

**EXPLORING DISCIPLESHIP IN MATTHEW 28:16-20 USING  
THE OPEN SYSTEM INTERCONNECTION (OSI)  
NETWORKING MODEL**

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Bachelor of Divinity with Honours.

by

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September 2022

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## ABSTRACT

“Discipleship” is one motif that is unique in the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew framed his Gospel in a way that discipleship is etched and encoded in, and through the ministry of Jesus. The manifestation of discipleship has been established by Jesus through his teachings and through his deeds, and in and through his mission as the Saviour of all Humankind. After his resurrection, Jesus called his disciples to continue his ministry, and to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:16-20). In this call, I recognize *discipleship* in the realms of the messenger, the message (mission), the receiver(s), and how the message is encoded and conveyed. All of these elements and essentials are embodied, so that the Word is communicated, and that the network of Jesus is extended and prolonged. In light of our modern world of technology, how can we respond to the call of Jesus?

There is no question that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has greatly affected all spheres of human life – it influenced and impacted the way we live today socially, politically, and economically. Most prominently, with the emergence of computer networks, ICT has paved the way to enable communication and the dissemination of information in a convenient and consistent way. To maintain connectivity and consistency, and to ensure the growth of the network, it requires specific rules of network protocols and standards.

This study is intended to explore discipleship in the Gospel of Matthew in light of a computer networking model as the hermeneutic. In doing so, the study will integrate a dialog between the networking model and the chosen text (Matt. 28:16-20). By using the Socio-Rhetorical method of interpretation, the study aims to extract meaning from the text in light of a technological networking model, in order to make more sense, how discipleship is to be perceived, and manifested in our modern world.

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I declare that this work has not been used without due acknowledgment of any material that has been previously submitted for a degree or diploma in another institution. I also declare that the work has not used any material, heard or read, without proper acknowledgment of the source.

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## DEDICATION

*Dedicated to my beloved father, Tauiliili Samasoni Sasa, who has been  
called home by God during my time here in Malua.*

*You have planted the seed of love, faith, and perseverance in our hearts,  
giving us hope and strength, to endure the adversities of life.*

*Rest in Love!*

To my two mothers, Fa'asaveve Tauiliili Samasoni Sasa & Leaso Motusaga.

Your undivided love, patience and courage has never been faded,  
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## List of Abbreviations

ASCII	American Standard Code for Information Interchange
EFKS	Ekalesia Fa'apopotoga Kerisiano Samoa
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IP	Internet Protocol
IT	Information Technology
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MAC	Media Access Control
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
OSI	Open System Interconnection
PDU	Protocol Data Unit

# INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter serves as a prologue to this study; aiming to put things into perspective and act as guide to reading this study. In doing so, this chapter will include: the purpose of the study; the motivation of the study; a brief summary; focus questions; the methodology and approach used; and an outline of how the study will be implemented.

## *1. Purpose of the Study*

Discipleship is simply doing the will of God as Jesus did in his ministry. It was a type of work carried out by a particular group of people considered the chosen disciple following a system which I call the system of the Kingdom of God. Doing the will of God, or following that system, was not a way of life done in a vacuum. It was a way of living life in the reality of the world. Thus, discipleship as a system, of doing the will of God in this world has its own networks and models that are essential to the maintaining and the continuation of doing the will of God.

This study aims to explore ‘discipleship’ in the Gospel of Matthew as a task of doing the will of God in a networking model. I will use my perspective of a computer networking model as the chosen hermeneutics to guide my exploring of discipleship as a networking model and system. The use of hermeneutics as a reading perspective is not to impose my computer networking model understanding on the Matthean text but to guide my approach of the text in order to make meaning in the networking model, in light of discipleship networks and systems. It is making relevant the meaning of the text in my world as a reader.

The objectives of the study are: (i) to define and to explore the deep meanings and significances of ‘discipleship’ within the Matthean text in its form, (ii) to explore and reinterpret ‘discipleship’ as a means of active communication within the Matthean text using the

contemporary approach of a computer networking model hermeneutic, and, (iii) to utilise and employ how this reinterpretation of the text is relevant to our modern context as disciples of Christ.

## **2. *Motivation of the Study***

Throughout my experiences in various disciplines of Information Communication and Technology (ICT), I have learnt that information is key and the life blood of any business or any organization. In computing terms, information is made up data. Data is comprised of characters, numbers, words, images, and special characters. When the data is organized and structured in a meaningful manner, it is called 'information'. Hence information in a sense, has meaning, and in turn has consequence and effect, on the operation of a business or an organization. It is why it is vital for any organization or business to store, manage, and to disseminate such information properly and securely. This is the motive behind a computer network. A computer network or simply a network, enables communication and the dissemination of information to all employees as well as to all business' customers. It is through this behaviour of computer networking that inspires me to take on a similar approach to explore 'discipleship'.

## **3. *Brief Summary***

In the Gospel of Matthew, the manifestation of 'discipleship' by Jesus was accomplished through his teachings and through his deeds, and in and through his mission as the Saviour of all Humankind. Before his ascension, Jesus called his disciples to continue his ministry, and make all disciples of all nations. In this call, I recognize 'discipleship' in the realms of the messenger, the message, the receiver, and how the message is encoded and conveyed. All of these elements are embodied, so that the Word is communicated, and that the network of Jesus Christ is extended and prolonged.

Like the network of computers, we need to be constantly connected in order to communicate. In order to be connected requires the proper network protocols and specifications. Protocols are the set of rules, syntax, and principles that govern and enable communication between two or more computers (hosts). To maintain connectivity and to ensure the growth of the network, it requires consistency, monitoring, and daily updates. In this study, it is anticipated that the processes in the model and how communication works using the hermeneutic I have identified, will contribute to how discipleship functions in the selected text.

#### **4. *Focus Questions***

In conducting this study, the following focus questions have been used as guideline.

- (i). What is the engraved meaning and functions of ‘discipleship’ as a networking open system and model of proclaiming the Gospel embedded in the language of the text (Matthew 28:16-20)?
  - Using the heuristic interpretive analytic of sociorhetorical criticism, an exegesis of the text will be conducted, exploring how discipleship as a system and network is engraved and revealed in the text. The exegesis will also explore how the syntax and semantics of the language expose the functions of ‘discipleship’.
- (ii). In what ways does the Open System Interconnection (OSI) networking model assimilate the processes, and functionality of ‘discipleship’ as reflected in the text?
  - This question will guide how the OSI networking model and its functionalities conform or embrace the syntaxes and semantics of ‘discipleship’ as inscribed in the text.
- (iii). How does an interpretation from this reading approach make relevant the meaning of the text to my serving God in my world as a reader?

- This question seeks to exegetically understand the text from a technological perspective as a basis for valid application for the modern-day reader.

## **5. *Methodology and Approach***

In approaching the text, I will be using the reading framework of Socio-Rhetorical as an interpretational tool, with special attention to linguistic and grammatical aspects. By using such method of criticism, I will explore ‘discipleship’ as a system and network in Matthew 28:16-20 using my experience in the field of Information Communication Technology (ICT) specifically in the area of computer networking.

The field of computer networking or simply, networking, is a complex phenomenon which builds upon physics and electronics, syntax and rules that governs communication and the exchange of information. In today’s modern networks, no matter how complex networks have become, they basically consist of five vital components: the sender, the message, the medium, the receiver, and the protocols that controls communication and transmission of data and information. One of the oldest and a well-known networking model in the field of information and communication, is the **Open System Interconnection (OSI) Model**. The OSI Model is a conceptual framework used to describe the functions of a networking system. It characterizes computing functions into a universal set of rules and requirements in order to support interoperability between different products and software. In this study, I will be using the OSI model as my hermeneutic to read the text. The OSI Model Hermeneutic will be thoroughly discussed in Chapter 2.

## **6. *Structure of the Study***

The study is divided into 4 Chapters. **Chapter one** will be focusing on the Literature Review. This chapter aims to set the foundational concepts of the study specifically on the aspects

of discipleship in Matthew and within the selected text (Matthew 28:16-20). Various studies of the text will be explored on the basis of the methods and approaches used, with findings. In doing this, the chapter will provide a detailed description of the literature review with an effort to locate the study within the existing literature. Finally the chapter will conclude with a description of the criticism method used.

**Chapter two** is largely devoted to the reading approach used in this study, and that is; the Open System Interconnection (OSI) networking model. The model is explained through a series of seven layers, focusing on the process and behaviour of communication as information is passed from layer to layer. In doing so, essential communication aspects such as identity, translation, encapsulation, syntax and rules will be explored. Due to the technical and the technological nature of the model, an attempt to (simplify) the language and clarify some of the technical terminologies will also be explored.

**Chapter three** offers an exegesis of the text, (Matthew 28:16-20). In approaching the text, I will use the reading framework of Socio-Rhetorical Criticism as an interpretational tool with special attention to grammatical and linguistic aspects of the text. At the same time, the fusion or the synthesis of the network hermeneutic is integrated within the exegesis of the text, with a challenge to extract how the behaviour and characteristics of the model brought forward a contemporary way of looking at discipleship.

Lastly, **Chapter four** will discuss how my understanding of the OSI model functioned in my sociorhetorical interpretation of the text. It is carried out with the expectation to bring out new meanings found in the fusion of the hermeneutic used and the text. The chapter will also provide discussions on the significances of this study to the discipleship mission of the EFKS, and to the personal journeys of the individuals, within our community of the faithful.

# CHAPTER 1

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter opens with identifying the key aspects of discipleship in Matthew in light of the existing studies. It then moves forward to explore and discuss the scholarship on Matthew's treatment of discipleship. Secondly, the chapter will review some of the existing studies along with their methodological approaches to Matthew 28:16-20, with a summary of their findings. Finally, a detailed explanation of the methodology is given, and the attempt to locate the study within the Samoan existing literature and my technological context.

### *1.1 Discipleship in Matthew*

The Gospel of Matthew is distinctive among the Gospels in a number of ways. Though the aspect of discipleship is one motif that is common among the four Gospels, Matthew is unique in the sense that discipleship is manifested in the aspect of fulfilment.<sup>1</sup> The frames of the gospel establish that discipleship is of major concern in the Matthean perspective. In this sense, the Gospel of Matthew not only fulfils God's purpose in and through Jesus, but also enables how this fulfilment will find expression in the community in which Jesus founded.<sup>2</sup>

This fulfilment not only established the Kingdom of God among those who are ready to receive it, but also an imperative for Matthew's original Jewish readers to expand their vision of

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<sup>1</sup> W. F. Albright and C. S. Mann, *Matthew*, vol. 26, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1971), ix.

<sup>2</sup> Albright and Mann, *Matthew*, ix.



the people of God. Matthew's motivation for his readers is not to abandon their fellow Jews, but the message of the kingdom must be taken to "all the nations".<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, Michael Wilkins claims that Matthew's presentation of Jesus' ministry shows more clearly than any other gospel the nature of discipleship and this is manifestly told in the beginning and ending of Matthew's account.<sup>4</sup> It begins with the calling of the first disciples to leave their families to follow Jesus (Matt 4:18–23), and concludes with the great commissioning of the followers to go and make disciples of all nations (Matt 28:16–20). Through the course of the Matthew's account, the list of disciples grows from a selected few to a multitude. In this sense, discipleship is not a matter of keeping the Word of God to one's-self, but to communicate it, and influence others.

Matthew, like the rest of the Gospels, manifest discipleship as a scheme to expand the good news of God from particularism to universalism. In doing so, Matthew underscored Jesus' motive to break down the barriers of status, religion, gender, and nationalism.<sup>5</sup> 'Unlike some of the sectarians within Judaism, Jesus broke through the barriers that separated the clean from the unclean<sup>6</sup>, the obedient from the sinful. He summoned the fisherman as well as the tax collector and even a zealous evolutionary. He indicated that Jews and Gentiles would join him in the future kingdom banquet (Matt 8:10-12). In calling the despised to himself (Matt 9:9), in sitting down to a meal with tax collectors and sinners (Matt 9:10), and in having women among his circle of disciples (Matt 12:49-50), Jesus demonstrates that they have been adopted into discipleship to him and fellowship with God.' This demonstrates that discipleship in Matthew is an open system. A

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<sup>3</sup> David L. Turner, eds. *Matthew*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2008), 46.

<sup>4</sup> Michael J. Wilkins, *The Concept of Discipleship in Matthew's Gospel: As Reflected in the Use of the Term Μαθητης*. (Leiden, The Netherlands: E. J. BRILL, 1988), 2.

<sup>5</sup> Joel B Green, Jeannine K. Brown, and Nicholas Perrin, eds. *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. (Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2013), 206.

<sup>6</sup> Matt 8:1-4 (Jesus healed a leper); Matt 15:21-28 (Jesus' encountering with the Canaanite woman)

network of believers that is not bounded by anything else, but by the love of God, and the faith of the believers.

Ben Cooper, in his work on “Commitment and Discipleship in the Gospel of Matthew”<sup>7</sup>, argues that ‘Matthew’s Gospel generates: “a communication event” enclosed between its author and his readers within which the author interacts with a subset of readers to provoke and sustain a particular kind of commitment to God.’<sup>8</sup> Cooper coined the term “theocentric commitment”, which involves a particular understanding of the teacher-discipleship relationship between the Jesus portrayed in the Gospel and those who follow him.’ This is both a claim concerning Matthew’s communicative strategy as he composed the Gospel, and a claim that the Gospel functions broadly as he intended for a definable subset of ‘compliant’ flesh-and-blood readers.<sup>9</sup>

Similarly, Fernando F. Segovia, identified two general descriptions of what discipleship means to Matthew. First, discipleship in its narrow sense is a tradition of following Jesus in accordance with the historical master-disciple relationship between Jesus and his followers. Second, discipleship in its broader sense is the self-understanding of a Christian believer in relation to his or her daily commitment and practicing of the teachings of Jesus.<sup>10</sup> Segovia’s second definition points to the importance of considering the location of the reader in today’s world. Someone who lives life today in the ways advocated by Jesus are also disciples. These definitions allow for taking Matthew’s interpretation of the master- disciple relationship to consolidate the audience’s faith and to make sense within their daily lives.

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<sup>7</sup> Ben Cooper, ed., *Incorporated Servanthood: Commitment and Discipleship in the Gospel of Matthew*. The Library of New Testament Studies (London and New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 12.

