

# USING MARKETING AS A MEANS TO 'SELL' SALVATION

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## **ABSTRACT**

The adoption of marketing communication strategies is becoming more prevalent in the routing services of some contemporary churches. This paper explores the concept of selling from the perspective of commercial selling to personal selling as many churches have become much more aggressive about the use of marketing communication strategy. However, this study is positioned to draw a contradistinction between motivational speaking and biblical preaching, and ask the question whether the former can be used as a means to 'sell' salvation similar to selling a product or service to the consumer. The theoretical framework for this study is integrated marketing theory which was narrowed down to two of its components, direct marketing/selling and personal selling situated alongside rhetorical tools such as *Logos*, *Ethos* and *Pathos*. A qualitative methodology was used to gather the data with fifteen churches in Durban as sample, were selected for the study. The result indicates that although, marketing communication can be used by the church, the effectiveness of the message depends largely on the power of the Holy Spirit as against the power of marketing communication by profit marketers.

## INTRODUCTION

In spite of the misunderstandings regarding the overall use of marketing communication methods by the church in achieving its goals, the adoption of marketing communication strategies by certain churches is becoming more prevalent in one's immediate environment. It is on this note that the present study is positioned to draw a contradistinction between motivational speaking and biblical preaching, and whether the former can be used as a means to 'sell' salvation similar to selling a product or service to a consumer. However, the use of marketing communication has been a controversial subject among the various categories of churches: Conservatives, Evangelicals and Pentecostals.<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that many churches are today using recognisable marketing communication techniques, such as Newspaper advertising and telephone calls.<sup>2</sup> More relevant is the competition between motivational speaking and biblical preaching, whereby the former has been heavily commoditised in the 21st century and anecdotal evidence suggests that motivational speakers who are involved in the pulpit ministry mostly use marketing communication techniques and rhetorical tools. The study seeks to interrogate the use of the marketing communication method by fifteen churches in Durban. Churches were randomly selected on a non-denominational basis for this study. Drawing on two key components of marketing communication mix, the study discusses the responses of pastors and church members around, motivational speaking, direct marketing and personal selling.

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<sup>1</sup> Unruh, Sinha, Morrison and Belcher 2008: 2; Appiah, Dwomoh and Kyire 2013: 9.

<sup>2</sup> Vokurka, McDaniel & Cooper 2008: 17.

## **UNDERSTANDING THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES: MARKETING COMMUNICATION, RHETORIC, SACRED RHETORIC AND BIBLICAL PREACHING**

### ***Marketing Communication***

Marketing communication is a complex subject and draws on a variety of disciplines. According to Fill (2011: 5), there is no universally agreed definition of marketing communications and there are many interpretations of the subject. The origin of multiple definitions arises from a promotional outlook where the purpose was to use communications to persuade people to buy products and services. Fill (2011: 5) views marketing communications as being an audience-centred activity which attempts to encourage engagement between participants and provoke conversations. Two key points are to be taken into consideration from this view which are of relevance to this study. The first issue, based on the notion that marketing communications is audience-centred which can be related to marketing orientation in marketing management. Kotler & Keller (2012: 40) state that marketing orientation is concerned with the idea of satisfying the needs of the customer by means of the product and the whole cluster of things associated with creating, delivering, and, finally, consuming it.

Contrary to this is the argument presented by Doran (1996: 189) that it is critical to recognize the difference between ministry governed by the pursuit of meeting needs and ministry governed by pleasing God. Therefore, the balance between pleasing God as the first concern of Christ ministry as seen in Mark 1: 35–38 and meeting needs and wants of consumers as seen in marketing, is paramount to this study. In addition, marketing orientation is a business approach or philosophy that focuses on identifying and meeting the stated or hidden needs or wants of customers. Riley

(2012: 1) adds that a marketing-orientated approach means a business reacts to what customers want.

The second point relates to the word ‘engagement,’ or the nature of the communication that can occur between people, the preacher and the congregants in this case. The initiative for engagement can be either consumer or company-led, or the medium of engagement can be based on the media decision of any organization. In a modern perspective, the connections that consumers have with brands, products, and services have become increasingly complex and dynamic. As relationships with customers evolve, the notion of how to ‘manage’ these relationships needs to evolve, as well. With this perspective, it is clear that as brand slogans can provide an important supplemental role to brand names and logos in building and cultivating brand images,<sup>3</sup> chants and psalms also provide preachers basis for the teaching of the word of God (‘Be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your hearts’ – Ephesians 5: 19).

