

# From Everyday Language to a Culturally-Embedded Metaphor: Identifying a Tool for Teaching about the Christian Life in Brazil<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** By noticing how people speak of life in everyday language, one can better understand their cultures. Such an understanding can help one think about how the Gospel of Jesus Christ can be preached and lived out in particular contexts. This paper is an attempt toward that end. In what follows, then, we apply metaphor theory to Brazilian culture and move on to a theological reflection in order to offer a tool to teach about the Christian life in Brazilian context. In such an attempt, we pay special attention to the important distinction between salvation and Christian life narratives, in order that the biblical teaching about the Christian life may be fostered and the believer comforted in times of distress.

*Pastor, I need your help! I have been through great trials in life and not been able to overcome them. I know I have to 'continue fighting'—I have to 'fight' for the future of my family—but I just cannot see a way to overcome the difficulties and temptations I've been through.*

This hypothetical plea for help from a parishioner to his pastor illustrates a common approach to life in the Brazilian context. “To continue fighting” is a particular Brazilian expression, a metaphorical utterance, to say that life is not easy, that a person needs to overcome the bad things in life, even the person’s own weaknesses, in order to continue living and to achieve his goals in life.

The way people speak of life and the exact concerns they express are things that pastors need to pay attention to. In comforting someone with concerns like the foregoing parishioner, pastors need to be able to talk about the believer’s daily struggle of the Christian life along with the work of the Holy Spirit, and not only about Jesus’ work for our salvation. While the latter is foundational to understand the former, one should not be confused with the other. Neither should an (over)emphasis on Jesus’ work obscure the biblical teaching of the Christian life. Therefore, besides saying that *difficulties and temptations are part of life because of sin, but Christ has died on the cross to forgive you*, it is also necessary to affirm the Holy Spirit’s daily guidance in times of distress, and all this needs to be done with a language, a vocabulary, that the person can understand. Otherwise, misunderstandings and

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confusion between narratives can lead to theological confusion. How, then, can pastors appropriate of Brazilians' daily language in teaching about the Christian life and still preserve the necessary distinction between salvation and Christian life narratives?

In regard to the above, the present paper has a twofold purpose. First, it aims to show how the Brazilian culturally-embedded metaphor of "life is a battle" can be used for teaching about the Christian life in Brazil. Second, this paper intends to demonstrate how, on the other hand, this image might render the Gospel incomprehensible if the proper distinction between salvation and Christian life narratives is not made.

It is also important to say what we do not intend with this paper. In affirming that the Christian life can be spoken of in terms of a battle, we are not saying that warfare imagery should shape the way Christians engage in conversation with those who think different from us. This would imply that we have to be always in conflict with others and that we have to "defeat" those who think different from us, which would make the communication of the Gospel much more difficult. Moreover, to see our conversation with other people in terms of warfare imagery would require an investigation of another metaphor, such as "argument is war,"<sup>2</sup> which is not the focus here. In this paper, on the other hand, the warfare imagery is intended to affirm the biblical teaching about "fighting" primarily our own sinfulness for the sake of serving and helping our neighbors.

In order to accomplish our purpose, we first offer a description of how such a culturally-embedded metaphor is identified. A proposal for speaking of the Christian life to Brazilian culture will be developed in the second section.

The paper requires of its readers a basic prior knowledge of Metaphor Theory, which has been explained by Justin Rossow in *Preaching the Story Behind the Image: A Narrative Approach to Metaphor for Preaching*,<sup>3</sup> from which we borrow its suggested methodology. Also, the paper is informed by the discoveries of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in *Metaphors We Live By* to the extent that they affirm the pervasiveness of metaphor and its relation to experience and thought. Their main idea is that "metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action."<sup>4</sup>

## **1. "Life Is a Battle": Identifying a Culturally-Embedded Metaphor in Brazilian Culture**

"Metaphor is a tool so ordinary that we use it unconsciously and automatically, with so little effort that we hardly notice it."<sup>5</sup>

In presenting a study about how people read poetry, George Lakoff and Mark Turner have shown that the metaphorical language used in poetry is not beyond ordinary language and that great poets use the same "tools" (like metaphor and metonymy) that we use in our daily conversations. The difference in using such tools resides in the fact that poets pay careful attention to and use them intentionally, while we use these tools "unconsciously and automatically."