<sup>8</sup> Cooper, *Incorporated Servanthood*, 12.

<sup>9</sup> Cooper, *Incorporated Servanthood*, 12.

<sup>10</sup> Fernando F. Segovia, "Introduction: Call and Discipleship - toward a Re-examination of the Shape and Character of Christian Existence in the New Testament," in *Discipleship in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 2.

In a nutshell, Matthew entails quite a variety of rudiments that are important to discipleship through time and space. Not only that the message of God is to be open to anyone, but also as disciples of Jesus, we need to be interconnected with each other, and with God, in order to maintain our faith. Furthermore, the significance of focusing on our local community, to better our community and our own-selves, will prepare us well to take the Word of God further, and to face the world with confidence.

## **1.2 *Matthew 28:16-20***

Most commonly known as the Great Commission, Matthew 28:18-20 culminates Jesus Christ's mission on earth. The Gospels of Mark, Luke and John also ends with a version of the Great Commission (Mark 16:15-20; Luke 24:45-49; John 20:21-23).

While some scholars argue Matthew 28:16-20 provide the key to the interpretation of the whole Gospel<sup>11</sup>, others resist that Matthew has used the concluding pericope to underline some significant themes and to resolve certain tensions in his narrative<sup>12</sup>. Matthew 28:16–20 can be understood not simply as the climax of the Gospel but as a summary of the Gospel or as its hermeneutical key.

As its interpretative key Matthew's story of Jesus must be read backwards as it were, but over and above all this, it needs to be appreciated as looking towards the future. It is, in other words, a bridging passage that concludes Matthew's story of the 'historical Jesus' and points the reader to the new era of the universal mission of the Church which conducts its endeavours under the protection of the risen Christ. Luz<sup>13</sup> interpreted Matthew 28:16-20 not only as a timeless

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<sup>11</sup> Peter F. Ellis, *Matthew: His Mind and His Message* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1974), 22.

<sup>12</sup> William D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel of St Matthew* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 687-88.; Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 21 – 28* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress (Hermeneia), 2005), 616.

<sup>13</sup> Luz, *Matthew 21 – 28*, 616.

command that was used to justify the expansion of Christian missionary activity in both Protestant and Catholic circles, but also to affirm Jesus' universal victory, and authority.

The text not only affirms the *universal authority* of Jesus, but also reveals His *mission* and *conditions* for His disciples, and His assurance of His *abiding presence* among them. The resurrected Jesus who had fulfilled the redemptive plan of God, now commissioned His disciples in the same way God (the Father) commissioned Him.<sup>14</sup>

In terms of the origin of this passage, the large number of Mattheanisms in the text, has led many to attribute it to the hand of the evangelist himself.<sup>15</sup> However, not all scholars are convinced that this was the case, and they propose that Matthew 28:16-20 has heavily redacted traditional material.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, one suggests that the evangelist has constructed this pericope, at least in part, to serve his anti-Pauline agenda.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, there is no denying that the Great Commission is a scene of great authority and majesty; it establishes a fitting climax to Matthew's narrative.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Kenneth L. Gentry, *The Greatness of the Great Commission* (Texas: Institute for Christian Economics, 1993), 31.

<sup>15</sup> Craig S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 488-91.; Jack D. Kingsbury, "The Composition and Christology of Matt 28:16-20," *JBL* 93(1974): 573-79.

<sup>16</sup> Benjamin J. Hubbard, "The Matthean Redaction of a Primitive Apostolic Commissioning: An Exegesis of Matthew 28.16-20," *Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series (SBLDS)* 19, (1999):101-36.; John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 1261.

<sup>17</sup> David C. Sim, *Matthew's anti-Paulinism: A neglected feature of Matthean studies*, (HTS 58), 767-783.

<sup>18</sup> William D. Davies & Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St Matthew*, 687-689.

## 1.3 Methodology

### 1.3.1 Locating this Study

Since this study is engaging with a contextual biblical reading using a hermeneutic, a brief description of hermeneutic is provided first before locating the study. *Hermeneutics* is the study of theories of interpretation and can be considered another approach of reading the biblical text. It involves using our intellects and our experiences to try and make sense of a given text.

Schleiermacher defined hermeneutics as not rules of interpretation but as “the art of understanding”.<sup>19</sup> Schleiermacher assumes that there are two dimensions involved in the process of understanding, which are the subjective dimension and the objective dimension. The objective dimension is also referred to as the grammatical aspect. This is viewed as the art of finding the particular sense of a certain discourse in the language. The *subjective* dimension is also known as the psychological aspect, that comprehends the unity of the text and the major parts which make up the whole text. Both dimensions of interpretation are of equal importance. Schleiermacher suggests that every understanding is based on a preliminary understanding of what the text is about (pre-understanding).<sup>20</sup> Thus, the text is the expression of the subjective thoughts of its author, and interpreters must try and put themselves within the author’s world to try and understand the author better than the authors understanding of themselves. The interpreter’s or reader’s putting himself or herself in the world of the author which can also be looked at as the world in the text is contextual reading of the text. It is exactly the approach I am using in this study – contextual interpretation of the text or making more sense of the meaning of the text in my world as a reader.

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<sup>19</sup> Anthony C. Thiselton, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 154.

<sup>20</sup> Thiselton, *Hermeneutics*, 154.

In my introductory chapter, I have mentioned that this study is a reading of the Bible using contextual biblical reading approaches. Contextual biblical reading approaches were made possible by putting emphasis on the reader and their location in the interpretive process. Such interpretive approach is taken up by Pacific Island biblical scholars including Samoan biblical scholars. The shift to reader oriented approach allows Samoan biblical scholars to bring our local contexts into engagement with biblical texts. This approach enables the reader to employ aspects of Samoan island life such as experiences, cultural and religious beliefs, and worldviews within their biblical interpretation. This mode of biblical interpretation has been given prominence by Pacific island including Samoan biblical scholars. Of those scholars, I have chosen the works of Vaitusi Nofoaiga, Arthur Wulf, Peniamina Leota, and Frank Smith.

In his work on “*A Samoan Reading of Discipleship in Matthew*”<sup>21</sup>, Nofoaiga uses a hermeneutic known as the *Tautua-ile-va* (service in-between spaces). *Tautua-ile-va* refers to service carried out in-between spaces, as well as to a servant who stands in-between spaces. One of the aspect of Nofoaiga’s approach was his localization of *tautua* (service) within a particular place. It expresses the expectation that service in a family or community is reciprocal and the needs and rights of everyone are important.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand, it shows his hybrid location as third space, at which *tautua-ile-va* is a dynamic location where he moves, as a *tautua*, to and from places and act in accordance with the reality of life in everyday life as a Samoan. This notion of localization can express the interconnectedness of the servant within his/her local community. Jesus’ proclamation to his eleven disciples to gather in Galilee, may have shown his concentration on Galilee as an important place – the place where He started His ministry. A local community full of people with all walks of life, the marginalized, those who needed to uplift not only

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<sup>21</sup> Vaitusi Nofoaiga, *A Samoan Reading of Discipleship in Matthew*, International Voices in Biblical Studies (Atlanta, Georgia: SBL, 2017).

<sup>22</sup> Nofoaiga, *A Samoan Reading of Discipleship*, 40.

physically, but mentally and spiritually. Jesus' mission is to be initiated and to be dispersed from this local area, to all nations. This behaviour of localization fits well with the aspect of a computer network that is employed within a local area network, that functions to provide and facilitate consistent inter-connectivity among the local hosts.

In a similar approach, Wulf, in his study "*Reappraising Earth in Genesis 1:1–2:4a from a Samoan Gafataulima Perspective*"<sup>23</sup>, he utilizes a Samoan hermeneutic called "Tala-mamanu". Wulf's definition of *tala-mamanu* methodology is a "fusion of Samoan *tala* (narrative) and *mamanu* (concepts/patterns/motifs) reading strategies which not only focus on texts as *tala*, but also analyzes the *mamanu* or concepts in the text."<sup>24</sup> The 'tala' reading reconvenes narrative criticism, concentrating on narrative devices such as the narrator, setting, characters, and plot in deciphering the meaning of the text.<sup>25</sup>

The *mamanu* reading strategy is derived from the *mamanu* of a *siapo* (tapa-cloth) or *tatau* (traditional tattoo). Wulf attempts to interpret these *mamanu* of a *siapo* or *tatau*, because of the consideration that they relay and communicate a story. Hence, this reading perceives *mamanu* as words of a special language that communicate meanings comparable to grammatical criticism being attentive to individual words, vocabulary choices, and linguistic features in the narrative in order to unravel the text's meanings.<sup>26</sup>

Further, Peniamina Leota uses an analogical approach in his engagement with the biblical text in his study on "Ethnic Tensions in Persian-Period Yehud"<sup>27</sup>. Leota investigates the issues between ethnic groups in Persian-Period Yehud in light of the existing issues relating to land tenure

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<sup>23</sup> Arthur John Wulf, "Was Created Good? - Reappraising Earth in Genesis 1:1-2:4a from a Samoan Gafataulima Perspective" (PhD Thesis, The University of Auckland, 2016).

<sup>24</sup> Wulf, "Was Created Good?," 3.

<sup>25</sup> Wulf, "Was Created Good?," 3.

<sup>26</sup> Wulf, "Was Created Good?," 102.

<sup>27</sup> Peniamina Leota, "Ethnic Tensions in Persian-Period Yehud: A Samoan Postcolonial Hermeneutics" (PhD Thesis, Melbourne College of Divinity, 2005).

and human rights in Samoan society. That is, Leota explores the analogies between contemporary Samoa and Persian Yehud. In such a process Leota allows the biblical world to inform current concerns of culture and rights in Samoa and vice versa. Leota, concludes his study by proposing recommendations for a Samoan hermeneutic and the responsible use of the Bible in the Samoan context.<sup>28</sup> Leota's analogical approach can also be applied and utilized in my technological approach in the interpretive process.

Smith<sup>29</sup> in his study of the Gospel of John, analyses the Gospel's characterization of Jesus from a Samoan perspective. Particularly, Smith attempts to resolve the interpretive problem of 'distanciation' (distance between the world of the text, world encoded in the text and world of the reader) faced by readers in interpreting biblical texts. To bridge this distance, Smith draws on his experience and understanding of the Samoan social and cultural world and develops an analogical approach to reading biblical texts. Smith's analogical approach can also be utilized in my technological approach in the interpretive process.

It is a challenge in trying to locate a hermeneutic of computer networks and technology within the realm of discipleship and existing literature, due to the limited amount of resources directed to my topic. Perhaps the challenge is a good start for this study, as it could be the first of its kind to use a technological hermeneutic to approach a biblical text. My references to various studies in this thesis, focusses on the methods used, but the nature and essence of my computer network hermeneutic may not be appropriate, given the cultural, social, economic, and political issues it relates to. Hopefully the connection will be established, when the computer network hermeneutic is thoroughly explained in chapter 2, paving the way to a meaningful analysis of the function of networking models and systems in the task of discipleship explored in chapter 3.

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<sup>28</sup> Leota, "Ethnic Tensions," 1.

<sup>29</sup> Frank Smith, "The Johannine Jesus from a Samoan Perspective: Toward an Intercultural Reading of the Fourth Gospel" (PhD Thesis, University of Auckland, 2010).



### 1.3.2 Critical/Analytical Method

#### A. *Socio-Rhetorical Criticism*

This methodology aims to present a reading framework that will explore the discipleship network in the text. Sociorhetorical criticism was developed by Vernon K. Robbins as a heuristic interpretive analytic to combine social science with more literary based advances in biblical studies.<sup>30</sup> Robbins' goal is to develop a rhetorical approach that integrates literary, social, cultural and ideological issues in texts. Sociorhetorical criticism merges the world of the text, the world behind the text and the world of the reader.<sup>31</sup> The reading approach focuses on finding the meaning of the text by examining the values, convictions, and beliefs in the world of the text.<sup>32</sup> It explores how those values help shape meaning and as readers we compare or contrast them with the world we live, in order to make meaning relevant to us.<sup>33</sup> For this study, sociorhetorical criticism will bring my world as an IT person, into dialogue with a sociorhetorical reading of Matthew 28:16-20, to find out more about the discipleship network as put forward by Jesus in Jesus' commissioning of the chosen disciples to go make disciples of all nations.<sup>34</sup> Robbins' sociorhetorical criticism approach has five stages.<sup>35</sup> They are, inner texture, inter texture, social and cultural texture, ideological texture, and sacred texture. For this study, I will use the inner texture, inter texture, social and cultural texture, and ideological texture.

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<sup>30</sup>Vernon Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to the Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation* (Harrisburg: Trinity, 1996), 1.

<sup>31</sup>Robbins, *Exploring the Texture*, 1996, 1-2.

<sup>32</sup>Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 1.

<sup>33</sup>Vernon Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, Society and Ideology* (London: Routledge, 1996), 26.

<sup>34</sup> Robbins, "*The Tapestry*," 11. Robbins states here, that this is one of the goals of socio-rhetorical criticism.

<sup>35</sup>These five stages are explained clearly in Robbins' two books; *Exploring the Texture of Text*, and *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse*.

*(i) Inner Texture*

According to Robbins, the inner texture refers to the various ways the text employs language to communicate. The inner texture has been summed up as “looking inside the selected text and the world of the text extracting meaning.” The inner texture includes various types of linguistic patterns within a text (*progressive* and *repetitive* textures), structural elements of a text (*narrational* and *opening-middle-closing* textures), the specific manner a text attempts to persuade its reader (*argumentative texture*) and the way the language of a text evokes feelings, emotions, or senses that are located in different parts of the body (sensory-aesthetic texture).<sup>36</sup>

Grammatical criticism is part of the innertextual interpretation of the text, analysing a text through its language. Language consists of words; an idea may be conveyed through a single word, or through words arranged in various combinations with each other. Jan Botha related the idea of language to linguistic signs that consist of a whole range of units.

‘A discourse is composed of individual utterances of a sentential nature. Sentences are composed of phrases which, in turn, consists of words. Words are composed of morphemes. Morphemes are composed of speech sounds, which are composed of phonological features’.<sup>37</sup>

Therefore, grammatical criticism is concerned not only with how individual words function as carriers of meaning but also with how those words are arranged in phrases and sentences to form meaningful sense units.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Robbins, “*The Tapestry*,” 34.

