealing with the violent oppression that exists all around them. “Submit to the offender. If he strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other to him. If he wants to sue you and take your coat, give him your cloak as well. If he forces you to walk a mile, go a second mile. If someone begs or borrows from you, give what you’re being asked for.” Whereas before your audience lived in a cycle of cause and effect you are teaching them how to disengage themselves from that cycle. You are appealing to the Law of Moses to obtain agreement from your audience before leading them to a deeper and more expansive understanding and application of the law. No longer shall your audience exact revenge according to the

nature of the crime, however legal it was for them to do so in the past. Violence begets violence. Peace begets peace. You are engaging your audience in beginning a new cycle in place of the old one. The Kingdom of God you are preaching is a peaceable one.

You are striking at the very identity of your audience as people of God, subject to Moses and the Law he promulgated. By associating yourself with Moses you are generating amazing personal charisma and rapport. You are the New Moses, greater than Moses and your audience is subject to you as Law-giver. Your audience is now believing in you. They are now trusting you and obeying your commands. In obtaining this stature with your audience you can command them. And they are ready to carry out the commands you make of them.

And you are saying to your audience “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’” Again, you have your audience’s unanimous agreement and generated even more rapport with them. They are already committed to strive to love their neighbor. And without a doubt, they hate their enemy. But, as before, you point your audience to a higher commitment: “But I say to you, ‘Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?’” The commitment you are pointing your audience to is to love

like God loves. God's love is perfect. It is extended to all people under all circumstances. You are saying to your audience, "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." You are leading your audience to believe something that they haven't before, that they are capable of changing for good and of helping others to change for the good if they so choose. And you are equipping your audience to do what they are capable of doing, to utilize their God-given abilities for the good of the Kingdom.

You are exacting improvement out of your audience and extension of their understanding and application of the law of love. Indeed, you are expanding upon the Law given by Moses, and making in its place a greater Law, a Law of Love. And you are believing that your audience is capable of loving where before they were justified in hating. They are capable of approximating the perfect love of God in their lives, and by their thoughts, feelings and actions, transform the world. You are challenging your audience to change behaviors, capabilities, beliefs, and identity and their understanding of God. You are expecting your audience to be perfect in love as God is perfect in love, and you are a flesh and blood example of how to do this. Intention is a powerful state. It is a necessary state for achieving your goals or desired outcomes. However, intention is not sufficient (Hoag 2014; Dilts 1996; Bandler and Grinder 1976; Bandler and Grinder 1979; Dilts, Grinder, Bandler and DeLozier, 1980; Dilts 1990; Dilts 1995). A goal or desired outcome will not be accomplished without first establishing good enough conditions for its realizations. When the conditions are ideal, the goal well stated and outcome well defined, you will produce fruit or manifest the desired outcome.

Exercise: Forgiveness

Be seated in your easy chair. . Put your index fingers together with the thumbs of both your hands. Sit back, close your eyes, breathe and relax. In front of you is a large screen television. You have a remote control in your right hand. You have total control of the image and sound on the screen via your remote control. You can make the image larger or smaller within the confines of the screen and raise and lower the volume within the limitations of the speakers. You can brighten or dull the colors. You can bring an image into focus or out of focus. You can intensify or cause to fade any sensory. The remote has a unique galvanic skin reader and you have controls that allow you increase or decrease a wide spectrum of experiences like pain, stress, joy, excitement and relaxation.

Recall a person that you have a deeply held resentment towards. You not only are angry at this person you hate this person. You see this person on the screen. See what the person looks like, listen to what he says and observe his actions that fuel your hatred. Notice the color of your hatred for this man. Let's say that it is blood curdling red. Notice the shape of the resentment, anger and hatred. Let's say that it is a sharp edged disk. And let's call him a name. Let's say that it is "Bully." Project on to the screen a voice over that represents your thoughts about this man and expresses your resentment, anger and hate. Turn the volume up so that you hear your every thought loud and clear. Notice what you feel towards this man and what you want to do. Project onto the screen is a subsection of the screen an image of what you look like and feel like, resentful, anger and hating. See yourself exactly as you look, the resentment,

anger and hatred expressed in your face, your breathing and your body. See a blood curdling red sharp edged disk named Bully. Now holding your controls turn down the volume on his words and sounds and your thoughts. Now cause the image of the man to fade out of focus so that he is not recognizable. See the blood curdling red sharp edged disk named Bully and drain the disk of its color so that what remains is a dull gray, smooth the edge of the disk so that it dull, shrink down the disk to the size of a marble and rename "Bully" to "Silly." And as you look at Silly I want you to laugh at him.

Turn the television off, turn it back on. Change the channel. Recall a person that you have a deeply held appreciation towards. You not only appreciate this person, you enjoy this person and you love this person. See this person on the screen. See what this person looks like, listen to what he says and observe his actions that fuel your love. Notice the color of your love for this person. Let's say that it is nerve calming blue. Notice the shape of your appreciation, enjoyment and love. Let's say that it is a soft heart shaped pillow. And let's call this person a name. Let's say that it is Lovey-dovey. Project on to the screen a voice over that represents your thoughts about this person and expresses your appreciation, enjoyment and love. Turn the volume up so that you hear your every thought loud and clear. Notice what you feel towards this person and what you want to do. Project onto the screen in a subsection of the screen an image of what you look like and feel like, appreciative, joyful and loving. See yourself exactly as you look, appreciation, enjoyment and love expressed in your face, your breathing and your body. See a soft nerve calming blue heart-shaped pillow named lovey-dovey. Now holding your controls tune the volume on his words and sounds and your thoughts

so that you hear them clearly and turn them down a little so that you can hear them and remember them subliminally. Now cause the image of the person to come into a clearer focus so that you can recognize it immediately. See the soft nerve calming blue heart-shaped pillow and see the person squeezing it and putting their head on it. Turn on the 4D device on your controls and see the soft nerve calming blue heart-shaped pillow, so real you can take it in your own hands, squeeze it, place it against your heart and put your head on it. And in your sweetest voice, call out the name of the soft nerve calming blue heart-shaped pillow.

Turn off your television and turn it back on. Turn it to the station with the program about the person you hate. And as the screen opens you see a blood curdling red sharp edged disk named Bully and feel resentment, anger and hate. Turn down the volume, fade out the image, drain out the color of the disk, dull its edges, shrink it down to a marble and call it silly.

Now change the channel to the station with the program about the person you love. See the soft nerve calming blue heart-shaped pillow, turn up the volume to your appreciative, joyful and loving thoughts, bring into focus the person you love, increasing your feelings of appreciation, enjoyment and love and turning on the 4-D so you can hold the soft nerve calming blue heart-shaped pillow, so real you can take it in your own hands, squeeze it, place it against your heart and put your head on it.

Change the channel back to the program hate, blood red, sharp, Bully, drained, dulled, shrunk, silly. Change the channel back to the program love, nerve blue, soft, Lovey-

dovey. Back to hate. Back to love. Now pick up your phone, call you cable provider and tell them to cancel the hate station. Now turn on the hate station: Signal lost. Turn on the love station: Lovey-dovey.

You continue masterfully generating great rapport with your audience. You are creating personal charisma by associating himself with Moses and in the tradition of the Torah and Prophets. You are establishing in yourself authority greater than Moses, even as one who embodies and exemplifies the Law itself in your person. You are taking scripture and interpreting it in a way that supports a perspective not present before in the Scripture, making a leap to a new morality. You are obtaining agreement with his audience and then leading them to a deeper comprehension and broader application of the Law to contemporary issues. You are lifting your audience to a higher level of cognitive-moral development and greater awareness of and responsibility for their thinking, feelings, and behaviors.

We turn now to chapter six of Matthew and the practical concerns of almsgiving, prayer, forgiveness, fasting, wealth and worry. We continue in the style we began above, you assuming the role of Jesus, preaching to your audience. Remember how you look, sitting as you in front of your audience, wearing your Moses-Elijah-Jesus white robe, radiating divine energy and light from both beyond you and deep within you outward to your audience.

You are saying to your audience, "Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. So

whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites (gesture away from yourself to your left) do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms (gesture to your audience), do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

Your audience is giving of what they have earned and possessed. You are not concerning yourself with this. It is one of the things God’s people do. It is part of the lifestyle that garners eternal reward. What is concerning you is how some people of God make a show of their giving. They want credit for it. They are concerned with how they appear to other people. You are adjusting the attitudes of your audience, calling their attention to a correct motivation for almsgiving – humility, sincerity, compassion and generosity. You are creating a contrast. On one hand are the pious. On the other are the hypocrites. You are inviting your audience to join the ranks of the pious. In doing so, they are seeing the long-term consequence of their piety - reward in heaven, and the long-term consequence of hypocrisy - absence of reward. The pious are building up treasure in heaven. When they die they have everything. The hypocrites are getting their ego polished, their self-image stroked, and their reputations told about. When they die they have nothing. You are modeling almsgiving. Your selfless, generosity is becoming evident in what you say and do.

You are saying to your audience, “Whenever you pray, do not be like those hypocrites (gesture away from you to the left); for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues

and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray (gesture to audience), go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do (gesture to your left); for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

You are continuing to contrast the pious people of God with the hypocrites (gesture to the left). “It is important that you pray. But the prayer of the pious is internal, secret, personal, and relational (gesture towards self). It is genuine, meaningful, and to the point (gesture towards self). It is respectful towards God (gesture towards self). The prayer of the hypocrite (gesture to left) is for appearance sake, public and pretentious, even irrelevant and contrived. It is disconnected from God and disingenuous.

Prayer is essential for God. You pray and so you know the power of authentic prayer. It is part of your identity and your heritage. And you are open to learn about prayer. After all, those hypocrites (gesture to left) have modeled inferior, even useless prayer.

You are saying, “Pray then in this way: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one.” You are praying this

prayer to God in the presence of your audience, they watching you pray and overhearing your address of God.

You are saying, “If you forgive others their trespasses your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” You are establishing a condition, “if you forgive others, then God will forgive you.”

You are saying, “And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

You are continuing to contrast the practices of the pious people of God and the hypocrites. “Fasting is an important spiritual discipline for approaching God and preparing for a spiritually significant moment. You as a pious person fasts but keeps quiet about it. You don’t look like you’re is fasting. The hypocrite calls attention to himself as to appear spiritually superior to others, or uses his fasting as an excuse for not doing other things. You do all things towards God.

You are saying, “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

You are capturing the imagination of your audience around the dichotomous imagery of treasure in heaven versus treasure on earth, the treasure in heaven more desirable, secure and lasting than the treasure on the earth. You are recognizing the dilemma your audience faces. Heaven is their true or ultimate home. Earth is where they are for the time being. The spirit and spiritual have priority over the body and physical. But the demands and desires of the body and physical world are quite consuming and seem all important. People want comfort, pleasure and luxury. They want treasures. They want things. They come to love the body and the physical and the things of the world and their own worth is determined by what they have. And while this is happening, the value of the spirit and spiritual is lost. One's eye is not on heaven and life there, but on accumulating comfort, pleasure, and luxury here. One's vision is clouded by the material and desire for it. One becomes a slave to sense desire and material accumulation, neglecting, even punishing one for the sake of the other. While you recognize this, you are leading them to desire that which is spiritual over that which is material.

Exercise: Building Up Treasure in Heaven

Take a seat in your easy chair. We have some work to do, but it is quick and easy work. Close your eyes. Put the index fingers and thumbs of each hand together. Now relax deeply. In front of you is piled treasure, half of it are earthly treasures, half of them are heavenly treasures. You can only take ten treasures with you to heaven. The rest you have to leave behind behind you. You need to place ten earthly treasures in the dump as this creates room for heavenly treasures on the conveyer-belt. Put the ten

earthly treasures in a place to your left, “the Dump.” The treasures for heaven are put, to your right, on a conveyer belt that will take your treasurers to the room set aside for you in heaven. Earthly treasures cannot go to heaven. They cannot exist there. They just burst into flame in heaven’s atmosphere. The one’s you don’t choose just stay behind on earth. Your job is to sort in five minutes the ten things that are going to heaven. You can write these things down to help you sort. These are like the last five minutes of your life! Okay start sorting. Feel what it is like to place certain items in the dump and onto the conveyer belt. Know that you will enjoy your heavenly treasures when you get there.

In my dump I placed all my houses, all my jobs, all my income, my degrees, my cars, my vacations, my ego, my pride, my clothing and my comforts. On my conveyer built I placed love, good deeds, learning, my relationship with God, my relationships with others, contentment, freedom, growth, peace and joy.

You are saying to your audience “The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!” You are contrasting the images of the unhealthy eye and the healthy eye, the healthy eye more desirable and the health of the body and the experience of light or darkness being determined by the health of the eye.” And you are challenging your audience to a healthy outlook, a clean lens and a clear perception, untarnished by worldly and demonic influences.

Exercise: Healthy Vision

Take a seat in your easy chair. We have some more work to do, but it is quick and easy work. Close your eyes. Put the index fingers and thumbs of each hand together. Now relax deeply. You have entered the heavenly optometrist's office. Sometimes your vision is healthy. Sometimes it is unhealthy. You are sitting in the patient's chair in the optometrist's office. He puts a device on each of your eyes and looks inside. His assessment is that your eyes are unhealthy. He explains that he has to do a procedure. He has to perform surgery on your eyes. But he assures you that he knows what he is doing and that the procedure will be pain-free, side-effect free and successful. He has a great success rate. He said, "I have to remove the clouds from your eyes. Each of these clouds are acting as filters that are distorting your vision. They are causing you to see darkly and for your body to fill up with darkness. The internal darkness has contributed to the cloudiness. If we don't remove the clouds the darkness will only increase. There will be complete darkness inside of you and all around you. You will be blind. Once the clouds are removed the darkness inside of you and around you will clear up. And once your eyes have adjusted to the light you will clear sight. You will see things for what they are and be able to maneuver about in life easily. Do you want healthy eyes and sight, inner and outer? Do you want your vision healed? I have a large silver pail to your left. Now, I am removing the clouds and placing them in the pail. Now, I am removing the darkness, piece by piece and placing them in the pail. Now, I am shining a special ultra-violet light in your eyes and cleaning-up any darkness residue inside of you. Now, I am placing a darkness-proof solution to your psyche saturating

your psyche with it. Now, I am putting a patch over your eyes and allowing you to fall asleep, 5 – 4- 3- 2- 1 and when you awaken from the surgery, you will awaken in a room that has special lighting. Now, am removing the patches. Now, the light in the room is very dim and now, 1, the light is comfortable but increasing and your vision is adjusting to it, 2, the light is brighter and still comfortable as your vision is adjusting more, 3, the light is becoming brighter and you almost fully adjusted to your new vision, 4, if and when you open your outer eyes you will be able to see clearly, 5, you open your eyes, seeing clearly, your vision healed, seeing everything as it is naturally and easily.

You are saying “No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.” You are contrasting the images of two masters, God and wealth, God being the more desirable. You are presenting your audience with a choice and leading them to arrive on their own at the logical conclusion of what is more desirable. Your own values carry through the choices you are presenting to your audience. Because of your rapport with your audience and the way you relate your own values to them even as you pose choices for them, your influence is prevailing upon your audience.

Exercise: Mammon Industries or Heaven’s Gardens

Take a seat in your easy chair. We have some more work to do, but it is quick and easy work. Close your eyes. Put the index fingers and thumbs of each hand together. Now relax deeply. You are at recruitment fair. At one table is the representative of Mammon Industries. At the other is the representative of Heaven’s Gardens. The

representative of Mammon Industries is wearing a red leather jacket and red leather shoes, a black shirt and black pants and a red tie. The jacket and tie have black dollar figures in them. The representative of Heaven's Gardens is wearing a white linen jacket and black leather shoes. He is wearing a lavender cotton shirt and white line pants and an indigo colored tie. The jacket and tie are embossed with white star-of-David figures. The Mammon representative promises you fame, fortune and influence, a huge salary and benefits package, including a house with servants, all expenses paid, a car with a chauffeur and access to a corporate jet and pilot. We will take care of you until the day you die. It sounds too good to be true. Quite impressed, you get up and take a seat at Heaven's Gardens table. The representative offers you a glass of cool, refreshing water and asks about your well-being and that of your family. He asks you, "What are you looking for in life? What will result in you being truly happy and satisfied?" And he awaits your answer. And once you have answered he asks "How do you define success and how will you know when you achieve it." He explains, "We want you to be content with us. We want you to succeed with us. Your success is our success. We want you to be part of our team where everyone succeeds and so we succeed together. You and your family will be with us forever. What do you need as compensation that will allow you to comfortably and easily succeed in your work with us and achieve all of your healthy life goals? That is what we are offering." You stand up and return to Mammon. The representative says, "Nobody can beat our offer. Do you accept the deal?" And you answer, politely, "Thank you for your generous offer, but no. I have decided to accept another offer. And you return to Heaven's Gardens, you are greeted by the representative. "Is there anything else we can do to help you decide?

And you answer, “No, thank-you. I like your offer and am accepting it.” “Oh, in that case” responded the representative, our CEO likes to meet our new employees and their staff. In fact, his throwing a party to celebrate your joining. Can you and your family join us tonight? And you respond, “Yes.”

You are addressing the identity of your audience, showing them how they are citizens of heaven and earth, and children of God and biological parents, divine and human. You are addressing their belief about what is important and worthwhile, the spirit and spiritual, or the body and the physical. And you are addressing their capability to live while putting the Kingdom of God or spiritual first, without dependence on the physical and material. You are showing them how to store up treasures in heaven by their priorities and behaviors on earth, that it is possible to place their interest and desire on heaven first and foremost, and to serve the spirit and the spiritual. They can behave on the basis of such an outlook, displaying their love of others by their behavior, giving to others and serving others for the sake of God’s Kingdom and plan. And the outcome of this is freedom in this life and reward in heaven.

You are saying to your audience, “Therefore I tell you do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his

glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. “So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.”

You are building here on the previous section of this sermon saying “therefore I tell you.” Your audience is reliant upon God or seeking to be. They believe that God provides for them. They are capable of trusting God and relying upon God. Yet, at the same time they are capable of worry and complaint. This was true during their journey out of Egypt through the wilderness to the promised land of Canaan. You are addressing their psychological state of worry and leading them to generate in themselves a more desirable state of faith and trust. Here you are directing your audience to act on their belief that God is reliable. Likely they are worried about their physical survival, but you are leading them to imagine their lives free of concerns regarding what they will eat and wear. You are having them disassociate from their own situation and condition and look at the birds, and how they neither sow nor reap, yet “your Heavenly Father” feeds them. Disassociation is a process of removing your audience’s consciousness outside of their body (Dilts, Hallbom and Smith 1990; Dilts 1990; Dilts, Yeager and Dilts, 1996). You are re-associating them by referring to them

as God's children who are more valuable to God than the birds. Association is the process of bringing consciousness into the body (Dilts, Hallbom and Smith, 1990; Dilts 1990; Dilts and Yeager and Dilts 1996). Their answer, unless they are mentally diminished can only be one thing; "yes." Their self definition is as "children of God."

Disenfranchised as many of your audience is because of illness, mental illness, uncleanliness or poverty, you are reestablishing in them a self-awareness and consciousness of themselves as children of God. You are leading your audience to disassociate a second time when you ask them to consider the lilies of the field and how they neither toil nor spin. Then you are associating them telling them that as beautiful as the lilies are, they are impermanent and not worth as much they are to God. You are leading your audience to diminish their worry and fear and increase their faith. You are emphasizing your audience's identity as children of God and privileged by God as his children. You are building in your audience a state of faith in place of worry, strengthening their belief and trust in God as their Father. You are ingraining in them a sense of capability to trust God and put the Kingdom of God and his righteousness first.

In the section above you are utilizing a contrast between piety and hypocrisy, between heavenly riches and reward and earthly riches and reward, between a spiritual orientation and a material orientation, and between faith and trust in God and worry and fear. While you are not making the decision for your audience, of which side of the contrast is better, your presentation is weighted to lead your audience to conclude that piety, heavenly treasure and reward, the spiritual, and faith and trust are better than hypocrisy, earthly treasure and reward, materialism, and worry and fear. You are

seeking to incubate in your audience a belief and trust in God and a primary commitment to their inner, spiritual life, and a selflessness or egoless state of being, where the Kingdom reality of God has priority.

This section of Matthew, chapter 7 is concerned with practical aspects of the spiritual path. We continue in the style we began above, you assuming the role of Jesus, preaching to your audience. Take a seat in your easy chair. We have some more work to do, but it is quick and easy work. Close your eyes. Put the index fingers and thumbs of each hand together.

You are saying to your audience “Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. For with the judgment you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. Why do you see the speck in your neighbor’s eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? Or how can you say to your neighbor, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ while the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor’s eye.”

Your concern now is not with the identity and beliefs of your audience, but their behaviors. There are those in your audience that are critical and judgmental of others. They are fault finders. You are telling them to stop and warning them that what goes around comes around. If they judge others, they will be judged. If they don’t judge others, they won’t be judged. You are quite directive, telling them to put their attention on their own flaws rather than on the flaws of others. And with all this talk of criticism

and judgment you are free of judgment even though you are capable of it and ultimately the final arbitrator.

You are saying, “Do not give what is holy to dogs; and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under foot and turn and maul you.” What you are teaching is very important. It is powerful. It is special. You don’t want to waste it on an audience who is uninterested in it or unprepared for it. And so you are telling your audience how important what you are teaching them is. They don’t want to waste this opportunity for learning. They want to make the most of what they are learning. They may want to guard their knowledge so as not to lose their gains.

You are saying “Ask and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him?”

You are providing your audience access to and the Kingdom of Heaven and knowledge of the Kingdom Heaven. You are initiating them in a process that will end them in the Kingdom of God. It begins with them asking and receiving. It continues with them seeking and finding. It ends with their knocking on the door and being let in. The object of their desire is the Kingdom of God.

You are saying to your audience, “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.” This is the behavioral essence of the Law and Prophets you have presented from the beginning. This is the way the Kingdom of God is realized on earth; in the way the people of God treat the people of God.

You are saying, “Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it.” You are pointing your audience to the gate. And now you are warning your audience that there are two gates, one easier to enter, but the wrong choice to enter, and the other harder to enter, but worth passing through. You are offering a choice, but the right choice is obvious that have followed you so far. They are privileged to have found the narrow way and presented by you the opportunity to enter. The impact of taking the narrow gate and doing the right thing is entering into the Kingdom of God.

