

Weekly Column  
Korean Newspaper



Melvin University  
and Me

## Lay Pastors Ministry in Kenya

I talked to students in class a few weeks ago about the lay ministry as a special lecture.

But I found it quite difficult. They are theological students, but I found them worse than the lay people of the Korean church. Of course, it wasn't their fault. I think it's because the churches in Kenya aren't used to it yet, and they haven't dealt with it for decades in seminaries, and they also don't have faculty to teach. It can be said that the level of churches is directly proportional to the economic level of the country.

If we look at the reality of the Kenyan church, that is, the level of the church, mainly the Pentecostal Church & Pentecostal Pastor & Pentecostal laymen, and as it move on to this atmosphere, rather than just systematic education, training, studying the Bible, it seems to be more comfortable to think that becoming a pastor can be ordained and pastoral if they pray a lot and serve hotly.

Now, while the government is concerned about the pastors those who never gone to theological schools, they have to go to the accredited Seminary/Theological University and get a degree, then they will get permission from the government, that is, to give the qualification to preach. Therefore, it is working to reorganize pastors by establishing a policy to be properly ordained and pastoral. Of course, there is also a backlash that "the government is too deeply involved in the church."

Anyway, with the reality of the churches, the pastors has no time to think seriously about laymen. It was like the pastors of the Korean church a few decades ago. Severely speaking, laymen has been considered as an object of utilization.

I asked to the students, "do you accept laymen as partners in ministry? But it seemed like they didn't understand what I was saying. It was like a church in Korea in the 60s and 70s. When I was working in Korea, only a decade ago, there were many pastors who were curious about the question, "Do you accept laymen as a partners in ministry?" I think that such a problem has been solved now. First of all, the level of laymen has increased due to the change of times, and the other is that the idea that realistic ministry is impossible without laymen has become an issue that touches individual pastors. That's why the book *Partners in Ministry* (written by James Gallow) became popular in the United States as well.

African churches are likely to take time. These are the two reasons mentioned above. The level of laymen should be raised, and pastors' awareness of laymen should be changed. The churches here in Kenya will be just as it took Korea 20 to 30 years.

Maybe this is the biggest task for Melvin University. Melvin University is now almost fully aware that it was established with the basic theme of the lay ministry. Now, if these problems are dealt with and taught in schools, the future ministry is might to change.