This idea of metaphorical language as unconsciously and ordinarily used, which Lakoff and Turner have demonstrated by presenting different metaphorical expressions in ordinary language, is also evidenced by a Brazilian way of speaking about life. Hardly noticing that they are using metaphorical language, Brazilians sometimes talk about their lives in terms of a *battle*, in which whoever wants to continue living should never stop *fighting*. In their daily conversations, there are many linguistic expressions in which *fight*, *battle*, *struggle*, *victories*, and *defeats* serve as ways of describing a person's view of or situation in life.

For Lakoff, Johnson, and Zoltán Kövecses, metaphorical utterances like these indicate that “there are metaphors in a person's conceptual system”<sup>6</sup> and that people of the same culture share what we are calling here “culturally-embedded metaphors.” These are metaphors that are formed by shared experiences and become part of the way that people process experiences and communicate. Such metaphors shape our understandings of the world and everyday practices without our even noticing them. They underlie everyday metaphorical utterances and allow one to understand such utterances. For instance, expressions such as “He is *wasting* time” and “I could *save* one hour if I used my own computer,” both present in American culture, presuppose the culturally-embedded metaphor that time is money.<sup>7</sup> In the view of the forgoing authors, Americans use and understand these expressions because they share this metaphor embedded in their culture, present not only in their language but primarily in their thought, as part of their conceptual system.

The list below shows some common expressions that Brazilians use when they talk about their ordinary lives. These expressions identify a culturally-embedded metaphor for life in Brazilian culture. Each expression in its original language (Portuguese) in the left column is followed by a translation into English in the column on the right:

Everyday Expression	Translation
- <i>A vida é feita de vitórias e derrotas</i>	<i>Life is made of victories and defeats</i>
- <i>Vai à luta!</i>	<i>Go ahead and fight for it!</i>
- <i>Não desista de lutar</i> <sup>8</sup>	<i>Do not give up fighting!</i>
- <i>A luta continua</i>	<i>The struggle (or fight) continues</i>
- <i>Você tem que encarar as batalhas do dia a dia</i>	<i>You have to face the daily battles</i>
- <i>Este cara é batalhador</i>	<i>This guy is a fighter</i>
- <i>Não está morto quem peleia</i>	<i>Whoever still wrestles is not dead yet</i>
- <i>A morte venceu esta batalha</i>	<i>Death has won this battle</i>
- <i>Estou lutando por uma vida melhor</i>	<i>I am fighting for a better life</i>
- <i>Estou lutando pelo futuro da minha família</i>	<i>I am fighting for the future of my family</i>
- <i>Esta pessoa venceu na vida</i>	<i>This person has won in life</i>

In light of what has been said thus far, one could say that these metaphorical expressions are possible because there is a metaphor present in Brazilian thought by

which people process their understanding of life.<sup>9</sup> We suggest that the expression, “life is a battle,” is a culturally-embedded metaphor in Brazilian culture that allows Brazilians to understand and even experience life in terms of battle. As Lakoff and Johnson recall, “The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another.”<sup>10</sup>

In this sense, one can think of metaphorical utterances in terms of correspondences between two conceptual domains. In the present paper, such a correspondence is between Brazilians’ understandings of the domain of “battle” and of the domain of “life.”

These are some correspondences between the two domains:

- A person leading a life is a fighter/soldier;
- His or her purpose is survival, protection, and a better life for his or her loved ones;
- The means for achieving purposes are hope and fight;
- Difficulties in life are enemies to be overcome;
- Counselors are commanders;
- Plans are strategies;
- Professional success is victory.

Another relevant aspect regarding metaphors is their connection with narrative contexts and their structures. One of Rossow’s main arguments is that metaphors have implicit or implied narratives and that what will guide the interpretation of a given metaphor is how one handles the implied narrative relationships of the metaphor.<sup>11</sup> For instance, to say that a person “fights for the future” of his or her family places this person within implied narrative relationships proper for a soldier, who has to fight the enemy for the best for his nation. Here, in the narrative context of a battle, then, the terms “soldier,” “enemy,” and “nation” have roles and relate to one another creating a certain relationship structure.