<sup>37</sup> Ian Botha, *Subject to Whose Authority?: Multiple Readings of Romans 13* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press 1994), 13.

<sup>38</sup> John H. Hayes and Carl R. Holladay, *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginners Handbook* (Louisville/London: Westminster John Knox, 2007), 72.

In analysing the language of the text, we may also begin by looking at the way in which we scrutinize the most fundamental unit of communication—the word. Even though meaning can be conveyed through complex patterns of word arrangement, interpretation often focuses on a single word or phrase.<sup>39</sup> Cracking the code of an important term or expression often provides the key to interpreting a much larger passage.

## ***(2) Intertexture***

Inter texture is the second arena of Robbins' idea. It shows how “...the interpreter works in the area between the implied author and the text, not between the text and the reader.”<sup>40</sup> This part of the methodology looks at how other phenomena speak through Matt 28:16-20 or how the implied author used them to render the networking model or system of making disciples of all nations such as the recitation and recontextualization of Daniel 7:14, 19. In other words, it indicates how the implied author used the phenomena to show discipleship as the best networking system and model to undertake Jesus' ministry. Analysing that adaptation will identify the verbal signs of networking system and model.

The task in this part of the methodology is to explore Matthew's recitation of Daniel 7:14, 16. Matthew's recitation brings in the significance of Jesus' authority as the main authority behind the discipleship networking system and model. This part will indicate the social, cultural, and Christian codes of discipleship in relation to the work of becoming and being a disciple from the beginning of Jesus' ministry in Galilee and all the way to the commissioning of all disciples in 28:16-20. The disciples will have honor because they have knowledge of the discipleship networking system and model as taught to them by Jesus.

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<sup>39</sup> John Hayes and Carl R, *Biblical Exegesis – A Beginner's Handbook* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987), 59.

<sup>40</sup>Robbins, *The Tapestry*, 96.

### ***(3) Social and Cultural texture***

Matthean text to me as Samoan belongs in a social and cultural context and this is evident in the narrative. This section focuses on analysing the text's "social and cultural nature *as* a text."<sup>41</sup> This part of the methodology will show that the text belongs to Jesus and the group of twelve disciples. The analysis identifies the difference between characters in text using one of the Mediterranean family characteristics called "the culture of honour and shame."<sup>42</sup> It will also explore a "challenge-response"<sup>43</sup> moment between Jesus and the Jewish leaders. Those social and cultural situations indicate the social and cultural context of the text. This part of the methodology will analyse the commissioning of the disciples based on 'reciprocity' and 'retribution.'<sup>44</sup> Robbins speaks of these terms as distribution systems in first century Mediterranean society.

### ***(4) Ideological texture***

Robbins states that the "ideological texture concerns the biases, opinions, preferences, and stereotypes of a particular writer and a particular reader."<sup>45</sup> For this part of the methodology, I will define systems of differentiation that make dominant persons subordinate others. We will look at different types of families in the Mediterranean world in relation to their positions in the social structure of the Roman Empire. Here we will look at the Matthean presentation of elitism in contrast with voluntary associations<sup>46</sup> and personhood<sup>47</sup> characterised by honour and shame in the

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<sup>41</sup>Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 71.

<sup>42</sup>One of the characteristics of the Mediterranean families. Halvor Moxnes, "What is Family: Problems in Constructing Early Christian families." in *Constructing Early Christians Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor* (ed. Halvor Moxnes; London: Routledge, 1997), 13-41, page 20.

<sup>43</sup>Another social and cultural topic mentioned by Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 80.

<sup>44</sup>Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 83.

<sup>45</sup>Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 95.

<sup>46</sup>Michael H. Crosby, *House of Disciples: Church, Economics, & Justice in Matthew* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1988), 29-31.

<sup>47</sup>Most scholars like Dennis C. Duling, "The Matthean Brotherhood and Marginal Scribal Leadership." in *Modelling Early Christianity: Social-Scientific Studies of the New Testament in its Context* (London: Routledge, 1995), 159-182, called how some Mediterranean families ordered their lives as 'brotherhood'. This study uses the term 'personhood' because brotherhood indicates gendering.

Mediterranean world. We will discuss various contrasts in the text; the contrast between Jesus and the disciples, the contrast between the Roman Empire and the Kingdom of Heaven. The ideology that the Roman Empire is based on money, but God's Kingdom is based on hearing and obeying God which is the expected manner from the disciples of Jesus. That contrast will give what authorisation means in accordance with Jesus' ministry and being part of the discipleship networking system.

#### ***1.4 Summary***

In this chapter, I have laid out some important aspects of discipleship zeroing into Matthew's Gospel and the motivation behind the study. Some important aspects of discipleship have been identified to bring out the intrinsic functions of the so-called 'disciple', embarking on the core roles of a disciple within discipleship. Such responsibilities have been imperatively imprinted within the Great Commission in Matthew 28:16-20.

An attempt to situate the study within the existing literature and methods is given, but as I have previously mentioned, the nature of the computer network hermeneutic makes it a challenge to locate it among the existing studies. Although my hermeneutical lenses are slightly technical and technological in nature, these studies help me sets the scene for my appealing to technological and social location in third space as a hermeneutic in this study.

The Open System Interconnection (OSI) model mostly deals with symbols, syntaxes, and rules when it comes to communication within a computer network, hence the selection of socio-rhetorical criticism with elements of grammatical/linguistic criticism is chosen as the critical/analytical method. The next chapter will explain the hermeneutic - the Open System Interconnection (OSI) model. This will be followed by the Exegesis in chapter 3.

## CHAPTER 2

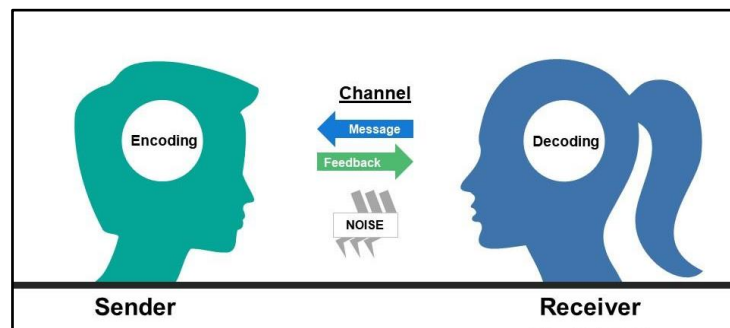
# NETWORKING SYSTEM AND MODEL UNDERSTANDING AS A HERMENEUTIC

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the Computer Networking System of Open System Interconnection (OSI) Model as an example of a networking interconnection model to analyse the discipleship networking model reflected in the sociorhetorical interpretation of the text. It is not to examine which model is the best model, but to integrate my understanding of the computer networking models with discipleship in order to make more sense the meaning of discipleship in my world of IT. This chapter is twofold. On the one hand, the chapter begins by defining what a ‘network’ is, as well as identifying and clarifying its basic elements. And having an understanding of what a network is and its essential elements, will certainly help us to understand the functional concepts of a network model.

On the other hand, this chapter presents the Open System Interconnection (OSI) model – a network model that is comprised of seven abstract layers. In exploring the model, we will look at how ‘data’ and ‘information’ is structured and transformed as it passes through each layer of the model. Important concepts such as network protocols, syntax, encapsulation, identification, translation, encoding and decoding will be thoroughly looked at. Lastly, it is hoped that this chapter will highlight the key aspects, functionalities, and significances of using the OSI model as a framework for communication and transmission of data and information in computer networks.

## 2.1 Introduction

Person-to-person communication begins with language. With language, messages can be exchanged between people over a limited distance - within a room or across a short open space. As early as 3000BC, before the introduction of a postal system and newspaper, humans communicated by means of symbols and signs. Messages were visually and verbally transmitted by means of papyrus, stone-carvings, carrier-pigeons, smoke signals, drums and horns. These visual and audio signals or patterns were used to announce, or can be used to *interpret* the presence of, a camp, an attack or simply a warning.<sup>48</sup> In other words, we can interpret the meaning of a signal if we have a common understanding of the language use, or the type of signal we receive.



**Figure 1:** Basic Communication Model

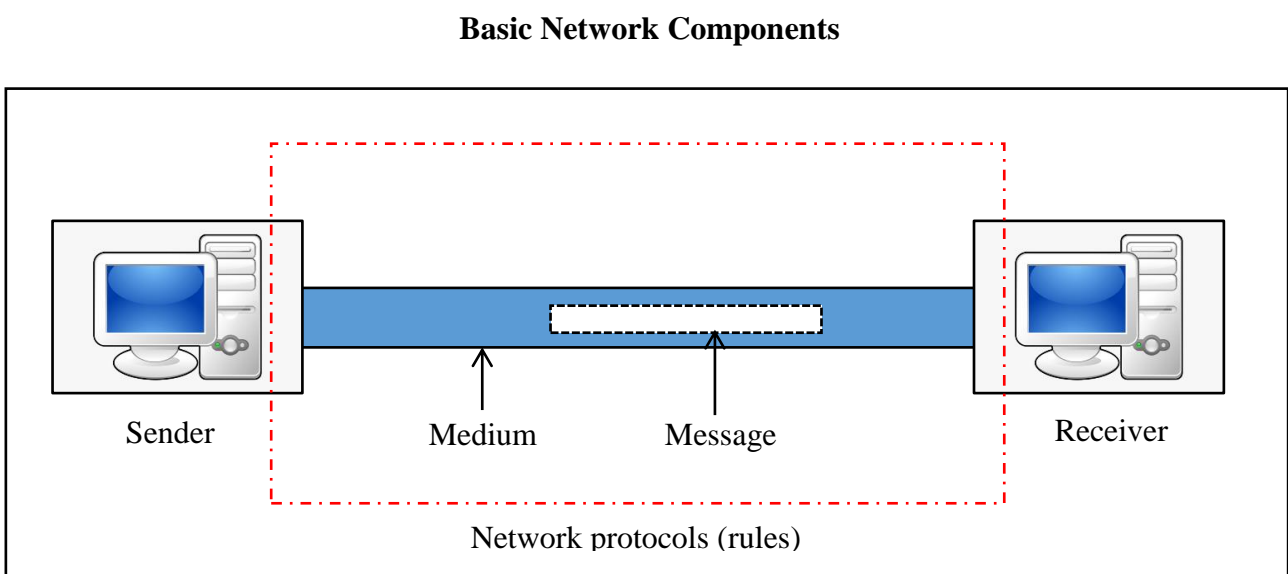
The basic communication model above illustrates how messages are exchanged and interpreted by the receiver. Encoding is a process of expressing the message into an understandable form so that it can be decoded, understood, and interpreted by the receiver. The *noise* in figure 1 represents some other form of interruption that hinders the transmission of the message.

<sup>48</sup> Gascoigne, B, *History of Communication*. History World. Retrieved 25 May, 2022 from <http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=aa93>

## A. What is a network?

The significant technological advances of the 19<sup>th</sup> century brought profound changes in telecommunications. One of these changes is the emergence of the so called *computer networks*. A computer network or simply, a ‘network’, is a connection or set of connections made between two or more computers or hosts<sup>49</sup>, for the purpose of communication and transmission of information.<sup>50</sup>

In today’s world of network communication, no matter how complex networks have become, they basically consist of five vital components: the *sender*, the *message*, the *medium*, the *receiver*, and the *protocols* that controls communication and transmission of information. Figure 1 below shows the relationship between these network components.



**Figure 2:** Basic Network Components

<sup>49</sup> The term host (or node) is used to represent an end user or an end device such as a Personal Computer (PC), desktop or a laptop, connected to a network.

<sup>50</sup> Barrie Sosinky, *Networking Bible* (Indianapolis: Wiley Publishing, Inc, 2009), 3.



The ‘sender’ is the originator or the initiator of the message. In computing terms, the *message* is the information<sup>51</sup> that is sent by the sender through a networking medium, to the receiver. The medium is the physical transmission carrier that carries the message between two end-nodes.<sup>52</sup> Most importantly, the embodiment of these components is governed by a set of rules or standards known as *network protocols*. A network protocol, in turn, is a set of rules or agreements for interaction between two or more hosts and is expressed by three components, *syntax* (e.g., a set of headers, a set of commands/responses), *semantic* (the actions and reactions that take place, including the exchange of message), and *timing*, (the sequencing and concurrency aspects of the protocol).<sup>53</sup> These protocol aspects will be discussed thoroughly later in this chapter.

## **B. Why a networking model?**

Information is the life blood of any organisation regardless of size and function. From academic institutions to government organisations, and private businesses, information is essential for effective operation and decision making at all levels. In computing terms, information is made up data. Data is comprised of characters, numbers, words, images, and special characters. When these pieces of data are organized in a meaningful structure, it is called ‘information’<sup>54</sup>. Hence information in a sense, has meaning, and in turn has consequence and effect on the operation of a

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<sup>51</sup> Information is a collection of data that is organized to have meaning. This means that ‘data’ are the building blocks for information. In computing terms, data include individual characters such as letters, symbols, special characters, numbers, and images.

<sup>52</sup> There are two types of networking medium – they are (1) wired, and (ii) wireless. In a wired network, the end devices and hosts need to be physically connected to the network using a networking cable.<sup>52</sup> Whereas, in a wireless network communication, the two hosts do not need to be physically connected to the network, they use a wireless media or a wireless access point for connection that utilises the atmosphere (air) for communication and data transmission.

<sup>53</sup> Paul Jr. E. Green, ed., "*The Structure of Computer Networks*" in *Computer Network Architectures and Protocols. Applications of Communications Theory* (New York and London: Plenum Press, 1989), 1.

<sup>54</sup> In this study, I will be using the terms ‘data’, ‘information’, and ‘message’ interchangeably to mean the same thing, although they are different in some aspects.

business or an organization. Consequently, it is imperative for any organization or business to store, manage, and to disseminate such information properly and securely.

### **C. The Need for a Common Protocol for Various Network Platforms**

When the earliest computer networks were first developed in the 1970's, they were run and managed privately by various network companies and enterprises. This resulted in the development of proprietary software and products that were not only exclusive, but also incompatible with other network devices. Simply, they were software products speaking their own languages, and using their own set of rules. There were no standard protocols across the manufacturers and developers. And given the growing complexity of computer networks during the 1970's, network researchers proposed various models to facilitate the description of network protocols and services. Of these, the **Open System Interconnection (OSI)** model<sup>55</sup> was the first one to be coined.