This study is of the opinion that chanted psalms and prayers were virtually unheard of in contemporary preaching.<sup>4</sup> Rather, preachers are presenting themselves with motivational speaking contrary to the early Christians who understood complete submission to the Holy Spirit and were not ashamed of the Gospel.<sup>5</sup> However, it has been established that communications must be viewed more broadly than just media advertising, public relations, and professional salespeople. According to Shimp and Andrews (2013: 7), communication is the process whereby commonness of thought is established and meaning is shared

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<sup>3</sup> Miller and Toman 2014: 1.

<sup>4</sup> Beisel 2014: 1.

<sup>5</sup> Irukwu 2012: 2.

between individuals or between organizations and individuals. Koekemoer (2004: 11) adds that marketing communication is not something marketers 'do' to consumers. It is what occurs when marketers are sensitive to consumers' needs and wants and communicate with them in a responsible, respectful and relevant way.

On one hand, persuading someone is performing an act, roughly, that of affecting someone's beliefs or desires, using some form of communication, usually language. As such, persuasion constitutes a 'speech act,' an act performed in, or by speaking.<sup>6</sup> Persuasive communication, in this study, is comprised of various forms of marketing communications messages designed to enhance customers' impressions of the basic offer. These consist of non-personal verbal messages, personal selling and word-of-mouth support, and non-verbal messages. In other words, persuasive communication intends to stimulate wants by encouraging customers to imagine the benefits of the basic offer (product). It is also noted that marketers attempt to stimulate wants by supplying facts or by appealing to the customer's imagination. Ilardo (1981: 3) adds that persuasion is a communicative process of altering the beliefs, attitudes, intentions, or behaviour of another by the conscious or unconscious use of words and nonverbal messages.

On the other hand, marketing communication is the coordination of promotion efforts to ensure maximum informational and persuasive impact on customers. According to Koekemoer (2011: 15), promotional inducements are substantive or extra benefits, beyond the benefits of the basic offer, intended to motivate particular customer actions. This study relates promotional inducement to what is commonly called sales

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<sup>6</sup> Taillard 2000: 1.

promotion that promotes the marketer's product more aggressively. From this perspective, one could question concern that conviction, persuasion/inducement as seen in the case of marketing, is different from marketing as argued by Irukwu (2012: 1) that one is not called to convince. Rather, one is called to declare and proclaim, and allow the Holy Spirit do the work of convincing.

### ***Rhetoric and Sacred Rhetoric***

The focus of this study is to explore a common frame of reference, an understanding of the use of marketing communication strategy and rhetoric by the church. It is necessary to point out that there is a paradigm shift from biblical preaching, in the sense of it being a directional set of activities to communication, which emphasises a two-way flow of information between marketers and their target markets. This is in relation to the dynamism in the marketing environment which changes with growing consumer awareness of the choices available to them. Therefore, it becomes imperative for a preacher in his/her simplicity to balance between his/her sermon and motivational words in order to be understood by the congregants. Miller and Toman (2014: 2) support that conventional wisdom has long held that most marketing communications should be kept simple.

It will be of value to find a relationship between rhetoric and preaching or religious sermon by the Pentecostal preachers of the 21st century. According to Nordquist (2014: 1), rhetoric is viewed in four different perspectives: the study and practice of effective communication; the study of the effects of texts on audiences; the art of persuasion; and a pejorative term for insincere eloquence intended to win points and manipulate others. In other words, rhetoric examines the way discourses are constructed in order to achieve certain effects. Contextually, sacred/religious rhetoric is

based essentially on statements and commands, known as the indicative and the imperative, which, together with exclamations and questions, are of immense significance in the preaching of the Word.<sup>7</sup> This, in contemporary preaching, is well pronounced.

Studies show that preacher's opinions towards this strategic instrument are very diverse from one denomination to another. For example, Pasquarello (2012: 1) makes it clear that there is a modern approach to contemporary preaching and it has developed into a task: asking preachers how to make preaching, effective, more relevant, more interesting and more entertaining. Pernot (2006: 235) pinpoints that rhetorical forms of religious expression include discourse about the gods (narrative, eulogy, preaching, naming) and discourse addressed to the gods, especially prayers and hymns. Pasquarello (2012: 1) further expresses the viewpoint that excellent preachers conceive Christian speech as a unique theological practice (homiletics) learned through prayerful attention to the Bible and aimed at communion with God.

