

REFLECTIONS ON THE LAY PASTORS MINISTRY WITH PACE

HOW WE CAN LEARN TO FULFILL GOD'S MISSION IN THE CHURCH

FOR STUDENTS, PASTORS & CHURCHES



BYEONGCHEA SEO

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Reflection on the
Lay Pastors Ministry
with PACE

***New Paradigm
of Ministry for Today***

Byeong chea Seo

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CONGRATULATION!

Dear Byeong,

Congratulations on your book, *Reflection on the Lay Pastors Ministry* and leadership in making the School which will be vital to authentic, quality, and effective Ministry of Lay Pastoral Care into the future of the churches in Nagaland India.

God will bless you for the strenuous effort you are giving to this project! However, as we leaders of Christian ministry know, it takes more to do God's work than our "strenuous effort." Jesus puts this way, "Apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). He also said, "It is the Father, living in me who is doing his work." Somehow, in the mystery of God, His Son, and His Spirit...the triune God...with and in us, we are able to get His work done.

That's what you are participating in, God's work. God has a lot to say to us who do his work about perseverance...(1) "You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised" (Heb. 10:36); (2) "By faith Moses . . . persevered because he saw him who is invisible" (Heb. 10:22, 27); (3) "...let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us" (Heb. 12:1). One more..."Make every effort to add to your faith. . .perseverance..." (II Pet. 1:5-6).

If you ever get exhausted, tired or even discouraged, I have been faced with those negatives for the years I led the LPMI from in just our church in Cincinnati, Ohio. My strength is Psalm 1:3, "Whatever he does prospers." Simple! Our job is to do the works; God's job is to make it prosper. Whatever it is you are doing, the end result will prove God's formula works!

I am very interested in what you have written book for I know God will prosper it.

Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron
Founder Lay Pastors Ministry, Incorporated (LPMI) USA

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I am deeply indebted to God and to the many people who have encouraged and supported me in the writing of this book.

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This book is the fruit of reflecting on the ministry of Lay Pastors Ministry in Korea and many other countries over the past fifteen years. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the dedicated staff members of the Lay Pastors Ministry Institute Korea for their faithful service, encouragement, and partnership throughout this journey.

My deepest gratitude also goes to four distinguished mentors and advisors: Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron, Founder of Lay Pastors Ministry International (USA); John Morgan; Dr. Vincent Strudwick; and Dr. Paul Stuehrenberg. I am profoundly grateful for their encouragement and for the opportunities they gave me to study and conduct research at their respective institutions.

Finally, I thank God for the faithful leadership of Rev. John Ogillah, Vice President of Melvin University, and Dr. Aloto, Principal of PACE Bible School, who continue to serve diligently in leading and managing these ministries.

May this book bring glory to God and serve as an encouragement to pastors and lay leaders around the world.

Byeong Chea Seo, Ph.D.

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PREFACE

The central theme of this book is **"to equip the saints"**(Ephesians 4:12). This verse has been the foundation of my ministry because Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron, the founder of Lay Pastors Ministry, Incorporated (USA), established the ministry upon this biblical vision.

Although many books have been written on the subject of equipping believers, this book presents the principles and practices of Lay Pastors Ministry as I have experienced them over many years of ministry in Korean churches. Rather than serving as the pastor of one local congregation, God called me to assist many churches through this ministry. Over the past years, I have worked with approximately 160 churches, equipping laypeople for pastoral care and ministry. These experiences have become the foundation of this book.

I am currently serving as a professor at PACE International Seminary (PIS) in Nagaland, India. Although I am not a full-time resident there, I travel from Korea to Nagaland each year to teach for several months. One of my primary motivations for writing this book is to provide a practical resource for our students, pastors, and church leaders. My prayer is that readers will gain fresh vision, practical ideas, and biblical insight for equipping God's people for ministry.

This book also reflects lessons I have learned not only in Korea but in many other countries that I have had the privilege of visiting and serving over the years. While ministry methods may differ from culture to culture, the biblical calling to equip believers remains the same.

For many years I wanted to write a book in English. However, I felt that the time was not yet right. I believed I needed more experience, greater maturity, and a broader understanding of this ministry before putting my thoughts into writing. Looking back, I am thankful that I waited. After many years of ministry, teaching in seminaries and churches, and witnessing God's work in

different nations, I believe the time has finally come.