Near as you are to the end of your sermon you are issuing this warning to your audience, “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will know them by their fruits.” You want your audience to stay the path with you and not to lose their way. Some will become your disciples and continue to walk beside you on the path. Some will not be able to follow so closely. On their own they

will be vulnerable. As seekers they naturally will be drawn to other teachers and prophets. Some of these teachers will be good and true. Some of them will be bad and false. And how your audience will know whether they are good or bad prophets and teachers will be their fruit. And some of these teachers will be deceptive. They won't be what they appear to be. Your audience is capable of discernment. After all they found you.

You are saying in conclusion, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but only the ones who do the will of my Father in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many deeds of power in your name?' Then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; go away from me, you evildoers.'" "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!" Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes."

You are grateful for the crowd coming out and hearing you preach. But you are wanting more from your audience than listening. You have two kinds of followers. One type says "Lord, Lord" and does the will of God. The other says "Lord, Lord" and doesn't do

the will of God. You want your audience to decide which one they will be. The one group may even prophesize, cast out demons, and do many things in your name, but not do God's will. Although they have been invited to, they'll never enter in. The group that does God's will consists of the wise people who build their houses on rock. When the rain fell, floods came, and winds blew and beat against the house, they stood. The other group consists of the foolish people who build their houses on sand. When the rain fell, floods came, winds blew and beat against their houses, they fell.

You really know how to end a sermon! You left your audience with a faith choice. If they apply what they just heard in their daily life, they will reap the benefits. If they fail to apply it, they will suffer the consequences.

Jesus identity in this sermon was Messiah or Christ. Jesus was the Law-giver, like Moses was the lawgiver and the prophets after Moses, but greater than Moses. His audience consisted of crowds of Jews from all over the region in a variety of states of being and need, all of whom were children of God, and all of them seekers after what they had not found elsewhere and found in Jesus. Solid in his own identity, Jesus addressed the identity of his audience, facilitating in them an increased self-identification as children of God.

Jesus believed in God, in himself as the Son of God and David, a Prophet and Messiah, and he believed in the Law and the Prophets and the Kingdom of God. The audience believed in God, that Jesus was a Teacher and a Prophet, in Moses and the Law and the Prophets, and had some inkling to what the Kingdom of Heaven was. Jesus

believed in his audience. Jesus expressed his own belief in everything he did and addressed the beliefs of his audience, helping them to a stronger and productive belief in God, himself, and themselves

Jesus was a capable speaker, teacher, Preacher, healer and exorcist. He knew the Law and the Prophets and was able to extend its meaning and apply it and lead others to understand and apply it. He was capable of great rapport, compassion, empathy and connection with audience. He was capable of leading his audience to discover new insights. He was able to direct his audience to change states and behaviors. The audience was capable of listening, understanding, changing states, discerning, and applying what they heard. They were cable of trusting Jesus once he had rapport with him. Jesus' capability was expressed in everything he said and did and was really limitless. He addressed his audience own sense of capability, increasing their sense of capability to do what they needed to do to better live according to God's will.

Jesus spoke plainly, directly, and confidently in language his audience could understand. He presented his audience with choices and directions for living their lives consistent with God's will. He led them away from negative, less desirable states, toward positive, more desirable states. The audience listened attentively and respectfully throughout the sermon.

Jesus' sermon was quite impactful. When Jesus was done speaking, the crowds were astonished for he had spoken with authority unlike their scribes.

What you have done in this sermon is identify with Jesus as a Preacher. You have become Jesus or like Jesus for a moment. Of course, you are not Jesus and cannot be Jesus, but you can be like Jesus, and in this case like Jesus as a Preacher. When you step into the pulpit the next time you do you will be you and you will represent Jesus. You represent Jesus when you preach whether you like it or not, whether you believe it or not, whether you believe you can or not, and whether you want to or not. You can represent him well or not so well, but you represent Jesus. That is quite the responsibility. This is a way of preaching Christ.

The Horton Ladder: Modeling Jesus as Preacher

Here is a technique for modeling that I learned from Dr. William Horton. I am modifying it, in this case for modeling on Jesus. Enter into your learning state. For each of the following: environment, behavior, capabilities, beliefs and values, identity and source make two columns. Column one is you and column 2 is Jesus. We begin with you, column 1.

Consider your environment: where you live, work, and/or study. What is the socio-politico-economic reality that surrounds you? What is the environment in which you preach or will preach? What is the socio-politico-economic reality of your audience? What is their theological and social worldview? What is the educational, vocational and demographic profile of your audience? What is your and their environment conducive to, facilitative of and discouraging, restrictive, or delimiting of? What is environment that

you are preaching in? Is loving, accepting, and supportive or is critical, rejecting, and attacking? Reflect on this.

Consider your lifestyle and behaviors, those of the people where you live, work and/or study, and those in your audience. How do you and they spend their time? What activities to you and they participate in? What spiritual activities do you and they participate in? How socially, culturally, and theologically inclusive or exclusive are you, the people in your life, and the people in your audience? What is your lifestyle and what are your behaviors as a Preacher? How do you prepare to preach and what do you do when you preach? What's involved in your preaching? Reflect on this.

Consider your capabilities and the skills, those of the people where you live, work, and/or study, and those in your audience? What capabilities and skills do you and they have and use or have and don't use? What spiritual gifts do you and they have and use or not use? What particular skills and capabilities do you have as a Preacher? Do you preach with or without notes, inductively or deductively, narrative sermons or expository sermons, behind a pulpit or without a pulpit? Reflect on this.

Consider your beliefs and values, those of the people where you live, work and/or study, and those in your audience. What do you and they believe and value that is important? What are and they for and against? What are your and their moral beliefs and values if you haven't considered them yet? What are your and their spiritual beliefs and values if you haven't considered them yet? In addition, consider your beliefs and values as a

Preacher. What do you believe about preaching? What is or should be your message or aim as a Preacher? Reflect on this.

Consider your identity, that of the people where you live, work and/or study, and that of your audience. Describe who you are and what you belong to and who they are and belong to. What does it mean to be who you are and belong to what you belong to? Identity can be relational, familial, marital, vocational, religious, ethnic-racial, national, medical, social, political, economic, class, recreational, and consumer, among other things; anything by which you define yourself and your membership. In addition, consider your identity as a Preacher. What makes you a Preacher and not a lecturer, teacher or storyteller? Do you consider yourself a preacher or a pastor that preaches? Reflect on this.

Consider the source of your identity, that of the people where you live, work and/or study, and that of your audience. Describe where you find your source: from God, the Bible or other scripture, an ethical or religious code, family, tradition, media, experience or other and where the others in your immediate environment and in your audience find their source. Consider the source of your identity as a Christian and as a Preacher? What is your relationship with God, with Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, and with the Church? Reflect on this.

In my experience there is an interaction between the different logical levels, usually the one immediately above or below the level. Change of environment can impact behavior and behavior can impact environment. Moving out of an impoverished neighborhood

may lead to new opportunities. Forming a neighborhood watch group can reduce crime in a neighborhood. Behavioral change can alter capabilities and skills and feeling more capable and skillful can lead to new verbal and physical behavior. Going to the gym and working out can lead to increased health and strength. Increased health and strength can allow one to take a new job involving walking and lifting. Development of new skills and abilities can modify beliefs and values and new beliefs and values can lead to the development of different capabilities and skills. Being able to read can allow someone to read the Bible and attain a new set of beliefs and values for living. Obtaining a belief in a benevolent God may lead to someone accepting help for themselves, trying new things and working to help others. New beliefs and values can lead to new identity and a new identity result in different beliefs and values. Belief that God loves, forgives, and accepts through Jesus Christ can lead to someone joining a Church and becoming a Christian. Joining a Church and becoming a Christian can lead to someone believing in God, and even themselves and life in a better way. And having an encounter with God or discovering an important ethical or spiritual principal or reality can cause one to become a stronger and better Christian or human being. Really, one can intervene at any of the logical levels to produce change to the system, and all logical levels need work. But ultimately it is better if all of the logical levels are aligned top to bottom and bottom to top.

Now, let us turn to column 2, Jesus. Let us look at Jesus at each of the logical levels beginning with environment. Either through your own study and involvement with Jesus and the Christian faith or by reading through this study you have an understanding of

Jesus, if not a relationship with him. You can draw on some or all of this in your modeling of Jesus. When it comes to Jesus, you and just about everyone in the world has some knowledge of Jesus. By now your understanding is adequate. And if you are Christian preacher it is likely that your modeling of Jesus will be lifelong and always evolving.

Consider the environment Jesus lived, worked, and preached in and of the audience he preached to. What was the socio-politico-economic reality that surrounds him and his audience? What characterized the audiences Jesus preached to? What was expected of Jesus and what kind of pressures did he experience as man and as a Preacher? What was the effect of Jesus' preaching on his environment and the environment he preached in? What was the effect of his preaching on his audience? Compare and contrast the environment Jesus preached in with the environment you preach in. Reflect.

Consider the lifestyle and the behaviors of Jesus as a man and as a preacher and that of the people who constituted his audience. What did Jesus say and do when he preached and how did he say and do it? What was the impact of Jesus' spoken word and physical behaviors towards his audience on his audience? What was the impact of his preaching on the lifestyles and behaviors of his audience? Compare and contrast your own lifestyle and behaviors as a Preacher with those of Jesus. Reflect.

Consider Jesus' capabilities and skill as a Preacher and the capabilities and skills of the people that constituted his audience. What was Jesus capable of as a Preacher and what preaching skills did he exhibit? What was the impact of Jesus' preaching on the capabilities and skills of his audience? Compare and contrast your own capabilities and skills as Preacher with those of Jesus. Reflect.

Consider Jesus' beliefs and values as a man and a Preacher and the beliefs and values of his audience. What did Jesus believe and value about preaching and what did he convey in the act of his preaching? What was the impact of Jesus' preaching on the beliefs and values of his audience? Compare and contrast your own beliefs and values about preaching and that you preach with those of Jesus. Reflect.

Consider Jesus' identity as a man and as a Preacher and the identities of the people in his audiences. Who did Jesus claim as his identity and membership and how did that affect his preaching? What did Jesus' audience consider his identity to be and how did that affect them? What was the effect of Jesus' preaching on the identity of his audience? Compare and contrast your own identity as a Preacher with Jesus. Reflect.

Consider the source of Jesus' identity and the source of identity of Jesus' audience. What did Jesus consider to be his source and what did his audience see as the source of Jesus' identity? What was the impact of having the source Jesus had on Jesus and on how Jesus was received by his audience? What was the impact of Jesus' preaching on his audience's understanding of their own source? Compare and contrast the source of your identity as a Preacher with that of Jesus. Reflect.

What is being set up here is a dichotomy between who you are now as a preacher and Jesus as a preacher, of who you are now as a preacher and Jesus as the ideal and perfect preacher. The basic goal here is for you to approximate Jesus as a preacher and become overtime more and more like him as a preacher. The paradox here is that you are not being eliminated or replaced as a person and a preacher, but are becoming better and better as a preacher. You will never be Jesus as a preacher but like him. Your message will become like his. Your mind, attitude, and consciousness will become like him. Yet you will be the best possible you and best possible Preacher you can be. You are picking up your cross and following him, not his. He's already carried his. In this process your current identity, your ego will be crucified and die, and your true self as a preacher will emerge.

Exercise: Climbing the Ladder to Heaven

Imagine now, in front of you, flat on the floor, a drawing of a ladder with six rungs, with space enough for you to fit yourself between each rung. The first space before you is your environment, the second your behaviors, the third your capabilities and skills, the fourth your beliefs and values, the fifth your identity, and the sixth your spiritual source. The space that you are standing in is a luminous opal black circle at the foot of the ladder.

Step forward into the first space, into the first luminous mother-of-pearl white circle. Recall the environment that you and your audience live in and the environment you preach in. Notice what it feels like to live and preach in that environment. Recall the

impact of your environment on your preaching and of your preaching on your environment and that of your audience. When you have a clear feeling of what it is like to live and preach in that environment step forward in

As you stand in the circle, recall the environment that you and your audience live in and the environment you preach in. Notice what it feels like to live and preach in that environment. Recall the impact of your environment on your preaching and of your preaching on your environment and that of your audience. When you have a clear feeling of what it is like to live and preach in that environment step forward in to the second space, also a luminous mother-of-pearl white circle.

In this second space, recall your behaviors as a preacher, how you live as a preacher, and how you prepare as a preacher, how you deliver your sermon, verbally and non-verbally; all the things you do wherever you do them; and recall the lifestyles and behaviors of those you preach to, how your sermon is received by your audience, and the impact of your preaching on your audience. Recall the impact of your behavior on your preaching and the impact of your behavior as a preacher on your environment. When you feel like you are ready step into space three, a third a luminous mother-of-pearl white circle.

In this third space recall your capabilities and skills as a preacher, the ones you use and the ones you don't use. Describe the capabilities and skills you have as a preacher. Recall how you developed these capacities and skills and your confidence in using them and how you decide to use them or not use them. Recall the impact of your

capabilities and skills on your preaching and your behavior as a preacher. Recall the impact of your preaching on the capabilities and skills of your audience. When you are ready to do so, step into space four, fourth a luminous mother-of-pearl white circle.

In this fourth space recall your beliefs and values as a preacher and your beliefs and values about preaching. Describe your beliefs and values. Recall the impact of your beliefs and values on your preaching. Recall the impact of your preaching on your audience's beliefs and values. When you are ready, proceed into space five, a fifth luminous mother-of-pearl white circle.

In this fifth space recall your identity as a preacher. Who and what are you and to who and what do you belong when you are preaching. Recall the impact of your preaching on your audience. Recall the impact of your identity on your beliefs and values and upon your preaching. When you are ready, make your way to space six, a sixth luminous mother-of-pearl white circle.

In this sixth space, recall your spiritual source, the source of your identity, of who and what you are as a preacher and the ultimate source of who and what is the source of those in your audience. What is the impact of this source on your identity as a preacher and on your preaching? When you are done, step back into the fifth space, then the fourth, and so on, just for a moment in each space, until you return to the foot of the ladder, space zero, making sure you feel to be in each space what's like. Take stock of your experience of the whole ladder.

Now, imagine that there is a completely new ladder before you and at the foot of that ladder is a circle, drawn in a luminous precious gold color. In this circle is standing Jesus. Just observe Jesus there preparing to step into the first space on the ladder. Notice Jesus examining the ladder, thinking about it, preparing to take hold of it. Be aware of what Jesus looks like, how he is standing, how he is breathing his belly expanding, his chest rising, his chest falling, his belly contracting. And when you are confident that you are matching Jesus, step into the circle where Jesus is standing, and where Jesus was, you are as Jesus, preparing to step forward onto the ladder. Put on your Moses-Elijah-Jesus robe and feel what it is like to be in the same body as Jesus.

Step now into the first space as Jesus, a luminous precious gold circle. Feel yourself as Jesus in this environment in which Jesus lived and preached, 2000 years ago, Israel, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Galilee, the Jordan River, Jerusalem; Mary, Joseph, angels, shepherds, wise men, Herod, Caesar, Rome; crowds of people, possessed by demons, hungry, sick, blind, deaf, lame, hemorrhaging, dying, tax-collectors, prostitutes, lepers, Canaanite woman, Syro-Phonecian woman, Gentiles, children; fishermen, apostles, disciples, Peter, James, John, Philip, Nathaniel, Mary Magdalene, Mary, Martha, Lazarus; Pharisees, Sadducees, Sanhedrin, Temple priests, Pontius Pilate, Joseph of Arimethea; in the stable as a baby, in the Temple as a boy, in the country side, in your hometown synagogue, on the lakeside, on the mountain, on the plain, on the lake, in the Temple as a man, in Jerusalem, at the High priest's house, in Pilate's court, in Herod's palace. Notice the mountain, the plain, the lakeside, the Temple, the

Synagogues, the homes and the marketplace and wherever one or more were gathered to receive from him.

Now, see into the second space, a luminous precious gold circle, and see Jesus behaving in his environment. Notice how Jesus breathes, how he stands, sits and moves. Notice his demeanor, his facial gestures, his body language and his way of speaking and interacting with others. Now step into that circle. See yourself, as Jesus: How you are behaving as a boy in Jerusalem and at Temple, at your baptism in the Jordan River, in the wilderness with the devil and along the lakeside calling your first disciples. How you are healing the sick, driving out demons, going off alone, preaching the good news of the Kingdom, feeding the hungry, raising the dead, forgiving sins and debts and turning water into wine. How you are giving sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf, freeing the imprisoned, visiting the lonely, cleansing the unclean, challenging the unjust and walking on water. How you are washing your disciples feet, blessing and breaking bread and distributing it, lifting up the cup of wine and offering it. How you are teaching and telling parables, calling children to you, sending disciples to preach the good news and drive out demons and heal, picking up the scroll of Isaiah and reading it and preaching on it. How you are praying in Gethsemane, standing trial, taking a beating, carrying your cross and dying on the cross. How you are raising the dead, rising from the dead, appearing to your disciples, ascending into heaven, and taking your place in front of you disciples and the crowd and preaching.

Now see Jesus in the third place, a luminous precious golden circle. See his being confident about what he is able to do in the way he carries himself: his gaze, his

breathing, his gestures. And when you are confident that you are matching Jesus' competence, step into the circle as Jesus. Experience yourself now as Jesus working with your father Joseph in his carpenter's shop, learning his carpenter's trade, learning scripture, doing what had to be done and was right. Experience yourself withstanding temptation, performing miracles and healings and exorcisms, interpreting the Law and the Prophets correctly, preaching God's word prophetically, preaching God's word as God's Son, speaking for God and as God and being faithful to God's word. Experience yourself initiating disciples, empowering your audience, challenging your audience, forgiving sins, comforting and consoling. Experience yourself listening intently, changing your mind, commanding demons and winds and rains and bringing life, hope, light and love where it is needed. You are capable of eternal unconditional love and forgiveness. See yourself as Jesus using all of your capabilities and skills as a preacher in your preaching to the crowds that have gathered around.

Now, see Jesus in the fourth space, a luminous precious gold circle. Notice Jesus, believing the truth, understanding life, firm in his convictions, certain of himself and his ethical and moral positions, knowing right from wrong and confident of his application of the Law to life. When you are confident that you are matching Jesus' beliefs and values step into the circle as Jesus. Notice what you believe and value about God, about yourself, about the world you live in, about your audience and about your preaching. You believe that you have a purpose and that purpose is to proclaim, inaugurate, and usher in a new age and new reality that being the Kingdom Of God; a Kingdom where God rules as a loving father over all his children and all creation; where love, peace,

justice, prosperity, health, and life is abundant everywhere; where all share as one as participants in the co-creation of this Kingdom reality. You believe in the power of God and God's word to accomplish everything and the power of faith by human beings to bring about everything that is rightfully desired, and to overcome evil in all of its forms. You believe that human beings are capable of being one with God and you and the Holy Spirit and one another and all creation, overcoming hindrances of every sort, and accomplishing greatness together. You believe in the forgiveness of sins and debts and restoration of the lost to a just society, the Kingdom of God on earth. You believe in the power of God's word such that it can create, recreate, redeem, replenish, rectify, reconcile, renew, raise from the dead, save and sanctify. You value every human life and all the life that God has created. And you see yourself preaching as Jesus believing all of these things and affecting the beliefs and values.

Now see Jesus in the fifth space, a luminous precious gold circle. Who is this Jesus? How does he see himself? See how Jesus lives his life as Son of God, Great Exemplar, Second Adam, Messiah and King of the Jews; how he relates to the world, its people, the religious and secular authorities. When you are confident that you are matching Jesus' identity, step into the circle as Jesus. Note how you are Son of the God, Great Exemplar, Second Adam, New Moses, Messiah, King and prototypical Child of God and Heir of the Kingdom, Heaven, salvation, and eternal life. All that is God's is yours. As the Son of God, you are God's Word made flesh, incarnate God, and you have power over life, sin and death. You are spiritually free, not bound by anything in Heaven or on earth. You belong fully to God and fully to human-kind and are fully God and fully

human at the very same time. You take your primary identity from God the Creator, with whom, and with the Holy Spirit, you coexisted with forever, since before the beginning. You are the face of God in the material world and have made your body out of the people of the world and the creation. You are all Wisdom from on high. You know that while your body can be slain, your spirit cannot, because it and you are eternal. You have perfect knowledge of God and all things spiritual and physical but are not limited by the physical or the spiritual. You are the Messiah, the Savior of the World, the Liberator, who overcomes all evil in the world, freeing all human beings to return to their pure spiritual state as Children of God or shards of the Divine Light that is God. You embody pure compassion, love, peace, justice and life and invite others to share with you in this state of perfect holiness. You are sinless. See yourself now preaching as Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, the perfect embodiment of God on earth and impacting your audience by initiating them into the pure knowledge of God.

Now see Jesus in the sixth space, a luminous precious gold circle, the space of God, your eternal Father-Mother-Spirit and eternal home. Jesus is one with God in this space. This is the fountainhead of the spring of eternal life. It is perfectly still, the seed and the womb out of which all life begins. It is a non-dual state that is indescribable. When you have matched or approximated Jesus at this Source or Self level step into the circle as Jesus. Now, rest in this space with God. There is nothing to do here but be here. Let your mind rest. Your thoughts are inconsequential. This is the source of who you are and of all human being and all created beings. It is uncreated and unmanifest Being. All identity is derived of this source but is absent in this space. In

this space, as Jesus, you are not Jesus, but God. You are nobody. You have no name. You have no personality.

Now, step down from this sixth space, feeling yourself in each space, down into the fifth space, fourth, third, second, first, all the way to the zero space in the luminous golden circle at the foot of the ladder, stopping for a moment so your experience in the upper space is brought down into and pervades each lower space, sixth, fifth, fourth, third, second, and first. Stand in that luminous gold circle as Jesus. Review in your mind your journey up and down the ladder and integrate that experience inside of you. Now step outside of the bottom circle.

Now, holding your felt identity with Jesus and your ongoing experience of God, recall the first ladder. See it before you. Stand in the black circle at its foot. Quickly step up onto that ladder, recalling the environment of your preaching, the behaviors of your preaching, your capabilities and skills for preaching, your beliefs and values when preaching, your identity as a Preacher, and the spiritual source of your identity as a Preacher. Return back down the ladder to the black circle at the foot of the ladder.

Step away out of the circle and erase the black circle. Replace it with your gold circle and step into that circle as Jesus. Your first ladder remains. Now as Jesus step into the first space in your ladder in the very same environment you live and preach in and your audience lives and listens in. As Jesus, simply be as a preacher in all the places that define your environment, seeing it, listening to it, feeling what it if's like to be in this environment.