This type of differentiation makes rhetoric more practical in terms of selling and preaching. Furthermore, this idea, perhaps, indicates that the effectiveness of preaching can be greatly influenced if preachers make use of the pattern of communication laid down by God in Scripture for their instruction. Carrick (2003: 1) sees in the Bible a sacred rhetoric which the apostles and prophets, and Christ himself, used to awaken, move and persuade their hearers. This means that discourse can have supernatural effectiveness, and the speaker (preacher) can be invested with religious powers.<sup>8</sup> This type of rhetoric is evidenced in marketing communication system as Haase (2009: 1) expresses that it follows the rhetorical definition of communication as a persuasive figure

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<sup>7</sup> Carrick 2003: 1.

<sup>8</sup> Pernot 2006: 235.

of speech and demonstrates this impact in examples. This professional mass media communication in marketing, PR, and advertising serves commercial interests. It aims to incorporate the audience into the flow of discourses that is set up for serving the commercial interests. Thus, this communication tool (rhetoric) appeal to a preacher just as it appeal to speaker/orator. For the preacher, it usually a question of what can one do to help people pay more attention to sermons? When they do, there's a greater chance what one is saying will stick in their minds to give the Holy Spirit time to ultimately change their hearts.<sup>9</sup>

***Understanding Relationship between Biblical Preaching, Personal Selling and Direct Marketing***

Literally, the term marketing to the general public may mean selling. Futrell (2008: 43) affirms that, under the selling concept, a company makes a product and then uses various selling methods to persuade customers to buy the product. In effect, the company is bending customer demand to fit the company's supply. Selling, in turn, usually implies advertising and personal selling to the public. Yet, the act of selling is only one part of a firm's marketing activities. According to Manning, Ahearne & Reece (2012: 37), personal selling is a process of developing relationships, discovering needs, matching the appropriate products with these needs, and communicating benefits through informing, reminding, or persuading. However, there are claims that there is similarity between personal selling and biblical preaching in the sense that the preacher (company representative) engages the congregation (through speech) to build up Christians in the gospel as the Holy Spirit applies the scriptures to the hearts of and minds of the hearers (customer or prospective customer). On the other hand,

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<sup>9</sup> Stone 2012: 1.



the salesperson builds a mutually rewarding relationship, diagnoses the customer's needs, and custom fits the product to meet these needs through word-of-mouth. According to Delzell (2012: 1), biblical preachers rely totally upon the scriptures to 'drive' the content and to feed the God's sheep. In other words, biblical preachers seek to proclaim God's word, drawing heavily from the Holy Spirit to comfort the afflicted and convict the sinners.

From the foregoing, it can be said that for wherever someone attempts, in speech or in writing, to persuade others, whether from the pulpit, market place or in writing, rhetoric is employed. For example, the use of *logos* in classical rhetoric, relates to syllogistic constructions to establish apparent premises that lead to reasonable conclusions; *pathos*, refers to appeals to the audience's emotions which become the most concerting tools pastors utilise when presenting a sermon.<sup>10</sup> *Ethos*, is the appeal based on the projected character of the speaker or narrator in presenting goodwill, practical wisdom, and virtue is evidence and becomes doctrinaire rhetoric on Christian preaching and teaching.<sup>11</sup> The classical art seems relevant to the modern salesman in order to secure the assent of his client, vis-à-vis, the establishment of one's credibility and goodwill, ethical and knowledge of the product.

However, the philosophy of preaching involves three instincts, as described by Stanchek (2014: 1): convictions regarding the purpose of preaching (to glorify God, to save the sinners and to sanctify saints); texts that mandate Biblical exposition (give attention to the public reading of scripture); and convictions regarding expository preaching of the word of God. This process is described by Shimp and Andrews (2013: 678) as personal selling's primary purposes which include educating customers,

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<sup>10</sup> Pearson 2012: 10-12.