For handling these relationships, Rossow suggests the use of the structuralist Actantial Model developed by A. J. Greimas.<sup>12</sup> This model is “helpful shorthand for these narrative relationships,”<sup>13</sup> as it allows one to visualize the roles and structure of the implied narrative relationships of a given metaphor.<sup>14</sup>

For the purpose of this paper, then, the narrative roles and relationships that shape the inference structure of the metaphor, “life is a battle,” are plotted on Greimas’ model (see below).

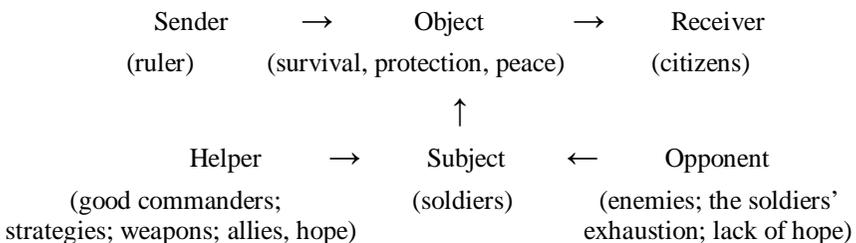


Figure 1 (A Horizontal Actantial Model)

This is the implied narrative relationships of the **Source Domain** of the “battle” metaphor put into Greimas’ Actantial Model. A second step to be taken here would be to map onto the Target Domain of “life” on the basis of the correspondences of the two domains listed above. However, since the goal of the present paper is to demonstrate how one can helpfully speak not of life itself, but of the Christian life in terms of a battle, the mapping onto the target will be made in the second section, as we offer our proposal for speaking of the Christian life.

What is important here is what the model helps to clarify, that is, the positions occupied in the narrative, the “who is doing what for whom and how,” to put it in Rossow’s words.<sup>15</sup> This way, the actantial positions in the model are helpful also for understanding and clarifying the distinction between the biblical narratives about salvation and those about the Christian life. This matter will be approached in the next section, as we map onto the target domain, attempting to suggest a way of speaking of the Christian life.

## 2. The Christian Life Seen in Terms of a Battle

Talking about, thinking of, and experiencing the Christian life in terms of battle are not alien ideas to Christians. According to David J. Williams, the Apostle Paul talks about both his own life and Christians’ lives in terms of warfare. Sometimes, says the author, Paul “felt himself to be more like a soldier at war than anything else.” In such warfare, sometimes the enemies are “human antagonists” (2 Cor 7:5) in the world; at other times, the human nature is the enemy to be fought—in the inner conflict between “the flesh and the Spirit of God” (Rom 7).<sup>16</sup> Also, the devil is seen as an enemy who, like the world and sin, has already been defeated by Jesus’ work but “is still able to cause great distress.”<sup>17</sup>

This said, and taking into consideration what was presented in the first section, I suggest that “the Christian life is a battle” is a metaphor that might foster the biblical teaching about Christian life in Brazilian culture.<sup>18</sup> In this metaphor, then, the Christian is located within implied narrative relationships appropriate for a soldier. Such narrative relationships can be visualized by the Actantial Models that follow this paragraph. Unlike the first model presented above (see Figure 1), Figure 2 places two Actantial Models next to each other so that the correspondences of each actant in both the source and the target may be clearly seen.<sup>19</sup>