Now, step into the second space as Jesus, with the whole supply of thoughts, words, and behaviors available to you as a preacher, and see yourself preparing to preach and preaching to your audience in your preaching environment. See what you look like and what you are doing as you preach; how you stand, how you move, how you gesture; your stance, your head, your face, your neck, your shoulders, your back, your hips, your legs, your arms and hands. Hear what you say and how you say it; your volume, your pitch, your cadence, your timbre, where your voice originates from (your head, your throat, your chest, your belly), your phrasing, the words you use (visual, auditory, kinesthetic). Feel what you are feeling, your emotions, bodily tension or ease, your breathing (shallow or deep). Notice what you are thinking. And notice your audience. What do you see of them as you are preaching; their motion, facial expressions, their emotions, their posture, their bodily stances, their wakefulness? And what do you hear from them as you are preaching; silence, sighing, answers to your questions, mumbling, whisperings, and verbal responses to your requests. What are they feeling; excitement, boredom, anger, fear, curiosity, etc . . . ?

Now, step in to the third space as Jesus bringing with you your entire arsenal of capabilities and skill for preaching; you capacity to listen, empathize, gain rapport, have compassion, identify with, accept, love, forgive, bring reconciliation, challenge, support, encourage, empower, confront, pace, lead, mirror, match, frame, reframe, contextualize, utilize story and metaphor and parable, to self-differentiate, stay connected, and utilize language. See yourself, as Jesus, utilizing these capabilities and skills preaching to your audience and observe the impact on your audience and upon what they feel they

are able to say and do as the result of your preaching. Notice how you initiate your audience into a new way, a new conception, and new experience of being human.

Now step into the fourth space as Jesus, your entire spectrum of beliefs and values evident as you preach to your audience, loving them as your brothers and sisters and children of your Father-Mother God, so they know love; knowing what they are capable of if only they believe as you do in God, in you, in themselves, and each other and are willing to trust God, you, themselves and each other and use their freedom like they can, so they know they are capable; convincing them of the viability of the Kingdom God with its values of love, peace, justice, prosperity, health, and life ac, so that it is accessible to them as you invite them and initiate them into it as they are ready; and conveying to them that by faith in the power of God and God's word anything is possible, so that any obstacle including those of sin, ignorance, and unawareness are overcome. By the authority invested in you by God as God's Preacher you create, recreate, redeem, replenish, rectify, reconcile, renew, raise from the dead, forgive, save and sanctify as you preach.

Now, step into the fifth space as Jesus, identified as Jesus, Son of God, Son of Man, Messiah, Christ, Savior, Word of God made flesh, Wisdom from on high, and convey to your audience who you are; the Way, the Truth, the Life, the only way to God, Light of the World, Bread to the World, Gateway to Eternal Life, Good Shepherd whose sheep know your voice, providing them, as you preach, access to who you are, to God, to the very source of your existence and identity, so that they know who they are as Adam, as children of God, as descendants of Abraham, as disciples of the Teacher, as travelers

on Way, as Light to the world and salt of the earth, as Bread to the hungry, as saints of God and sheep of the Shepherd, as ones who once saw themselves as like through a glass darkly and now see themselves as they really are, like Christ.

Now, step into the final space as Jesus, into your source, into mystical unity with God; Father-Mother, Child, and Holy Spirit, the Cloud of Unknowing where all else disappears into nothing, save God, and abide there in God and God in you, one.

Now, return back down the ladder, rung by rung, space by space, bringing your experience from each preceding space into the next, until you stand at in the luminous gold circle, and the ladder collapses, folding down in to you Jesus and into you.

Now simply remember being Jesus, preaching your congregation, being you preaching to your congregation whenever you preach.

Exercise: Modeling on a Preferred Preacher

You may wish to record and play back the following instructions or you can solicit someone to read these instructions to you slowly. I want to invite you into a light trance state right now. Take a moment and use your imagination to imagine the kind of preacher you want to be. If you please, choose Jesus as your model, or choose another model to your liking. I find that it's helpful to enter into a relaxed state to imagine, so let's do that. Now, sit with you back straight against the back of your chair, your feet, uncrossed and flat on the ground, your arms uncrossed, your hands palms down and flat on your lap or thighs. Now take a deep breath through your nose, filling

your belly and chest. And breathe out through your mouth. Now simply be aware of your breathing in and out and in and out. And with your next breath relax even more, five times, ten times, one hundred times more. In and out, in and out, you are relaxing, more and more, deeper, deeper.

Having entered into this deep state of relaxation, imagine yourself sitting in a most comfortable and supportive seat, and seeing above and before you, a large movie screen. On that screen is a great preacher, someone you have seen and heard and experienced as a great preacher. Watch this preacher. What does this preacher look like? How is this preacher moving? Listen to this preacher. What is this preacher saying? How is this preacher saying it? Feel the effect of this preacher on you? Note the adjectives that describe what you see, hear, and feel. You don't need to remember these consciously as your unconscious mind will remember everything you need to remember when you need to remember it.

Now project yourself from your seat into the screen and experience yourself preaching as this preacher. Hear yourself preaching as this preacher. Feel yourself preaching as this preacher. Experience the characteristics of this preacher embodied in you. You are looking, thinking, feeling, and speaking as this Preacher, with all the passion and all the feeling of this preacher. You look like, think like, feel like, and sound like . . . you, this preacher.

Now project yourself back into your seat, being yourself, seeing that preacher separate from you. At the same time imagine that this Preacher is inside of you, residing so to

Speak inside of you. Feel the impact of that Preacher in you. Discover in yourself what you have learned in this experience, what you have internalized, incorporated, and made your own . . . you . . . that Preacher.

Now, let's exit out of your relaxed state to your normal waking state, taking into your waking state everything you have learned. Your unconscious mind remembers everything. It stores it away for safekeeping, until you are ready to use what you have learned when you need it, the next time and each time you preach. Simply be aware again of your breathing and your body seated comfortably in the chair, your feet, your legs, your bottom, your torso front and back, your arms and your hands, your head and your face. Now one, two three, your attention is coming back fully to the front of the room; four, naturally and easily feeling better than you did before, five. You're back. Let your senses associate fully to being here and now.

What did you see, hear and feel from and as this preacher. What adjectives can you use to describe this Preacher? Write them down. Some words that I've heard used to describe model Preachers are powerful, magnetic, persuasive, influential, captivating, outstanding, exciting, charismatic, bravo, and wow. Say these words out loud emphasizing the emotions contained in the words. Do this right now. Include the words you used to describe your preaching model. Say these out loud and with feeling. Notice the feeling associated with each word you use. These are powerful, emotive words that contain the quality of the experience they represent. There are emotive states associated with each word. They serve as anchors that evoke the very state that they are referring to. The aim of this exercise is to generate the states associated with

these words in you, just as you experienced the state in the Preacher you described.

This is a beginning modeling exercise. When you are able to do this you develop greater sensory acuity and flexibility. You are able to discern better the emotional states present in your audience and move consciously and purposefully from one emotional state to another.

In the exercise above I utilized mainly kinesthetic predicates to introduce the state of relaxation. By leading you into an experience of your body your mind naturally quieted and you were free from physical, emotional, and psychological concerns. I referenced three representational systems through three different senses; sight, hearing, and feeling. I introduced the topic of representational systems in our discussion of Gonzalez. I led you to dissociate from yourself and to associate with the preacher. You imagined yourself as the preacher in this exercise. In doing so you experienced what your model of this preacher experienced. I then led you to dissociate from the Preacher and re-associate with yourself and maintain in you the learning you gained from your experience of the preacher, making it your own. I referred to the unconscious mind and set an anchor (the next time and each time you preach), so that what you learned will be elicited and acted upon the next time and each time you preach. The anchor I introduced was the preaching event, something most preachers will enter into on a regular basis.

How is it that you don't preach like the person you imagined? Write down your reasons. Here are some I've heard before, "I don't have the experience." "I don't have a good memory." "I don't have the charisma." "I couldn't possibly." Feel the power of these

words . . . I can't . . . I don't have the experience . . . I don't have the charisma . . . I don't have the personality . . . It's impossible . . . It's not in my DNA . . . Yikes! Now recall these words: Exciting! Powerful! Magnetic! Persuasive! Influential! Charismatic! Bravo! Wow! Words have emotive power. You can take control over your emotive state and rapidly, if not instantaneously, change your emotive state to more desired state. This is important because your emotive state affects the emotional state of your audience. It often is determinative of your audience's emotional state. You can join your audience in their emotional state, developing rapport with them as you do, and then lead your audience to a more desirable and productive emotional state. The joining with your audience is called, in NLP, pacing. The leading of your audience to another emotional state is called leading.

Exercise: Modeling Powerful Preaching States

Imagine that there is a pulpit in front of you. Locate where the pulpit is. The pulpit can be something that you can stand behind, or near or beside. Or it can be the area you will stand when you preach. And on the floor right before the pulpit where you will be standing, imagine a luminous red circle. In that circle place your model preacher. See your model preacher entering into his or her preacher state. Notice how your model is standing, how your model is breathing, how your model is looking out over the audience and at the audience members, how your model is attending to the audience. Notice how your model begins to speak, how your model speaks, how your model preaches. Notice your model's tone of voice, pitch, cadence, volume, inflections. Notice how your model gestures, facially, with their hands, with their body. And as your model preaches

listen to, feel and see their passion, excitement and power and the impact on their audience. Notice the color of your models' passion, excitement and power and impact on his audience. Experience that culture becoming brighter. Now step into the circle and into image of the preacher such that you are now the preacher. Feel all that preacher's passion, excitement and power building up in you. Feel the Holy Spirit pulsating in you. Smack down on the pulpit with the flat of your right hand and say the preacher model's name. And when you have integrated that feeling step back out of the circle, shake out of the state and return to neutral. Then repeat the exercise three or four times until the experience feels established in you.

Now remember a time when you were passionate. Project that passion into the circle of excellence. Notice that passion building up in the circle, ten times, twenty times, fifty times, one hundred times, one thousand times. The circle can hardly contain the passion. It is bursting up against the circle, ready to explode out into the audience. Step into that circle into your referred preacher self and all that passion building up and feel that passion throughout your body. Smack down on the pulpit with the flat of your right hand and say passion. Feel it fully, then step out of the circle and return to neutral. Repeat these steps three-four times.

Now remember a time you were excited, more excited than you ever were before. Project that excitement in the circle. The excitement is building in the circle, ten times, twenty times, fifty times, one hundred times, one thousand times. The circle can hardly contain the excitement. It is bursting up against the circle, ready to explode out into the audience. Step into that circle into your referred preacher self and all that excitement

building up and feel that excitement throughout your body. Smack down on the pulpit with the flat of your right hand and say the preacher model's name. Feel it fully, then step out of the circle and return to neutral. Repeat these steps three to four times.

Remember a time when you felt powerful, more powerful than ever before. Project that power into the circle of excellence. Now increase that power, ten times, twenty times, fifty times, one hundred times, one thousand times. That power is building upon in the circle, up against the circle, ready to launch out into the audience. Step into that circle with your referred preacher self and all that power building up and feel that power throughout your body. Smack down on the pulpit with the flat of your right hand and say the preacher model's name. Feel it fully, then step out of the circle and return to neutral. Repeat these steps three to four times.

Remember a time when you were persuasive and influential, able to get someone to do something important you wanted them to do. Project that persuasion and influence into the circle. That persuasiveness and influence are building up in the circle, ten times, twenty times, fifty times, one hundred times, one thousand times. Step into that circle with your referred preacher self and all that persuasiveness and influence building up and feel that persuasiveness and influence throughout your body. Smack down on the pulpit with the flat of your right hand and say the preacher model's name. Feel it fully, then step out of the circle and return to neutral. Repeat these steps three to four times.

Remember yourself preaching magnificently, your best sermon and best sermon delivery ever, what you looked like, what you sounded like and what you felt preaching

that sermon. Project that magnificent, best sermon ever, best sermon look, best sermon sound and best sermon feeling in the circle. And let the magnificence of that sermon build up in the circle, ten times, twenty times, fifty times, one hundred times, one thousand times. Wow! Now, step into the circle with all the characteristics and ability of your model, plus all of the passion, excitement, power, persuasion and influence built up in the circle of excellence, plus all of the magnificence generated in that sermon and being built up in the circle. Smack down on the pulpit with the flat of your right hand and say the preacher model's name. Feel yourself now, prepared to preach, preaching with all of that skill, all that passion, all that excitement, all that power, all that persuasiveness and influence; magnificence! Wow! Feel it fully, then step out of the circle and return to neutral. Repeat these steps three to four times.

Every time you approach a pulpit or a lectern, your circle of excellence appears right in front of it, a luminous red circle of excellence containing every model of excellent preaching and speaking you place in it, containing every characteristic associated with excellent and magnificent preaching in it waiting to be expressed, every ounce of passion, excitement, power, persuasion, influence and magnificence ready to explode and shower your audience with grace, meaning and purpose as soon as you step up to preach or speak. Wow!

Modeling the Kingdom of God

Having modeled Jesus, let us now model his teaching of the Kingdom of God. The primary way Jesus taught about the Kingdom of God was through the parable. Only

once, while telling the Parable of the Sower, did he interpret the parable for his audience. Rather, Jesus told the story and allowed his audience to uncover his message. Here is a scripted guided experience that you can use.

The primary teaching of Jesus as presented in the gospels is that of the Kingdom of God or Kingdom of Heaven. Other words commonly used for the Kingdom of God or Heaven are the Rule of God and Realm of God. I sometimes refer to the Kingdom of God as the Reality of God and the Presence of God.

According to Jesus, the Kingdom of God is near to you. It is within you. It is among you. It is coming now into your life and into your world as I am speaking and you are listening. The Kingdom of God is here right now in you and all around you. And this Kingdom of God is not only a present reality, it is a future reality, not yet realized in the present in its fullness, but within your human reach and grasp within your human lifetime, if not the present moment. This Kingdom of God was fully present in Jesus of Nazareth and expressed in all aspects of his life. Indeed it was the very mind of Christ; the very consciousness of Christ. Through identifying with Jesus, you can experience the Kingdom of God where it is, near you, within you, among you, around you, and coming into your life fully. In this state you are connected to God. You have full access to God and communication with God. You even have obtained unity with God. Just relax in that state of union with God. And if present in Jesus of Nazareth in its fullness, it can be realized fully in you when you opt to model Jesus; when you put on the mind of Jesus and assume the very same attitude of Jesus, and step into the very consciousness of Jesus; that access to God, communication with God, and unity with

God. What was fully present in Jesus then, can be experienced and realized in you right now as you are ready and willing right now. Do you want to experience that same mind and reality that was in Jesus now? Yes!

Exercise: Modeling the Kingdom

Now, I am inviting you to enter into an even more receptive state than you are already in, where you can, if you will, close your eyes, and breathe deeply, and become more receptive, with each breath, more receptive, receptive to Jesus, receptive to who Jesus is, receptive to what Jesus is, receptive to the mind of Jesus; ten times more receptive than before, twenty, thirty, forty fifty times more than before, 100 percent!

And now, you are identifying with Jesus, Son of God, and the source of his existence, God the Father, and the Spirit that was in Jesus; Jesus with whom the Father is well pleased; Jesus who the Spirit of God landed and anointed to preach the good news of the Kingdom; Jesus who is one with the Father and who invites you to identify with him; the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the Way to the Father; and to pick up your cross like he picked up his and follow him

Now, according to the Bible, Jesus came preaching the Kingdom of God; the Kingdom of heaven, the Reign of God, the Rule of God, the Reality of God, the Presence of God; so that you would know God and abide with God just like abides with God, and God with you like Jesus abides with you.

Now listen to Jesus. And you hear him speaking clearly to you; his message clear as a bell, because you want to you know all there is to know about God and God's Kingdom, and you are ready and willing to understand and to know what Jesus is talking to you about.

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field which someone found; she hides it again, goes off happy, sells everything she owns and buys the field." (Matthew 13:44) See yourself in this story, finding the treasure hidden in the field; you hide it again, you go off happy, you sell everything you own and you buy the field.

Outstanding!

Again, listen to Jesus. Hear his voice speaking directly to you and only to you like you are his chosen one: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value; he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it (Matthew 13:45-46). See yourself in this story, the merchant looking for fine pearls; when you find one of great value, you go and you sell everything you own and you buy it. Great!

Again, listen to Jesus. Hear him again speaking to you as you hang on his every word. "The reality of heaven is like a mustard seed which a farmer took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown, it is the biggest shrub of all, and becomes a tree, so that all of the birds of the air come and shelter in its branches." (Matthew 13: 31-32; Mark 4:10-32; and Luke 13:8-19). See yourself in this story. A farmer took the Kingdom of Heaven, a tiny mustard seed and sowed it in you, his field.

The smallest of all seeds, is growing in you, and has grown in you, the biggest shrub of all, a tree so where all the birds of the air have come and found shelter in your branches.

Listen again to Jesus. He is talking to you so can understand him: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed it in with three measures of flour till it was leavened all through (Matthew 13:33; Luke 13:20-21). See yourself in this story. You take the Kingdom of Heaven as yeast and mix it in with three measures of flour, your life, until it is leavened all the way through.

And now allow your eyes to open, and shut them as you fall deeper into relaxation, deeper still, and deeper. And now you are ready to meet Jesus, your spiritual master, messiah, king of all rulers, the prototype child of God of which you are one, the Word of God made flesh.

Now, I don't know, but there may be another teacher or master that can serve the same purpose for you that Jesus serves for me, and so simply think of that master if you prefer, even as I speak of Jesus.

Across from you, across a beautiful meadow of green grass and dazzling flowers, beneath clear blue skies, there is a building, a cathedral build of the finest crystal dazzling in the sun. And as you come to its doors, the doors open wide and you enter. And you are in a great crystal hall, radiant with all the colors of the rainbow blazing. And you admire the magnificent colors. And you are drawn forward to the center of the

great hall, where there is a chapel, and you enter the chapel, which is the holy of holies of the cathedral.

And in the center of the chapel there is a sacred place, with entry ways leading up and down, and escalators ascending up and descending down. And your body stands on the down escalator and your mind on the up escalator, and your body goes down one flight, relaxing deeper, and your mind goes up one flight, rising higher, and your body descends to a second level, going deeper, and your mind ascends to a second level, climbing higher. And your body descends to a third level, becoming heavy, and your mind ascends to a third level, becoming lighter. And your body descends two more levels to the foundation level, where it just lets go, and rests completely, and your mind rises two more levels to the top story of the cathedral. And there on the upper most level of the cathedral you enter a sacred room and before you is the Master Jesus, seated on a royal red throne, girded with gold and precious stones. His face and body are luminous and you are speechless as you take a seat across from him and gaze upon his unsurpassable beauty. And finally, after what seems like ages, but was only a moment you ask him to unlock the secrets of the universe and reveal to you the reality of God and God's Kingdom. And he looks at you, his gaze penetrating your outer appearance and reaching down to your deepest core, and it is like you are naked and not at all ashamed, as he sees you as you really are, beyond all appearances and conditions. And all you feel is love and peace. And he speaks to you telepathically so you know his mind. And the mind that is in him is in you now. And you feel his

presence like he has crossed over into you, but is still across from you. And there is no time, but eternity, as you experience unity with Jesus.

And when you are ready, you ask Jesus for a token, for a symbol, an image and a word that you can take back with you, with which you can easily remember this experience. And Jesus impresses that token, symbol, image and word on your mind and in your heart so that you know it and can remember it and have it with you always.

And now, you are ready to come back down the escalator from the top level of the cathedral, and your body rises back up from the foundation, one level at a time, and your mind returns down from the top, one level at a time, your body up to the fourth level, your mind down to the fourth level, and your body up to the third level, your mind down to the third level carrying your image and word within you, your body up to the second level, and your mind down to the second level, your body up to the first level, your mind down to the first level, your body and mind arriving together and uniting.

And you kneel and pray a prayer of gratitude in the chapel, for what you received at the foundation and the pinnacle of the cathedral, and the token, symbol, word and image that are your gifts from Jesus forever. And you leave the chapel and cross the great hall of the cathedral in the radiance of the crystal. And you make your way across the sunlit, green meadow, and return to your seat facing the great crystal cathedral. And you know that you can return to the crystal cathedral because while it belongs to God, it belongs to you, too, and you relish the token, the image and word impressed upon you.

And now, prepare to return to your normal, but now enlightened state of being, and I will count to five, and you will prepare to turn your consciousness to the world, 1, 2, you are returning your wide awake attention to this world, 3, 4, and you are awake, alert, refreshed and energized, 5.

Okay, welcome back. This exercise is a taste of what you will experience as you train your mind to enter into higher and higher, and more and more expansive states of consciousness, until passing through Christ Consciousness you experience God Consciousness and you are able to integrate your entire being and relate to others on every level of consciousness.

Chapter 11: Modeling for Pastoral Counseling

We have already discussed the importance of having a model for pastoral and spiritual counseling. The way of modeling that has been presented thus far is based upon Dilts' Logical Levels. What follows is a framework for utilizing those levels for producing a model. We have utilized Jesus as a model, but any Christian pastoral counselor will do for our purposes as this is a general model. Developing a specific model will be helpful but will come later. A pastoral or spiritual counselor from another faith tradition other than Christianity or humanism can utilize this same framework substituting in appropriate references and language.

Let's consider for a moment the source of Christian pastoral counseling. What is the origin or source of all Christian Pastoral Care and Counseling? It is God-based, Christ-centered, Spirit-led, Scripture-oriented and based in Christian tradition and experience.

What is the identity of a Christian Pastoral Care Provider and Counselor? A good Christian Pastoral Counselor takes Jesus, in the scripture "the Good Shepherd" as the primary model for counseling. Second, the counselor looks to the Apostles, Disciples and Saints who themselves have determined to be Christ-like.

What are the capabilities or capacities of the Christian Pastoral Counselor? They are the capacities of holiness, holy listening, empathy and compassion, self-discipline

including boundary setting, discernment of right from wrong and of spirits, agape love, unconditional love or positive regard, and being non-judgmental.

What are the beliefs of the Christian Pastoral Counselor? Every person is a child of God, made in the image of God, who is loved by God so much so that God sent God's son into the world to save it and is loved by Jesus so much that he laid down his own life to save the people he was sent to; Every person is spiritually gifted and meant to contribute to the advancement of God's Kingdom on the earth; Faith in God and Jesus leads to forgiveness, reconciliation, healing, and salvation; The Church (Christian Community) is a sign of the presence of God and God's Kingdom on the earth; A person can grow in grace: justifying, sanctifying, and perfecting grace.

What are the behaviors of the Christian Pastoral Counselor? These include: Listening with one's eyes, ears, and heart; Loving while listening and speaking; Reflecting back what the person says; and expressing empathy, care, concern, genuineness, and warmth; knowing one's limits and being prepared to refer.