## ***2.2 The Open Systems Interconnection (OSI) model***

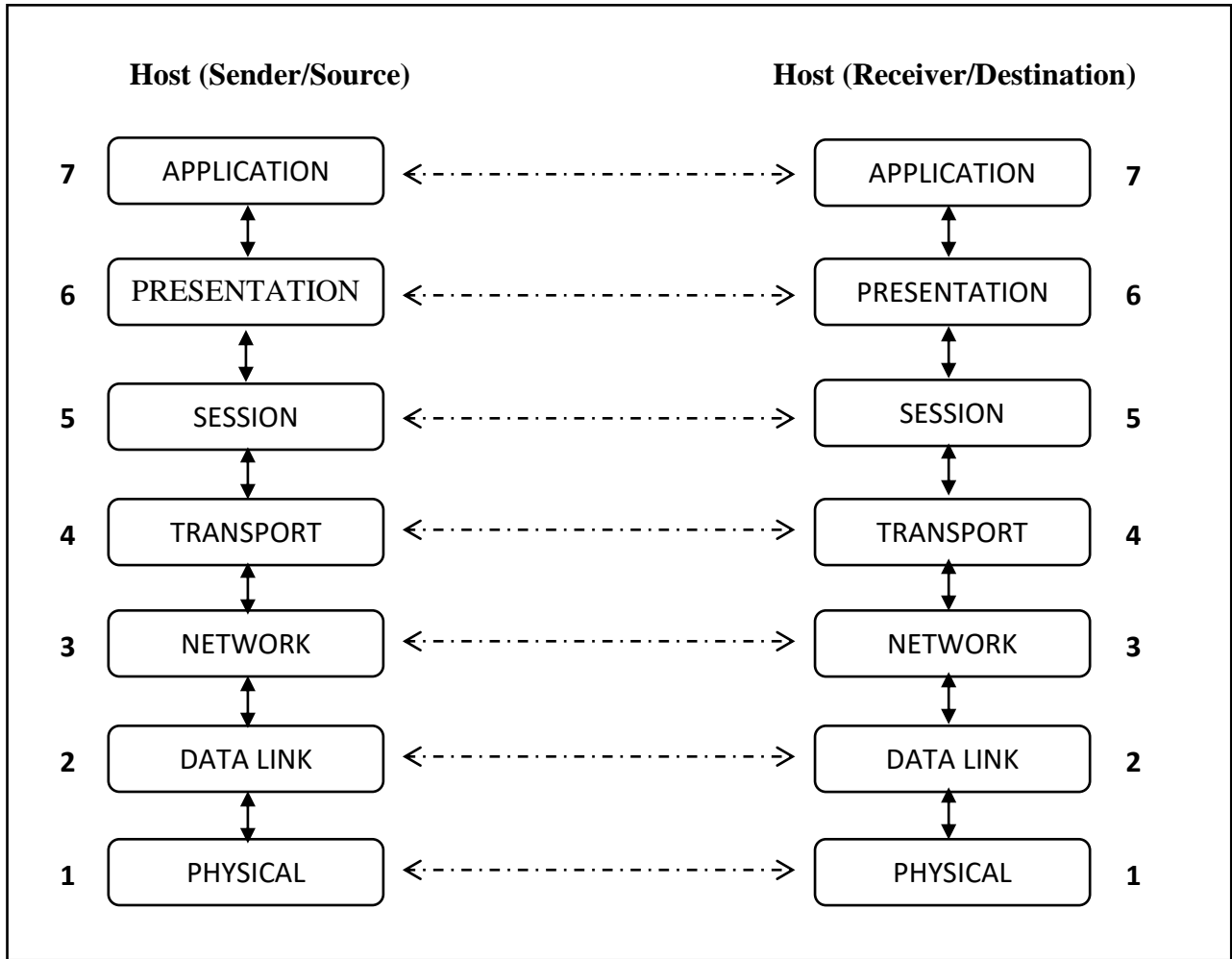
The OSI model was published in 1984 by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and known more succinctly as "ISO/OSI." It is a reference model that is used to describe the functions of a networking system. In other words, it acts as a conceptual framework that describes how data is transferred between two hosts or computer systems. The term "open" was chosen to emphasize the fact that by conforming to those international standards, a system will be capable of interacting with all other systems obeying the same standards throughout the world. It characterizes computing functions into a universal set of rules and requirements in order to support

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<sup>55</sup> Herbert Zimmermann, "OSI Reference Model - the ISO Model of Architecture for Open Systems Interconnection," IEEE Transactions on Communications 28, no. 4 (1980): 425-32.

interoperability between different products and software.<sup>56</sup> In the OSI reference model, the communication and data transmission between two or more computing system is divided into seven different abstraction layers:

### The OSI Seven-Layer Model



**Figure 3:** A Conceptual View of the OSI Model

In the conceptual view of the OSI model, the two hosts represent the sender and the receiver. Communication and transmission happen in both ways<sup>57</sup>. When information (message) is sent from

<sup>56</sup> Olivier Bonaventure, *Computer Networking: Principles, Protocols, and Practice*, (<http://www.saylor.org/courses/cs402/>: The Saylor Foundation, 2011), 20.

<sup>57</sup> There are network terms used for various types of communication in terms of direction and behaviour. For example: (i) *Simplex* is one way only (e.g., TV broadcast), (ii) *Duplex* is two ways but only allow one to

one host to another, it passes through each layer. In response, each layer performs a specific task in transmitting the message. Within each layer, one or more entities implement its functionality and each entity interacted directly only with the layer immediately beneath it and provided facilities for use by the layer above it.

All communication between two systems requires that the data being transferred travel down through the sending system's network stack, across the Physical layer, and then up through the receiving system's network stack. Communication begins at the Application layer on the sending system with a command or perhaps some other kind of event. Data travels over the link at the Physical layer using the specific connection that leads back up in the intended system's network stack. The data then ascends the different layers of the target system's network stack to arrive at the receiver's Application layer where the data is extracted and used in some way.

In order for the data to be sent to the correct system or systems, additional information must be added to the data that describes the content and how to use it. This type of information is commonly referred to as meta-data<sup>58</sup>, which is literally "data about data." This additional information is usually added to the raw data by means of a 'header'. The header is not part of the data, but it contains important information that influence the transmission and interpretation of the data by neighbouring layers and the peer layers when the data arrives to its destination. The process by which metadata is added is referred to as *encapsulation*; when the metadata is removed, the process is referred to as *de-encapsulation*.

In the encapsulation process, data is wrapped together with the meta-data, generating a single data unit. This data unit is known in computer networks as a Protocol Data Unit (PDU)<sup>59</sup>. The

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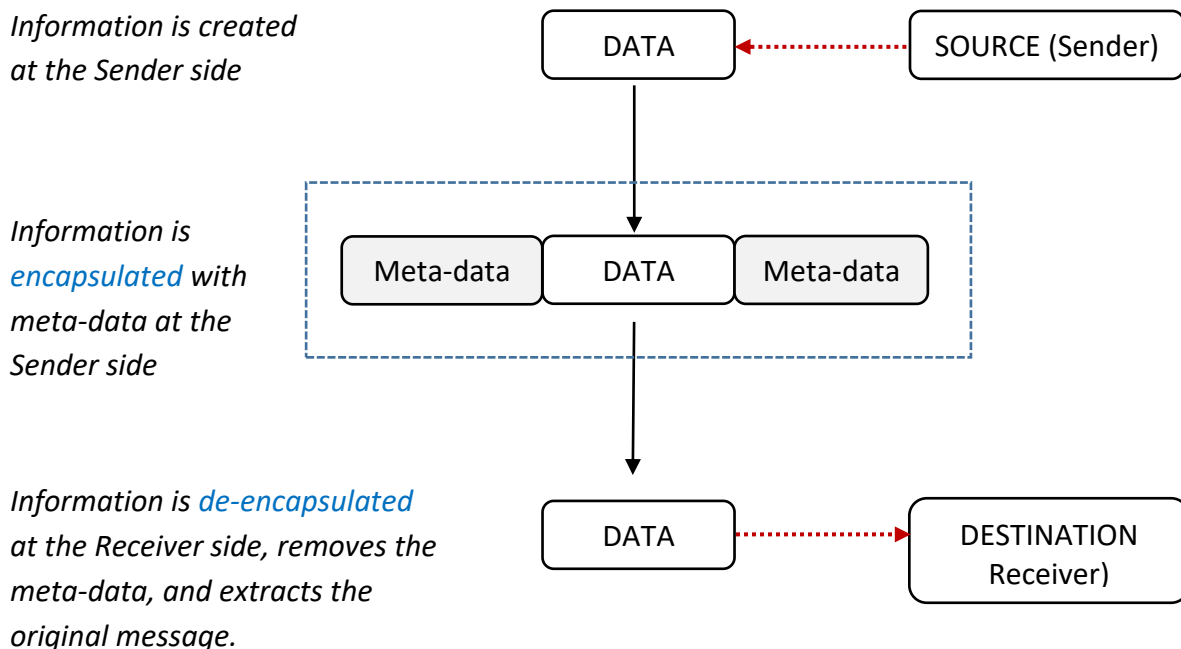
transmit at a time (e.g., Radio transmission), (iii) *Full-duplex* allows both parties to simultaneously transmit at any given time (e.g., telephone, networks).

<sup>58</sup> Metadata means "data about data". For example, the addressing information that is added in Layer 3 and Layer 2, helps the network to determine and to identify both the sending node (sender) and the receiving node (receiver).

<sup>59</sup> A Protocol Data Unit is information delivered as a single unit among peer entities of networks containing control information, address information and data.

PDU is a single unit of information that has been encapsulated with metadata in each layer, so that it can be easily interpreted when received by the layer above and/or by the layer below, as well as by the corresponding peer layer on the destination side.

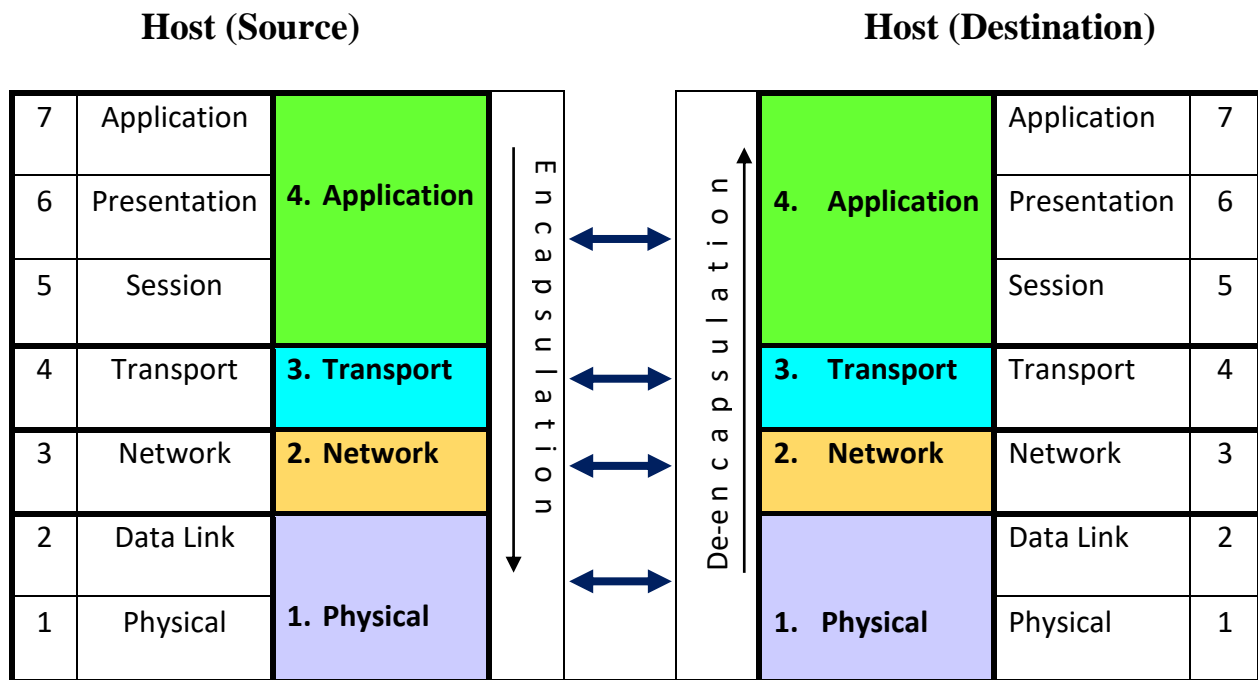
### Encapsulation and De-encapsulation



In the illustration above, data (information/message) that is passed down from the Application Layer to the Physical Layer of the source node (sender) needs to be encapsulated with meta-data. The header and the trailer are the meta-data. These meta-data are added as the message goes through each layer of the model, enables the message to be properly guided to its destination. When the message is reached at the destination node (receiver), the receiver reads and then strips off the header and the trailer, and choose the proper protocols to extract and read the original information at the application layer based on the information given in the meta-data.

For this study, the above seven-layered model will be adapted into a *four-layered model*. This adaptation will allow some of the layers to be combined based on their collective functions.

## 2.3 The Four-layered Model



**Figure 4:** The Four-Layered Model

Using a four-layered model does not mean that the functions of the other layers are omitted or ignored. Layers with related functions are combined, and their collective functionality has a collective purpose. In the sections that follow, each layer of the four-layered model will be explained, with a focus on their functions, the types of syntax and semantics or the protocols that take place, and the Protocol Data Unit (PDU) they generated.

### 2.3.1 APPLICATION LAYER

In the four-layered model, the Application Layer<sup>60</sup> mainly deals with the raw data. It makes sure that the data is properly formatted and structured according to some standard protocols or syntax before passing it on to the layers below. For example, a Word document is a collection of

<sup>60</sup> The Application, Presentation, and Session layers from the seven-layered model have been grouped into a single layer called the Application. Their collective function is focused on the data, from when data is constructed and organized into meaningful information, to the formatting and preparation of such information so that it can be passed down to lower layers for transmission.

organised data stored in a compact unit called a document file. Files are categorised by the nature of their content, which can be identified by their file extension.<sup>61</sup>

In order for a file to be readable by the receiving host (destination), the destination host must have the same type of software applications (or similar) and interpreters. These are examples of some of the most commonly used application software along with the associated file extensions that signify their data types and formats.

