

Weekly Column  
Korean Newspaper



Melvin University  
and Me

## #2 Melvin University established in 15 months

Melvin University in Kenya was established in 15 months. I think there are many readers who can't believe it. However, this is true. It is not wrong to say that Melvin University was established in 15 months because in May 9, 2020 Ogillah and I talk first "let's make university," and eventually the opening ceremony was held on August 14, 2021. This is true and was followed.

On May 9, 2020 (I remember the exact date), Pastor Ogilla, head of the Lay Pastors Ministry institute in Kenya, received the English materials what I sent him (pdf file) and said to me, "This will make it possible to make university." I answered "...probably in 10 years.?" Then he immediately replied, "Five years is enough." Actually I didn't have any other ideas, so I said, "Then it's hard for you alone, so make a team and get together."

So Pastor Ogilla gathered several people and gathered every day to proceed with the goal of [establishing a university]. At that time, I suggested not to involve too many pastors, but to gather pure laypeople and start, and a steering committee was established with truly pure lay believers. Later, I came to Kenya at the ground-breaking ceremony, were too naive people gathered as steering committee. There were no people who graduated from college, and almost only elementary school was the mainstream of about 10 people.

But I didn't care about that. It wasn't whether I had skills or not, but whether I studied a lot or not, but whether I really wanted to establish a university was my key. However, seeing them gather from the beginning, they literally gathered with only that passion.

Their goal was the ground-breaking ceremony. As I had never done anything about architecture, I began to focus only on it, thinking, "Should I dig the ground?" So, we have to decide on the deadline as we proceed, so we decided on December 4th and Saturday.

As a result, Pastor Ogila's friend Jacob(now director of Administration in Melvin) joined around October because of his good administrative power and began preparing documents for the establishment of a university. The land was already 6 hectares that Pastor Ogila inherited from his father, so there was no difficulty. I remember sending about 200 U.S dollars a month for drinking beverages and refreshments every time I gathered money, and sending about 300 U.S dollars for months because it took months to leave the establishment documents to be submitted to the Ministry of Education. At least it cost only 2-3000 U.S dollars.

Anyway, the ground-breaking ceremony is ready. So I went to Kenya from Korea. It was my first time to establish a university, my first time to build architecture, and my first time to visit Africa. However, I learned something in my own way, so I started and proceeded without much concern. There are a few things to summarize: Begin from the End. Don't stop, just keep the moment. Stick at Final Destination. Pray even when you can't, and proceed as it is (Brutal facts/Stimulate Progress). Don't lose your sense of urgency. There are several themes like this, and I held on to this and continued. Upon completing these short-term projects, I thought, "Are you a leader?" Under the title "Are You Leader?" they often write English books and teach them locally.

Let's briefly look at some of the above here;

First, if any project needs to be completed in the short term, it is argued that it should start from the end. (Beginning from the End). The reason is that researchers confirmed that many people in the world passed away with little achievement of their goals. Isn't there a saying that it's a short-lived resolution? For a long time, the most regrettable number one when people die is "when they leave without achieving what they want to do." It is believed that almost all of them end their lives like this.

He suggested one way, and he told me to start from the end. In a way, it is both biblical and a general expert's suggestion. In other words, it is a suggestion to hold onto the goal, not let go of the vision, and focus on it. Then why can't you start well and reach the end? For example, suppose 1 is the starting point and 10 is the last arrival, the destination. Usually, schools teach and learn to start from 1 and do it in order of 2, 3, and 4, that is, sequentially.

But the problem here is that people put a lot of energy into 1-2-3, that is, there is no energy left to reach 10, and 10 seems too far away, so they give up almost before 4. Don't you think so? So start at 10 and move freely between 1 and 9. This is an absolutely necessary method for short-term projects. Long-term ministry is a little different for long-term ministry.

Anyway, the establishment of Melvin University followed this strategy. That's why I was able to finish in 15 months. I only applied this because I learned it long ago. There are a few other key factors, strategies, but if you add one more thing, you should always stick to your final destination (Stick to the final landing spot). The reason is that if we don't do that, there are always temptations that distract our attention, so there is a possibility that our destination will be blurred or lost. Anyway, thanks to this kind of prior understanding, the ground-breaking ceremony of Melvin University ended well (December 4, 2020).

But the problem began after that. The ground-breaking ceremony was held, but as if the radio was turned on, but there was no sound, as if the electric switch was raised, but the electric light was not coming in... The ground-breaking ceremony was held magnificently, but there was no next.

The truly boring and frustrating time has passed to December and January. I didn't know what to do either. However, at that time, there was already a good understanding, so the method was applied. In other words, it was an ordinary truth that every change required process and time. I already knew this. In other words, it was called "Ending-Neutral Zone-New Beginning," a process of change. This was an absolute discovery for me. It was a book called Transition: The

Most Change, written by William Bridges. The most brilliant idea in this book was the Neutral Zone. In other words, it is necessary to pass through this intermediate zone when a new one begins after finishing the past one.

In the end, the fact that many attempts to change end in failure is also a disproof that this second process has not been taken seriously. I read this book and was already ready, so when reality was difficult, I decided to accept that it was entering the Neutral Zone. However, the reality continued to be difficult. I was prepared in my mind, but in reality, I was at a loss. The money was not ready, and only time went by.