What is the environment of the Christian Pastoral Counselor? These include: The Church, the person's home, hospitals, prisons, jails, the street, nursing homes, hospitals, rehab programs; The person's life – home, school, work, community – self, relationships, marriage, family, extended family, coworkers, employers, pastors, church people – one wants to impact the person's environment.

Modeling Jesus as a Counselor

The key to learning how to counsel like Jesus is to be model on Jesus in his counseling like encounters with people. This is behavioral level modeling. This includes observing what Jesus says and does in relationship to the person or people he is helping. The next level down from the behavioral level is the environmental level. This is the level of impact that Jesus has on the person he is helping. It is the persons' response and the response on the people involved with that person. The level above the behavioral level is the capacity level. This is the level of the capacity that Jesus has to counsel. It is the level of ability. Capacity may be implied by behavior or it may be revealed in other ways like through narration in stories about Jesus. Above the level of capacity is the level of belief. Jesus may say what he believes or a report of what he believes may be provided by a narrator. Above the level of belief is the level of identity. This is the level of who Jesus identifies as or is identified as by others or by narration. The top level is the level of source. This is where Jesus comes from or where his identity and power derives from, filtering down through identity, through belief and capability to behavior to impact on people and environment.

Starting at the top we recognize that God is the source of Jesus' identity and power. Jesus derives his authority to preach, teach, heal, forgive sins, drive out demons, raise from the dead, etc . . . from God. Everything he does in the name of God; that is in identity with God, sometimes in unity with God and sometimes out of relationship with God. Jesus is in constant contact and communication with God. From the time of his baptism through his death he is in contact with God. The only time he seems to be out

of contact with God is while he is on the cross and cries out “Father, why have you abandoned me.” Recalling that the Emperor of Rome is also referred to Son of God, Jesus’ death on the cross represents the defeat of a Son of God (Jesus) by a Son of God (Emperor). The Son of God is a god, an expression of the imminence of God. Both the Emperor and Jesus are kings, the Emperor ruler of the Roman Empire and the dominant worldly kingdom, Jesus the King of the Jews and of a kingdom not of this world. In defeating the Son of God, the King of the Jews, the God of Rome defeats the God of the Jews. It is not just the historical, human Jesus who dies on the cross; it is the God of the Jews. Therefore, Yeshua (Yahweh saves) is Yahweh in the flesh and it is Yahweh who dies as Jesus. And then, it is Yeshua and Yahweh that overcomes sin and death, and the domination of the Beast, Rome, in the resurrection. God can only appear to be defeated and destroyed. Or if the significance of Jesus’ death is taken to its extreme conclusion, God dies in the flesh, and God resurrects. God fully transcends his identity as King of the Jews. Having defeated the Beast, the most dominant ruling system on earth, Jesus, like a human (Daniel 7) is King of all kings and God has defeated all human-made Gods.

Jesus is identified with God in a personal way, as begotten Son of God the Father; also as Messiah (Hebrew) or Christ (Greek) and savior of the world. He also is self-identified and identified by the gospel writers as the Good Shepherd and as Suffering Servant, light of the world, bread of life, the way, the truth and the life, the gateway or door and the vine. People come to God the Father through relationship with him and identity with

him as way, truth and life and living the same way, truth and life as he. People identify with him through his story.

Jesus believes in God. He believes that he is anointed by God for a messianic purpose, to preach and inaugurate the kingdom of God, to forgive the sins of humankind, to restore humankind to a primary relationship with God, to offer a baptism by the Holy Spirit and fire, to teach, to heal, to raise the dead, to drive out demons and to judge the living and the dead as a servant. And Jesus believes that he is capable of doing the things God has sent him to.

Jesus has an incredible capacity for love, compassion and empathy. He is able to meet people where they are and lead them to where they need to become. He is able to enter easily into rapport with people and set their hearts and minds at ease and at the same time to confront, challenge and cajole them to change. He has great psychological and spiritual insight. He epitomizes the word of God found in scripture while others can only interpret it. His interpretation of the scripture is authoritative, even more authoritative than Moses. He is able to transmit spiritual and psychological knowledge and power and activate spiritual power in people. He is able to lead people into greater reflection, insight and responsibility. He is able to leverage the faith of people into healing and miraculous behavior. He generates charisma. He is able to build propulsion systems in people that empower them to find new life aims, new ways of being and attain meaningful personal, social and spiritual goals.

It appears that Jesus knows what he is doing. He routinely brings about positive change in the lives of the people he interacts with. An example is the story of the invalid at Bethzatha (John 5:1-15).

After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Beth-zatha, which has five porticoes. In these lay many invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be made well?” The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me.” Jesus said to him, “Stand up, take your mat and walk.” At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk. Now that day was a Sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who had been cured, “It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your mat.” But he answered them, “The man who made me well said to me, ‘Take up your mat and walk.’” They asked him, “Who is the man who said to you, ‘Take it up and walk’?” Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had disappeared in the crowd that was there. Later Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, “See, you have been made well! Do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you.” The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

Exercise: A Well-Defined Outcome

For an outcome to be realized it needs to be well-defined. Failure to have a well-defined outcome will result in the failure to obtain the desired outcome. The well-formulated outcome (Gray 2008) is:

- Stated in positive terms as something wanted.
- Something that is under the goal seeker's personal control.
- Is stated narrowly.
- Specified in terms of multiple levels of sensory experience.
- Should be evaluated for ecology; changes it produces in the person's life and environment.
- Should be imagined and experienced in fantasy as fully as possible.
- Intrinsically motivated rather than externally motivated.

Jesus asked an important question of the man who was waiting at the pool to be healed. Do you want to be healed? The question was an important one even though Jesus knew the answer. The man answered that he had been unable to enter the healing waters at the appropriate time. Jesus heard the man's affirmative response. He wanted to be healed. The outcome was stated in positive terms. The man wanted to be made well. The outcome was under the man's personal control. There was an ecological problem that needed to be addressed. The man needed help to get into the waters. The goal was stated narrowly. He wanted to be healed. The man was seen by Jesus as needed help. The man was not able to walk or walk well enough to

accomplish even small feats. Jesus spoke to him and questioned him. Jesus commanded the man to perform a physical action: Stand up, pick up your mat and walk. Jesus healed the man on the Sabbath. The man was confronted for carrying his mat on the Sabbath. While the man could not get to the waters, Jesus eliminated the need for him to enter the water. His intervention came in the form of a question, an answer, a command and an action. I'm not sure if the final condition was met but when Jesus asked the man if he wanted to be healed, the man described what had to happen for him to get into the waters. That seemed improbable. I can imagine, however, that the man fantasized many times about getting up and into the water on time. He just needed a helping hand and Jesus provided it. The man was intrinsically motivated. He wanted to get better. As the result of his healing he was motivated not to sin again.

On the level of behavior, Jesus is a great active and reflective listener and apt communicator. He is authentic. His outer expression is congruent with his inner reality. He is able to attend fully to his audience and sense things about them that they have not revealed to him. He meets people where they are and paces them so not to get ahead of them. He is assertive, asks questions, makes requests and commands adherence. He confronts people directly and indirectly. He utilizes stories or parables to confront attitudes and behaviors, bypass defensiveness and teach life lessons. He argues and debates where argument and debate are called for. He utilizes his gaze and his touch to reach people and heal them. He utilizes examples from everyday life to communicate life lessons. He utilizes spit and dirt and mud for healing. His use of the earth element, dirt and water may reflect back to the creation, where God

takes earth, forms the first human and blows air into the mold to create the first human. He is always utilizing ordinary objects or situations to illustrate or accomplish something. He allows his own divine power to leave him and enter other people through his gaze, touch, sharing bread and wine, word and presence, even through their reaching out and touching him. He encourages people and exhibits appropriate emotional responses; happiness, anger, pity, compassion as is appropriate to the situation. Pastoral and spiritual counselors can be holy listeners who attend to their clients' needs. They can be active listeners, too, not only via reflective listening but by responding to the client with questions and directives, utilizing touch and meaningful ritual to meet their client's needs.

Jesus makes an impact on people in his relationships with them and the environment they live in: the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, the naked are clothed, the hungry fed, lepers are healed, chronic illnesses are healed, demons are driven out, the dead rise, prisoners are released, sins are forgiven and lifestyles are changed. Miracles occur: storms are calmed, disciples walk on water. Disciples learn to wait on God, receive the Holy Spirit and receive spiritual gifts and powers. Faith, hope and love increase in his disciples. Evil and injustice is confronted. Through encounter with him and the actions of his life meaning is generated in people's lives, beliefs are challenged and changed, new capabilities arise and disciples are able to do the very things that he did and more.

Jesus and his party had come to the other side of the lake, to the country of the Gerasenes. And when he had stepped out of the boat, immediately a man out of

the tombs with an unclean spirit met him. He lived among the tombs; and no one could restrain him anymore, even with a chain; for he had often been restrained with shackles and chains, but the chains he wrenched apart, and the shackles he broke in pieces; and no one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always howling and bruising himself with stones. When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and bowed down before him; and he shouted at the top of his voice, 'What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me.' For he had said to him, 'Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!' Then Jesus^{*} asked him, 'What is your name?' He replied, 'My name is Legion; for we are many.' He begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. Now there on the hillside a great herd of swine was feeding; and the unclean spirits^{*} begged him, 'Send us into the swine; let us enter them.' So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the lake, and were drowned. The swineherds ran off and told it in the city and in the country. Then people came to see what it was that had happened. They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the legion; and they were afraid. Those who had seen what had happened to the demoniac, and to the swine, reported it. Then they began to beg Jesus to leave their neighborhood. As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed by demons begged him that he might be with him. But Jesus refused and said to him, 'Go home to your friends, and tell them

how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you.’ And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed” (Mark 5:1-20).

In this passage, the demoniac appears to be a desperate man, helpless and powerless about his mental and emotional state. He is no estranged from human community that he lives among the dead. He is haunted by an unclean spirit that has taken possession of his mind. Others have tried to control him by chaining him but they are not able to restrain him. He is in great emotional pain as evidence by his constant howling and hurting himself with stones. The demoniac has lost every shred of human dignity. He appears nothing more than a raging lunatic and an animal. He no longer has a world that he relates to. He lives as an animal in an environment. If human beings are made in the image of God, he certainly is not a human being. His conscience has been overwhelmed by his instinct. He is merely surviving. Sometime in his life his dignity has been injured, his personal adequacy undermined and his freedom to be his unique self has been curtailed. He is at war with himself. He is experiencing an inner struggle of unresolved forces. He has lost sight of the essential unity of his personality. There lacks a cohesive or organized self. He is afraid of others and keeps others at bay to protect what little dignity he maintains. The demoniac sees Jesus, runs to him, bows down before him and shouts out in response to Jesus’ command to come out of the man. He asks Jesus what Jesus has to do with him. He knows that Jesus is the Son of God and addresses him as such. And he asks Jesus by God not to torment him. Jesus asks him what his name is and he answers, “Legion, for we are many.” All of Jesus’

communication was with the demons in the Demoniac. The Demoniac did not want to leave his home as he had no place to go. And the demons wanted to survive as well. They asked Jesus to spare them by allowing them to enter into a herd of swine. They so tormented the swine that the swine ran into a lake and were drowned. The demoniac was healed. He got dressed and was in his right mind.

The demoniac's wild behavior was calculated to scare Jesus off. They, the legion of demons had taken possession of the man's mind. Knowing who Jesus was they knew that their jig was up. Their concern was with what Jesus wanted of them. He wanted them out of the man. Here is another case of a well-defined outcome. This man needed healing. He wanted the demons out of him. They were driving him like they ended up driving the swine. It's a wonder that he survived them. But he stayed alive. He came seeking Jesus. Was this despite the demons? Did he approach Jesus out of hope for healing? Why would the demons approach Jesus, knowing who he was and what he likely would do to them? This man had been doing the best he could given the circumstances of his life and the presence of the demons in his life. From the moment they saw Jesus the demons sought to survive. They needed a new host and desperately sought it. Interestingly, Jesus got the legion of demons to speak to him as one. He got them, by having them name themselves, to unify. The outcome Jesus wanted was the elimination of the demons. The demoniac was trying to bring the demons under control. He could not. But he knew to go to Jesus. Just as the demons knew who Jesus was and what he was about so did the man they possessed. The goal as stated narrowly: Get rid of the demons. Jesus needed to silence the voices. He

needed to get the demons to leave and he commanded them to leave. He negotiated their exit and respond to their stated desire. There needed to be a place for the demons to go. The man needed someone who would not be afraid of his condition but would be willing to help him with it. The man was intrinsically motivated to be free of the demons.

This procedure could be considered a parts-integration with a visual squash. Internal conflicts occur when two or more "parts" of a person lead to behaviors which are contradictory. The most problematic conflicts occur when the opposing parts have negative judgments about each other. The resolution to the conflict comes from identifying a common positive intention. In the case of the demoniac there are a "legion" of parts, meaning many parts.

A Roman legion normally indicates the basic ancient Roman army unit recruited specifically from Roman citizens. The organization of legions varied greatly over time but they were typically composed of up to 5,400 soldiers. For most of the Roman Imperial period, the legions were a part of the Imperial army and formed its elite heavy infantry, recruited exclusively from Roman citizens. In the Bible Legion" is the name of a group of demons that possessed a man living in Gadara. In Mark 5:9 the demoniac referred to his name as "Legion: for we are many." In Matthew 8:28-34 and Luke 8:30 the demons were referred to as devils. The demons recognized Jesus as the Son of God and demonstrated fear of him (Mark 5:10). They pleaded with him that he would not send them out of the country (Mark 5:12). The Greek word *chora*, translated as "country" can be defined as meaning "the space lying between two places or limits" or "an empty expanse"(Greek Lexion 2010). In Luke 8:31, the word *abyssos* is used,

meaning "bottomless pit" (Greek Lexion 2010). Although none of the words translated as "Hell" in the Bible (being *sheol*, *Gehenna*, *Haides*, *tartaros*) were used in the passage, one interpretation is that they begged to be spared from being sent back to Hell (Mark 5:12). Jesus casts the demons out of the man, granting their request, and allows them to dwell in a herd of pigs (Mark 5:12). The pigs then drowned themselves in the Sea of Galilee (5:13). The man was a Jew. The demons were unclean entities or spirits. They were alien to the man's personality and dominated him just as Rome had dominated Israel. It was as if the man did not exist as he silently cowered in their shadow. However, he longed to be free of the oppressive governance of his personality and sought a Messiah to free him from it, just as the Jews sought a Messiah who would save them from the "Beast" and its legions, which had devoured her and left her subject to another people's gods and laws. This was a shameful condition.

Jesus identified the conflict inside the demoniac and physically sorted out the parts in the conflict; the Jewish man versus the legion of demons. He established a "meta-position" that is disassociated from either of the conflicting parts. The "Meta-position" can either be third position or fourth position. The first position is your own perceptual position. It is you who are perceiving the world around you. It is usually associated. In the case of the demoniac it is disassociated. The second position is that of another. It is the experience of "walking in someone else's shoes." In the case of the demoniac it is the perception of the Jews who fear him and what him away from the population and controlled. The second position can be in communication with the first, the first position referring to itself as I and me, the second position referring to the first as you. The third

position is more complex as it has three sub-variants. The third position is outside of the first two. It stands apart from the first two. It is also outside of the communication occurring between the first two. The third position is like an interested, but uninvolved third party. It is useful for assessing the relationship between the first two. Jesus is a third party figure in relationship to the demoniac. To describe yourself in first or second position from the third position, you use pronouns such as he, she or they. A pure third position is one outside the first two, but has a history of being in the first two positions. It may have beliefs, assumptions and judgments about the first two. The Meta third position is also outside the first two, but it has a history of being only in the first position. It has beliefs, assumptions and judgments about the first position, but has suspended them about the second. The Observer third position is also outside the first two but has no experience in the first two positions and suspended beliefs, assumptions and judgments about it. Jesus moved through different positions with the demoniac. He is approached by the demoniac as being in the second person (you) and responds to the demoniac as second person. The demoniac comes to Jesus as a first person seeking help and as "Legion," an organized "we" but this "we" is a first position "I." There is a split in the demonic between the healthy Jewish self of the man and the unhealthy, fragmented and disorganized sense of self. That healthy, real self of the man has been forgotten or lost in the legion that has overcome it and needs to be remembered, recovered and re-established. The cacophony of voices of Legion needs not to be repressed but relocated outside of the body and mind of the demoniac. Jesus, not caught up in the internal drama of the demoniac. The fourth position provides a synthesis of the others. It provides a sense of wholeness to the system or psyche.

From the position you can see how the other positions came to be and their effect on the other parts of the system and the whole system. Larger patterns that transcend individual identities, parts and relationship can be identified from this position. Jesus brings to the situation an identity and status outside of the system, a fourth position perspective. He comes from beyond, from heaven to earth, from God to Israel and humanity. He is breaking into the complex of systems the demoniac exists in. Externally, the demoniac belongs to a Jewish system that is dominated and contaminated by a Roman one. He, like other Palestinian Jews is living under Roman occupation, an undignified life. He is feeling hopeless and powerless against the prevailing powers of his day. His Jewish identity is restricted. There may even be parts of him that identify with the oppressor and repress his Jewish identity. As the result there is anxiety about being Jewish and being himself. That part may hide from and be silenced by the internalized parts identified with the oppressor. The only hope that remains for the healthy part of the demoniac is an outside intervention and in the Jewish religious climate of his time that means divine intervention, a one like a human (Daniel 7) Messiah. The Kingdom of God, or Heaven, amounts to a divine alternative to the demoniac's and Jewish people's plight. And Jesus, the Kingdom's inaugurator is the one to intervene.

Legion made its position clear in what they said to Jesus. The demoniac made his position clear by coming into Jesus' presence. His voice stifled, he could not be heard but he could be seen. The demoniac wanted to be healed. Legion wanted to survive. The demoniac did not care what happened to the demons only that they left him. The

demons only wanted a host. On a higher level, the demoniac and the demons wish to exist in proximity to their present location. Jesus was a resource to both parties. He could use his influence to command the demons to depart from the demoniac and to relocate in a desirable (to them) location (the the herd of swine). Jesus created two parts out of many parts in the demoniac. Jesus addressed the legion of demons as one. He motivated them out of their fear that he would destroy them to organize as one. They became as one and Jesus was able to negotiate their demise as one. This in itself must have created some ease in the demoniac, quieting the cacophony of voices inside his head. The legion of demons represented an aggressive foreign species that had taken over the demoniac and which he needed to be liberated from. That Jesus did this non-violently in a collaborative manner, negotiating for them a new home was quite an accomplishment. The demoniac, sitting alone, parts integrated, malignant parts removed, can reflect upon what his life was before the demonic occupation. He can remember who he was and discover again who he is. He can anticipate his options. He can accompany Jesus on his mission. He can go home and see his family and friends. He can resume his life as a healthy Jewish man, practicing his religion and his cultural activities. He is no longer apart from. His is a part of. This is reconciliation with God, with self and with community. He still has to live, like other Jews do, under Roman occupation and oppression. But he is no longer internalizing that oppression. He is a free man, a child of God and thus a child of promise. He has regained his hope and his power.

Illustration: Healing the Demoniac

If the demoniac was to come to me today, I would apply Jesus' strategy.

1. I would ask the man if he wanted to be healed.
2. I would respond to the cacophony of voices and identities that seek to maintain the status quo.
3. I would know that there was a part of the man who wanted to be healthy.
4. I would identify the part of him who wanted to be healed and name that part, "Healthy." (anchor).
5. I would identify all the characteristics of Healthy: a unified and cohesive self, calm, assertive, integrated, responsible, one voice, connected to family and community, participant in the Temple religion, order.
6. I would have him choose a color that represented cohesiveness; let us say an indigo color in the shape of a circle.
7. I would have him touch his right knee with his right hand imagine seeing the indigo circle and say "Healthy!" and feel his unified and cohesive self, calm, assertive, integrated, responsible, one voice, connected to family and community, participant in the Temple religion, order.
8. I would have him increase the size of the circle and intensify the indigo to deep and bright and intensify his feelings of unity, cohesiveness, calm, assertiveness, integration, responsibility, one voice and connection as he stated, affirmatively "I am Healthy!"
9. I would have him fully feel that experience

10. I would have him close his eyes and open them.
11. I would then identify the parts called Legion.
12. I would identify the characteristics of Legion: fragmentation, anxiety and fear, irresponsibility, alienation, isolation multiple personalities and chaos.
13. I'd have them choose a color that represented fragmentation; let us say, brown in the shape of a square.
14. I would have him touch his left knee with his left hand and hold it there, imagine seeing the brown square and say "Legion" and feel all the confusion, fragmentation, anger and fear, loneliness, isolation, alienation and chaos.
15. I would have him increase the size of the square until it filled his vision and increase his sense of confusion, fragmentation, anger and fear, loneliness, isolation, alienation and chaos as he screamed (in his mind) "I am Legion!"
16. Then I would have him release his hand, close your eyes and then open them.
17. I'd have him touch his right knee with his right hand and hold it there and say "Healthy indigo circle" while feeling unified, cohesive, calm, assertive, integrated, responsible, one voice and connected.
18. I would have him increase the size of the circle and intensify the indigo to deep and bright and intensify his feelings of unity, cohesiveness, calm, assertiveness, integration, responsibility, one voice and connection as he stated, affirmatively "I am Healthy!"
19. Then I would have him release his hand, close your eyes and then open them.
20. I would have him touch his left knee with his right hand and hold it there, saying Legion while he saw the brown square and felt chaos.

21. I would say intensify it.
22. Then I would have him release his hand, close your eyes and then open them.
23. I would have him touch his right knee with his right hand and hold it there, saying
Healthy while he saw the indigo circle and felt united.
24. Then I would have him release his hand, close your eyes and then open them.
25. I would repeat the last two steps.
26. Then I would have him touch his left knee with his left hand, see the brown
square and say "Legion."
27. Then I would have him touch his right knee with his right hand, see the indigo
circle and say "Healthy!"
28. Then I would take my right hand and touch his left knee and hold it there, see the
indigo circle and say "Healthy!"
29. I would have him remove the right hand from the left knee, touch his right knee
with his right hand and say "Healthy!"
30. Then I would have him remove the right hand from the right knee and touch the
left knee with that right hand and say "Healthy."