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS A BATTLE

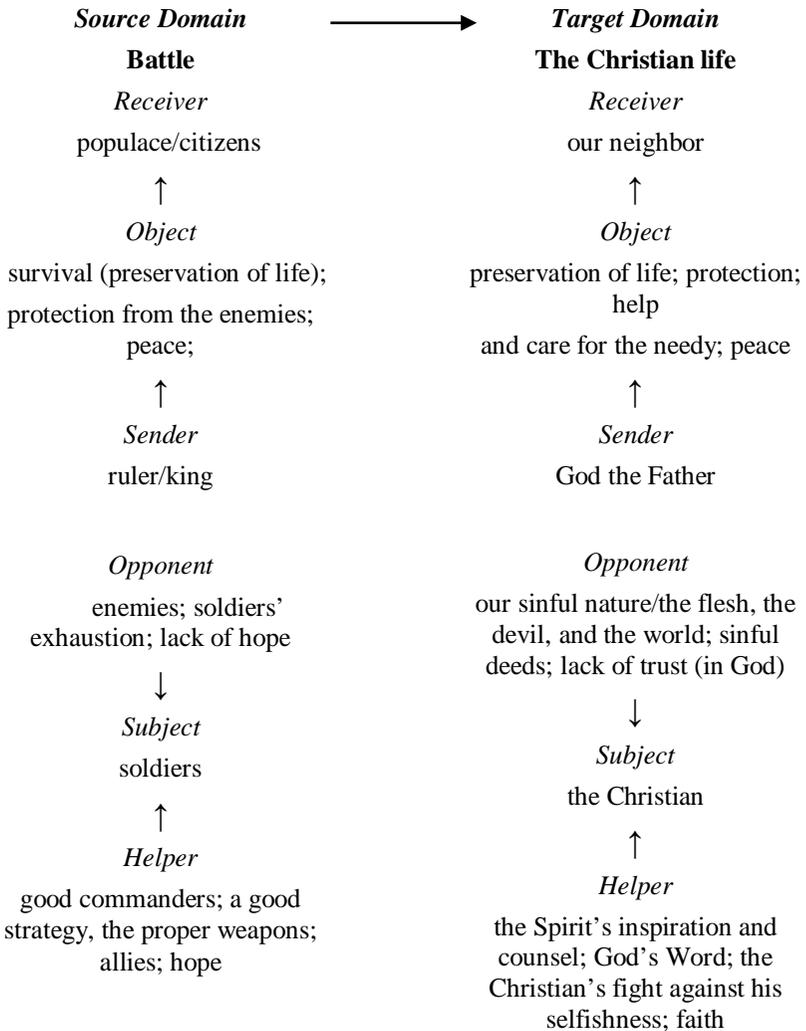


Figure 2 (Vertical Actantial Models in the Source and the Target<sup>20</sup>)

In approaching the Christian life in terms of battle, then, just as the Ruler or King wants to provide survival, protection, and peace to the citizens through the soldiers, God wants to preserve life and provide protection, help, and care for the needy through the Christian.

And, while in the source the enemies, the soldiers' exhaustion and their lack of hope oppose the soldiers, in the target our sinful nature, the devil, the world, and the lack of trust oppose the Christian. Such oppositions intend to hinder the delivery of the Object to the Receiver. And that is why the function of the Helper is so important. Just as the commanders and good strategies help the soldiers overcome the Opponents and deliver protection and peace to the citizens, the Holy Spirit and God's Word, for instance, help the Christian fight his or her selfish sinful nature and thus care for his or her neighbors in their needs. The function of the Helper, therefore, is fundamental in the present metaphor.<sup>21</sup>

Another fundamental point for the purpose of the present reflection is that the actant/actor who does something for the Receiver is the Subject. Although the Sender sends the Object to the Receiver, the one who actually does what has to be done to deliver the Object is the Subject. Therefore, the structure of the narrative relationships leads to the conclusion that protection of and care for the needy, for instance, come from God and, still, that the Christian is the one who protects and helps the needy; the believer is the one who performs these works. When one's selfish and sinful nature drives him to care for himself only, or when, in fighting sin, the believer gets exhausted or even fails, he can resort and cling to the Helper.

Having in mind this clear understanding of the metaphor, Brazilian pastors could speak of and teach the Christian life in such a way that the good works performed by Christians are clearly understood as not done for God—for God is not the Receiver—but for their neighbors. As Gustaf Wingren has put it, "God does not need our good works, but our neighbor does."<sup>22</sup>

At the same time, when offering comfort to their parishioners who are facing distress and temptations, pastors can affirm in a proclamatory way the presence of the Holy Spirit and point to Him as the one who can lead the parishioner during times of struggle. Pastors can assure parishioners, "The Holy Spirit will never abandon you!" In this way, "the Christian life is a battle" metaphor can be helpfully used to teach about the Christian life and to comfort believers in the daily struggles of this life.