<sup>11</sup> Paul 2007: 2.

offering product usage and marketing assistance, and providing after-sales service and support to buyers. Regarding the philosophy of conviction, Rhodes (2012: 1) believes that every sermon should have grace and truth, and that truth is truth and sometimes it is encouraging, but sometimes it is convicting which, in the end, should be encouraging if people do take that conviction and appropriate changes occur thereafter. The analysis here is drawn from the concept of marketing, in terms of developing and communicating a positioning strategy which emphasizes the act of designing the company's offering (products/services) and image to occupy a distinctive place in the minds of the target market.<sup>12</sup>

However, it can be said that the marketing presentation strategy in terms of personal selling, is similar to preaching with the use of motivational or persuasive words. For example, the presentation strategy, according to Manning, Ahearne and Reece (2012: 235), combines elements of the relationship, product and customer strategies. The analysis is that in any type of selling, the salesperson should attempt to determine the various buying influence. Manning *et al.* (2012: 239) state that in the selling presentation strategy, when presenting to a buying committee, it is important to make sure that all parties feel involved. In other words, selling involves altering sales behaviour in order to improve communication with the customer, with all available means of persuasion, the pattern of reasoning to be used, the language or style of communicating and the delivery. This in essence, characterised rhetoric as commercial rhetoric that uses the basic tools of classical rhetorical theory. This suggests that selling and rhetoric share the same tools within the broad categories of classical rhetorical theory and marketing principles.

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<sup>12</sup> Kotler and Keller 2009: 308.

Direct marketing messages also focus on the customer, data and accountability. Hence, interpersonal communication, customer relationship and the creation of actionable segments are integral to any good direct marketing campaign. According to Kotler and Keller (2009: 572), direct marketing is the use of consumer-direct (CD) channels to reach and deliver goods and services to customers without using marketing middlemen. Direct marketers can use a number of channels to reach individual prospects and customers: direct mail; catalogue marketing; telemarketing; interactive television; kiosks; Web sites; and mobile devices. Although many people direct their thoughts towards advertising when discussing communications, all elements of the marketing mix deliver a message to potential customers.<sup>13</sup> In this regard, there is much to put into contra-distinction in terms of biblical preaching and direct marketing. Appealingly, a manufactured or finished product is brought to a consumer or displayed in a shop by a marketer while it can be established that biblical preaching involves the pastor or the preacher who essentially receive the message from the Holy Spirit, prepare the message with biblical references that support the message and present the message before the congregation.

Another contradistinction, according to Fill (2011: 20), is that direct marketing represents a shift in focus from mass to personalised communications. According to Ilardo (1981: 69), the way scientists study things is quite different from the way other people do. Some people know things intuitively. They feel certain things to be true, and this is all the evidence they need. Others know mystically, through visions and other supernatural messages. What can be deduced from the aforementioned is that direct marketing holds that, besides the actual communication, creation

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<sup>13</sup> Winer and Dhar 2011: 281.

of actionable segments, pre- and post-campaign analysis and measurement of results are integral to any good direct marketing campaign. On the other hand, biblical preaching is formed as a supernatural message derived from mystics (prophetic word), visions and Holy Spirit, directly delivered to a congregation. Hedahl (2012: 1) states that speeches and sermons will yield information on the spectrum of linguistic choices. Classical rhetoric may have had significant influence on the both religious and marketing communications. The religious rhetoric is an offshoot of the epideictic rhetoric, the kind of rhetoric that is focused on performance. Similarly, marketing has a very strong affinity with the spoken word. Hence, rhetoric becomes a unique characteristic of both direct marketing campaign and biblical preaching in the customization process. In other words, to effectively influence the audience /congregation /consumer, one has to connect with their interest. According to Cicero (*De Orat.* 1.223) the speaker must be able to connect to the emotion of the audience if indeed he wants to persuade them. However, aggressive cooptation by the preacher is not encouraged by the Bible. Christian mysticism surrounding preaching holds that the Holy Spirit is the one who convicts sinners of their sins and is the teacher (*confer* I Cor. 2.4; I John 2.27). The christian rhetorology is most effective and safe when the context of speaking is yielded to the Holy Spirit. It is however imperative for both the salesman and preacher to understand that audience/congregation can agree, disagree, or make no decision at all in consequence to a rhetorical communication, direct marketing and sermon.

### **Method**

In this study, the researchers used qualitative interviews. According to Clifford (2013: 1), qualitative interviews can range from highly exploratory to addressing specific propositions. In addition,

qualitative literature review was also used to describe research and to provide some background to the study. It was also used to provide a synthesis of relevant information such as previous work/research and discussion of the experimental importance of this topic. It identifies gaps in current knowledge and research about this topic and thus justifies the need for this present study. Additionally, interviews can be tailored specifically to the knowledge and experience of the interviewee.<sup>14</sup> With this, the data was obtained through personal interviews with a prepared guide (questions). Pastors were interviewed individually at their various churches in one session (per interview) that lasted 30-45 minutes, on average. All sessions were videotaped so that the data could later be coded ideally, and all interviews were tape-recorded (an audio recording), which minimizes loss of information and allows the full attention of the interviewer. However, the consent of interviewees was obtained prior to the recording. A final transcript that integrates notes was created after the interview.

