

Weekly Column
Korean Newspaper



Melvin University
and Me

The learning process

I'm sure I have seen the process of learning before, but let me review it again.

First of all, it is adult learning. There is a difference between children's learning and adult learning. Children's education is called pedagogy, while adult education is called andragogy. Adults don't look at thick manuals to learn something, but only when they need to solve a problem.

The second is that there is advanced learning. If you look at the world's most famous schools, you'll see that advanced classes are almost all about 'issues'. At Harvard, students read about an issue and present it in front of the professor, whereas at Oxford and Cambridge, students play the role of professors, asking questions and leading the class. The professor doesn't give a lecture, but rather creates the atmosphere for this to happen.

The third is postmodernism. In this era, all answers are not black and white: they are not right or wrong, but good or bad. This means that not all decisions are simple. It's an age of information and dialogue and discussion rather than lectures.

The fourth is an ancient insight, and it was Plato who was at the forefront of thought and education in Greece in the 5th century BC. He was a student of Socrates, as we know him. Socrates didn't write any books, so it was Plato who compiled his ideas. Plato believed that the best leaders were 'lovers of wisdom,' or philo-sophers. Through dialogue with his disciples, Plato hoped to draw out the wisdom within them, which he hoped would lead them to the truth.

The fifth method is theological, which in modern times is understood as the memorization of truth. This was the so-called 'question-answering method'. All answers were given by creeds or confessions. Today, however, theology has become a verb. More than just a statement of truth, theology is described as an activity. We do theology. To theologise is to think biblically and comprehensively about an issue. Ancient truths now need fresh expression and internationalisation in each generation.

Finally, the sixth and final pattern is the biblical pattern, which Moses instructed Israelite parents to teach their children about God's Word and ways (Deuteronomy 6) because they needed to survive in a pagan world. So parents passed on the faith to their children.

To elaborate on the above, we can say that people learn to solve problems by themselves (self-study), learn by discussing a topic with others (group), use a lot of information (information sharing), and seek wisdom (my general view). This is a general pattern of education, and the last two are theological and practical.

For those of us living today, it is desirable to acquire a balance of the above two (general lessons and biblical truths) and use them in our lives. Furthermore, we need to teach the next generation how to think and live biblically about life in general. Just as Jesus did with his disciples, we should help the next generation of leaders to live a healthy and faithful life.