## **2.1. Avoiding Theological Confusion in Interpreting the Metaphor**

As noted above, the narrative relationships of any metaphor are of great importance. In the salvation narratives central to Lutherans, for instance, God (probably in the person of Jesus) will always be the active Subject, while we will always be the passive Receivers. In the Christian life narratives, on the other hand, the Christian may be the active Subject (as shown above), without compromising the biblical salvation narratives. As Rossow has pointed out,

Though Christians may be told to "fight the good fight" (1 Tim 6:12) or to "run in such a way as to get the prize" (1 Cor 9:24), the narrative structure of these metaphors for Christian living, with believers in the Subject position, will not set aside the passive nature of salvation highlighted in the more

central metaphorical blend of courtroom/sacrifice, where believers are clearly placed in the Receiver slot.<sup>23</sup>

Earlier, we affirmed that confusions between narratives (salvation and the Christian life) might create also theological confusion. This is another instance for this point: if, due to the fear of compromising the “passive nature of salvation,” one places the Christian in the role of the Receiver in our metaphor, then the implied narrative is changed. It is changed from a Christian life narrative to a salvation narrative. In the latter, Christ fights on the cross alone and wins the battle for us; in this case, we are indeed the Receivers. This victory is independent of our struggles; it does not depend on us at all. But if one is teaching about the Christian life, or comforting someone who is facing daily temptations and struggles, this change or confusion between narratives may confuse the person. “If Jesus won the battle on the cross, why do I still struggle in life? If Jesus has defeated sin, do I still have to fight sin?” These are doubts that this kind of confusion may generate.

In explaining the warfare metaphors in Paul, Williams makes a clear distinction between these two narratives:

The decisive battle was “out there” on the cross. But “in here,” in terms of our thoughts and words and deeds, the battle still rages. The flesh will not “lay down its arms” and is fighting a stubborn rearguard action. Thus, we must strive, under the command of God’s Spirit, to overcome the flesh by refusing to carry out its desires.<sup>24</sup>

The non-distinction between these two narratives (and their narrative relationships) has apparently caused a theological problem in some Neo-Pentecostal churches in Brazil. Informed by the so-called “theology of glory,” leaders and members of Brazilian Neo-Pentecostal churches believe that the Christian life is a life of *victory* only, in which there is no room for *defeat*.<sup>25</sup> Then, the achievement of financial success, social status, happiness, and even a claimed overcoming of sin, all of which seen as “victory,” are said to be the characteristics of Christians’ daily lives. Perhaps, a more comprehensive study of theology of glory could provide a more detailed description of the given problem; but for the purpose of the present paper, it should suffice to say that complete victory as a result of Jesus’ work—an eschatological victory—is understood by Neo-Pentecostals as something to be enjoyed here and now, and this shapes their so-called “over-realized eschatology.”

Another way of putting it would be to say that the final and complete victory as a result of Jesus’ work—salvation narrative—is being located in the present only and being applied to the Christian life in the sense that, instead of facing daily struggles, a true believer (supposedly) experiences only daily victories.

How could, then, the present proposal help respond to such a view of the Christian life? Before attempting to give an appropriate response to the problem at issue, it would be helpful to look at David Maxwell’s study of the Old Testament narratives that have served as the frameworks for understanding Jesus’ death and resurrection: *The Resurrection of Christ: Its Importance in the History of the Church*.<sup>26</sup> Concerned with the place of the resurrection in salvation narratives, Maxwell identifies in Luther what the author calls “stomping narrative”—an account

of Jesus' work in light of Genesis 3:15. Maxwell's concluding paragraphs highlight the most relevant aspects of the study for the purpose of our investigation:

The Day of Atonement narrative sees the cross as satisfying God's wrath over sin. The problem with the Day of Atonement narrative is that it has no obvious place for the resurrection. The Passover narrative understands the cross as a victory over death because the blood drives the Angel of Death away. The resurrection is also seen as a victory over death because through it God leads His people out of bondage of Egypt and crosses them over to the Promised Land. . . . *In the stomping narrative the cross is seen as a temporary victory for Satan, but resurrection reverses this victory, crushing the serpent's head. This narrative works well for dealing with the experience of defeat in the Christian life.*<sup>27</sup> (Emphasis added.)