However, at the end of January, a pastor from an acquaintance church in Korea contacted me. After hearing the news, he said he would build a university chapel. In fact, the Ministry of Education suggested to us that in order to open a school as a university, about 100 평 = 330m<sup>2</sup> of university chapel and three classrooms (10m<sup>2</sup> each, 300m<sup>2</sup> in total) must be prepared to open the school. Therefore, the news of building a university chapel was like welcome rain on dry land.

Moreover, Kenya, and moreover, the place where our school is located is Oyugis, and it is hot all year round because there is a sign that the equator passes nearby. The 35-degree heat comes in December and January, and the construction is not going on despite the hot weather, so the question of "Why should I be here?" continued to pour out from myself and from acquaintances in Korea. Why are you there when you can't even build.

The church, which promised to build a church, said it would send only 10 million won, so it continued to wait with only the foundation of the chapel. Even though I was a little skilled in waiting, waiting without any sign was a taste of death. Even I thought I was pathetic. There have been voices of criticism in Korea, the United States, and even here in Kenya about whether to build a university without money or without securing finances. Even when I think about it, it was not a normal process. However, the idea of continuing (Facts/Progress, paradoxical and contradictory) remained almost unchanged. It was like looking only at the sky in the dry wilderness. It is reasonable because

only the foundation of the chapel is set up, and only the time is waking up.

At that point, it is time to extend my visa. Should we return to visa maturity as it is, extend and wait longer? They were just urging me to return home because I couldn't do it in Korea. However, most of the school officials here have to go back after the construction of the visa extension. He extended his visa due to twists and turns and returned to Korea in April. I was in a situation where I had to return after only a tenth of the construction and go back. The classroom architecture was only marked with location, and the chapel was only based on the foundation.

When I arrived in Korea, my face turned completely black, and people were disappointed that I could hardly do it because I had just started construction. But since it started, what should I do? But two or three weeks later, people began to inquire. They were curious about how much they needed. People began to feel urgency (sense of urgency). I knew well that people wouldn't move without this.

So, after two months from April to May, the construction proceeded with a lot of fundraising, so I came back to Kenya to finish it. However, due to COVID-19, he gave up his visa for only a month and reported that the school would open at the end of July when he returned home in July.

However, until returning home, only 80% of the construction had been completed. However, the Ministry of Education said that we should complete the construction by July and open the school in August, otherwise it will be January 2022 the following year. Therefore, when returning to Korea, the conclusion that it should not be more urgent, that is, it remained firm. Of course, there were also opinions that the school should be opened slowly. But I didn't hear such stories. Because I had already learned that when I made a plan, the timetable was clear, so that the date should be clear when it ends and when it arrives at the destination.

So, the date of the Inauguration ceremony was decided to be July 31, and on July 26, I decided to fly with two other pastors and was going

to Incheon International Airport. One person took a bus from Iksan, and the other person came to the airport by car from Yongin. The departure flight to Nairobi is close to midnight. I promised to meet at Incheon International Airport at 8 p.m.

But I was taking the Olympic Boulevard near Yeongdeungpo by bus, and I got a call from Ogilla, Kenya.

The contents, that is, due government inspectors came out from the Ministry of Education, and the opening ceremony at the end of July was not allowed.

I was really at a loss. All three got visas, completed the COVID-19 test. We bought a plane ticket and We are going to the airport, but the opening ceremony will not be held in a few days. So I called the two pastors right away, and the person coming from Iksan came up by bus and said, "What can we do? "Let's go to Kenya and find out more," he said. However, the pastor coming from Yongin said that he had not left home yet, and said, "Why do you work like this?" He even said, "Do we need to go when we can't even start school?"

But what can we do? We bought all the plane tickets. In the end, we started fighting... Anyway, we arrived in Kenya. As soon as we arrived, there were so many complaints. Not only me but also Ogillah was scolded a lot. Anyway, we slept first, woke up tomorrow, and said let's talk more, and that's how the arrival date ended like that.

The next morning, we gathered together and discussed, and opinions were gathered to ask "how much more do you need and give some time to the Ministry of Education." So, the money needed began to be called here and there in Korea, and the Ministry of Education gave us two more weeks, so we got permission to supplement and open the school on August 14, diligently finishing the rest of the construction, and the first class began the week after.

As you can see,  
Anyway, Kenya's Melvin University was built in 15 months, and after the simultaneous opening ceremony with approval, classes are currently going well. It was possible to be completed in such a short

period of time by mobilizing God's special grace and wisdom given to man, and summarizing some strategies:

First, the firm goal was clear. There was no shaking about it. Second, the result, that is, the energy from the end, was concentrated there. I didn't waste too much energy in the beginning stage.

Another is paradoxical, but at the same time, it was clearly aware of the difficult reality, and at the same time, it continued. Sometimes it's fast like a rabbit, sometimes it's slow like a turtle, but it keeps going. Sometimes like a 100-meter sprint, other times like a marathon.

Finally, it was motivation, which was transferred to external request and internal impulse, sponsored by more than 20 churches and individuals.

In this way, it was also an opportunity to learn how short-term projects were completed.