Exercise: Experiencing Jesus

Sit back in your easy chair, close your eyes, touch the pads of the index finger to the thumb on each hand, take a deep breath and relax deeply, breathing in, breathing out relaxing like you have before, five times, ten times, one hundred times, one thousand times, one million times more, totally relaxed:

Picture Jesus in front of you. He is wearing a white robe. Recall his life, his pre-existence with God, the promise of his birth, the events of his birth, his baptism, his temptation in the desert, his calling his disciples, they following him . . . Recall his preaching of the Sermon on the Mount, his performing healing miracles, driving out demons, the lame walking, the blind seeing, the deaf hearing, the dead rising, bodies and minds healing . . . Recall his being betrayed, arrested, denied, abandoned, tried, scourged, carrying his cross and being crucified on it, mocked on it, dying on it . . . Recall his laying in the tomb three days and rising from the grave after three days, appearing to Mary, then the disciples in Galilee, on the road to Emmaus and by the Lakeside . . . Recall his ascension into heaven, his promise of the Holy Spirit, his sending of the Holy Spirit, waiting for the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit lighting on you and your receiving power to do even greater things than he. Rub your hands together and think, “Oh, boy!”

Now take a picture of you, one of you wearing your Moses-Elijah-Jesus robe, and superimpose that image on the image of Jesus. The pictures of Jesus and you are merging, so that you are like Jesus and Jesus are you and you are you. And rapidly recall all the incidents of Jesus’ life, of your life as Jesus . . . your pre-existence with God as Christ, the promise of your birth, the events of your birth, your baptism, your temptation in the desert, your calling your disciples, they following you . . . your preaching of the Sermon on the Mount, your performing healing miracles, driving out demons, the lame walking, the blind seeing, the deaf hearing, the dead rising, bodies and minds healing . . . your being betrayed, arrested, denied, abandoned, tried,

scourged, carrying your cross and being crucified on it, mocked on it, dying on it . . .
your laying in the tomb three days and rising from the grave after three days, appearing
to Mary, then the disciples in Galilee, on the road to Emmaus and by the Lakeside . . .
your ascension into heaven, your promise of the Holy Spirit, your sending of the Holy
Spirit, your disciples waiting for the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit lighting on them and they
receiving power to do even greater things than you. Jesus Christ Superstar! Rub your
hands together and exclaim “Oh, boy!

Picture yourself now as Jesus in relationship with God, the source of your being,
thinking to yourself, “Your will Father, not my will” and hold a golden chalice in your
hands, “Your will God, not my will: and raise the golden chalice to your lips and drink its
contents, the ruby wine of passion and compassion, the precious blood of Jesus
passion and compassion, the living nectar of Holy Spirit, Divine life, forgiveness and
eternal life. Touch the pads of your index finger and thumbs of both hands as you think
“Your will: my will” and One will: God’s will.”

What does this source relationship with God look like? Experience your-self relating to
God as Father and God as Holy Spirit as the Son of God, as One with God. What are
you hearing in this source relationship? What are you feeling, connected with God,
relating with God, being in God, breathing in God, being yourself, being God, Being.
What color is this relationship? What color is God? I see pure white light with tints of all
the colors of the rainbow, especially indigo. Increase the brightness of the whiteness
and the intensity of its hues and experience it pervading your being/Being. Feel that
light and all of its warmth pervading your being/Being. Hear its sound, its vibration and

increase its amplitude, the sound of AUM resonating within you, throughout your own being/Being, limitless Being, losing yourself in It as you are It. Locate this being/Being at the crown of your head, experiencing yourself wearing this golden crown.

Look at yourself/Jesus: Child/Son/Daughter of God, Messiah, Savior of the world; Preacher, teacher, counselor, healer and servant. This is who you are: Child of God, Christ, Savior, Second Person of the Trinity, Preacher, Teacher, Counselor, Healer, Servant and Governor Listen as Jesus yourself. Be as Jesus' yourself. Preach as Jesus yourself. Teach as Jesus yourself. Counsel as Jesus yourself. Heal as Jesus yourself. Serve as Jesus yourself. Identify as Jesus yourself with God, as God incarnate, in the flesh, rays of light radiating from you, through you and as you. Locate this being/Being in your third eye, violet light beaming out from your third eye.

What do you believe as Jesus yourself? What do you think and say about Jesus, about yourself as Jesus? What do you believe, think and say about God, about people, about your disciples, about life, about death, about resurrection, about life after death, about forgiveness and redemption, as Jesus yourself. Just list your beliefs but remember are Jesus' beliefs. They are higher, transcendent, Meta beliefs. They are congruent with your identity as Jesus and with God.

Jesus made eight I am statements in the gospel of John. These are:

John 8: 58 Before Abraham was, I am

John 11:25 I am the resurrection and the life

John 8: 12, 9:5 I am the light of the world

John 10:11 I am the good shepherd

John 6: 35, 48 I am the bread of life

John 10:9 I am the door

John 14:6 I am the way, the truth, and the life

John 15:1 I am the true vine

These represent what Jesus believed about himself. If you are identified with Jesus then you believe these things about yourself as well. John 8:58 places us in touch with source, with God. It provides a sense of origin. How are you originated in God and live in congruence with your origin in God? This personality called Will Baez did not exist before Abraham. Neither did the personality called Jesus of Nazareth. The Christ existed and all things existed in the Christ and were made in the Christ, the Christ being the image of God. God does not have images. God is transcendent. But Christ is imminent. Christ is the expression of God in the world. It is in Christ, an extension of God, that creation is possible and communication between God and humans is possible. Jesus was a perfect human expression of the Christ (Harvey, 1999: Harvey 2000). The Christ that incarnated as Jesus was not created but is the imminent expression of God. I locate God above me as a bright blue-white northern star. I do not believe that God is above me but locating God there helps me. I imagine an axis that starts above me in heaven and passes down the center of my body through the top

of my head, through the center of my head (eye level), through my throat, through my heart, through my solar plexus, through my belly and through my perineum and then down through my feet and into the earth. John 8: 58 offers a sense of origin.

John 11:25 offers a sense of identity and a crowning achievement: “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in Jesus as the resurrection and the life will never die and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.” How are you living as the resurrection and life? It is important to understand what Jesus means by believe here (Harvey, 1999: Harvey 2000). He is not looking for Martha to merely say I believe in this doctrine. He is asking her if she is convicted of it; does she experience him as the “resurrection of the life” and if she is willing to live in the resurrection and life. How does Jesus live as “the resurrection and life?” How will you live as “resurrection and life?” How are you resurrecting and living, overcoming sin and death, not just physical sin and death, but structural sin and metaphorical death? I locate “the resurrection and the life” on top of my head, the crown of my head and visualize it as a golden crown with rays of golden light.

John 8: 12, 9:5 offers a sense of perception (Harvey, 1999: Harvey 2000). How does Jesus live as the light of the world? How do you live as light to the world? How do you bring light into darkness? How do you garner insight and understand the contents of your mind and the reality of your being? How do you see through falsehood and illusion to truth? How do you develop clarity and help others develop clarity of vision? How do you see when you are placed in a dark circumstance? I locate this light between my

eyes. I see it as an amethyst colored crystal, clarifying light coming into me and projecting light out of me into the world.

John 10:11 offers a sense of communication “I am the good shepherd” (Harvey, 1999: Harvey 2000). The good shepherd knows his sheep and they know him. They know his voice and trust him. He cares for them as his own, willing to search for them when they are lost, lead them to pasture and drink, protect them from menaces, soothe them when sick or injured, bring them to shelter and die for them if necessary. He is a leader to the sheep and a caretaker of them. How do you, as Jesus did, be a good shepherd? How are you a good shepherd when the sheep are stubborn and disobey? I locate John 10:11 at the level of the throat. I see a royal blue colored cross there regulating my voice and all aspects of my communication and creative expression. It is how I express my care.

John 6: 35, 48, “I am the bread of life” offers a sense of love and compassion for others (Harvey, 1999: Harvey 2000). It involves nurture of others and sacrifices for others. How do I give of myself to others in ways that sustain them? How do I feed them without overfeeding them? How do I help them stop taking and give of themselves. How do I be sustain bread rather than junk bread? I locate John 6:35 and 48 at the place of the spiritual heart at the center of the chest. I see it as heart shaped and green. It characterizes my relationships with others, my openness, my compassion and my generosity.

John 10:9, “I am the door” or “I am the gate” is about access (Harvey, 1999: Harvey 2000). How do I keep who belongs in or let them in and out and how do I keep what doesn’t belong in, out? How do I show people when, where and how to enter the Kingdom of God? How do I become a facilitator and resource rather than a hindrance? How do I usher people in? How are you being the door or the gate? I locate John 10:9 at the solar plexus, a gold circle and representing power for action and movement.

John 14:6, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” is about path (Harvey, 1999: Harvey 2000; Borg, 2004). It is the how of entering the Kingdom of God. Once the door is opened you have to go through. Jesus offers himself as the exemplary way, truth and life and the “only” way to the Father (God). Some believe that we need to believe in Jesus; that he is the only way. But Jesus is not saying this. He is saying “Walk this way; live the way I live, in the manner I live on the basis of truth, the gospel, the word of God that I base my life on. This is the way to God and to unity with God. It is a way of redemptive suffering. It is a way of suffering (for truth), death (ego-death) and resurrection (new life). It is transcendent, moving beyond the limitations of time, space and corporeality into the now. How are you living the way, the truth and the life that leads to God? I locate John 14:6 at my belly as orange ball. This represents my way of life, a life of spirit in the flesh.

John 15:1, “I am the true vine,” represents connection to God, to Jesus and to community (Harvey, 1999: Harvey 2000). Life is continuous between vine and branches as well as with earth and sky and the vineyard owner and laborers. How are you connected to God, to Christ, to your community? How do you care for the vineyard, the

owner, the vine and the branches? How are you true vine and how do you relate to your branches as true vine? This vine connects me to the source of life as it comes up out of the earth. I locate it at the bottom of my tailbone and see it as a red sleeping serpent.

Jesus came to the disciples. There was a great crowd around them and an argument ensued. When the crowd saw Jesus, motivated by awe ran to greet him. He asked about the fuss. A man responded “Teacher, I brought you my son; he has a spirit that makes him unable to speak; and whenever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid” . . . “Bring him to me, “ said Jesus. And they brought the boy to him. When the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. Jesus asked the father, “How long has this been happening to him?” And he said, “From childhood. It has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if you are able to do anything, have pity on us and help us.” Jesus said to him, “If you are able!—All things can be done for the one who believes.” Immediately the father of the child cried out, “I believe; help my unbelief!” When Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, “You spirit that keeps this boy from speaking and hearing, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again!” After crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, “He is dead.” But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he was able to stand.

Dilts conceives of a Belief Change Cycle, the knowledge of which makes change easier. To implement the Belief Change Cycle, lay out separate locations for each of the states associated with the 'landscape' of belief change. This essentially involves having the person put himself or herself as fully as possible into the experience and physiology associated with each of these aspects of the natural cycle of belief change and 'anchoring' them to specific spatial locations.

The man with epileptic boy came to Jesus seeking help. The man had enough faith that Jesus could heal his son so went to see Jesus. The man described his son's symptoms to Jesus. Immediately, Jesus told the man to bring the boy to him. The boy was immediately brought to him. Upon seeing Jesus, the spirit that possessed the boy immediately began to seize him. Jesus asked the man about how long the boy's condition persisted. The man explained that it was a childhood disease and was life threatening. The man was worried that Jesus might not be able to help and said to Jesus, "If you are able to do anything . . ." Jesus responded "If you are able!—All things can be done for the one who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out, "I believe; help my unbelief!" . . . Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, commanding it to leave the boy and never return to him. It cried out and convulsed the boy terribly and when it came out, the boy was like a corpse. Most muttered that the boy was dead. But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he was able to stand.

Exercise: Belief Change Cycle and the Healing of the Boy with Seizures

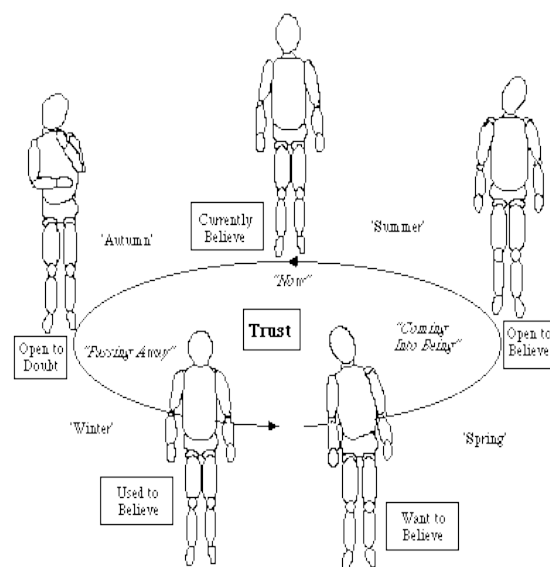
In this exercise we will lay out separate locations for each state associated with a landscape of belief change (Dilts 2009). The person seeking to change something puts herself as fully as possible into the experience and physiology associated with the location in the circle. In a physical setting, the person would walk through the various seasons and stations in the landscape. Here I will walk the father from the biblical story through the landscape.

The person wanting to change must (Dilts 2009):

- Want to believe something new.
- Be open to believe something new.
- Identify current including limiting or conflicting beliefs.
- Be open to doubting something believed for a long time.
- Consider beliefs from the past that are no longer believed.
- Recall an experience of deep trust in self or a higher power.

In his story the sick boy's father wanted to believe that Jesus could heal his son {Want to Believe}. He was open to believing it {Open to Believe}. That is why he came to see Jesus in the first place. However, he was worried that Jesus could not or would not heal his son. His son has been sick for a long time. Presumably, the father had tried to find healing for his son and previous efforts had failed to heal him {Limiting Beliefs}. He was open to doubting old beliefs such as the belief that his son could not be healed {Open to doubt}. He had a trust in Jesus, that

Jesus could heal his son. Even when he doubted whether Jesus could or would heal his son {Current Belief}, when Jesus questioned his doubt he immediately responded “I believe. Help me with my disbelief {Open to Doubt and Open to Belief}. The crowd slipped back into their disbelief {Current Belief} Jesus completed his healing. The am when through all the stations in the landscape finally coming to the belief that was necessary to heal the boy.



'Landscape' of States Associated with the Belief Change Cycle (Dilts 2009)

The Steps for producing this change in person follow:

1. Create a landscape of belief change circle,

2. Divide the circle into four seasons:

- Summer
- Spring
- Winter
- Fall

3. Locate five stations around the circle:

- Want to Believe
- Open to Believe
- Currently Believe
- Open to Doubt
- Used to Believe

Have a person think of a new belief that she would like to strengthen.

1. Stand in the “Want to Believe” space, think of the “new belief” that you would like to have more confidence in. Hold this belief in your mind,
2. Move into the “Open to Believe” space. If you have chosen a 'mentor' for this state, you may step into his or her 'shoes' at this point. Seeing yourself through the eyes of your mentor, you may give the you who is “Open to Believe” new

beliefs, helpful advice or support. Feel what it is like to become more open to believe this new belief.

3. When you intuitively feel the time is appropriate, step into the “Currently Believe” space concentrating on the new belief you want to have.
4. If there are any conflicting or limiting beliefs that come up in the “Currently Believe” space, hold them in mind and move to the “Open to Doubt” space. If you have chosen a 'mentor' for your “Open to Doubt” state, you may step into his or her 'shoes' at this point. Seeing yourself through the eyes of your mentor, you may give the you who is becoming “Open to Doubt” of the limiting or conflicting beliefs any helpful advice or support.
5. Ecology Check Go to the “Trust” space and consider the positive intents and purpose of both the new belief and any conflicting or limiting beliefs. Consider whether there are any changes or revisions you would like to make to the new belief. Also consider if there are any parts of the old beliefs that would be worth retaining or incorporating along with the new belief.
6. Return to the old limiting or conflicting beliefs that you left in the “Open to Doubt” space, bringing the insights you had from the “Trust” space and move them into the “Used to Believe” space.
7. Step back into to the “Currently Believe” space and focus on the new beliefs you want to strengthen. Experience your new sense of confidence and verbalize any new insights or learning that you may have discovered during this process.
8. Ecology Check Again step into the “Trust” space and consider the changes you have made. Know that, because this is a natural, organic and ongoing cycle, the

process can continue evolve and that you can make any necessary adjustments in the future in the way that is most appropriate and ecological for you.

Dilts (1990) offers a simple process for changing beliefs that we can understand the previous process.

1. Identify the present state e.g. the boy was sick.
2. Identify the desired state e.g. the boy is healed.
3. Identify the appropriate resources (internal states, physiology, information or skills) that you need to get from the present state to the desired state) e.g. the father's belief that Jesus can heal the boy and Jesus' ability to heal the boy.
4. Identifying interferences e.g. the father's past experiences seeking healing for the boy, the father's doubt that Jesus could or would heal the boy, the crowd's lack of belief that Jesus could heal the boy.
4. Eliminating any interferences through using those resources e.g. Jesus confronting the father's disbelief and teaching about the power of belief, Jesus healing the boy before the crowd arrived and before they could express their negativity.
5. You've got to want to change, know how to change, and give yourself the chance to change e.g. the father wanted to change, gave himself a chance to change and secured Jesus' help in changing.

Belief is often considered to be head-centered, as statement that has been memorized. But belief, in the Christian sense, is heart-centered. It is a felt reality rather than a conceptual reality. Or head and heart come together to produce belief. It is meant to be lived rather than professed. Beliefs are what gives meaning and beliefs generate capabilities. If I believe that I cannot sing, I am much less likely to try to sing or learn to sing better. But if I believe that I can sing I am likely to put myself in a position to sing more and even study and practice my singing to improve it. So, I locate belief in my heart. In my worship leadership ministry I often instruct people to bring their head to their hearts and their eyes to heaven at the same time in order to bring together head and heart and spirit and mind and body and God.

Having the same source as Jesus, the same identity and Jesus and the same beliefs of Jesus, what are you, as Jesus, capable of?

The disciples had gone ahead of Jesus by boat to the other side of the sea. The next Morning Jesus came walking towards them on the sea. They were terrified seeing him thinking that he was a ghost. He reassured them that was he. Peter called out to Jesus and asked if it were Jesus to command him to walk to Jesus on the water. Jesus told him come and Peter did. He was walking towards Jesus on the water when a strong wind came up. He became frightened and began to sink. He cried out to Jesus to save him. Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him and said, "You of little faith, why did you doubt" (Matthew 14:22-32)?

Jesus was capable of walking on water. Being Jesus' disciple and wanting to emulate him, Peter wanted to walk on water. But he did not quite think that he could. So he asked Jesus to command him to walk on the water. Now, he knew that he could. So he got up off of the boat, stepped on to the water and made his way towards Jesus. He was doing it! He was in arms reach of Jesus when the wind blew up and scared him. In the face of the wind Peter doubted and had a sinking feeling. He called out to Jesus, "Help me!" Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. He did not hold him up or walk him back to the boat. He spoke to him. Where is your faith? Why did you doubt? You were doing it. You had reached me. And here we are standing on the sea talking about it. Peter was capable of walking on the water all along. He needed to have Jesus say "Come." He just did not believe it. Later on, Peter will be able to do a lot of things that Jesus did without Jesus there. Jesus would be so confident in Peter that he would leave him in charge of his church and his sheep and lambs. Peter would be able to heal the sick and raise from the dead.

This story of Peter is the story of everyman. It's my story and your story. You can walk on water. Remember when you first learned how to walk on land. Every able-bodied person can share this story. Mommy and daddy were waiting for you across the room and you toddled your way across the room until you fell into their arms. The first time, or first few times, mom and dad said "Come!" and you came! You repeated this miracle when you learned to ride a bicycle, first with training wheels, then without, when you learned how to swim and made your way across the short side of the pool and when

you learned how to drive a car. There are so many things that you never did before that you have done. You've even taught other people how to do them.

The Messiah did not come into the world to save you. The Messiah came into the world to show you how you can be a godly person, how you can actualize your God-given potential, how you can be fully human, how you can be content, free and master your life circumstances. Jesus did not come to make disciples, but to make masters, to make leaders, to make whole and complete human beings.

Exercise: Your Unity With Jesus

Look up at Jesus on the movie screen and see his life playing beginning to end. In particular watch him as he preaches, teaches and heals . . . listen to him preaching, teaching and healing . . . see him performing miracles . . . see him putting up with flack from disciples, scribes, Pharisees, Priests, Herod and Pilate and responding . . . see him facing challenges that take him all the way to his death . . . watch what he does . . . listen to what he says . . .

Now put back on your Moses-Elijah-Jesus robe and project yourself into your Jesus movie, merging with Jesus, becoming Jesus, feel yourself being Jesus, breathing as Jesus, heart beating as Jesus, doing everything as Jesus, sitting as Jesus, standing as Jesus, walking as Jesus, eating as Jesus, washing yourself as Jesus, doing private things as Jesus, sleeping as Jesus. And what are you capable of as Jesus, changing water into wine, healing the sick, driving out demons, preaching magnificent sermons, teaching the multitudes, raising the dead, feeding the multitudes, baptizing with the Holy

Spirit and fire, dying for others, rising from the dead, ascending into heaven, noticing how you are doing all of these things, naturally and easily, second nature . . .

Let's consider for a moment the source of Christian pastoral or spiritual counseling. What is the origin or source of all Christian Pastoral Care and Counseling? Christian pastoral care and counseling is God based, Christ-centered, Spirit-directed, Bible-oriented and based in Christian tradition and experience. As we look at Jesus as the model of pastoral or spiritual counseling we are concerned with his source, identity, beliefs, capability, behavior and impact on others and the world.

What is the identity of a Christian Pastor and Counselor? A good pastor and counselor takes their example from whom? First and foremost from Jesus who is called in the scripture "the Good Shepherd" (Clinebell, 1984). How do you say "Good Shepherd" in Spanish? "Buen Pastor." Second, it's the Apostles, Disciples and Saints who themselves have determined to be Christ-like. Everyone becomes Christ-like in his or her own way. Christian discipleship is not clone-producing. Neither is modeling someone. The Good Shepherd enters the sheep pen through its gate. The sheep know his voice and trust it. The Good Shepherd is a friend to the sheep and will even lay down his life for them. He puts his life on the line for them as their advocate. If even one of the 100 sheep in his charge goes lost he looks for it, finds it and brings it back.

What are the beliefs of the Christian Pastor and Counselor (Clinebell, 1984)?

- Every person is a beloved child of God

- Every person is spiritually gifted and meant to contribute to the advancement of God's Kingdom on the earth
- Faith in God and Jesus leads to forgiveness, reconciliation, healing, and salvation
- The Church (Christian Community) is a sign of the presence of God and God's Kingdom on the earth
- A person can grow in grace: justifying, sanctifying, and perfecting grace.

What are the capacities of the Christian Pastor and Counselor (Clinebell, 1984)?

- Holiness
- Holy listening
- Empathy
- Compassion
- Self-discipline
- Appropriate boundaries
- Spiritual discernment
- Agape love/Unconditional love or positive regard
- Non-judgmentalness.