As already mentioned above, the Application Layer is responsible for the format of the data. It is concerned with the syntax and semantics of the information transmitted. That is, for outgoing messages, it converts data into a generic format for the transmission. For the incoming messages, it converts data from the generic form to a format understandable to the receiving application. Formatting of this data at the Application Layer needs important pieces of information. When formatting this data, the following questions need to be considered:

- (i). What type of data are we sending?
- (ii). What encoding method<sup>62</sup> needs to be used?
- (iii). Does the data need to be compressed<sup>63</sup>?
- (iv). Does the data needs to be encrypted<sup>64</sup>?

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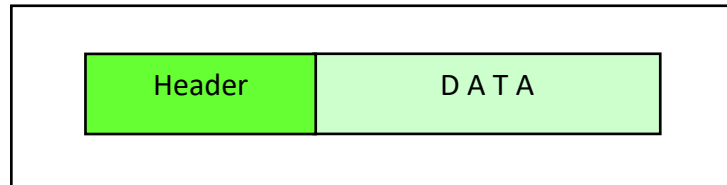
<sup>61</sup> A file extension in a Windows Operating System environment is used to identify the format or the type of file (Examples: Word Document files (.doc), Excel Spreadsheet (.xls), Images (.jpg, jpeg, gif), video clips (.mov, avi, mp4)).

<sup>62</sup> There are many types of data representation use in the presentation of data. One common example is the American Standard Coding for Information Interchange (ASCII). In this encoding method, each letter, numbers, and special characters has a corresponding binary code. These ASCII codes will be decoded back into their original representation, using the same encoding method. Another commonly used encoding method is the UniCode, which is used to represent characters of other languages such as Hebrew, Greek, Chinese, etc.

<sup>63</sup> ‘Compressing’ data is used to reduce the amount of space needed to store such data. Compressing data not only saves space, but also optimize time for the data to be transmitted.

<sup>64</sup> ‘Encryption’ is a type of security added on the data. For example, if the data is sensitive information, the user might want to add a password or a secret combination of characters in order to access the data.

The answer(s) to the above questions are the type of information that needed to be encapsulated with the data. This encapsulated data is inserted inside the header of the Application Layer PDU.



**Figure 5:** The Application Layer Protocol Data Unit (Data)

In Figure 5, the Data has been encapsulated with the Application Layer Header. The Application Layer Header contains important information such as *data format*, *encoding method*, along with optional information if needed such as *compression method* and *encryption*.

### **2.3.1.1 Syntax and Semantics**

As previously mentioned, the syntax refers to specific rules and network standards employed in each layer. For the Application Layer, there are open rules and standards for the data representation and formats along with optional formats as previously mentioned. For example, one open standard for data formats is the American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII). Each characters, numbers, and special characters has a unique ASCII code. Each ASCII code is common among different systems, hence they can be easily interpreted and translated back into their original equivalent formats.

### **2.3.2 TRANSPORT LAYER**

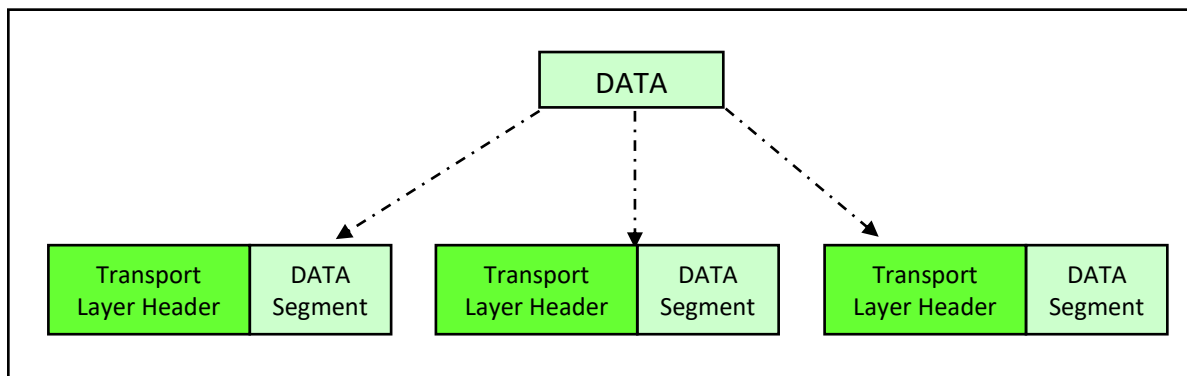
When the Application Layer PDU is passed down to the Transport Layer, the Transport Layer breaks down the data into smaller units called *Data Segments*, and then pass these data segments to the network layer. The division of the Data into data segments is a manageable scheme



that enables large data to be easily sent across the network. Segmentation enables multiple communications, from many different users, to be simultaneously interleaved (multiplexed) on the same network. The Transport layer also ensures that the data segments delivered are the same as the data segments transmitted without modification, loss or duplication. An important piece of information that needs to be encapsulated in each data segment is the network application port number<sup>65</sup> and the sequence number. The port number is a logical number that is specific for each network application. The sequence number identifies the segment. The sequence number is used on the receiver side to make sure that all data segments sent are successfully arrived. If a data segment is missing, the destination executes a request to the source for retransmission.

Each data segment has a header that contains specific information such as the port number, and a unique number that identified the segment (sequence number). The Transport Layer uses this unique segment number when data segments are reassembled at the destination, to their original order.

### The Transport Layer Protocol Data Unit



**Figure 6:** The Transport Layer Protocol Data Unit (Data Segment)

<sup>65</sup> The Transport Layer uses port numbers to differentiate between applications. For example, when a user requires a specific web page on the Internet, the web browser on the user’s computer uses the application port number, 80. Port 80 is a unique logical port that allows for processing and reading information on the World Wide Web.

### 2.3.3 NETWORK LAYER

The main function of the Network Layer is to identify the best route through the network to send information from the source to the destination. It is important to understand that there may be hundreds of network links and network devices that the sending information will have to go through before it reaches its destination. When a network grows and is connected to other networks, the task of finding the best path or the route to a specific host becomes tedious. This is why *addressing*<sup>66</sup> is so important in routing information throughout the network. Addressing is the method used by networks to identify a specific host. There are two types of addressing techniques used in networks: (i) Logical Addressing (**Internet Protocol address**)<sup>67</sup>, and (ii) Physical Addressing. The Network Layer deals with logical addresses while the Physical Layer deals with Physical addresses.

When a Data segment from the Transport Layer is passed down to the Network Layer, the Network Layer adds its own header. The Network Layer Header contains the addressing information. The addressing information also contains the IP addresses of both the source and the destination host. The IP Address is logical in the sense that it cannot be shared by any two devices, and that this address can be subject to change<sup>68</sup>. The encapsulation of the data segment and the addressing information forms a *packet*, the Protocol Data Unit for the Network Layer.

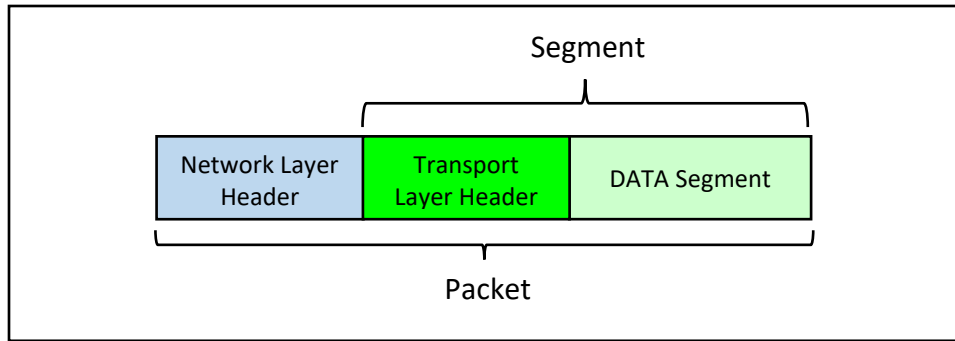
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<sup>66</sup> Using the analogy of a Post Office, the term addressing is used to identify the person who receives letter. A postal address is usually written on the envelope, indicating the postal address (which normally includes a Street number, City, and the city postal code) of the receiver of the letter. The message in this case, is the actual content of the letter, which is encapsulated inside the letter.

<sup>67</sup> A logical address is commonly known in networking as an **Internet Protocol Address (IP Address)**. An IP Address is unique, and it is used to uniquely identify a particular host or a network device on a specific network. The IP Address addresses two important things. The first part identifies what network that the source or the destination host resides on, and the second part identifies the source or the destination host itself. In some cases, the network in which the destination host reside may be sub-divided into what we call, subnets, hence the IP Address may also have a section to specify the subnet. Sub-netting occurs in large networks and it is an optimal method of managing smaller networks within a large network. Sometimes it is easier for an academic institution to have subnets for each of its various faculties and departments. For example, in the Malua Theological College network, it is possible to have subnets for various departments; such as the Old Testament, New Testament, Church History, Theology, Practical Theology, Biblical Studies, etc.

<sup>68</sup> What this mean is, let's say an employee changes her post and she needs to move from her previous department to her new post in another department, and she is still using the same computer. In this case, if her previous department

## Network Packet



**Figure 7:** The Network Layer Protocol Data Unit (Packet)

In Figure 7, a data segment from the Transport Layer has been encapsulated into an IP packet in the Network Layer. The Network Layer header contains two important information: the addressing information, and routing information.

### 2.3.4 PHYSICAL LAYER

The Physical layer mainly deals with the network hardware<sup>69</sup>. It controls how data is placed and received from the media<sup>70</sup>. The Physical Layer does this by implementing two main functions. The first one is to encapsulate the packets from the Network Layer into frames. The packet from the Network Layer has the logical Addressing information attached to it. But in the Physical Layer, the physical address information is added, giving it a more unique way to identify both the source and the destination host. The physical address (also known as the Media Access Control (**MAC**))<sup>71</sup>

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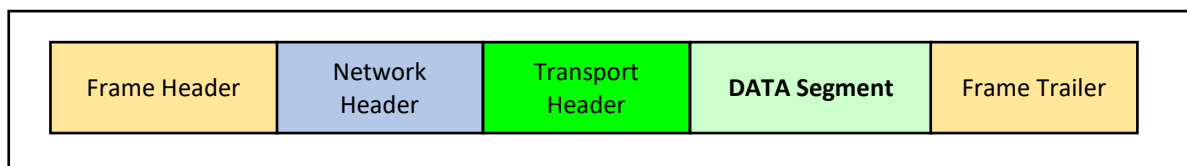
uses a different subnet that is different from her new department, then her IP Address should be changed as well. Although her IP Address changes, the Physical Address of her computer still remains, because it is physically etched and burned onto the network interface card of her old computer.

<sup>69</sup> The network hardware includes the tangible part of the network. This include electricity, cabling, connectors, network interface cards (NICs), hubs and switches, and other network hardware devices.

<sup>70</sup> The media (or sometimes known as medium) is the physical or the wireless links that connects a computer to a network. Example of networking media include copper cable, fibre optic cable, and wireless media.

<sup>71</sup> The Media Access Control Address, also simply known as the MAC address, consists of 48 bits, usually represented as a string of 12 hexadecimal digits (0 – 9, a to f, or A to F); these are often grouped into pairs separately by colons or dashes. For example, the MAC Address 3C415D37596A may be given as **3C-41-5D-37-59-6A** or **3c:41:5d:37:59:6a**.

address), is an essentially unique number associated with a network interface card<sup>72</sup> of a computer or a network device. This permanent address has been burned into or imprinted in the network interface of a computer, and it serves as a convenient way to distinguish between two different computers. Another important information that is added in the frame is the frame trailer. The frame trailer signals the end of the frame. It is important to signal the end of the frame so that streams of bits will not be mixed up when the data arrives at the destination.



**Figure 8:** The Physical Layer PDU (Frame)

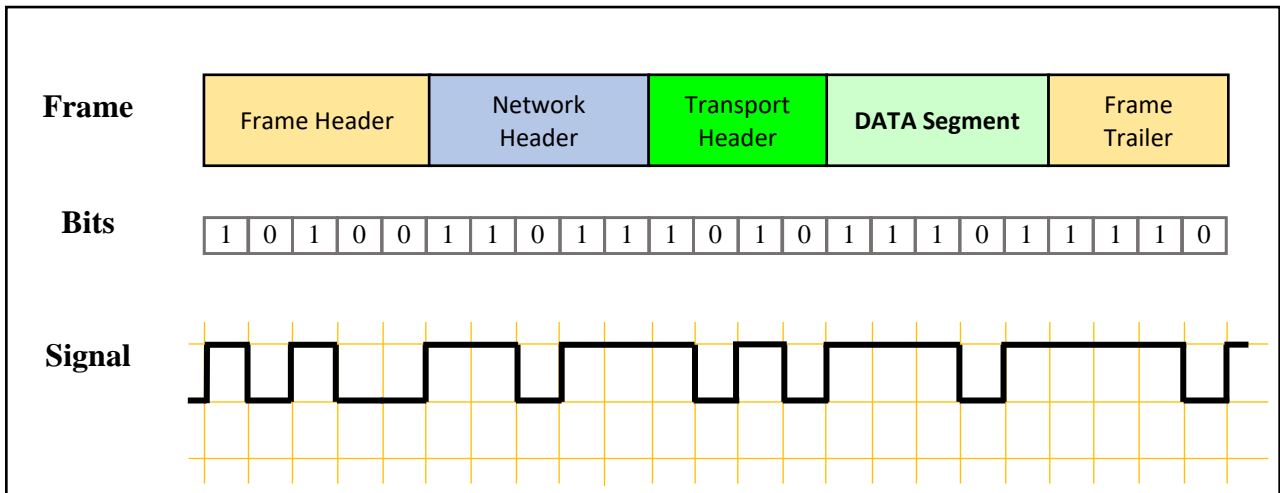
The second function of the Physical Layer is to convert the frames into *bits*<sup>73</sup>, and in turn, translate the bits into *electronic or digital signals*<sup>74</sup> so that data can be travelled on physical or wireless media. This process is known as *encoding*. Encoding is a method of converting a stream of data into predefined code. Codes are groupings of bits used to provide a predictable *pattern* that can be recognized by both the sender and the receiver. Figure 9 below summarised how frames are being translated into bits, and how bits are translated into electronic signals.