By approaching these three narratives and showing how some Church Fathers and Luther worked with them, Maxwell addresses the "zero-sum mentality that says if the cross saves us, then nothing else can."<sup>28</sup> Maxwell's study comes to meet our reflection because of what he calls the "stomping narrative," which, in his own words, "works well for dealing with the experience of defeat in the Christian life" (as quoted above). Maxwell identifies this narrative in Luther's sermon on Mark 16 in which the reformer says that the resurrection saves (and not only the cross). To come to such a conclusion, Luther refers to Genesis 3:15, where God affirms that "he [the offspring of the woman] will crush your head and you [the serpent] will strike his heel." On the basis of this text, and viewing sin as an "enemy power," the cross is described as a defeat and the resurrection as the victory; Satan and sin seem to win but, at the end, they are defeated by Jesus' resurrection.

This salvation narrative allows us to see Jesus experiencing defeat before the final victory in the resurrection and thus leads us to expect the complete victory only in our resurrection. While we are in this world, however, we will experience both victories and defeats in our daily lives. Regardless of whether a Christian has more defeats than victories in life, the final and complete victory has already been guaranteed to us by Jesus' resurrection.

In this sense, Paul says that God "gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 15:57). This text is within a resurrection setting in which the apostle emphasizes that such a victory will come to a completion only at Jesus' second coming, "at the last trumpet" (15:52) on the day of the resurrection.

Therefore, unlike Paul, in expecting only victories in their lives, in our opinion, Neo-Pentecostals are mistakenly locating the complete victory achieved by Jesus' resurrection here and now. In this way, salvation and Christian life narratives are confused, and the warfare image, in this case, hinders the Gospel incomprehensible.

### **2.1.1. Testing the Limits of the Metaphor**

"Metaphors both reveal and conceal important aspects of any Target Domain,"<sup>29</sup> says Rossow, as he suggests that, in working with metaphors, pastors might find it necessary to test the limits of a given metaphor. In doing so, misinterpretations may be avoided and important things may be added to what is being taught and

proclaimed; this is one of the *four metaphor moves* mentioned above (see footnote 14).

“The Christian life is a battle” metaphor might be useful for both catechetical and homiletic tasks, as well as for pastoral counseling in Brazil. In any of these three pastoral tasks, *Testing the Limits of the Metaphor* may help the pastor use the metaphor more effectively. This is due to the fact that the Brazilian culture might drive parishioners and hearers to draw unintended inferences from the “battle” metaphor. Following are some possible misunderstandings of which Brazilian pastors should be aware:

- Since we are living in a very individualistic culture, parishioners/hearers might think that they have to fight for themselves and not for others. This idea is opposed by what the Actantial Model (See figure 2) shows—that a soldier fights for the benefit of the citizens, and so the Christian fights for the benefit of his or her neighbors, and not for himself only.

- Since the Scriptures talk about demons’ possessing people, about Jesus’ casting out demons, and about the devil as an enemy, some people might think that the world is a battlefield in which there is a fight between good and evil, and that we have to help God (the good one) fight the devil (the evil one). In this case, Jesus’ victory in the salvation narratives could helpfully respond to such a view.

- Since the world is portrayed also as an enemy in the Scriptures and thus occupies the position of *opponent* in the narrative relationships (described above), the parishioner might forget that the world is, at the same time, the focus of the mission of the Church. “For God so loved the World . . .” and Jesus told the disciples “to make disciples of all nations.” Therefore, in using the suggested metaphor in a sermon or in catechesis, it would be very important to explain these aspects regarding the term *world* in the Scriptures.

In sum, in order to avoid these wrong inferences, *Testing the Limits of the Metaphor* provides a way for pastors to talk about those kinds of things concealed by the present metaphor. Such things might be other important aspects of the Christian life, or even some aspects of Jesus’ work on the cross for our salvation (the objective fight), referring, then, to a salvation narrative without confusing them.

In this way, pastors can, in *testing the limits*, remind their parishioners/hearers that, although the war is not over yet, our enemies have already been defeated. Pastors boldly affirm, with Paul, that when Jesus comes again the war will come to an end; then, the Christian’s enemies will be finally destroyed. Also, pastors can emphasize that our *struggle continues*, not because God needs our help, but because our selfish nature needs to be fought so that our neighbors may be protected and helped in their needs.