The primary model of these capacities is Jesus of Nazareth and then his direct disciples (Clinebell, 1984). Jesus models the perfect love of God for people and creation. He models telling the truth including telling truth to power. He models

suffering even to the point of death in order to accomplish a larger purpose. He shows people what they are capable of.

What are the behaviors of the Christian Pastor and Counselor (Clinebell, 1984)?

- Listening with one's eyes, ears, and heart
- Loving while listening and speaking
- Reflecting back what the person says
- Expressing empathy, care, concern, genuineness, and warmth
- Make referrals to other service providers when necessary

The model of behavior of the Christian pastoral counselor is Jesus of Nazareth, and again those who were directly or indirectly his disciples. We see Jesus listening to people and talking to people. We observe Jesus confronting people, touching people, being touched by people. We witness Jesus carrying his cross and telling others to pick up theirs and follow him. We watch as Jesus commands and directs people to follow his instructions and teachings, even casting out demons. He encourages and challenges people.

What is the environment of the Christian Pastor and Counselor (Clinebell, 1984)?

- The Church
- People's homes
- Hospitals
- Prisons and jails

- The street
- Nursing homes
- Rehab programs
- The community
- Workplaces
- Schools
- Families

This is where the fruit of the counseling is experienced. It is the impact the counselor has on the client and the outcome of the counseling in the client's life. In scripture we observe dead people living, blind people seeing, lame people walking, lepers cleansed, sins being forgiven, apostles being filled by the Holy Spirit and preaching in multiple languages at the same time, fish being caught, called people following him, Peter walking on water and the winds and seas becoming calm.

The fruit of the counselor's activities is shown in the life of clients in what the client does (behavior), what the client is capable of, in what the client believes, how the client identifies and what and how the client accesses the client's source or spiritual dimension. It is also shown in the counselor's own behaviors, sense of capabilities, beliefs, identity and source access.

For me, pastoral counseling extends beyond Christianity. A pastoral counselor can be Buddhist, Gnostic, Hindu, Humanistic, Islamic, Jewish, Kabalistic, New age, Philosophic, Shamanic, Taoist, Theosophist, Yogic, and more. He can be inter-spiritual.

Thus the source, identity and beliefs of the pastoral or spiritual counselor may differ, and their capabilities, behaviors and influence will follow from them. I look at my own spirituality as Integral with a Christian orientation; that is, as encompassing these and other perspectives in a unitive whole. I see myself as interfaith and pluralistic in perspective. I came across the Integral Perspective of Sri Aurobindo and Jean Gebser while attending the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco. Studies there were focused on integrating body, mind and spirit and integrating Eastern and Western psychology, philosophy, religion and essentially spirituality. Around that time, the philosopher Ken Wilber was beginning to develop a name for himself as he developed what he called “Integral Theory” (Wilber, 2000: Wilber 2007a, Wilber 2007b). He sought a synthesis of the best of pre-modern, modern, and postmodern perspectives on reality. He developed what he called a “theory of everything” (Wilber, 2001a; Wilber, 2001b) and offered an approach that sought to unite co-existing paradigms into an interdependent mutually enriching network. The word “integral,” as used by Aurobindo, is a derivation of the Sanskrit word, “purna” which translates as complete. Purna Yoga is described by Aurobindo as a “synthesis of Yoga.” It addresses needs for personal, cultural and planetary transformation.

One does not have to be a Christian to model Jesus. Ghandi probably had other models but he modeled Jesus, particularly from Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount.

What is Pastoral Care? Christian Pastoral Care and counseling involve the utilization by persons in ministry or service of one to one or small group relationships to enable healing within individuals and their relationships. In Christian understanding, anyone

who provides such a service is ministering and is thus a minister. Pastoral care is the broad, inclusive ministry of mutual healing and growth within a congregation and its community, through the life cycle. Pastoral care is needed throughout each person's life time, birth through death and afterwards with that person's family (Clinebell, 1984; Farabough, 2009).

What do you notice about this definition? Look at the difference between this definition and your own? Who provides pastoral care in this definition? Who doesn't? Every person in the church provides aspects of pastoral care, not just the Pastor. Sometimes I differentiate between Christian care and pastoral care, so one doesn't mistakenly conclude that pastoral care is the Pastor's job. Look at Jesus as the model and you will see that Jesus did not do all the work of ministry. He employed and deployed his disciples.

Where does pastoral care take place (Clinebell, 1984; Farabough, 2009; Stone 1986; Stone 1993)? It takes place in relationships, one-to-one and in groups. I would add in large groups, as well; inside the church group, in the communal worship, in classes, and in the community and the world, wherever members of the congregation find themselves. Wherever there are people because pastoral care is provided outside of the church, in the community and is extended to non-Christians.

What are some of the ways in which pastoral care is provided (Clinebell, 1984; Farabough, 2009)? Pastoral care is exhibited by the Pastor, but also by members of the congregation and the denomination. It can be provided by managing the milieu of

the church or the church event, from the time a person first contacts the church through their seeing the church through the media or its facilities, how persons are invited, welcomed, followed and incorporated into the church body, and how persons are managed and responded to throughout their involvement as members and non-members in the church. How people treat one another within and outside the church and how it treats neighbors, friends, strangers, enemies and the world itself are pastoral issues. As a Pastor, I want to provide guidance to the church community in providing pastoral care to each other and to members of the community outside the Church.

What is the end result of pastoral care (Clinebell, 1984; Farabough, 2009; Stone 1986; Stone, 1993)? The end result is healing within individuals, and in and of their relationships; Relationships with other individuals, their families, their churches, their community, their nation, their world, institutions, and with God.

Is all pastoral care good? Let's do an exercise. To help you get the most from this exercise, I invite you to use your imagination. You are able to use your imagination best when you are relaxed and open-minded. You can relax with your eyes open or your eyes closed, although you automatically relax when you close your eyes, as when you close your eyes, your brain produces alpha brain waves, which correspond with your increasing relaxation (Silva, 1979) . . . and you are more relaxed, and with every out breath you relax more deeply, one hundred, two hundred, three hundred percent more relaxed. Imagine yourself as you enter into a room with a very supportive and very relaxing chair and a large screen television that automatically goes on or off whenever you want it. Sit down now in that chair in front of the large screen and relax.

Exercise: Bad Pastoral Care

Take a moment now, and remember a time when you or someone else received bad pastoral care or failed to receive good pastoral care when you or someone else needed it. See that situation on the television screen in front of you. See the situation unfold before you; hear what's said and thought; feel what you feel in response, physically, emotionally. Notice how bright the image is, how loud the sounds, how heavy the feeling. Step into this image, and notice your experience in this pastoral care situation, first as a recipient, now as a provider. Now, change the image: let the image become dimmer, black and white, dimmer, fading away; the sounds quieter, turning down and off, and the feeling becoming lighter. Step out of the movie and see the same movie, the image dim, distant, the sounds quiet, absent, the feelings dissipating, dissolving.

Exercise: Good Pastoral Care

Now, remember or imagine a time when you or someone received good, even great pastoral care, and project this scene on the screen before you. Notice how bright the image is, how loud the sounds. Remember the types of feelings and emotions, and the intensity of the feelings. Turn up the brightness, full vivid color, coming clearer and clearer, four dimensional; turn up the sound to a comfortable level, hearing the words and phrases and verbal communication distinctly; fine-tuning the feelings, the emotions and feelings. Now step into this movie; experience yourself in it as a recipient of pastoral care, feel the muscles in your face, the words you hear and speak, the feelings and emotions you experience; and experience yourself as a provider of that pastoral

care – your look, the other’s look, the sounds, the words, the volume, the feelings, the emotions. Now step back out of the movie and see it again.

When you do this exercise with someone bring that back into the present by saying something like “Now, when I count to three open your eyes, remembering by heart what you need, ready to participate in this class as an active participant right away. 1-2-3 – Now!”

Pastoral counseling, as a dimension of pastoral care, is the utilization of a variety of healing methods to help people handle their problems and crises growthfully, and thus experience healing of their own brokenness (Clinebell, 1984; Stone 1986; Stone 1993). Pastoral Counseling is usually thought of as reparative or therapeutic and is used when personal growth is jeopardized or blocked. Pastoral counseling is used in times of crisis, usually on a short-term basis. But that is not the only time.

Christian Pastoral Counseling may be uniquely practiced as Spiritual Direction or Coaching where its practice is not rehabilitative, but habilitative and developmental, aimed to guide or assist the client from moving from one level of development (moral, cognitive, spiritual-motivation, faith) to another or progressing along a level of development (Clinebell, 1984; Stone, 1986; Stone, 1993; Stone, 2001). Spiritual direction and coaching may be unique aspects of pastoral and spiritual counseling. NLP-oriented counseling, coaching and spiritual direction is about generative change (Dilts and McDonald, 1997). The counselor, coach or spiritual director focuses on the client’s resources and how to enrich them instead of focusing on problems. The client

automatically attracts resolutions to their problems at an unconscious level because they are operating from the resolution space to begin with. Problems are prevented and solved before they enter conscious awareness. The client's latent capabilities and resources are uncovered, expressed and reinforced.

The goal of Spiritual Direction or Coaching is spiritual, personal or vocational growth and development. Spiritual Direction, Mentoring, and Coaching are dimensions of Pastoral Counseling (Clinebell, 1984; Stone 1986; Stone 1993; Stone 2001).

Exercise: Swish: Good Pastoral Care

Here is another exercise. Close your eyes. Relax. Let go. Every breath is an opportunity to let go deeper . . . deeper . . . relaxing . . .

For a moment think of a pastoral counseling or general counseling session that was really bad. If you never experienced a bad counseling session, imagine what a bad counseling session would be like. Place that situation up on your imaginary television screen in front of you. Notice what's bad in this counseling. What is the counselor saying or doing? What are you feeling? See the counselor do something that is counter-productive. Hear the counselor say something that is counter-productive. Feel the counselor feel something counter-productive. Now . . . change the channel. Turn this channel off. Come to a blank television screen and place on this screen the image of a pastoral counseling or general counseling session that is really good; spectacular; excellent; effective. Notice what's so great in this counseling session. What is the counselor saying or doing? What are you feeling? See the counselor do something

that is extremely productive. Hear the counselor say something that is super helpful. Feel the counselor feeling being ultra-productive in everything he or she does. Now step into the scene and place yourself in that counselor's seat, seeing as the counselor sees, hearing as the counselor hears, feeling what the counselor feels, listening to what the counselor says, and acting as the counselor acts. Excellent! Leave the screen and return to your seat and watch the scene again. When you do this exercise with someone bring that back into the present by saying something like "Now, Now, re-experience the transition from the first movie to the second; the increase in confidence, efficacy connectedness and love. Allow these feelings to continue increasing as you prepare to open your eyes at the count of three, 1-2-3, Excellent."

Pastoral Psychotherapy is the utilization of long-term, reconstructive therapeutic methods when growth is deeply and/or chronically diminished by need-depriving early life experiences or multiple crises in adult life (Clinebell, 1984). It is important to make the distinctions between pastoral care, pastoral counseling, and Pastoral psychotherapy. You have to understand and respect the limitations of your office and training and make referrals appropriately.

In general, what are the goals of pastoral and spiritual counseling? The Unifying Goal of Counseling is Wholeness (Clinebell, 1984). As a Pastoral Counselor I seek to lead people to an experience of wholeness. In Christian Pastoral Counseling this often includes a personal spiritual relationship with Jesus Christ and a community of Christian believers. It also can focus on the teaching and example of Jesus and the example of disciples. In pluralistic Pastoral Counseling with other groups it is less specific or the

Pastoral Counseling may reflect another faith tradition or that of the client. Jesus was about restoring individuals to wholeness; to a relationship with God, to participation in a supportive religious community and as a contributing member of society. He spoke to how people's faith led them to wholeness. He tried to make Judaism whole by making it more inclusive and by cleaning up its corrupt practices.

The Pastoral Counselor seeks to assist the individual to experience salvation, enlightenment, liberation, Self-realization, God-realization, nurture, and/or empowerment within themselves, in their relationships, and in society and its institutions; in the contexts that they find themselves (Clinebell, 1984). Jesus was oriented towards bringing people into a renewed relationship with God and a greater sense of power, decision and responsibility. He sought to bring the Jewish religion into a proper relationship with God rather than limp on as an institution cut off from its source.

The term wholeness, suggests the integration of the parts of oneself such that there is a characteristic cohesion of the self (Clinebell, 1984). Many people experience an internal fragmentation of the self into parts and an external brokenness in relationships with others and the world. So pastoral care and counseling assists in bringing such wholeness, cohesion, healing and reconciliation to the self and world they live in. This cohesion is supplied through the realization of love; love of God, love of self, and love of other. Love is the glue that makes cohesion possible. Cohesion may be experientially known as unity; unity with God, self, and other. Jesus sought to take what was broken and make it whole. He even used brokenness to connect with the human condition.

Jesus invited people to participate in a new world-view, following new rules of love, justice and collaboration in a new way of being human.

The liberation that pastoral counseling aims for is the liberation to live out God's dream and intention that the client can have life in all its fullness. It is the freedom to become all that one has the possibility of becoming – to discover and develop their maximum potential at each life stage, in ways that contribute to the growth of others and a society that permits the same (Clinebell, 1984). Jesus was a liberator. He sought to free people from counterproductive and non-productive modes of thinking and behaving and states of mind and being.

Human beings possess a wealth of undiscovered and undeveloped strengths, assets, and resources. Jesus taught that the "Kingdom (realm) of God is within you" (Luke 17:21) and to "Seek first the Kingdom (realm) of God and all things will be added to you" (Matthew 6:33). The pastoral counselor seeks to assist the person in realizing and living on the basis of the Kingdom/Realm/Rule/Reality/State of God within, and of bringing the fuller realization of that future, idealized vision of the Reality of God into the present. This is an ever-occurring, never-ending journey into God as we can never explain God to be. I consider this Kingdom of God as being a kind of consciousness of God-realization, life ordered in the Wisdom of God, Word of God and flow of the Spirit of God. The Kingdom of God came into the world with Jesus. Jesus proclaimed it and initiated people into it. It was a new way for them to be human; a better way.

Liberation is always to realize some future aspiration (to realize my potential, to a new level of development, service, worship, learn, to the Godhead), for a particular purpose (service to the Kingdom, pleasing God, working for the salvation of all human-kind, unity with God, salvation or liberation of all beings), and from a particular predicament (sin, death, fear, hate, a history of neglect, abuse and harm, evil, darkness, poverty, slavery, limitation, etc . . .) (Clinebell, 1984). Jesus was always pointing people from their present state and condition to a future state and way of being, that was better. Jesus activated in people hope and initiated them into a Kingdom, consciousness or way that they would grow into. The potential for them to grow was already in them.

Wholeness is not only spiritual, but has as its center spiritual wholeness. This involves helping people experience healing and growth in their relationship with God (Clinebell, 1984).

People are reconnected to God through grace. They are introduced to Jesus Christ and through faith in him and his saving actions realize forgiveness and reconciliation with God and human community. They become born again, from above, anew, or in the Spirit and are like new people. We call this moment of salvation, justification or regeneration. Once reconnected to God, they continue to grow in grace, in faith and in the Spirit, becoming whole or holier in the process. This growth is called sanctification. The end point of this spiritual path which is maintained and enhanced through spiritual discipline ends in Christian Perfection or Glorification: the experience of unity in perfect love with God and others also called Sainthood (Wesley, 1741). Grace is like power from God. It activates a process within the client where the person becomes more

awake, aware, powerful and responsible. Grace is already present in the person but it is dormant, but once wakened it pushes the client towards wholeness. This activation is not once and for all but needs to be repeated through direct or mediated experience of God. Jesus provides that mediation for his disciples until they are prepared to obtain it for themselves.

The goals of Pastoral Counseling are found across multiple dimensions of wholeness. They are, to use a pun, at cross purposes. There is a vertical dimension where the person is connected to God, a spiritual dimension or other worldliness. And there is a horizontal dimension where a person is connected to others, world, nature; this worldliness. The Pastoral Counselor works with the mental, physical, emotional, spiritual and ecological dimensions that together constitute wholeness (Clinebell, 1984). There is no salvation or enlightenment outside of the body and outside of relationships with others. Disembodied spirituality is irrelevant for human life in the world and for all intents and purposes is meaningless. The Buddhists say there can only be progress on the human, earthly realm, not in the heavenly realms (Fronsdal 2006).

In addressing the mind of the client, the mental or cognitive dimension, the counselor seeks to (Clinebell, 1984):

- Enliven the client's mind
- Develop internal clients resourcefulness for thinking, feeling, experiencing, envisioning, and creating
- Enrich consciousness

- Release creativity
- Deepen insight
- Sharpen awareness
- Expand intellectual and artistic horizons
- Develop creative capabilities for problem solving
- Approximate the mind or attitude of Jesus Christ as described in the scripture

In Christianity, people are challenged to put on the mind of Christ; to have the same mind that was in Jesus (Philippians 2:5). This might mean having the same attitude and outlook on life as he. Jesus challenged not only what people said, but what they thought. Jesus was able to calibrate his experience to that of other people to determine what they were thinking.

In addressing the body or the physical and energetic dimension, the counselor aims to help the client to (Clinebell, 1984):

- Experience and enjoy the body more fully
- Use the body more effectively and lovingly
- Obtain sound nutrition
- Manage and reduce stress
- Become healthier
- Establish physical disciplines
- Care for the body as the Temple of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit was most important for Jesus. Also Jesus enjoyed some pleasures like eating, drinking wine, hiking up mountains, walking (even on water) and getting his feet washed, dried and anointed by a woman.

In addressing emotions or the feeling dimension the counselor aims to help the client to (Clinebell, 1984):

- Speak a language of feelings
- Unblock the expression of feeling
- Control the expression of feelings
- Develop desirable emotional states
- Reduce undesirable emotional states
- Develop strategies for emotional self-care and protection

Jesus actively worked with people's mental, emotional and existential-spiritual states guiding people to move from state to state. In this way Jesus was like a cognitive psychotherapist. He sought to have people be loving, compassionate and forgiving and to let go of prior conditions.

In addressing the Spirit or spiritual dimension, the counselor needs to guide the client to (Clinebell, 1984):

- Develop an open, trustful, nurturing, joyful and empowering relationship with God as Father-Mother, Christ Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

- Facilitate the client's cognitive, moral, psychological and spiritual development
- Assist the client in developing spiritual disciplines including worship, prayer, study, meditation, confession, fellowship, service, mission, giving, and Holy Communion.

All of these things are tools accessible to the pastoral counselor, particularly the ordained one. Jesus made use of spiritual and religious tools, readings, images, ideals, rituals and traditions.

In addressing the social needs of the client the counselor seeks to help the client to (Clinebell, 1984):

- Nurture social relations
- Increase capacity of love of God, self, and others
- Increase capacity to be agents of reconciliation and wholeness
- Develop committed and inclusive community
- Raise consciousness about ageism, classism, creedism, ethnicism, racism, sexism, economic, political and religious oppression, economic exploitation, nationalism, militarism, violence, etc . . .
- Advocate for social change

Jesus addressed the conditions of people. He touched and healed the untouchable and returned them to life in their communities. He sent lepers he healed to the Temple to show themselves to the priests. He went into the homes of tax-collectors and

sinners. He engaged in conversations with unclean, Gentile women and allowed a suspect woman to care for him and another to be the first witness of his resurrection from the dead.

In addressing ecological needs, the dimension of world, earth and nature, the counselor seeks to aid the client to (Clinebell, 1984):

- Increase personal ecological awareness and responsibility
- Nurture the environment
- Become good stewards of the environment

I do not see Jesus modeling this himself, but some accounts of Jesus have all creation occurring through him or through who he was before he became human as Jesus (John 1:1-4).

The counselor needs to keep an eye on the client's development. Wholeness is experienced developmentally; along hierarchies of developmental stages, with opportunities and challenges for growth and development at each developmental stage (Clinebell, 1984). Each stage brings new problems, frustrations, losses and pain. But each stage brings new strengths, resources and possibilities. There are stages of psycho-sexual (Freud, 1905), psycho-social (Erikson, 1963), cognitive (Piaget and Inhelder, 1969), moral (Kohlberg, 1984) being-value-motivation (Maslow, 1943), faith (Fowler, 1981) and consciousness development (Wilber, 1977). There were times Jesus discouraged people from following him, telling them that they should count the

cost before following him (Luke 14:28). He told a demon-possessed man who wanted to follow him to not follow him but return home (Mark 5:1-20). A young rich man could not do what he must (sell his possessions and give the proceeds to the poor) in order to follow Jesus (Luke 18: 18-23). Nicodemus could not figure out what Jesus meant when he told Nicodemus he must be born again. So, Nicodemus, at that point in time, did not become a disciple of Jesus (John 3:1-21).

Infants, pre-school children, elementary school age children, Jr. High School and Senior High School youths, young adults, middle adults, and older adults all have developmental opportunities and challenges. When the task of each stage is mastered, the person proceeds to the next developmental stage. Persons at earlier stages cannot comprehend the realities and perspectives and needs of persons at later stages, but persons at the later stages can understand the perspectives and needs of persons at stages prior to their current one. Suffice it is to say, at this point, that pastoral care and counseling must be appropriate to the developmental level of the person needing pastoral care and counseling.

Wholeness develops best in a caring, facilitative, growth-fostering community. Clergy serve primarily to train, coach, inspire, and supervise lay persons in the ministry of caring, while providing their own professional care giving and counseling (Clinebell, 1984). Jesus gathered his disciples into a group and recognized disciples that belonged to other groups (Luke 9:49-50, Mark 9:39-41). Jesus often brought disciples with him: up the mountain (Matthew 17:1–9; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28–36), out on the sea and into the cities and towns.

A particular developmental perspective is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943).

According to Maslow there are physiological needs. These are biological needs. They consist of needs for oxygen, food, water, and a relatively constant body temperature. They are the strongest needs because if a person were deprived of all needs, the physiological ones would come first in the person's search for satisfaction.

There are safety needs (Maslow, 1943). When all physiological needs are satisfied and are no longer controlling thoughts and behaviors, the needs for security can become active. Adults have little awareness of their security needs except in times of emergency or periods of disorganization in the social structure (such as widespread rioting). Children often display the signs of insecurity and the need to be safe. Jesus warned his disciples not to harm children (Matthew 18:6). He warned the Pharisees against causing people to stumble on the weight of the expectations of the law (Matthew 23:13; Luke 11:52). Jesus cast out the demon of the Gerasene demoniac, securing his physical and psychological safety and wellbeing (Mark 5:1-17; Luke 8:26-37).