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<sup>72</sup> The network card (or the Network Interface Card (NIC)) is the physical device built in a computer that allows it to connect to a network through a networking media.

<sup>73</sup> A *Bit* is the most basic unit of information in computing and digital communication. The name is a portmanteau of binary digit, and it represents a logical state with one of two possible values which is either zero (0), or one (1). Computers stores information using bits, and can only converse using bits, hence the term binary, is known as the Machine Language. These bits need to be converted into electronic signals so that they can be transmitted on the networking media.

<sup>74</sup> Computers make use of electric current to encode and decode information. A message encoded this way is called an electronic signal, and the use of electric current for this purpose is called electronics. The two most commonly types of electronic signals are (i) analog, and (ii) digital. Analog signals consists of continuous changing voltage in an electric circuit. Digital signals on the other hand consists of rapid pulses of voltage that repeatedly switch the current off and on. This type of signal encodes information as a string of 0's (current off) and 1's (current on). This is called a binary ("two-digit"). The majority of modern electronic devices, including computers and mobile phones, encode data as digital signals.



**Figure 9:** Frames into bits, and bits into signals

### 2.3.4 Putting it all together

Overall, we have looked at how *data* makes its journey from the sender to the receiver through the various layers of the OSI Model. The ultimate goal of the network is to get the message from point A to point B regardless of the complexity of networks and their components that exist between the two points. As data travels from point A to point B, it transforms into other a form that is understood and interpreted by the next layer. The model makes this possible through encapsulation and de-encapsulation of meta-data, which are formatted and specified by common syntax and open standards.

## 2.3 Summary

Throughout this chapter, we have seen how and why computer networks play a significant part in communication and dissemination of information in all spheres of our society. They contribute to the development, advancement, and the growth of any organization in our modern world. Early development in networks were seemed to be limited and proprietary focused, making it hard for different network platforms to communicate with each other. Certainly, there was a

necessity, and it was inevitable for these limited network platforms to be compatible with each other, in order to cross the boundaries of communication and the propagation of information.

The Open System Interconnection model offers solutions to this problem. Not only has it provided open-standard to solve the problem of incompatibility, it has set the rules, syntax, and methods that supported and reinforced these open-standards. In fact, the very word ‘Open’ within the name, articulates the universal fitting of the model, enabling its diversity, operability, scalability, and compatibility.

At the same time, it provides methods to support security and integrity of communication and information distribution within the scope of a network. First of all, the model provides a way for identification. Addressing facilitates this identification not only within the locality of the source and destination, but also within a wide area network, and within the global network (Internet). Secondly, the information that needs to be transmitted has to be formatted and converted in the form that allows it to transcend through various layers of the communication process. The OSI model facilitates this through the process of encapsulation and translations. Encapsulation happens in all layers of the model. Each layer provides its own set of protocols and syntax, which governs the process of encapsulation, signalling, and translation, enabling messages to be successively transmitted.

While the OSI model facilitates communication and data transmission in networks, it offers us a diversity of opportunities for further development, in terms of optimisation, continuation, and an open space for ideas, leading us to the expansion of our own intellects, and our own personal networks.

## Chapter 3

### Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of the Text

This Chapter deals with the sociorhetorical interpretation of the text, Matt 28:16-20 which is exploring discipleship as a network and social and cultural system. How the OSI Model functions in that interpretation will be explained in Chapter Four. The sociorhetorical interpretation of the text will be divided into four sections. Section one is the innertextual interpretation of the text which focuses on exploring the ways the text uses words such as “word patterns, voices, structures, devices, and modes in the text.”<sup>75</sup> For this study, exploring the innertexture is revealing that Charles H. Lohr’s chiastic structure<sup>76</sup> of the Matthean Gospel shows a narrational and progressive texture that displays a discipleship network or an open system of an interconnection discipleship model. It will show that the Matthean text manifestly shows the discipleship system as an open system interconnection model. This model begins from Jesus calling of the first four disciples as fishermen.

This interpretation will present an exegesis of Matthew 28:16-20 using the proposed critical/analytical method of Socio-Rhetorical Criticism with a focus on the textual and linguistic elements of the text. A structure of Matthew is given first as a guide in implementing the exegesis. The second part will provide an interpretation of the text, integrating any findings and significances with my reading approach. The findings and interpretation of the text will be further clarified and applied, in the concluding chapter of the study (Chapter 4).

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<sup>75</sup> Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 7.

<sup>76</sup> Charles H. Lohr, “Oral Techniques in the Gospel of Matthew,” *CBQ* 23 (1961): 427. See Vaitusi Nofoaiga, “The Gracious Torah of Christ in the Gospel of Matthew: Christ in the Parable of the Sower as an Example (13:1–23).” *Samoa Journal of Theology* 1, no. 1 (2022): 53.

### 3.1 *The Chiastic Structure of Matthew*

There are various and different structures of the Gospel of Matthew by which to make sense of its emphases. I have in this study chosen Charles Lohr's structure because it signifies chapter 28 as part of the death and rebirth section of Matthew that contains the closing signs of Matthew. The section is also in relation to the birth and beginnings of Jesus' ministry part in Matthew. In implementing this thesis, I would like to use the chiastic structure of Matthew by Lohr.<sup>77</sup>

<i>A 1-4 Birth and beginnings</i>	<i>Narrative</i>
<i>B 5-7 Blessings, entering the kingdom</i>	<i>Discourse</i>
<i>C 8-9 Authority and invitation</i>	<i>Narrative</i>
<i>D 10 Mission Discourse</i>	<i>Discourse</i>
<i>E 11-12 Rejection by this generation</i>	<i>Narrative</i>
<i>F 13 Parables of the kingdom</i>	<i>Discourse</i>
<i>E' 14-17 Acknowledgement by disciples</i>	<i>Narrative</i>
<i>D' 18 Community discourse</i>	<i>Discourse</i>
<i>C' 19-22 Authority and invitation</i>	<i>Narrative</i>
<i>B' 23-25 Woes, coming of the kingdom</i>	<i>Discourse</i>
<i>A' 26-28 Death and rebirth "</i>	<i>Narrative</i>

This structure is used as part of an attempt to identify the oral techniques Matthew used in the actual composition of his Gospel. In the above chiastic structure, A and A' form the *inclusio* of the Gospel. Matthew 28:16-20 falls in the last narrative (Death and Rebirth) of the Gospel. In this section, I will analyse Matthew 28:16-20 as a rhetorical and narrative unit<sup>78</sup>, to explore how Jesus' farewell narrative to his disciples as encoded in the text, can be read through the lenses of the OSI networking mode.

<sup>77</sup> Charles H. Lohr, "Oral Techniques in the Gospel of Matthew," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 23 (1961), 427.

<sup>78</sup> A rhetorical unit has a "beginning, a middle, and an ending". George Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 33-34.



### 3.2 Socio-rhetorical Analysis of Matthew 28:16-20

There are five stages of the socio-rhetorical approach. I will draw upon four stages in this study: inner-textual, intertextual, social and culture texture, and ideological texture.

#### 3.2.1 Inner-Texture

The inner-texture stage will show how the language of the Matthean Gospel in his last narrative (Matthew 28:16-20) communicates that Jesus' final words reveal His ultimate purpose for his disciples to continue his mission on Earth. In this part of the analysis, I will focus on these types of texture: *repetitive*, *progressive*, and *opening-middle-closing*.

##### (a) Repetitive texture:

Repetitive texture refers to the occurrences of words and phrases more than once in a unit<sup>79</sup>. The repetition of a word may exhibit a theme or motif that the implied author is willing to convey. In the case of Matthew 28:16-20, two words have been repeated more than once: *all*, and *go*.

“all”		
v.18	Ἐδόθη μοι <b>πάσα</b> ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς.	All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me...
v.19	μαθητεύσατε <b>πάντα</b> τὰ ἔθνη	Make disciples of all the nations...
v.20	διδάσκοντες αὐτοὺς τηρεῖν <b>πάντα</b> ὅσα ἐνετειλάμην ὑμῖν	Teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you...
v.20	ἐγὼ μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι <b>πάσας</b> τὰς ἡμέρας ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος	I am with you always, to the end of the age.

<sup>79</sup> Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 8.

“go”		
v.18	οι δε ένδεκα μαθηταί <b>επορεύθησαν</b> εις την Γαλιλαίαν	But the eleven disciples <i>went</i> into Galilee, ...
v.19	<b>Πορευθέντες</b> ουν μαθητεύσατε Πάντα τα έθνη	<i>Going</i> therefore disciple all the nations...

i. πᾶς (all)

The repetition of the word *pas* (“all”) signifies the inclusiveness of Jesus’ words (command) and his character.

*Pasa exousia* (“all authority”) captures the universal authority of Jesus both in heaven and on earth. This declaration acts as an endorsement, and an affirmation, that empowers and motivates the disciples to go and fulfil the mission of Jesus, which is about to be declared.

*Banta ta ethen* (“all the nations”) implies the universality of the gospel in Matthew’s Christology. It points to the unrestricted nature of God’s salvation to include all ethnic, regardless of their races, colour, sex, religion and culture. In some communities of Jewish antiquity, the ethnic boundary that detached Jews from Gentiles was predominantly dense. However, the Gospel of Matthew reveals that it breathes a different, more ethnically inclusive spirit. Matthew’s first and most obvious instance of ethnic inclusiveness appears in the genealogy at the beginning of his Gospel (Matt. 1:3). Rather than begin his genealogy with Adam, as Luke does, Matthew begins with Abraham. In and of itself this ideological move could be an expression of either ethnic exclusiveness (because Abraham was the forefather of the Jews) or of ethnic inclusiveness (because Abraham was to be a blessing to “all the nations”), but in this instance the second option appears to be the more sensible interpretation.

The statement “*Everything that I have commanded you*” emphasized the importance of Jesus’ teachings. During his ministry, Jesus was teaching his disciples by using parables, preaching, and healing. In his Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:1-8), Jesus taught his disciples about

basic principles of ethical and moral behaviour. These are the standards and principles of Jesus, that that he is urging his disciples to teach and share with others.

Lastly, the statement “*I am with you always...*” is the ultimate promise of Jesus. It implies his invisible presence, and echoes the name Emmanuel (“*God is with us*”) given to him in the infancy narrative (Matt. 1:23). This designation is also supported elsewhere with Jesus’ assurance that when one or three are gathered in his name, there he is “in their midst” (Matt. 18:20).

ii. πορεύομαι (go)

The repetition of the word *poreuomai* (“go”) signifies how Jesus wanted his disciples to execute the mission. They need to “go”, which means they must leave their families and their possessions behind, and proceed to fulfil his mission. In verse 19, the participle verb **Πορευθέντες** is in aorist passive nominative masculine plural form. Which means it would natural be rendered either “having gone” or “as ye go”.

*(b) Progressive texture:*

**<sup>16</sup> Now** the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had **directed** them. (NRSV)

The conjunction *δε* (*de*) which means “now” or “then” is an indication that this is a progressive text. It indicates the time, and the time is now. It also inaugurates an opening sign of the rhetoric/narrative unit. The word *ετάξατο* (*etasato*) is an indicative aorist middle 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular from the verb *tasso* (meaning “to appoint” or “to arrange”), indicates that the meeting has been prearranged. This indicates that Jesus’ instruction to his disciples to proceed to Galilee, hints that something is going to happen.

Furthermore, Jesus’ commission which is divided into three sections, is itself, progressive in nature. It is progressive in the manner of how Jesus presented his commands. First, he declares his universal authority. Secondly, he utters his great commissioning. In this sense, Jesus’ declaration

of his universal authority is an endorsement upon the disciples to go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, etc. In other words, the first part of the commission is a ‘catalyst’ to the next part of the commission. The last part of the commission is Jesus’ promise to his disciples of his everlasting eternal presence among them. This I believe, is the utmost utterance of Jesus that sums up his commission – it is a statement of assurance, giving hope and inspires faith, in the hearts of the disciples.

***(c) Opening-middle-closing texture***

Opening-middle-closing texture resides in the nature of the beginning, body, and conclusion of a unit, section or discourse<sup>80</sup>. In most cases, repetitive text, progression, and narrational text may work together to create the opening, middle, and closing of a unit of text. In the following analysis, I have divided the rhetorical unit<sup>81</sup> (28:16-20) using the following structure:

- (i) Opening (vv.16): The Setting & Characters
- (ii) Middle (vv.17–18): Affirmation of Jesus’ universal authority
- (iii) Closing (vv.19-20): The mission, and Jesus’ Abiding Presence

***(i) Opening (28:16) – The Setting & Characters***

<p><sup>16</sup> Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. (NRSV)</p>
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The opening, as a narrative unit sets the setting and characters of the scene. The narrator establishes Jesus as the main character, with his disciples as the minor characters. The setting is some mountain in Galilee. The conjunction *de*, (as previously mentioned), indicates the

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<sup>80</sup> Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 19.

<sup>81</sup> The rhetorical unit is attributed to Jesus. The narrator, in the beginning of the unit, establishes Jesus as the main character who will utter his last words to his disciples, who are the minor characters.

progression of the meeting and time. It also inaugurates an opening sign of the rhetoric/narrative unit.

There is no mention of any specific mountain, but mountains have played no small part in Matthew's stage setting. The fact that Jesus instructed his disciples to meet him on the mountain implies that this gathering was to be an important occasion. For Matthew, "the mountain" is the place where Jesus proclaimed the gospel of the Kingdom of God and where he and his disciples experienced the presence of God. On a mountain, Jesus preached the great sermon recorded in (Matt. 5-7). On a mountain, Jesus healed and cured the lame, the maimed, the blind, the mute, and many others (Matt. 15:29-31). On a high mountain, the Transfiguration took place in the Presence of three disciples (Matt. 17:1-8). On a mountain, Jesus gave his disciples his prophetic unveiling of the future (Matt. 24-25). Now the disciples have been called to meet him on a mountain, would eagerly suggest to his disciples that it would be a time of revelation. The expectation, was consistent with the fact that "a mountain" is, in the Old Testament, one of the privileged places of divine revelation<sup>82</sup>.