It is my sincere prayer that this book will encourage pastors, inspire lay leaders, and help churches rediscover the biblical ministry of equipping the saints. Above all, may it bring glory to God and strengthen His Church around the world.

Byeongchea Seo, Ph.D

Chapter 1

What Is Lay Pastors Ministry?

Lay Pastors Ministry (LPM) is a **system of congregational care carried out by lay people**. This definition appears in Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron's PACE Training Manual, where LPM is introduced not simply as another church program, but as a ministry system. This distinction is very important. A program is an activity that begins and ends, but a system becomes part of the life of the church.

What does it mean to call LPM a system? When we hear the word *system*, many things may come to mind, but perhaps the simplest illustration is a computer. When we press the power button, the computer begins to function because all of its components work together according to a well-designed system. Every part has a specific role, and each part is connected to the others.

The church should function in a similar way. Every believer has a unique role, and every ministry should work together as one body. Neither the pastor alone nor the lay people alone can effectively care for the congregation. Scripture teaches that there is **one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, and one God**(Ephesians 4:4–6). Because the church is one body, the words, attitudes, and actions of every member influence the whole congregation.

The senior pastor, therefore, must recognize that his leadership affects the entire church. If he demonstrates a genuine heart of care, that spirit will naturally spread throughout the congregation. Conversely, if pastoral care is absent from the leadership, the members will notice it as well.

Likewise, lay people must understand that they are essential parts of God's design for the church. The Bible describes believers as different members of one body—hands, feet, eyes, ears, and many other parts (1 Corinthians 12:12–27). Just as every component inside a computer contributes to its operation, every member of the church contributes to the health of the congregation.

Each person's ministry directly or indirectly affects the whole body.

For this reason, Professor R. Paul Stevens emphasized that the pastor should be viewed as a **system leader** rather than merely a preacher or administrator. In his book *The Equipping Pastor*, he explains that the pastor's primary responsibility is to equip God's people so that the entire church functions effectively as one body.

Lay Pastors Ministry is also the official name—or brand—of this ministry. In its early years, the organization was known as **Lay Pastoral Care Ministry**, emphasizing that lay people were engaged in pastoral care. Later, the name was shortened to **Lay Pastors Ministry (LPM)**. The change reflected an important shift in emphasis: the ministry is not merely about pastoral care but about developing **Lay Pastors** who minister to others through caring relationships.

At the heart of LPM is the PACE ministry:

- **P**– Prayer
- **A**– Availability
- **C**– Contact
- **E**– Example

The ministry focuses first on people rather than programs. The most valuable resource in any church is not its activities but its people. A ministry succeeds because of the people who carry it out.

This principle is consistent with the well-known leadership insight of Jim Collins. In his book *Good to Great*, Collins argues that leaders must first get "the right people on the bus" before deciding where the bus should go. Although finding the right people is not always easy, successful organizations begin with people rather than programs.

Unfortunately, many churches do the opposite. They first create a ministry or a program and then look for volunteers to fill predetermined positions. As a result, many people participate only because they were asked, not because

they personally embraced the vision. Their involvement often becomes passive and temporary.

When people freely choose a ministry according to their calling and gifting, however, they invest themselves wholeheartedly. They develop a strong sense of ownership because the ministry becomes their own calling rather than someone else's assignment.

Ownership is one of the most important principles in Christian ministry. Today, many leadership scholars describe this concept as **autonomy**. Daniel H. Pink explains this idea in his influential book *Drive*(2009). Pink describes three stages of motivation. The first is **Motivation 1.0**, driven by rewards and punishments—the "carrot and stick" approach. The second is **Motivation 2.0**, which emphasizes empowerment and external encouragement. The third is **Motivation 3.0**, which is built upon autonomy, mastery, and purpose.

Pink argues that people in the twenty-first century are most motivated when they have the freedom to take ownership of meaningful work. This insight has significant implications for the church. Lay Pastors Ministry is built upon this principle. Rather than assigning people to ministries simply because positions need to be filled, LPM invites believers to respond to God's calling, discover their gifts, and willingly accept responsibility for caring for others. As a result, ministry becomes not merely a duty but a joyful expression of Christian discipleship.

Today's Christians Have Changed

Today's Christians are very different from those of previous generations. This is not because they have become less committed. Rather, society has changed dramatically, and the church has changed as well. Modern believers are no longer content simply to attend church week after week. They desire to grow spiritually, discover their gifts, and participate in meaningful ministry.