There are needs for love, affection and belongingness (Maslow, 1943). When the needs for safety and for physiological well-being are satisfied, the next class of needs for love, affection and belongingness can emerge. Maslow states that people seek to overcome feelings of loneliness and alienation. This involves both giving and receiving love, affection and the sense of belonging. Jesus included people in his life and ministry that were shunned by others. He went to Zacchaeus' home. Zacchaeus was a tax-collector (Luke 19:1-10). Jesus defended a sinful woman in the home of Simon (Luke 7:36-50) and an adulterous woman who was going to be stoned (John 8:1-11).

There are needs for esteem (Maslow, 1943). When the first three classes of needs are satisfied, the needs for esteem can become dominant. These involve needs for both self-esteem and for the esteem a person gets from others. Humans have a need for a stable, firmly based, high level of self-respect, and respect from others. When these needs are satisfied, the person feels self-confident and valuable as a person in the world. When these needs are frustrated, the person feels inferior, weak, helpless and worthless. Jesus treated people with respect. Jesus took a collection of fisher-folk, laborers and sinners and turned them into evangelists and leaders who would head up his church (Luke 4:18-20). He even told them that they would do greater things than he (John 14:12-14).

There are needs for Self-Actualization (Maslow, 1943). When all of the foregoing needs are satisfied, then and only then are the needs for self-actualization activated. Maslow describes self-actualization as a person's need to be and do that which the person was "born to do." "A musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write, if he is to be ultimately happy. What a man can be, he must be. This need we may call self-actualization" (Maslow 1943, 383).

These needs make themselves felt in signs of restlessness. The person feels on edge, tense, lacking something, in short, restless. If a person is hungry, unsafe, not loved or accepted, or lacking self-esteem, it is very easy to know what the person is restless about. It is not always clear what a person wants when there is a need for self-actualization. Jesus recognized the self-actualization and being needs of disciples and would-be disciples. He told his fisherman followers that he would make them fish for

men (Luke 4:18-20). Peter was on a path of self-actualization, showing that the path to the top can have ups and downs and successes and failures but never-the-less reaches the top (John 21:15-17).

The Self-actualizing person, while self-differentiating, is connected to, compassionate with, cooperative with others. Jesus was a self-actualizing man at the highest levels of human development. He was able to relate to people at each level of motivation because he himself had passed through and mastered that stage.

In assessing a person I might ask questions relevant to each stage to determine what their needs are. Someone struggling to survive isn't going to focus on their need for higher education or enlightenment.

The setting for pastoral care and counseling varies dramatically from the typical secular counseling and psychotherapy session of fifty minutes in a setting made particularly for such counseling. Of course, the formal pastoral counseling or psychotherapy session will appear structurally just like its secular counterpart.

The structure of formal counseling, pastoral or secular consists of: appointments, definite weekly or biweekly sessions, definite time limits, a fee, private meeting place, a counseling contract (treatment plan) and the label counseling.

The vast majority of pastoral care and counseling opportunities occur in informal settings; in a person's home during a visit, stopping by the office, at the hospital

visiting in a room, in the hallway or waiting room, in a car, after or between meetings, at a worship event, at a class, in the church or camp kitchen, dining room or at a picnic . . .

The Pastoral Counselor does not have to wait for a call for an appointment or help. The Pastoral Counselor can take the initiative in providing help to those in need but have not or may not take the initiative to seek help.

Pastoral counseling offers healing, support, sustenance, guidance or reconciliation (Clinebell, 1984).

Healing is a pastoral function that aims to overcome impairment by restoring a person to wholeness and by leading him to advance beyond the previous condition (e.g. a grief reaction to the loss of a loved one, a job, an ability, income, body part, etc) (Clinebell, 1984). Traditionally such healing was obtained through anointing, exorcisms, the intercession of saints and relics, charismatic healers, and prayer. Pastoral counseling and psychotherapy, spiritual healing, and marriage counseling are utilized today.

Sustaining is helping a hurting person to endure or transcend a circumstance in which restoration to his former condition or recuperation from his malady is either impossible or so remote as to be improbable (e.g. a physical or psychological illness, alcoholism, addictions or divorce) Clinebell, 1984). Traditionally sustenance was provided by holding and consoling the person. Today we provide supportive counseling, crisis counseling, and bereavement care and counseling. The story of the Samaritan Woman at the Well (John 4:1-47) is a good illustration. She could not undo the divorces

she had or the fact that she was living with a man out of wedlock. But she could take responsibility for her life from that point on.

Guidance is assisting perplexed or searching persons to make confident choices between alternate courses of thought and action, when such choices are viewed as affecting the present and future state of the soul. Traditionally guidance involved advice-giving and listening. Today we offer educative counseling, short-term decision making, confrontational counseling and spiritual direction. Jesus provided guidance to Nicodemus (John 3:1-16), Peter (Matthew 16:13-20), the Samaritan Woman (John 4:1-47), and the young rich ruler (Luke 18:18-23).

Reconciliation seeks to re-establish broken relationships between couples, family members, church members, employees. Traditionally this has been addressed by confession, forgiveness, and discipline. It is still addressed through the processes of confession, forgiveness, and discipline in worship, small group ministries and meeting with pastors and lay care providers. Marital counseling, existential counseling, and conflict or dispute resolution are contemporary means of reconciliation. Jesus told people who were bringing offerings to the table to first reconcile with their brother then return to make their offering to God (Matthew 5:22-24). He sent the healed lepers to show themselves to the priest in the Temple so that they could be reconciled with God, the Temple and their families and communities (Luke 17:11-19).

Nurture enables persons to develop their God-given potentialities. Traditionally this involved training new members into the Christian life or religious education. Small

groups in the church, educative counseling, pre-marital and marital counseling and enrichment and support during developmental crises are means of nurture. Jesus provided nurture to his disciples, training them up to lead the church and preparing them to receive the Holy Spirit, empowerment for their lives of service.

There are some proven guidelines for both pastoral and secular counseling.

Counseling is relationally based. From the beginning the following is necessary (Truax and Carkhuff, 1967):

1. Develop rapport with the person. I want the person to feel understood and feel comfortable opening up.
2. Understand what the person's problem is as clearly as I can. A well-defined problem leads to a desirable outcome.
3. Understand who the person is, how the person thinks, what the person believes, and how the person acts in the context the person lives in.
4. Understand the person's strengths and weaknesses, assets and liabilities.
5. Determine what the person's goals are. A good aim results in the best outcome

Rapport is developed by attending to the person, through caring and active listening (Truax and Carkhuff, 1967). An active listener is totally devoted to hearing the person, reflecting back to the person, what the person has said. One can repeat back exactly what the person said. Or one can repeat back what the person said in paraphrased

form. Or one can repeat back what the person said in paraphrased form and add the statement and you are feeling _____, making an educated guess about what the person is feeling. And you can go further, reflecting back what the person said, what he may be feeling, and what this means to him. The person can correct your reflection, which brings your understanding to greater accuracy. This skill is called reflective listening (Truax and Carkhuff, 1967).

One can reflect back to the person in the language style used by the person. Each person's language reveals that person's representational system (Bandler and Grinder, 1979). A representational system is how a person processes the person's experience of the world. Be careful to note the representational system(s) the person is using in your conversation with him.

The three most used representational systems are visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. There are also the gustatory and olfactory systems (Bandler and Grinder, 1979). We determine a person's representation system by the person's use of predicates (Bandler and Grinder, 1979). Visual predicates indicate a visual representational system, auditory predicates an auditory representational system, and kinesthetic predicates a kinesthetic representational system (Bandler and Grinder, 1979).

Visual predicates include "see, notice, examine, look, seek." Auditory predicates include "hear, listen, harken, splash." Kinesthetic predicates include "feel, touch, bring, find, hold." Splash can also be kinesthetic. A splash can be heard and/or felt. If we

use the language, visual, auditory, or kinesthetic of the person we are counseling, we will have better rapport with them (Bandler and Grinder, 1979).

Rapport is obtained by non-verbal means as well (Bandler and Grinder, 1979).

Rapport is obtained through matching. I can match a person's tone of voice, speed of speech, pitch, or accent. A kind of matching is mirroring. I can mirror another's posture, gestures, breathing, or movements. I can do this obviously or subtly because these characteristics are unconsciously controlled system (Bandler and Grinder, 1979).

Establishing a relationship is the key to all care giving and counseling (Truax and Carkhuff, 1967). All relationships are initiated by attending physically to the person and listening carefully to what is said (Truax and Carkhuff, 1967). This is foundational for all good relationships and the care giving and counseling relationship is dependent upon it. Counselor tenderness, warmth, realism, and empathy set the ground for developing insight and making changes necessary for the resolution of a problem (Truax and Carkhuff, 1967). Relationships characterized by fear, mistrust, coldness, insensitivity, and domination by one person lead to little or no positive change (Truax and Carkhuff, 1967).

It doesn't matter whether the helper is a friend, cleric, bartender, barber, nurse, counselor, psychologist or psychiatrist persons or the particular school of helping or strategies and techniques used – the key to helping are the relationship factors described above.

Attending Behaviors are physical, non-verbal ways in which care is demonstrated:

Some forms of attending behavior follow (Clinebell, 1984):

- Symbolic nourishing is the offering of some kind of food or drink and thus emotional nourishment. Bringing a salad or dish to a bereaved family, taking an employee out to lunch to discuss problems on the job, baking a coffee cake for a friend going through a divorce, offering coffee, tea or water are symbolic ways of feeding people in need.
- Posture or body language sends a message. The way a counselor sits and moves communicates interest or lack of interest. The most effective posture normally involves leaning forward slightly, remaining calm, but attentive. The counselor can use posture to mirror or match the client, increasing rapport as the result.
- Touching such as by holding the hand, putting an arm around the shoulder or a handshake sends a message. Be aware of the possibility of sexual innuendo. Touching can be used to anchor feelings and states.
- Eye contact may be necessary to create atmosphere of trust. There may be personal and cultural differences, so learn what they are and respect them.
- Provide a setting that is comfortable and relaxed and that communicates stability, openness, and confidentiality.
- Seating should be comfortable and of equal height, facing each other.
- Doors should be shut and noises from the outside should not be allowed to intrude.

- Care may be provided in a kitchen, emergency ward, walking down the street, riding in a car, but relaxed and conducive to private conversation.
- You may have to move to a more comfortable setting, but not to a place that may have other meanings, like a bedroom.

Listening Skills are key to the counseling relationship (Clinebell, 1984; Truax and Carkhuff, 1967). Listening should always precede responding whether that is to God or neighbor. God not only gives us God's word, God listens to us and then determines how to follow up in giving us that Word. There is a need to be open to feedback about whether our communication is effective so we can correct it. Some components of good listening are (Clinebell, 1984):

- Allow no distractions like phone calls, noises, daydreams, worrying or interruption. The counselor should be careful to not get lost in thought or concern.
- Be congruent. Make sure your attending behaviors are appropriate to what is being said. Laugh with those laughing, cry when they are crying
- Listen for meaning or cause behind the presenting problem; what the person is feeling; the methods tried to resolve the problems. This can be called listening with the third ear.
- Temporarily suspend all judgment, especially early in the relationship and allow the person to release pent-up emotions.
- Be patient. Allow the long pauses. These might be thought of as "pregnant pauses."

- Don't fill in the blanks for the client. Give the client time to work their way through to best articulating their problems.
- Listen for important themes being reiterated by the person, stated with great intensity or being brought up over and over

There are facilitative and non-facilitative ways of responding to clients. The following are non-facilitative (Clinebell, 1984):

- Quick advice giving. Quick advice is likely not to be followed. It often misses the pain of a client and leaves the client feeling unheard. It underestimates the complexity of the issues involved and if it is given before a relationship is established it may not be heeded.
- Reassurance such as telling the wife whose husband left, "I'm sure he'll come back," or person who is undergoing surgery "Everything will be fine." Support the individual emotionally and be realistically reassuring; but don't promise what's not possible to predict.
- Platitudes such as "God helps them who helps himself." "If you make your bed, you have to lie in it." Responses need to be specific, clear, and individually tailored to the issues faced by the person.
- Closed-ended Questions that call for yes or no answers don't allow the person to tell their stories in their own ways. Queries need to be open-ended.
- Evaluative statements such as "That's dumb" or "God is punishing you because you ____." "It's your own fault."

- Interpretations. Rather respond directly to what's been said. Let the client draw the client's own conclusions.
- Arguing and debating with client. Allow the client to have their own opinions and ideas.
- Inappropriate sharing. It is okay for the counselor to share struggles and joys, but inappropriate to use the relationship for the counselor's own help or release.

Facilitative Responses include (Clinebell, 1984):

- Verbal Mirroring – reflecting back in a sentence or two the essence of the feelings and content the other person is sharing.
- Open-ended questions and brief comments and gestures, rather than yes-no, closed-ended questions. “So tell me more about your plans to move to Montana.”
- Attending to non-verbal gestures. “Every time you talk about forgiving your wife, you thumb your nose. What might thumbing your nose at someone mean?”
- Pacing: Following the client's lead, avoiding changing subjects and staying in the here and now flow of the conversation (e.g. “I hear how much of a struggle this has been for you.”)
- Clarification by summarizing the high points of what the client has said and checking out one's understanding of the meaning to the client about what he has said (e.g. “For the past few minutes you have mentioned that your anger has gotten your wife, your children, your best friend and your coworkers upset with you. Is that right?”)

- Asking focusing questions in areas that the client has not discussed (e.g. “So, how has losing your job affected your relationship with your wife?”)
- Confronting in the context of valuing and affirming the client (e.g. “Gee Will, that’s three times where you reported that you drank more than you planned. It seems that every time you drank more than you planned, you ended up experiencing negative consequences in your life.”)

There are some qualities that are essential to effective counseling and psychotherapy. They are characteristic of all effective counselors and psychotherapists (Truax and Carkhuff, 1976).

- Congruence refers to inner genuineness, integration and openness. It involves being transparently real or authentic. Word and feelings are consistent with each other. When one is congruent outer behavior and words reflect inner feelings (Rogers, 1961).
- Non-possessive warmth can be called unconditional positive regard. It is the experience of being loved and accepted. It consists of warmth, liking, caring, interest and respect. There is a strong and mutual liking and respect between counselor and client. The relationship becomes a personal I-You relationship, rather than I-It (Rogers, 1961).
- Empathic understanding involves entering the client’s inner world of meaning and deep caring through listening with caring awareness. To be empathic it is necessary for the counselor to have a strong sense of self-identity and personal

worth. This guards against the counselor needing to draw his sense of purpose and worth from the counseling relationship with the client (Clinebell, 1984).

Congruence, unconditional acceptance and empathic understanding can be characteristic of the God-Human relationship.

To be congruent is to be in agreement and alignment. There is a consistency of experience, from the inside out on the part of the communicator. The speaker's words match his behaviors, his tone, his gestures and expressions and his state. All of the parts of the person are integrated, so there are no conflicting messages being given. And, I believe this is very important. The speaker's logical levels are aligned. If the counselor believes he cannot help his client then he is not going to be capable of doing so even if he engages in an attempt to help the client. The counselor may have to do some parts integration with himself if he is going to be able to help his client. A mother brought her son to the Zen Master. She told the Zen Master, "My son has started smoking. Please help him. I do not want him to develop a terrible habit. The Zen Master thought for a moment and then said, "Return in one month and I will help your son." The mother returned with her son a month later. The Zen Master sat alone with the boy for about an hour. He greeted the mother and said, "I have helped your son. I think that he will not be smoking any longer." "Thank you" smiled the mother. "But why did you not help him a month ago." The Zen Master grinned. "I had to quit smoking first." The Zen Master had to become a non-smoker (identity). He had to believe that non-smoking was a more resourceful state than smoking (belief). He had to develop capacities for non-smoking (capacity). He had to not smoke, meaning he had to do

something different than smoke (behavior). He had to change his environment. He had to be in a smoke-free area. He had to make his environment smoke-free. And he had to go to his source. In the Zen Master's case that may have been to go to his practice. He had to disassociate from his smoking state and replace it with a more desirable state.

Unconditional acceptance, positive regard, agape love, empathy, inner genuine, integration and openness are all states that can be generated by the counselor. But they need to be generated towards himself. If the counselor does not experience unconditional acceptance, positive regard, agape love, empathy, inner genuine, integration and openness within himself he is not going to be able to share them with his client. And once these are established in the counselor, he can share them with the client. They will not only be characteristic of the counselor's behavior towards the client, they will be generated in the client and in the client's relationships with others. The counselor can generate these states using submodalities and anchors. And these states can be experienced in relationship with God.

Inner genuineness, integration and openness are necessary for one to have an authentic relationship with God. An authentic relationship with God is not superficial. It has depth. It is from the inside out; from the heart of the person to the heart of God. There is characteristic warmth to the relationship associated with being unconditionally loved, accepted and believed in. Such a relationship is heart-based rather than head-based. It is based in love rather than duty and grace instead of legalism. It is an "I-You relationship" rather than an "I-It" relationship (Buber, 1971; Rogers). It is relational

instead of technical. There is empathy between God and the person as the person enters in the reality of God and God into the world of the person.

Exercise: The God Chair in the God Place

Sit back in your easy chair, only I want this easy chair that you are sitting in to be a special easy chair. This easy chair is the easy chair you sit in when you want to have some quality time with God. When you sit in this chair it positively glows. When you sit in this chair time stops. Everything slows down to stillness and you slow down to absolute stillness. And there is nothing present but you and your God chair which is holding you. And your chair is in a special place . . . you are sitting in your God chair in a special place . . . your God place . . . and you feel yourself sitting in the center of this place . . . there is nothing in this place but God and you. Feel yourself held by your chair, supported by your chair. In fact, you are so relaxed that you feel nothing but the presence of your chair. You love your chair and trust your chair and your chair loves you. In fact there is nothing in your chair but love and you are feeling the full glow of your chair's love for you as you sink deeper and deeper into your supportive chair. And all of the characteristics of your loving God are in this chair with you . . . perfect, complete love and acceptance of whomever is sitting in the chair . . . complete empathy and understanding . . . you can just be yourself . . . just be free . . . and experience that freedom . . . from everything . . . for everything . . . when you in this place . . . you are in an intimate space . . . just God and you . . . and you can share with God whatever is on your heart or mind or in your spirit . . . and you know that God knows what is on your heart and mind and spirit . . . what it is that you want and need right now . . . and you

want to be clear what exactly it is . . . and even if you don't want something you can have this special, intimate relationship with God who loves you . . . Do you feel that loving building up in your heart . . . God deeply knows you and appreciates you and is equipping you with power and tools and ingenuity . . . Do you feel creativity being built up in your solar-plexus . . . and God wants to be with you and have you with God all the time . . . in your waking, in your living, in your sleeping . . . Do you feel that energy in your forehead; in your third eye, vibrating . . . whatever your question is God is answering it right now and you will know the answer when you know it and that you know it when you are ready to know it. It is always good to go to your special place and sit in your special chair and they are always there for you like God is there for you . . . God is with you even as you come out of this exercise and sit in an ordinary chair, in an ordinary room, like the seat you are sitting in right now, and like the room you are sitting in now, as we go on to the next point of or discussion.

What helps a counselor have empathy with a client is that the counselor has lived a full life. The counselor has faced problems of living. The counselor has felt and coped with a full array of feelings in response to life. The counselor has suffered through difficulties. The counselor has, therefore, a familiarity with sickness, sin, loneliness, alienation, and despair. The counselor, thus, knows of what the client speaks, and can respond sensitively to it (Clinebell, 1984).

The counselor needs to be personally awake, aware and alive to life. The counselor has mined the depths of his own personality and soul and has worked through blocks to advancement and growth, integrating lost or broken pieces of life experience into a

cohesive sense of self-awareness. The counselor can then bring life to the relationship with a client who needs to come alive (Clinebell, 1984).

These are essential characteristics of a counselor. Techniques can be learned, practiced and perfected. Personality too can be developed. But without these essential ingredients of personality and behavior, the counselor will not be effective.

The Pastoral or Spiritual Counselor or Psychotherapist is uniquely positioned to address the spiritual dimension of the client's life. This does not mean that secular counselors and psychotherapists do not address the spiritual dimension. Some, however, are uncomfortable dealing with spiritual issues. Some will not address them. Some will address the spiritual issues as symptomatic of psychological distress. Most clients who come for counseling and psychotherapy, even to a pastoral counselor or psychotherapist do not present with a spiritual issue. Only ten percent do (Taggart, 1972). However spiritual conflicts and emptiness are significant factors in many problems people are faced with (Clinebell, 1984). Many face a "value vacuum" that leads them to experience anxiety and interpersonal conflict (Clinebell, 1984). According to Clinebell, Carl Jung, Roberto Assagioli, Erich Fromm, Victor Frankl, Gordon Allport and Rollo May all see psychological problems as rooted in spiritual pathology. Fromm even sees psychopathology as a secret, private religion, whereby a client may devote the client's efforts and passion to the beliefs associated with that religion (1984).

I wonder if there is an existential anxiety that is pervasive today because of peoples' lack of religious moorings for expression of their spiritual dimension; that people are cut off from their own spiritual dimension or deny and repress it.

The Counselor needs to be attuned simultaneously to the psycho-social and the spiritual dimensions in every human problem (Clinebell, 1984). The counselor need not address the problem with religious or spiritual language but find ways for the client to speak of the client's experience. At issue is an existential-spiritual problem that concerns morality and responsibility. There are the ongoing concerns of fate and death, emptiness and loss of meaning, guilt and condemnation (Tillich, 1952). The client's response to the experience of anxiety becomes the client's religion. It is the client's means of coping with anxiety and what the client conceives as reality. The client makes idols of possessions, health, success alcohol, ideologies, the church, a job, family, etc., making these ultimate concerns. They provide meaning for the client. They provide protection from the impending experience of non-being or meaninglessness. If the client continues to cope with existential anxiety in pseudo-religious or idolatrous ways the client's sense of life, creativity, awareness and authenticity will be diminished. On the level of being, the client is not able to relax. If not able to relax, the client cannot experience the true inner-self and its source in God (Bugental, 1965). The only constructive way of handling this existential anxiety is authentic relationship with the spiritual dimension or God (Jung, 1933, 264): "The power of the divine is that which within which non-being is eternally conquered." Via the power of the divine the client is

able to confront rather than evade this existential anxiety. In facing this anxiety the client develops the certitude of faith (Kierkegaard, 1944).

