

Weekly Column  
Korean Newspaper



Melvin University  
and Me

## About "naming"

When I worked for the Lay Pastors Ministry in Korea, I was very interested in the naming of laymen. Recall that naming is still quite important. Rev. Melvin also wrote this in his essay: "What should PACE ministers be called!" In the essay, he understood that there are many different names in the American churches, but emphasized that even if they were given a different name, the original meaning and concept should not be changed as if roses were given the same scent. (Rev. Melvin studied theology in Methodist and Presbyterian, but he is ordained from Presbyterian Churches and pastoralized in three Presbyterian churches in the States.)

The original name of the people who do this ministry is Lay Pastors, and the ministry is one-on-one care, that's PACE. Just as laymen are called teachers, missionaries, cell leaders, etc., experts on caring can be called pastors in caring for others. (Not an ordained pastor. I hope there is no misunderstanding.) A pastor is a person who is educated in theology and has been ordained. Of course, everyone is called by God definitely, but it is precisely ordained person. However, lay people who are gifted with care and trained in special distinction may be called "lay pastors." Rev. Melvin was not the only one who decided to name it, but the pastors and laypeople of the Church (in Ohio, College Hill Presbyterian Church) gathered and studied the Bible for months and decided it. I think we also can look at it as biblical significance.

Let's take an example. One of the largest churches in the United States is the Frazer Memorial Church in Montgomery, Alabama. They adapted this

ministry PACE several years ago, calling them "lay ministers" rather than lay pastors. Of course, these two names are very different, as you know, but the church called them slightly differently from the original names. The church is a large church, so there was already a title and system called "lay minister" for many years, so Melvin's PACE ministry was adopted, but the title was not changed but by using the old one, lay minister, as it was. Perhaps the new wine was not put in the new wineskin, but it was put in the old.

In doing so, many other churches copied their style and called them "lay minister." Of course, there was no big problem because they knew the exact meaning and concept of PACE, but other churches could be misunderstand and confused. So I think we have to be very careful with how we naming them and how we call them. Of course, I know that there is also a risk factor in calling them "lay pastors." Because people think it is a person who graduated from the seminary and has been ordained.

In Korea, there is Hallelujah Church in Bundang, and when the new pastor, David Kim, was appointed to the Hallelujah Church in Daechi-dong era in the United States, he brought the brand of PYEONGMOK, which means Lay pastors. So the church has been running 10 years of "Lay Ministry Academy" which called Lay Pastor Academy. Then one day, through our LPM Korea Institute, he introduced Melvin's lay pastor as the ministry PACE, and used the name "PACE Training Center" openly and intentionally.

In June 2001, since they adopt PACE ministry for 10 years, the Church hold its first "Lay Pastors Conference" in Korean church history, introducing PACE ministry and opening a PACE training center in the church, trained and produced more than 1,000 lay pastors. There is an illustration that the pastor, (Kim Sang-bok at the time) argued with his wife for years over such a naming issue. The pastor constantly insisted that they should be called "lay pastor," but many members said the title is not suitable for laymen, so his wife was always uncomfortable and told him for dozens of times over the past decade. Whenever he talked about it, the pastor David Kim did not give up calling them "Lay Pastor." Because, as Melvin said, the title accurately expresses the person's heart, soul, and who they are. Rev. Kim understood

exactly the meaning of this ministry.

As mentioned in the beginning, as Rev. Melvin said, "Roses should smell the same wherever they are placed," the title is important, and it can vary depending on the situation and theological p[oint of view. The lay minister and the lay pastor should not be mixed, and confused. Even if it is mixed, it is thought that it is the task of the senior pastor to carefully think one more time, and decide what will happen in terms of the original intention and meaning, especially [effectiveness].