### **Sample**

In qualitative research, only a sample (that is, a subset) of a population is selected for any given study. The study's research objectives and the characteristics of the study population (such as size and diversity) determine which and how many people to select. A total number of six (6) pastors were interviewed from a population of eight (8) that were selected using random selection. In this study, snowball sampling, also known as chain referral sampling, is considered. In this method, participants or informants with whom contact has already been made, use their social networks to refer the researcher to other people who could potentially participate in or contribute to the study. Pastors of

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<sup>14</sup> Clifford 2013: 1.

Pentecostal churches in the Durban area of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, were selected and interviewed.

### **Research Question and Proposition**

This purpose of the study is to understand whether any elements of motivational speaking in biblical preaching propel selling concept. In answering such question, the study seeks to set up the following propositions based on the various relevance literature in the previous section of this study. The formulated propositions are as follows.

*P1:* That biblical preaching is explained by St. Paul in 1 Cor. 2:1-5

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When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. . . My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.

*P2:* The degree/system in which consumers purchase products (tangible or intangible) is not related to how a congregation can obtain salvation.

*P3:* Salvation is influenced by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God and not merely an issue of stylistic preference. Salvation is to deliver and it should be free.

## RESULTS

The research was designed to explore opinions, feelings and knowledge held by clergies/pastors towards selling, motivational speaking and biblical preaching. An exploratory study conducted by the researcher identified various marketing communication activities used in one form or another by churches. Also, the possible relationship between motivational speaking, rhetorical tactic) and biblical preaching was examined. The aforementioned propositions were proved and or disproved using qualitative interviews that were used to determine if the two variables are related or not. The results with the propositions under examination are presented as follows:

*Pr:* The debate around the theme generated from this proposition which suggests that biblical preaching is not associated with eloquence or persuasive words but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power was rejected. The data indicated that they are inseparable. Although, they are two separate ideologies and there are tremendous differences between 'motivational speaking' and 'biblical preaching.'<sup>15</sup> They can be combined to achieve the intended objective(s). The most important thing is that persuasion is man's means of moving his fellow man. God's means is demonstration, leaving no doubt, and inspiring implicit faith, by the powerful working of the Spirit. Nonetheless, the rhetorical devices, *logos*, *ethos* and *pathos* are broad categories, some fall into the categories of those involving emphasis and association, and some on clarification and focus.<sup>16</sup> According to Harris (2013: 2) there are those involving physical organization, transition, and disposition or arrangement; and those involving decoration and

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<sup>15</sup> Delzell 2012: 1.

<sup>16</sup> Pearson 2012: 12.

variety, these categories are not equipped with the proper biblical knowledge to lead people into the realm where souls meet God and then grow in Christ as discovered in the study.

*P2:* Response to the question from the interview whether salvation can be considered as a product or not was rejected. Result indicates that there is similarity in the process where a consumer purchases products and a member of a congregation obtain religious salvation. The case is close to marketing, as confirmed from the respondents that salvation was a sovereign act of God, as a matter of fact, it is a spiritual gift manufactured by God. ‘You are a Christian not because of something you did, but because of something God decided’ acclaimed by one of the respondents. A similar idea was raised in support of the outcome of this proposition. This was inspired to affirm that sellers (motivational speakers) do not think about the law and the gospel when presenting a message as a product. Instead, they attempt to persuade/motivate people to change their behaviour. One of the respondents affirms that a model of preaching (product) that can be suitable for this present generation of Christians consists of spiritual formation or the practice of spiritual direction, pointing listeners to God.

On the contrary, findings that were extracted, support the proposition regarding salvation as product, selling of a salvation like product. Since there is a value involved and a profit/reward is attached, selling was seen as an act of building relationships. Consumers seek products to satisfy their needs and wants. Likewise, congregations yearn for a fuller connection to what is, from liberation from all that keeps them in bondage, for sight, for wholeness, for the healing of the wounds of existence. Moreover, most yearn for a world that is a better place. This is the salvation Christianity, at its best, offers them. One of the respondents states



that the gospel is free. One must never sound like one is selling salvation. It carries a lot of negative baggage for a lot of people.