The Counselor needs to aim to help the client grow in the depth and vitality of the client's spiritual life in a way that empowers all aspects of the client's life. Clinebell recognizes nine spiritual needs that must be met if the client is to learn to relate well to God, people, nature and the client's own inner being (Clinebell, 1984):

- A viable philosophy of life with a belief system and living symbols that provide life with meaning.
- Creative images and values to guide the client's lifestyle.
- A dynamic relationship with and commitment to a loving God that integrates and energizes life.
- A higher self or soul as the center of the client's entire being.
- Regular renewal of the client's sense of trust to maintain hope in life.
- Movement from the alienation of guilt and shame to the reconciliation of forgiveness and acceptance.
- Undergirding self-esteem and reducing self-centeredness in the client with an awareness of being deeply valued by God.
- Regular experiences of transcendence.
- Membership in caring, nurturing and sustaining community.

These needs are met through the establishment of the client's relationship with the ultimate spiritual reality, God. This healthy spirituality is characterized by openness,

growth, and respect for reality rather than by rigidity and authoritarian, reality-denying ways. The counselor aims to nurture high-level spiritual wellness in the client. This involves helping the client to align the client's will with God's will, recognizing God's will for the client being the client's own higher will. To discover and develop the image of God within the client is the key task of the growth phase of pastoral or spiritual counseling.

At this phase of counseling the emphasis is spiritual growth and development. The client is no longer moving away from pain and suffering but towards realization of the client's potential for wholeness, spiritual perfection or completion. It is for the client to realize the client's full potential as a human being which is defined in Christian terms as a "Child of God." The full inheritance promised to the child of God is everything that God possesses. It is for the client to realize fully the presence of God within. This is a positive-orientation rather than a deficit-orientation. This is no longer mental-health counseling but seeking the direction of God from the counselor who in this case is a spiritual director or spiritual friend (Leech, 1977). The counselor aims to lead the client into a process of seeking God and an encounter with God (Leech, 1977). This search for God occurs in the context of the client's mental, emotional, psychological, social and vocational life.

Jesus and Nicodemus

Consider this story of Nicodemus' encounter with Jesus from John 3:1-17,

“Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews.² He came to Jesus by night and said to him, ‘Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.’”³

Significant in this story is that Nicodemus is a Pharisee and leader of the Jews and he came to Jesus at night. The Pharisees were a Jewish sect that was very law-abiding. They were oriented towards religious cleanliness and holiness. A particular group of Pharisees came into conflict with Jesus because of laxity around the law and focus upon grace. Not only was Nicodemus a Pharisee he was a leader in the Jewish community. That he was coming to Jesus was surprising. That he came to Jesus at night indicated that he wanted his meeting with Jesus to be cloaked in secrecy. It seemed that not even Jesus’ disciples were present when Nicodemus arrived. He approached Jesus in a respectful tone referring to him as “Rabbi” meaning teacher. He did not speak for himself alone. He said, “We know . . .” Likely the “we” was a small group of Pharisees, perhaps even as small as two, certainly not a large group or all of them, because many Pharisees seemed to harbor hostility towards Jesus. Nicodemus displayed a reverence towards Jesus identifying him as a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.” This certainly was not the general opinion about Jesus among the Pharisees.

Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no-one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.”⁴ Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be

born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?"

Jesus recognized that Nicodemus was a seeker and had a real interest in him. He also recognized Nicodemus' status as a Pharisee, leader of the Jews and a teacher of the law. He surmised what Nicodemus wanted; to see the Kingdom of God and said to Nicodemus "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." So much for small talk! He said very matter of factly and sincerely that "no one can see the Kingdom of God without being 'born from above'." The Greek translated as "born from above" also could be translated as "born again." Nicodemus was incredulous and asked how he could be born again after having grown old? His interpretation of Jesus' statement was quite literal. He could not fathom the idea of entering his mother's womb a second time and as a grown man and be born again.

Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' ⁸The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Jesus stayed right with Nicodemus answering his confusion: "No one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and spirit." He educated Nicodemus about there being two births, a physical birth and a spiritual birth. And he admonished

Nicodemus to not be astonished by this requirement to be born again. He spoke to the power of the Holy Spirit, invisible but noticeable and powerful. One can feel it and hear it and has no control of it. It will without notice lead one and one will not have say as to where it leads.

Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?"¹⁰ Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"¹¹

Nicodemus did not get it. This was contrary to what he had learned. He could not wrap his head around it. He challenged Jesus, "How can this be?" And Jesus challenged him back, confronting his lack of understanding, "You are a teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things." How surprised must Nicodemus had been about Jesus' response!

"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony."¹²

But Jesus did not back down. He continued to confront Nicodemus with his lack of understanding. Now he spoke for a group. We speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. Jesus is speaking with authority. He already has been recognized by Nicodemus as a teacher from God, differentiating him from other teachers. But now he is speaking from experience. He has been reborn or born from above. And others have, too. Jesus is speaking for himself and those others. Nicodemus and his party do not believe this teaching. Not only have they not heard it, they have no experience of it at all. Here is a teacher of

Israel that has something to learn and do that he did not know before, that was necessary to realize his ultimate spiritual goal of entry into the Kingdom of God.

If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³

Nicodemus is silenced by this teaching. He has no answer. The answer to what he is searching for is before his eyes. He is not going to enter into heaven from obeying the law. This is a new teaching. He will have to be born again, from above, in the Spirit. He would have to leave his old idea behind and believe in Jesus. The old idea will not work.

¹³No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴

And Jesus reveals himself to Nicodemus. He is not only a “Rabbi,” a teacher, he has ascended to heaven, has descended from heaven and is the promised Son of Man. Jesus is inviting Nicodemus to believe in him. And once he receives this earthly teaching, he will be able to understand heavenly ones. Nicodemus and the Pharisees, as sincere, pious and disciplined as they are have a religion about God, about the coming Messiah, about holiness, but they have not yet experienced life in the Spirit. They are having an impersonal “I-It” relationship with God rather than a personal “I-You” relationship with God.

“Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. ¹⁷ Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

Nicodemus' mind is opening to believing in Jesus. He is not ready yet. But he is ripening. And Jesus makes an association between Moses and him. Both Moses and Jesus are the High Priest of their respective times. But Jesus makes an association between the serpent that Moses lifted up to save his people from the venomous snakes that were biting and killing the unfaithful people. The snake brought death and life. Jesus would now be lifted up like the snake so that people would believe in him and have eternal life. Jesus would be offered to God as sacrifice in return for the life of the repentant people so that when they would see him resurrected they would believe in him and rather than perish on account of past sin, have eternal life.”

At a later time, when people are accusing Jesus, Nicodemus defends him, but backs down when other Pharisees who want Jesus killed ask if he is one of his disciples. The process of awakening to the spirit and being born in the spirit has begun in Nicodemus. But he will have more learning and growth to do. Jesus, the Master is courageous even unto death. His body can be slain but his spirit cannot be. Nicodemus does not yet know what it means to be alive in the spirit. He has not yet developed the resurrection body that Jesus has developed.

The knowledge of this experience of regeneration of which the snake is a symbol has been passed from Jesus to Nicodemus. He has been initiated into the path of the spirit in the flesh that will ultimately transform the flesh, conquering sin and deaths hold on it and bring it back to life.

Nicodemus comes to Jesus seeking eternal life. He does not know what that will involve. He is like the rich young ruler. He has been living a satisfactory life. He has everything that he can want materially. But something is missing. His desire for God, the spiritual dimension has been sparked. Nicodemus' spirituality is external. It is based upon duty to God rather than love of God. It is exoteric, a shell. Jesus' religion is not a shell. His body is animated. It is full of life, abundantly full. It is spiritual, a spiritual that is eternal, that is one with God. He sees what Jesus has and what some of Jesus' disciples have and he wants what they have. He wants that spiritual experience of being a child of God.

The Horton Ladder: Modeling on Jesus as a Counselor

We close this section, revisiting Horton's Ladder. Enter into your learning state. Look at yourself. Stand on the top rung of your imaginary ladder. Determine what your source as a counselor is. Where do you receive your calling, your energy, your passion for counseling. Step down one rung. What is your identity as a counselor? What sort of counselor do you call yourself? What kind of counselor do you want to be? Step down another rung. What do you believe about yourself as a counselor, about the people who you counsel, about counseling, about what can be accomplished by counseling?

Step down to the next rung. What are you capable of as a counselor? What do you want to be capable of? What are your clients capable of? What do you want them to be capable of? How are you capable of these things and how are your clients capable of them? Step down one more rung. What do you do as a counselor in counseling? What do your clients do? What do you have your clients do? How do you do them? How do your clients? What does it look like, sound like and feel like when you are counseling? How do you look, sound and feel when counseling? Now step down to the bottom rung. What impact do you have as a counselor on your clients, the lives they lead and the world they live in? Just feel yourself now as your ladder.

Now alongside that ladder, imagine a second ladder. This is Jesus ladder. Start on the top rung. What is Jesus' source as a counselor? Where did Jesus receive his calling, his energy and his passion for counseling and healing? Step down one rung. What is Jesus' identity as a counselor? What sort of counselor is Jesus? Step down another rung. What does Jesus believe about himself as a counselor, about the people who he counsels, about counseling, about what can be accomplished by counseling? Step down to the next rung. What is Jesus capable of as a counselor? What are Jesus' clients capable of? What do you want them to be capable of? How is Jesus capable of these things and how are his clients capable of them? Step down one more rung. What does Jesus do as a counselor in counseling? What do his clients do? What does he have his clients do? How does he do them? How do his clients do them? What does it look like, sound like and feel like when Jesus is counseling? How does he look, sound and feel when counseling? Now step down to the bottom rung. What impact

does Jesus have as a counselor on his clients, the lives they lead and the world they live in? Just feel yourself now as Jesus' ladder.

Take the Jesus ladder and place it on your ladder, matching rung to rung, and watch the ladders merge. Your ladder is Jesus' ladder and Jesus' ladder your ladder. Step up and down the ladder as yourself. Now step up and down the ladder as Jesus. Now step up and down the ladder as Jesus as you, both of you, one of you. And standing on the top rung as Jesus, as you, both of you, one of you, determine what your source as a counselor is. Where do you receive your calling, your energy, your passion for counseling. Step down one rung as Jesus, as you, as both of you, as one of you. What is your identity as a counselor? What sort of counselor do you call yourself? What kind of counselor do you want to be? Step down another rung as Jesus, as you, as both of you, as one of you. What do you believe about yourself as a counselor, about the people who you counsel, about counseling, about what can be accomplished by counseling? Step down to the next rung as Jesus, as you, as both of you, as one of you. What are you capable of as a counselor? What do you want to be capable of? What are your clients capable of? What do you want them to be capable of? How are you capable of these things and how are your clients capable of them? Step down one more rung as Jesus, as you, as both of you, as one of you. What do you do as a counselor in counseling? What do your clients do? What do you have your clients do? How do you do them? How do your clients? What does it look like, sound like and feel like when you are counseling? How do you look, sound and feel when counseling? Now step down to the bottom rung as Jesus, as you, as both of you, as one of you.

What impact do you have as a counselor on your clients, the lives they lead and the world they live in? Just feel yourself now as your ladder, as yourself, Jesus in you, you in Jesus.

Modeling on the Kingdom of God

Having modeled Jesus, let us now model his teaching of the Kingdom of God. The primary way Jesus taught about the Kingdom of God was through the parable. Only once, while telling the Parable of the Sower, did he interpret the parable for his audience. Rather, Jesus told the story and allowed his audience to uncover his message. Here is a scripted guided experience that you can use.

The primary teaching of Jesus as presented in the gospels is that of the Kingdom of God or Kingdom of Heaven. Other words commonly used for the Kingdom of God or Heaven are the Rule of God and Realm of God. I sometimes refer to the Kingdom of God as the Reality of God and the Presence of God.

According to Jesus, the Kingdom of God is near to you. It is within you. It is among you. It is coming now into your life and into your world as I am speaking and you are listening. The Kingdom of God is here right now in you and all around you. And this Kingdom of God is not only a present reality, it is a future reality, not yet realized in the present in its fullness, but within your human reach and grasp within your human lifetime, if not the present moment. This Kingdom of God was fully present in Jesus of Nazareth and expressed in all aspects of his life. Indeed it was the very mind of Christ; the very consciousness of Christ. Through identifying with Jesus, you can experience

the Kingdom of God where it is, near you, within you, among you, around you, and coming into your life fully. In this state you are connected to God. You have full access to God and communication with God. You even have obtained unity with God. Just relax in that state of union with God. And if present in Jesus of Nazareth in its fullness, it can be realized fully in you when you opt to model Jesus; when you put on the mind of Jesus and assume the very same attitude of Jesus, and step into the very consciousness of Jesus; that access to God, communication with God, and unity with God. What was fully present in Jesus then, can be experienced and realized in you right now as you are ready and willing right now. Do you want to experience that same mind and reality that was in Jesus now? Yes!

Now, I am inviting you to enter into an even more receptive state than you are already in, where you can, if you will, close your eyes, and breathe deeply, and become more receptive, with each breath, more receptive, receptive to Jesus, receptive to who Jesus is, receptive to what Jesus is, receptive to the mind of Jesus; ten times more receptive than before, twenty, thirty, forty fifty times more than before, 100 percent!

And now, you are identifying with Jesus, Son of God, and the source of his existence, God the Father, and the Spirit that was in Jesus; Jesus with whom the Father is well pleased; Jesus who the Spirit of God landed and anointed to preach the good news of the Kingdom; Jesus who is one with the Father and who invites you to identify with him; the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the Way to the Father; and to pick up your cross like he picked up his and follow him

Now, according to the Bible, Jesus came preaching the Kingdom of God; the Kingdom of heaven, the Reign of God, the Rule of God, the Reality of God, the Presence of God; so that you would know God and abide with God just like abides with God, and God with you like Jesus abides with you.

Now listen to Jesus. And you hear him speaking clearly to you; his message clear as a bell, because you want to you know all there is to know about God and God's Kingdom, and you are ready and willing to understand and to know what Jesus is talking to you about.

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field which someone found; she hides it again, goes off happy, sells everything she owns and buys the field." (Matthew 13:44) See yourself in this story, finding the treasure hidden in the field; you hide it again, you go off happy, you sell everything you own and you buy the field.

Outstanding!

Again, listen to Jesus. Hear his voice speaking directly to you and only to you like you are his chosen one: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value; he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it (Matthew 13:45-46). See yourself in this story, the merchant looking for fine pearls; when you find one of great value, you go and you sell everything you own and you buy it. Great!

Again, listen to Jesus. Hear him again speaking to you as you hang on his every word. "The reality of heaven is like a mustard seed which a farmer took and sowed in his field.

It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown, it is the biggest shrub of all, and becomes a tree, so that all of the birds of the air come and shelter in its branches.”

(Matthew 13: 31-32; Mark 4:10-32; and Luke 13:8-19). See yourself in this story. A farmer took the Kingdom of Heaven, a tiny mustard seed and sowed it in you, his field. The smallest of all seeds, is growing in you, and has grown in you, the biggest shrub of all, a tree so where all the birds of the air have come and found shelter in your branches.

Listen again to Jesus. He is talking to you so can understand him: “The Kingdom of Heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed it in with three measures of flour till it was leavened all through (Matthew 13:33; Luke 13:20-21). See yourself in this story. You take the Kingdom of Heaven as yeast and mix it in with three measures of flour, your life, until it is leavened all the way through.

And now allow your eyes to open, and shut them as you fall deeper into relaxation, deeper still, and deeper. And now you are ready to meet Jesus, your spiritual master, messiah, king of all rulers, the prototype child of God of which you are one, the Word of God made flesh.

Now, I don't know, but there may be another teacher or master that can serve the same purpose for you that Jesus serves for me, and so simply think of that master if you prefer, even as I speak of Jesus.

Across from you, across a beautiful meadow of green grass and dazzling flowers, beneath clear blue skies, there is a building, a cathedral build of the finest crystal dazzling in the sun. And as you come to its doors, the doors open wide and you enter. And you are in a great crystal hall, radiant with all the colors of the rainbow blazing. And you admire the magnificent colors. And you are drawn forward to the center of the great hall, where there is a chapel, and you enter the chapel, which is the holy of holies of the cathedral.

And in the center of the chapel there is a sacred place, with entry ways leading up and down, and escalators ascending up and descending down. And your body stands on the down escalator and your mind on the up escalator, and your body goes down one flight, relaxing deeper, and your mind goes up one flight, rising higher, and your body descends to a second level, going deeper, and your mind ascends to a second level, climbing higher. And your body descends to a third level, becoming heavy, and your mind ascends to a third level, becoming lighter. And your body descends two more levels to the foundation level, where it just lets go, and rests completely, and your mind rises two more levels to the top story of the cathedral. And there on the upper most level of the cathedral you enter a sacred room and before you is the Master Jesus, seated on a royal red throne, girded with gold and precious stones. His face and body are luminous and you are speechless as you take a seat across from him and gaze upon his unsurpassable beauty. And finally, after what seems like ages, but was only a moment you ask him to unlock the secrets of the universe and reveal to you the reality of God and God's Kingdom. And he looks at you, his gaze penetrating your outer

appearance and reaching down to your deepest core, and it is like you are naked and not at all ashamed, as he sees you as you really are, beyond all appearances and conditions. And all you feel is love and peace. And he speaks to you telepathically so you know his mind. And the mind that is in him is in you now. And you feel his presence like he has crossed over into you, but is still across from you. And there is no time, but eternity, as you experience unity with Jesus.

And when you are ready, you ask Jesus for a token, for a symbol, an image and a word that you can take back with you, with which you can easily remember this experience. And Jesus impresses that token, symbol, image and word on your mind and in your heart so that you know it and can remember it and have it with you always.

And now, you are ready to come back down the escalator from the top level of the cathedral, and your body rises back up from the foundation, one level at a time, and your mind returns down from the top, one level at a time, your body up to the fourth level, your mind down to the fourth level, and your body up to the third level, your mind down to the third level carrying your image and word within you, your body up to the second level, and your mind down to the second level, your body up to the first level, your mind down to the first level, your body and mind arriving together and uniting.

And you kneel and pray a prayer of gratitude in the chapel, for what you received at the foundation and the pinnacle of the cathedral, and the token, symbol, word and image that are your gifts from Jesus forever. And you leave the chapel and cross the great hall of the cathedral in the radiance of the crystal. And you make your way across the

sunlit, green meadow, and return to your seat facing the great crystal cathedral. And you know that you can return to the crystal cathedral because while it belongs to God, it belongs to you, too, and you relish the token, the image and word impressed upon you.

And now, prepare to return to your normal, but now enlightened state of being, and I will count to five, and you will prepare to turn your consciousness to the world, 1, 2, you are returning your wide awake attention to this world, 3, 4, and you are awake, alert, refreshed and energized, 5.

Okay, welcome back. This exercise is a taste of what you will experience as you train your mind to enter into higher and higher, and more and more expansive states of consciousness, until passing through Christ Consciousness you experience God Consciousness and you are able to integrate your entire being and relate to others on every level of consciousness.

Chapter 12: Conclusion

The test of whether you preach better and like Jesus comes in actual preaching. Stand up like you are facing your audience. Stand in the leveler position; tall, knees slightly bent, equal weight on both legs, hands at your sides, head suspended from the sky. Take a deep breath. Enter into your Preacher's state. Speak the Lord's Prayer to each person in the room so they understand it. Do this with an imaginary group right now. But do it at a meeting. Tell people that you do not want them to say the Lord's Prayer, but to listen to it because they always say it and do not get the chance to listen to it. Be in a prayerful state as you speak it like you are actually speaking to God as you say it to your audience. Speak another prayer you know or scripture passage to each person so each person in the room understands it. I like using the 23rd Psalm. Be in that prayer state as you proclaim to the people in the room your message, "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures . . ." Say it with conviction like it is true. Experience it. Convey that experience to your audience. Now, take one of your sermons, and speak it to your audience in this same way. If you have access to a congregation, preach your sermon from this state. Apply everything that you have learned up until now from this study. Know what you want to convey to them. Experience the outcome in them. If you want them to be motivated and take action, be motivated and take action yourself. How will you enter that state of motivation or whatever state you want your audience in? This week, and for the next four weeks, prepare your sermon like you are Jesus preparing it. Then, after entering into your Preacher state, practice them like you are Jesus delivering them. Finally, after entering

into your Preacher state, preach your sermon like you are Jesus preaching it. Do this every week for the next four weeks and notice the difference in your preaching.

Imagine, practice, and preach in the place your ordinarily preach. Stand in the place your ordinarily stand when you preach. You have used NLP to improve your preaching. You have learned how to preach like Jesus. You have identified all of the characteristics of Jesus as a Preacher and of his preaching. You have observed Jesus as a Preacher in the Sermon on the Mount and seen yourself, heard yourself, and felt yourself preaching that Sermon as Jesus. You have identified with Jesus at his different levels: source, identity, belief, capability, behavior, and environment, matching him, and incorporating his attributes at each of these levels in your own preaching. You have at your resource a strategy that you will be able to utilize in modeling other Preachers, teachers, trainers and speakers. Now you have to do it. You have to put into practice what you have learned. Practice makes perfect. Incorporating the feedback you get from others will allow you to become better and better at obtaining the outcome you want from your preaching.

You have also modeled Jesus as a counselor and applied NLP to counseling. You have observed the characteristics of Jesus as a counselor. You have observed Jesus counseling, healing, exorcising demons and engaging biblical figures in stories. You have explored pastoral and spiritual counseling and spiritual direction from a general pastoral counseling perspective, Logo-therapy and NLP. You have modeled Jesus through the Nicodemus story in John 3:1-17 and employed the Horton Ladder to model Jesus and incorporate characteristics of Jesus on each logical level into your

counseling. Your job now is to apply what you have learned in pastoral care or counseling relationships. Practice your learning state prior to any of the exercises in the counseling section. Prior to your client entering the counseling room run through your performance state and greet the client from that state.

This study presented a model for learning to preach and counsel as Jesus preached and counseled. The model could be used to model on any Preacher, teacher, counselor or person you decided to model on. The model would be effective in the context of a course on preaching utilizing the principles of NLP and a course in pastoral counseling. The presentation of training courses on preaching and counseling would be an additional project. There is enough information in the present study to provide background for initiating such studies. This same model can be utilized on different biblical passages where Jesus preached, taught, or healed or the disciples did or Old Testament figures did.

The approach taken to training in preaching and counseling here is a psychological and communications model that is not taught in any seminary program that I am aware of.

The modeling theory of Robert Dilts is sound theory. There are observable steps that can be replicated. It is testable. The model presented here is testable as well. But it is testable in the hands of persons well versed in the model, who understand the underlying principles of NLP and are trained in employing its procedures. Language patterns, matching and mirroring practices, management of trance, anchoring

procedures, and modeling all are observable and testable. Modeling is the primary gift of NLP to the world, and this model, mine to you.

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