Furthermore, the selection of a mountain in Galilee is significant. "Galilee of the Gentiles (Matt. 4:15) as the place of meeting, where the risen and glorified Jesus would commission his disciples, "involved a symbolic declaration of the shifting of the seat of God's program from Mount Zion and earthly Jerusalem, to the church as his chosen agent in bringing the message of redemption to all nations during this present age".

(ii) *Middle (28:17-18) – Jesus Universal Authority*

<sup>17</sup> When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.

<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. (NRSV)

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<sup>82</sup> Exod. 19:3; 1 Kings 19:8.

The commissioning proper begins with an astounding claim to authority. The word ἐξουσία (*authority*) means “power” or “right”<sup>83</sup>. This statement is not only a Christological/cosmological declaration<sup>84</sup>; it is also a statement of fulfilled prophecy<sup>85</sup>. Matthew also mentioned the authority of Jesus a number of times.<sup>86</sup>

Jesus’ bold statement regarding his authority in verse 18 is the objective basis for the mission. It acts as motivation that will drive his disciples for the task that is about to be declared. As Barth states: “The disciples’ carrying out of the charge will not at all be determined by the excellency and strength of their own will and work; nor will it be threatened by their insufficiencies.”<sup>87</sup>

Behind the command of verse 19 stands the commander himself, Jesus, as described in verse 18. He assures the execution of the command over against both the disciples’ weakness and any interference by a third party.” Matthew provides two qualifying prepositional phrases concerning where that authority exists. First of all, there is a divine passive at work in this verse. By placing the word ἐδόθη (*Edothe*) at the beginning of the clause, Matthew emphasizes the action of “giving”. All authority has been given to Jesus. Secondly, Matthew wants the reader to understand that Christ’s authority no longer has limitations. Whereas He formerly only had authority as far as God was enabling Him, Christ now has “all” authority in heaven and on the earth.

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<sup>83</sup> Bible Works: Software for Biblical Exegesis & Research (version 7.0). Windows. Virginia: Bible Works LLC, 2006.

<sup>84</sup> Phil 2:9-11.

<sup>85</sup> Dan 7:14.

<sup>86</sup> Jesus’ authority are also expressed in Matt. 7:29; 10:1, 7-8; 11:27; 22:43; 24:35.

<sup>87</sup> Karl Barth, “*An Exegetical Study of Matthew 28:16-20*,” in *The Theology of the Christian Mission*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), 60.

(iii) *Closing (28:19-20) – The Mission, and Jesus’ Abiding Presence*

**19** Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,  
**20** and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (NRSV)

The closing section of the text comprised of two main parts: (i) the mission, and (ii) Jesus’ promise.

**(a) The Mission**

Jesus mission’ is included in verse 19 and the first part of verse 20. “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you”. In a nutshell, this is the core of the great commission, sandwiched between the declaration of Jesus’ universal authority (v.18), and his promise of his everlasting dwelling among his disciples (v.20(b)). The mission includes four critical verbal forms that I would like to explore: (i) *go*, (ii) *make disciples*, (iii) *baptizing*, and (iv) *teaching*.

**1. Go (Πορευθέντες) (v.19)**

Πορευθέντες is a nominative plural masculine participle, first aorist of πορεύομαι (*poreuomai*), a passive deponent verb<sup>88</sup> meaning “*to pass from one place to another, to go.*”<sup>89</sup>

It is an imperative form, and as an aorist participle, would naturally be rendered either

<sup>88</sup> “In linguistic, a deponent verb that is active in meaning but takes its form from a different voice, most commonly the middle or passive. A deponent verb has no active forms. Hence in this case, the participle Πορευθέντες will precede the main verb – both in word order and time of event (though usually there is a very close proximity).”

<sup>89</sup> Walter Bauer et al., *A Greek Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, Fourth ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021), 757.

“having gone” or “as ye go”. According to Wallace<sup>90</sup>, this participle should be classified as attendant circumstance<sup>91</sup> participle. Therefore, it should be translated with the same force as the main verb μαθητεύσατε (*matheteusate*), which is an imperative verb follows immediately.

## 2. make disciples (μαθητεύσατε) (v.19)

μαθητεύσατε is second person, plural, first aorist, imperative active of μαθητεύω (*mathēteúō*), meaning “to make disciples”. It is imperative in form and meaning – the only imperative verbal form in the entire narrative unit beginning with verse 16. The command, “to make disciples” is a strong statement that reflects the expansion and the growth of Jesus’ network to all nations. In this sense, Jesus’ disciples have been urged to make disciples, as they are going, wherever, whenever, by exercising the two conditions show in verse 20 that follows.

The word “disciple” in the original Greek text is μαθητής (*mathetes*) “a learner” or one who follows one’s teaching or engages in learning through instruction from another.<sup>92</sup> It is derived from the verb μανθάνω, “to learn”.<sup>93</sup> A disciple is constantly associated and committed with a person who has a pedagogical reputation or a particular set of views. A pupil, or an adherent or apprentice (in contrast to the teacher or the master).<sup>94</sup> A disciple is a follower who transforms into the exact likeness of their master through total obedient and submission.

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<sup>90</sup> Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 645.

<sup>91</sup> Examples: [Matt 2:8 and 26:42]. The first is in the context of the wise men looking for Christ the child, and Herod tells them to “Go and look carefully.” “Go” is an attendant circumstance participle, and “look carefully” is an imperative verb. Thus the participle carries some imperatival force as well. “Looking carefully” is an action that is rationally preceded by going to the place where they will look. In the second example, Matt 26:42 records that Jesus as “going away and praying” in the Garden of Gethsemane. “Going away” is the participle, and it logically precedes “praying,” which is the main verb. These two examples illustrate the idea of attendant circumstances.

<sup>92</sup> Wilkins, *The Concept of Discipleship in Matthew's Gospel*, 11.

<sup>93</sup> Wilkins, *The Concept of Discipleship in Matthew's Gospel*, 11.

<sup>94</sup> Walter Bauer, Frederick W. Danker, William F. Arndt, Felix W. Gingrich, *A Greek –English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature. 4<sup>th</sup>ed.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021), 540.



### 3. baptizing (βαπτίζοντες) (v.19)

βαπτίζοντες is a nominative plural masculine participle, present active of βαπτίζω (*baptízō*), meaning “wash ceremonially for purpose of purification, wash, purify”<sup>95</sup> or “to use water in a rite for purpose of renewing or establishing a relationship with God, dip, wash, baptize”<sup>96</sup>. This participle, present is likewise in agreement with the finite verb μαθητεύσατε. It is not imperative in form, though because of its position and relationship to the imperative verb which controls it, is much better position to convey an imperative idea nevertheless, as shall be seen.

### 4. teaching (διδάσκοντες) (v.20)

The word is to be analyzed exactly the same as the baptizing, except that it is derived from διδάσκω (*didáskō*), meaning “to teach” or “to provide instruction in a formal or informal setting, teach”<sup>97</sup>. It is a participle present active nominative masculine plural verb. It is in agreement also with μαθητεύσατε, yet is also grammatically and syntactically connected with βαπτίζοντες as dependent, not strictly co-ordinate, as is sometimes assumed. The justification for this statement is the absence of καὶ (and), the co-ordinate conjunction. That is, the "teaching" is associated with the "baptizing," not merely subsequent to it.

#### (b) The Promise

The Closing section ends with Jesus promise to his disciples of his timeless presence.

“And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age”

The opening words, καὶ ἰδοὺ, (“*and behold*”) is an imperative, aorist active 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular from ἰδοὺ, which can be translated as “surely”. It emphasized the

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<sup>95</sup> Bauer, *A Greek Lexicon of the New Testament*, 144.

<sup>96</sup> Bauer, *A Greek Lexicon of the New Testament*, 144.

<sup>97</sup> Bauer, *A Greek Lexicon of the New Testament*, 213.

importance of the reality being declared. His emphatic assurance is, “I will be with you always” (ἐγὼ μεθ' υμῶν εἰμί πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας), literally, “I, with you I am all the days”. Jesus words are not a mere promise, “I will be with you,” but an emphatic assertion, “I, with you I am”. The emphatic pronoun “I” (ἐγὼ) adds strength to the assertion of His personal presence with them. “With you”, while directly addressed to his disciples, is not to be localized but comprehends the whole church. He assured them of his perpetual, spiritual presence.

The word "always" assured them that His presence will be constant and persistence, not merely erratic and changing. His presence with them is assured throughout their days, through "days of strength and of weakness, days of success and of failure, of joy and of sorrow, of youth and of age, days of life and days of death—all the days."<sup>98</sup>

Finally, Jesus promise forms an *inclusio* with the opening of the Gospel in which the name Immanuel, “*God [is] with us*” (Matt. 1:23), is to be given to a child (Isa. 7:14). It also echoes (Matt. 18:20), where Jesus promises his disciples that where two or three of them are gathered in his name, he will be with them. In this sense, the reference is unmistakably to the future spiritual presence of Jesus with his disciples. Here, Matthew powerfully proclaims the future cosmic, omnipotent, omnipresence power of Jesus as the Son of God.

### 3.2.2 Inter-Texture

This part of the analysis looks at how other phenomena speak through Matt. 28:16-20 or how the implied author used them to render the networking model or system of making disciples of all nations. The inter-texture will focus on the *recitation* and *recontextualisation* of Daniel 7:14.

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<sup>98</sup> John A. Broadus, *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew: An American Commentary on the New Testament* (Philadelphia: American Baptist, 1986), 591.

**(i) Recitation**

What we find in Matthew 28:18 is recitation of Daniel 7:14:

*“To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed.” (NRSV).*

In the text, the narrator, through Jesus, attributes the prophecy to Daniel. The attribution of a text draws a Matthean audience into the vision of the prophet Daniel in order to assist the hearers to understand Jesus declaration of his universal authority. The apocalyptic vision of the four beasts and the one who is like the Son of Man (Dan. 7:1-28) is the first of the three as described in (Dan. 7:1-12-13). The four beasts represent four great nations arose with power, but due to their arrogance, the four beasts were destroyed, their dominion was taken away, and were burned with fire (Dan. 7:11-12). Then as Daniel watched in the night visions, he saw one like a human being coming with the clouds of heaven. And he came to the Ancient One and was presented before him. Then in verse 14, he was given “dominion”, “glory”, and kingship”, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him.

The arrangement of the rhetorical unit indicates how the recitation functions in the progression of Jesus’ commissioning of his disciples, and its purpose. The recitation is part of the Middle section (Matt. 28:17-18) of the rhetorical unit which connects the Opening (Matt. 28:16) to the Ending (Matt. 28:19-20). The recitation acts as a “declaration”, an affirmation that Jesus is indeed the “Son of Man”, and the fulfillment of Daniel’s vision. Jesus’ universal authority is endorsed upon his disciples, in order to enrich and equipped them as they embarked on their mission. And with his abiding presence among them, they are to be fully inspired and be equipped for the task at hand.

Matthew's recitation brings in the significance of Jesus’ authority as the main authority behind the discipleship networking system and model.

**(ii) Re-contextualization**

Matthew recontextualizes the vision of Daniel as a prophecy fulfilled in Jesus. Majority of Jesus' ministry in Matthew revolves around Jesus' proclamation of his universal authority. Placed at the center of the Book of Daniel, chapter 7 functions as the transition from the first part (ch. 1–6), and the second part (chs. 7–12). There are close links between chapter 7 and chapter 2; both stories include a dream interpretation that revolves around the division of history into four kingdoms. Daniel 7:1-14 is a prophetic vision that describes the four winds of heaven (Dan. 7:2) and four great beasts came out of the sea (Dan. 7:3), and the one who is like the Son of Man. The “four winds of heaven” refer to literal wind in this vision which is symbolic of Satan and his angels causing violent conflict among the inhabitants of the nations. This suggests that Satan and his kingdom is the source of the four great heathen empires in history, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome.<sup>99</sup>

In verse 13, Daniel, in the night visions, saw one like a human being coming with the clouds of heaven<sup>100</sup>. And he came to the Ancient One and was presented before him. Furthermore, verse 14 describes this Son of Man as receiving an eternal kingdom from the Ancient of Days. In Daniel 7:27, the text describes this son of man as “the Highest One” whose kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom. The Matthean text re-contextualizes this vision bearing Jesus' universal authority and kingship. The risen Jesus, vindicated over those who tried to destroy him, is now established as the universal sovereign, and his realm embraces not only the whole earth, which was to be the dominion of the “one like a son of man” in Daniel's vision, but heaven as well.

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<sup>99</sup> Warren W. Wiesbe, *The Wiesbe Bible Commentary: Old Testament* (Colorado Springs: Dvid C. Cook, 2007), 1369.

<sup>100</sup> The incarnate Son of God Jesus Christ describes Himself as coming with the clouds at His Second Advent (Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Acts 1:11; Revelation 1:7).

In addition, it is even possible that the Trinitarian formula in 28:19 reflects a modification of the triad in (Dan. 7:13-14) of Ancient of Days (God the Father), Son of Man (God the Son), and angels as God's spiritual servants as the implied agents of the Son of Man being led into God's presence (thus functionally analogous to the Holy Spirit)<sup>101</sup>.

### 3.2.3 Social and Cultural Texture

This section focuses on analyzing the text's "social and cultural nature as a text". In doing so, the analysis will first explore the specific social topics. These include *conversionist* and an analysis of the "culture of honor and shame".

#### (i) *Conversionist*

Robbins defined the conversionist response as being characterized by a notion that "the world is corrupt because people are corrupt."<sup>102</sup> Often, Jesus preached about corruption, specifically his negative views of the corrupted engagements of the Judaism leaders such as the Pharisees and the scribes.<sup>103</sup> Through this mission, Jesus was about to bring a new, revolutionary utopia. Through this mission, his disciples will engage in bringing his message to all those who are willing to be transformed. To "make disciples of all nations" implies that the task of the disciples is to influence the world through discipling, baptizing, and teaching, so that they will become "disciples" of Jesus, instilling in them Christ-like characteristics. Jesus' command was not just to evangelize, but rather, to change all aspects of an individual's spiritual and social life by the power of the Gospel.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> G.K. Beale and D.A. Carson, eds., *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Nottingham: Baker Academics & Apollos, 2007), 212.