## **Conclusion**

“Life is a battle” is a culturally-embedded metaphor in Brazilian culture. By such a metaphor, and taking into consideration Paul’s way of speaking of the Christian life, we have suggested that “the Christian life is a battle” metaphor might

well communicate biblical teaching about Christian life and foster Christian proclamation to Brazilians.

Also, the use of actantial models for both the source domain and the target domain placed next to each other allows us to see the correspondences of the two domains; we can see how they are related. In addition, the narrative relationships of the metaphor at issue, clearly visualized through the actantial models, can help Brazilian pastors/preachers work with the present metaphor, making the proper distinction between the Christian life and salvation narratives. If such a distinction is not properly made, then the image renders the Gospel incomprehensible.

Finally, “the Christian life is a battle” metaphor, along with the “stomping narrative” of Luther, has helped us to address the problem of an over-realized eschatology in which Brazilian Neo-Pentecostal Christians understand the Christian life as a life of victory only. We have argued, however, that seeing the cross as a defeat and the resurrection as Jesus’ victory against Satan, as Luther did, along with Paul’s understanding of our resurrection, leads us to locate the Christian’s final and complete victory in our resurrection on the last day. To speak, therefore, of a complete victory is something that belongs to a salvation narrative in which Christ has already fought, alone.

In the Christian life narrative explored in this paper, however, the Christian is seen as a soldier who will continue fighting until the war is over. But the Christian is not alone, for just as a good commander never abandons his soldiers, the Holy Spirit will never abandon the Christian.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> A previous version of this article has been posted on JustinRossow.com in parts. Samuel Fuhrmann, “The Brazilian Metaphor LIFE IS A BATTLE,” March 6, 2013, <http://justinrossow.com/2013/03/06/brazil-life-is-a-battle/>.

<sup>2</sup> For the implications of this metaphor in one’s conversation with non-Christians, see <http://justinrossow.com/2012/07/17/outreach-and-warfare/> (accessed on February 9, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Justin Rossow, *Preaching the Story Behind the Image: A Narrative Approach to Metaphor for Preaching*, Ph.D. diss., Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (2009).

<sup>4</sup> George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 3.

<sup>5</sup> George Lakoff and Mark Turner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), xi.

<sup>6</sup> Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 6. The so-called *Conceptual Metaphor Theory* defended by Lakoff and Johnson affirms that a conceptual system “emerges from our constant successful functioning in our physical and cultural environment. Our categories of experience and the dimensions out of which they [conceptual systems] are constructed not only have emerged from our experience but are constantly being tested through ongoing successful functioning by all the members of our culture” (Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 182–183). This is basically what the authors call the “experientialist” approach. It focuses on the relation between (culturally-shared) experiences, thought, and everyday language.

<sup>7</sup> See Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 9.

<sup>8</sup> The word “luta” is the noun “fight,” while the term “lutar” is the verb “to fight,” in the infinitive form.

<sup>9</sup> In the words of Zoltán Kövecses, “metaphorical linguistic expressions make conceptual metaphors manifest.” See *Metaphor in Culture: Universality and Variation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 8.

<sup>10</sup> Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 5.

<sup>11</sup> Rossow, *Preaching the Story Behind the Image*, 34. What is meant here by implied narrative relationships can be exemplified as follows: the biblical metaphor, “Jesus is the Lamb of God,” has as its implied narrative the sacrificial rite of the Old Testament as well as Jesus’ death on the cross. The metaphorical utterance, “I am Jesus’ little lamb,” on the other hand, has another implied narrative, which is one of a shepherd that cares for his frail sheep. In both instances *lamb* is the source domain, but in each image *lamb* has a different role. In the former image, the lamb (Jesus) saves us; the lamb has an active role in the narrative relationships of the metaphor. In the latter image, the lamb (us) is frail and in need of protection, which is provided by the shepherd; here, unlike in the former image, the lamb is passively gathered and protected by the shepherd. It is these kinds of relationships between shepherds and lambs or sacrificial lamb and the sinner that we refer to as implied narrative relationships.