**P3:** The proposition was accepted. The finding indicates that there was an iota of association between the stylistic preference and the work of Holy Spirit. Although, according to Belch, Belch, Kerr and Powell (2012: 31), ‘successful companies recognize that creating, communicating and delivering value to their customers is extremely important.’ It was discovered that whether the preacher combines marketing strategy or not, the success and the acceptance (influence or conviction) of the message depends on the approval of the Holy Spirit. A respondent states that it becomes imperative to the preachers of the gospel to note that it is the Holy Spirit or nothing. Salvation cannot be achieved; no holiness; no spirit of discernment; no power; no miracles; therefore, no God. If one is ready to preach the gospel, honouring the Holy Spirit is both necessary and inevitable. That is, humanistic motivation, which examines the relationships among physical, emotional, intellectual, and aesthetic needs cannot produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit in one’s life.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, one cannot be saved without God’s work of conviction and conversion.

## DISCUSSION

The study is set off to look at possible ways in which the church has adopted marketing communication strategies to communicate its offering to the end users. If so, what type of marketing communication can be employed as appeal to rhetorical tools and biblical preaching? Overall, pastors and clergy were found to have a rather positive approach toward most of the marketing communication strategies and rhetorical devices investigated. The

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<sup>17</sup> Pearson 2012: 10-12.

findings support the textual factor of direct marketing/selling and personal selling with their relevance to biblical preaching. For example, Futrell (2008: 43) affirms that, under the selling concept, a company makes a product and then uses various selling methods to persuade customers to buy the product. In effect, the company is bending customer demand to fit the company's supply. Marketing communications also suggests that achieving the objectives of a marketing campaign can be tailored towards a well-coordinated use of different promotional methods that are intended to reinforce each other. It is necessary to pinpoint, however, that there is a paradigm shift from biblical preaching, in the sense of it being a directional set of activities to communication, which emphasises a two-way flow of information between marketers / preachers and their target markets / congregations.

One of the previous studies on this subject, Hedahl (2012: 1) indicates that rhetorical application in a sermon is a particular way of using language to alter the listener's perceptions of the Gospel. Preachers who are aware of the variety of rhetorical applications available for use in proclamation can more deeply reflect the Gospel's intrinsic nature: it is a change agent! In addition, the development of a personal selling philosophy involves a series of creative improvements within the sales process that enhance the customer experience, and assume the role of a problem solver or partner in helping customers make informed and intelligence buying decisions.<sup>18</sup> Preaching/sermon, therefore suggests bold proclamation of the gospel (Matthew 28: 20) and the accurate explanation of the truths of Scripture (2 Timothy 2: 15).

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<sup>18</sup> Manning *et al.* 2012: 37.

## CONCLUSION

As stated in the results, association was found between marketing and the church based on what motivation behind the activity of seller or preacher of the gospel or salvation. In addition, this influence, the Holy Spirit, depicts whether the product is accepted or unaccepted, how motivated the consumers/congregations are to adapt a behaviour and the degree of religion within a consumer's/congregation's life. In addition, from the linguistic view of preaching, the preacher is supported and can make use of intelligent use of a wider range of biblical studies and theologies (homiletics). Analogy remains an important tool in the preparation of a sermon; nothing so illuminates a biblical text as an apt comparison.<sup>19</sup> To a certain level, some aspects of marketing and rhetoric can be used to communicate effectively by the preachers of the gospel. Those commonly used are personal selling, public relations and motivational/persuasive speaking. Biblically, effective Christian communication is seen from where Paul commanded one of his protégées, Timothy: 'Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction' (2 Tim 4: 2). These assertions juxtapose rhetoric and marketing context.

This juxtaposition is linked with factors affecting biblical preaching (declining in spiritual commitment) these factors can be categorised into two; first, identification and references, which suggest referencing self (the self-proclaimed Evangelists, self-ordained Bishops, Arch-bishops and General Overseers) in place of God or providing standards of comparison for self-appraisal and identification. However, the bible establishes in 2 Corinthians 4:5 that 'For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. The study

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<sup>19</sup> Shepherd 1998: 205.

concludes that there is a degree of relationship between marketing and the church. The result also indicated that although, marketing communication can be used by the church, but the effectiveness of the message depends largely on the power of the Holy Spirit as against the power of marketing communication by profit marketers. Furthermore, 'Salvation' was identified as a product of the church and a gift that can be sold but for free. Generally, this study contributes to existing knowledge on the use of marketing tactics by the church to communicate effectively to its target consumers without forgetting its primary objectives. Moreover, further analysis of the price of biblical products might be helpful.

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