<sup>102</sup> Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 72.

<sup>103</sup> For example: Matt. 21:12-13, 23:1-39.

<sup>104</sup> J. W. Shepard, *The Christ of the Gospels* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1939), 630.

## ***(ii) Honor and shame***

Social scientific critics of the Bible have gathered extensive data that can enrich analysis of social and cultural texture of texts with insights into honor and shame culture, patronage, hospitality, and other cultures.<sup>105</sup> According to Robbins:

“...the purpose of honor is to serve as a social rating that entitles a person to interact in specific ways with his or her equals, superiors, and subordinates, according to the ascribed cultural cues of the society....Acquired honor is honor actively sought and garnered most often at the expense of one’s equals in the social contest of challenge and response.”<sup>106</sup>

Jesus has just risen, after a shameful execution on the cross, in front of his enemies, families, friends, and his disciples. Through his resurrection, he conquered death and the cross, and now he has the honor to inherit universal authority, making him the King in Heaven and on the earth. Through this honor, he is now issuing a mission to his disciples to continue his mission. The disciples will have honor because they have knowledge of the discipleship networking system and model as taught to them by Jesus.

### **3.2.3 Ideological Texture**

This part of the analysis looks at how Matthew’s perspective on Roman Empire and Political Authority and territory expansion are adopted in the text. According to Riches, Jesus commissions his disciples to a worldwide mission of teaching; similar to Rome’s desire for worldwide societal

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<sup>105</sup> Robbins, *The Tapestry*, 36.

<sup>106</sup> Robbins, *Exploring the Textures of Texts*, 76.

control at the time.<sup>107</sup> Riches also asserted that as a counter-culture text, these texts will have resonated with Jesus community and any feelings of resentment against Rome. The text may be considered as a strategy:

“...how the various themes enunciated – teaching authority, political power, territorial expansion – interact with the theme of Jesus’ divine status, which is conferred on him from the outset of his ministry by the voice at his baptism.<sup>108</sup>

Furthermore, some claimed that Rome was actually divinely commissioned to expand power over all nations. This can be reflected in the adoption of Daniel 7 in the Matthean text, to be seen as overtly or covertly political.<sup>109</sup> Furthermore, there are close thematic links between the Daniel passage and the gospel.<sup>110</sup>

According to Riches:

“...we are to say, that in the world of revolutionary apocalyptic rhetoric, where the parousia of the Son of Man/Son of God with his heavenly retinue and court is contrasted with the advent of the divi filius<sup>111</sup> emperor.”<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> John Riches and David C. Sim, eds., *Matthew’s Missionary Strategy in colonial Perspective.*” in *The Gospel of Matthew in Its Roman Imperial Context* (London, New York: T & T Clark International, 2005), 129.

<sup>108</sup> Riches and Sim, *Matthew’s Missionary Strategy in colonial Perspective*, 129.

<sup>109</sup> Riches and Sim, *Matthew’s Missionary Strategy in colonial Perspective*, 137.

<sup>110</sup> Judgement (19:25); thrones (in the plural, 19:28); angels/heavenly court (25); coming of the Son of Man (10:23; 24:27); the clouds of heaven (24:30; 26:64).

<sup>111</sup> The title was given to Octavian, as the adopted son of Julius Caesar, once Caesar was defied; cf. Klauck H. J., *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: A guide to Graeco-Roman Religions* (Edinburgh: T & T Clack, 2000), 293.

<sup>112</sup> Riches and Sim, *Matthew’s Missionary Strategy in colonial Perspective*, 138.

With this background, Matthew's purpose is to contest the prerogatives of imperial theology that claims the emperor as representation of the god's sovereignty, will, and blessings on earth.<sup>113</sup> Matthew's presentation of Jesus challenges the imperial claims that the emperor embodies divine sovereign and presence, and that as the agent of the gods, he ensures social well-being.<sup>114</sup>

### 3.2.4 Summary

This chapter was focusing on providing an exegetical analysis of the text by using the Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation method. It explored discipleship as a network and social and cultural system.

The exegesis demonstrated that the Matthean text manifestly shows Jesus' discipleship system as an open system interconnection model. Matthew encapsulated in the text, the message, as well as the standards and rules, of Jesus' discipleship networking model.

The next chapter will provide a further interpretation of the text, in light of the OSI model.

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<sup>113</sup> Boris Repschinski, "Matthew's Perspective on Roman Political Authority," *Matthew, Paul, and Others: Asian Perspectives on New Testament Themes* (2019): 9-42.

<sup>114</sup> Repschinski, "Matthew's Perspective on Roman Political Authority," 12.



## CHAPTER 4

### INTEGRATION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter presents an interpretation, or the dialogue between the text and the hermeneutic. It focuses on how the OSI model and its behaviour, and networking elements are attuned with that of Jesus' open system of discipleship network as articulated in the Matthean text. An implication and application of the interpretation is also given, with a conclusion and final remarks.

#### *4.1 Introduction*

At the beginning of the thesis, I have asked the question: "What is the engraved meaning and functions of 'discipleship' as a networking open system and model of proclaiming the Gospel embedded in the language of the text (Matthew 28:16-20)?" Furthermore, in what ways does the OSI networking model assimilate the processes, and functionalities of 'discipleship' as inscribed in the text? In Chapter 2, the OSI model is described as an 'open system'. It was established as a generic model, to bridge the different standards set by various networking vendors and manufacturers of networking services and devices. The model established a common ground or an 'open standard' for incompatible networking systems. Having said that, the main objective of these open standards is not only to enable communication between incompatible systems, but also to facilitate future development and support, and expansion of network capacity to new development areas.

Intrinsically, Matthew 28:16-20 expresses an 'open system' of discipleship. Matthew's use of language and structure, reveals that Jesus' has established an 'open system' of discipleship network. Jesus' open system model of discipleship is supported and enhanced by his own standards. These standards have been explored in Chapter Three during the Exegesis. In

approaching this part of the interpretation, I would like to integrate the functions of the OSI layered model with Jesus' discipleship model, as exhibited in the text, in order to extract meaning relevant to our modern context as disciples of Christ. These functions can be expressed, interpreted, and be understood by the use of the terms such as *open*, *encapsulation*, *translation*, *identification*, and *interpretation*. I will be using these networking terminologies to structure my interpretation of the text.

#### **4.2 *Jesus network of discipleship as an open system***

The OSI System was initially established to overcome the problem of "incompatibility". That is, it was created to initiate and encourage open standards to facilitate communication and data exchange between two different networking systems. With the creation of such networking model, different vendors and manufacturers were able to communicate using a common or an open protocol or standard.

Jesus' model of discipleship in Matthew although has been limited only to the Jews at the beginning of his ministry, has now being extended to embrace all nations. The Jewish leaders were very conservative at the time, with their view that they were the elected ones, and the salvation belongs to them, excluding everyone else. He commanded his disciples to go and make disciples of all nations. Jesus established an open model of discipleship from particularism to universalism. How did Jesus establish his open system of discipleship? The answer can be found in what he says, what he teaches, and what he does. He broke the barriers between the Jews and the 'others' by establishing his own standards, an 'open system' based on love. Through his teachings, sermons, healings and miracles, he founded a model that unite the incompatible and the conflicting parties. The essence of his teachings is love and forgiveness, these are the core of his open standards that were knitted in what he says and what he does.

Throughout his mission, Jesus lived in a society where people were oppressed by various forms of oppressions. Jesus became the voice of the oppressed. In doing so, Matthew underscored Jesus' intention to break down the barriers of prestige, religion, gender, and nationalism. Jesus established a system that allows everyone to live in peace and harmony. This demonstrates that discipleship in Matthew is an open system. A network of believers that is not bounded by anything else, but by the love of God, and the faith of the believers.

### **4.3 'Encapsulation'**

#### **4.3.1. Encapsulation in Jesus' open system of discipleship network**

In the OSI model, encapsulation refers to the process of wrapping a message or information with a header or additional data for purpose of transmission. Such information include addressing data, information that helps the receiver to decode the message, as well as data for security. In the text, Matthew has structured and encapsulated Jesus' command. Matthew's uses of the Greek language has enabled him to encapsulate purpose, meaning, and the motives of the message.

Encapsulation can be seen in the text when we identify the sender, the message, the rules and standards, and the receiver. Jesus' mission is to go, and spread the message of love, the message of salvation. The message of salvation inaugurates everything about Jesus – love, forgiveness, his purpose on earth and his love for all mankind. His standards and rules of how to spread his message are engraved and embedded in his disciples' mission to go, make disciples, baptising, and teaching everything that he commanded. Hence, we can say that Jesus standards are embedded in the text. The verb "go" has strong significances in Jesus' mission. Being an attended circumstance participle, the verb *go* should be translated as the same force as the main verb *make disciples*, which is an imperative verb. Thus the participle carries some imperatival force as well. "Making disciples" is an action that is rationally preceded by going to the place where they will

make disciples. “Going” is the participle, and it logically precedes “making disciples”, the main verb. Baptising and teaching are the two verbal signs that are associated with each other in respond to making disciples. Hence *go*, *making disciples*, *baptising*, and *teaching* are four verbal forms that act as open standards in enabling the communication of Jesus’ message of salvation. They are embedded and encapsulated within the message itself.

Furthermore, Jesus universal authority and his abiding presence are the two motivational actions or forces that enthuse and inspire the disciples in fulfilling the Jesus’ mission.

#### **4.3.2. Encapsulation in Jesus’ ministry (of teaching)**

In comparison with other Gospels, Matthew attributed most of his Gospel in the manifestation of discipleship through Jesus’ teachings. These teachings of Jesus are exhibited and expressed in his preaching, healings, and his deeds. Most of Jesus’ principles and moral teachings were being taught and encapsulated, or hidden inside his parables, or demonstrated through his deeds and miracles. Jesus’ teachings can be translated, interpreted and adopted in our own cultural context, because we do have common rules and aspects of love in our culture and the culture of Jesus. These open standards of Jesus which is based on love, enable his teaching and his ideas, to be adopted and adapted in our society.

#### **4.4 *Method of Identification and translation in Jesus’ open system of discipleship***

Identification is important in the OSI model. It helps to identify a specific host, whether it is a sender or the receiver. It uses special numbers that are unique, formulating specific addresses unique to a specific host. In terms of applications, each host uses what is known as application port numbers, which is used to select the type of application or platform and all the related data, to open or to retrieve the content of the message.

Matthew uses three very strong identification methods in the text. First of all, Matthew clearly identifies who the *sender* is: Jesus Christ. Matthew identified him as the one who has the ultimate and universal authority. The *receivers* of the message, are his eleven disciples, including all others (who are and will become members of Jesus' network through discipling). Matthew also identified the *message* of Jesus. The message in this case as being the mission comprised of three things, as described in the Inner Texture analysis (§2.2.1).

In the OSI model, translation happens through the processes of encoding and decoding. Data representation is understood because of the open standards and syntax employed. With the syntax and semantics of the language Matthew encapsulated in the text, he encoded a timeless command with Jesus' specific instructions and Jesus' principles which are intrinsically etched within the whole of his Gospel. As a timeless command, we, as disciples of Christ are called to fulfil this command, expanding Jesus' discipleship networking, with the assurance of his continuous presence. We can accomplish this by our disposition to decode and translate Jesus' mission into our own cultural context and perspective.

#### **4.5 *Interconnectedness***

Interconnectedness is the concept of 'active communication'. It shows that the network is a live entity. The network devices are always active and send updated information to neighbouring devices so that communication is always up and running, making sure that there is no disruptive in communication and transmission.

The Internet, which is the global network, is an active network that is affiliated with information and communication in all spheres of life - social, political and economic. The internet as a tool of communication and interaction shapes the work and development of the world, the organizations and it influence every one of us as individuals. Consequently, the Internet enables the community of disciples to not only communicate with each other, but enables the dissemination

of Jesus teachings. In this sense, we as disciples of Jesus, are using the best resources we have at hand, to fulfil the mission of Jesus. To teach all nations about the love of God. This teaching is an active process, in the sense that the Holy Spirit is anointing us to fulfil such action, as well as those who hear the Word, and does the Will of God.

Discipleship behaves the same way. Jesus affirmed his eternal abiding among his disciples. Hence as disciples of Jesus, we continue this interconnectedness with Jesus through our active communication with our fellow colleagues (disciples), and Jesus himself, our Master. We make the discipleship network of Jesus grow and continuously active by our willingness to teach others, and by doing the will of Jesus. Through prayers, we continue to interact with Jesus who promised his abiding presence with us.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

The text of Matt. 28:16-20 shows an intrinsic open system of discipleship commissioned by Jesus to his disciples. It is a timeless mission that is applied to each and every one of us, the (faithful) followers of Jesus. It is a call of action, a mission to lead others to Jesus, and having being called into fellowship with Christ. It is also a mission to maintaining the faith of the disciples by sharing the teachings of Jesus. By teaching others, we are not only expanding the network of Jesus, but also continue to maintain and sustain his Word. Jesus Word is encapsulated in his characteristics, his ministry, and his work of salvation, his authority, his everlasting presence, and his grace. Teaching and baptising those who are willing to join Jesus' network, are our ultimate task as faithful disciples.

In order to become a true disciple of Christ, the network starts from within. It starts from the individual. It is through the conviction of the individual that enables him or her to commit his life to Jesus, by doing the Will of God. Our personal drive which is inspired by the Holy Spirit, enables us to expand our personal network, in fulfilling the mission of Christ.

Families with strong foundations that built upon the love of God, contributes to building a strong community, which generates true disciples, whom to continue Jesus' network.

As demonstrated by the OSI model, a global network is an open system where people communicate and share information. It is also very important to keep in mind, that as an open system, the network accommodates all types of information, services, and intentions. As disciples of Christ, we have been taught to live and abide by the Christian standards and ethical codes. A Christian code that is founded on the grace of God. The grace of God which is inherited in all of us, empower us to have good intentions when we make use of technology as a tool, and as a platform for making disciples, and sharing the teachings of Jesus. As a community of faithful believers, we have been called to fulfil the mission of Christ, taking the Gospel further and Jesus' good news of Salvation to universal heights.

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