<sup>12</sup> On this model, see Daniel Patte, “Structural Network in Narrative: The Good Samaritan,” *Soundings* 58 (1975), 229. According to Greimas’ structuralist model, it is assumed that every narrative has a structure that consists of a *Subject* communicating an *Object* to a *Receiver*. These three actants are also accompanied by a *Sender* (usually implied), a *Helper* (who helps the *subject* to deliver the object to the *Receiver*) and the *Opponent(s)* (who tries to hinder the delivery of the *Object* to the *Receiver*). These are the “actantial positions”; they form a basic structure that is found in every narrative, from a structuralist point of view.

<sup>13</sup> Justin Rossow, “Narrative Structure and Metaphor,” accessed April 6, 2015, <http://justinrossow.com/the-basics/narrative-structure-and-metaphor/>.

<sup>14</sup> Rossow, *Preaching the Story Behind the Image*, 44. See footnote 7.

<sup>15</sup> Justin Rossow, *Preaching Metaphors We Live By*, accessed February 9, 2013, <https://itunes.apple.com/us/itunes-u/preaching-metaphors-we-live/id468118579?i=117881938>.

<sup>16</sup> David J. Williams, *Paul’s Metaphors* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999), 213.

<sup>17</sup> Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, and Tremper Longman III, *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 211–213—Divine Warrior.

<sup>18</sup> The idea of working with the given metaphor in this paper is not to use a specific Bible passage but the general biblical understanding of the Christian life in terms of warfare. When using one specific passage in which the warfare metaphor is played, the pastor could work with the expressions and development of the given text. In Romans 7, for instance, “waging war” and “making me captive” would play a very important role in the development of the sermon.

<sup>19</sup> Rossow, *Preaching the Story Behind the Image*, 54. Rossow suggests this way of placing the two actantial models next to each other so that it may be more clearly seen “how the two domains relate to each other.”

<sup>20</sup> Rossow, *Preaching the Story Behind the Image*, 55. In presenting the actantial models this way, Rossow provides a clear visualization of how “relationships and outcomes assumed by the source are intended to correspond to relationships and outcomes in the target: Helpers align with Helpers, Opponents with Opponents, and so on.”

<sup>21</sup> This explanation of the narrative relationships is not, of course, what pastors/preachers will explain in a sermon. In preaching, the source domain, for instance, should be evoked in such a way that the preacher not only tells things but shows those kinds of things in the source which will help the hearers make the proper inferences in the target. Since in the present metaphor the *Helper* has a fundamental role, in evoking the source, the preacher could, for example, emphasize the *soldiers' exhaustion* and *lack of hope* in the *battlefield* along with the importance of having a *good commander* who never abandons his *soldiers*. This will lead to the inference that the *Holy Spirit* will never abandon the Christian in his daily struggles.

Since the goal of the present paper is not primarily to work with the suggested metaphor in a sermon, but to show how the culturally-embedded metaphor, "life is a battle," can be helpful for speaking of the Christian life to the Brazilian culture, we are not going to provide examples of how this metaphor should be used in a sermon.

Still, we consider Rossow's suggestion as being very relevant to the homiletic task, as one works with metaphors in preaching. The four metaphor moves suggested by Rossow may serve for structuring the progression of a sermon and for its development, as rhetorical units. <http://justinrossow.com/the-basics/preaching-metaphors-we-live-by/> (accessed February 10, 2013).

<sup>22</sup> Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocation* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1957), 10.

<sup>23</sup> Rossow, *Preaching the Story Behind the Image*, 210, 211.

<sup>24</sup> Williams, *Paul's Metaphors*, 214.

<sup>25</sup> Ricardo Mariano, "Neopentecostalismo: O Novo Modo de ser Pentecostal," in: Márcio Fabri dos Anjos, *Sob o Fogo do Espírito* (São Paulo: Paulinas, 1998), 19–37.

<sup>26</sup> The study was presented at the *17th Annual Theological Symposium, September 19–20, 2006, "Recapturing a Full-Bodied Theology of the Resurrection: Christ's and Ours."*

<sup>27</sup> David Maxwell, "The Resurrection of Christ: Its Importance in the History of the Church," *Concordia Journal* 34 (January–April 2008), 35.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>29</sup> Justin Rossow, *Metaphor, Text, World: Preaching Metaphor*, accessed February 9, 2013, <http://metaphortextworld.wordpress.com/the-basics/preaching-metaphors-we-live-by>.