Many Christians today no longer remain in one church for their entire lives. They seek churches where they can continue growing. In Korea, many

churches provide discipleship programs that last three years. Ironically, after completing these programs, many committed members leave their home churches. Some have faithfully served for twenty or even thirty years, yet they move elsewhere without hesitation.

Why? Because they want opportunities to continue growing and to use the gifts God has given them.

As a result, churches that provide ministry opportunities often receive mature believers who have already been well trained elsewhere. Nearly every week, capable Christians transfer to churches where they can actively serve. This is the reality of today's church, especially in Korea. Pastors must recognize this reality rather than continue living in an idealized vision of church life. Otherwise, they may gradually lose members until their own churches begin to decline.

The Danger of Keeping Airplanes in the Hangar

Another serious problem is the excessive length of many church training programs.

Many believers today are already spiritually mature. They do not need years of preparation before serving. Instead, they need opportunities to minister. Unfortunately, many churches keep them in what I call "the airplane hangar."

An airplane is built to fly, not to remain inside a hangar forever. Likewise, Christians are equipped to serve. If they remain in training too long, they gradually lose the enthusiasm that first motivated them. By the time they finally complete the program, much of their passion has disappeared.

This is one of the greatest mistakes pastors can make. Instead of releasing people into ministry while their enthusiasm is at its highest, they unintentionally delay them until their motivation begins to fade.

Years ago, believers often required lengthy Bible instruction because they had

little biblical knowledge. Today the situation is very different. Many Christians already possess considerable biblical understanding. What they need is not another three-year course but a change of mindset—a new paradigm that helps them discover their calling and begin serving immediately.

For this reason, training programs have become progressively shorter. Three years became two, then one, then six months. In many situations today, even a three-month program is sufficient.

PACE training illustrates this principle. The entire training requires only about twelve hours. Personally, I usually conduct the training over two intensive days. Why? Because most participants are already prepared. They simply need someone to open the door and encourage them to take flight.

A Missed Opportunity

One of my earliest experiences taught me an unforgettable lesson.

After translating Dr. Melvin Steinbron's book *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?*, I was serving as an associate pastor. Our senior pastor asked me to train lay people for this new ministry. Nineteen members joined the first training class. After completing the course, we organized the Lay Pastors Ministry according to the model described in the book. The lay pastors immediately began caring for other members of the congregation. Their enthusiasm exceeded everyone's expectations.

However, the senior pastor became uncomfortable with how quickly the ministry expanded. The church had never experienced this level of lay involvement before, and the rapid mobilization created uncertainty.

A second mistake followed. According to the ministry model, those who complete the training should be commissioned publicly during a worship service and receive certificates before the entire congregation. Public commissioning gives both recognition and authority.

Instead, our senior pastor decided to call each participant into his office individually and present the certificate privately.

As a result, the lay pastors were never publicly recognized by the congregation. Without public commissioning, they lacked the confidence and authority to carry out their ministry openly. Gradually, the ministry lost momentum and eventually came to an end.

Looking back, many people in that church still believe God had opened a unique opportunity for renewal, but the opportunity was missed.

God sometimes opens doors that may not remain open forever. When such opportunities come, we should respond with faith and courage rather than hesitation.

A Second Lesson

At another church, I trained a group of highly motivated believers who were eager to begin serving.

The senior pastor agreed that they should be commissioned but said, "First I will go to Prayer Mountain and pray before holding the commissioning service."

One month later I called him. He said he was still praying. Another month passed. I called again. He gave the same answer. Eventually, the commissioning service never took place.

The people were ready, but the door was never opened. Once again, the opportunity passed.

Sometimes excessive caution becomes disobedience. There are moments when prayer should lead to action rather than endless delay.

The Meaning of Lay Pastors Ministry

From years of ministry experience, I have come to understand that Lay Pastors Ministry rests on five foundational principles.

First, every believer is a minister. This conviction comes directly from Ephesians 4:11–12. God gives leaders to equip His people for ministry; ministry is not reserved for ordained clergy alone. This understanding was powerfully expressed by Oscar Feuchtin his influential book *Everyone a Minister*, which challenged the traditional assumption that only pastors are ministers.

Second, pastors and lay people are partners in ministry. James Garlow emphasized that the church flourishes when pastors and members serve together as partners rather than as leaders and spectators.

Third, both pastors and lay people grow together. As lay believers discover and exercise their gifts, pastors are also freed to focus on leadership, vision, teaching, and equipping. The entire church matures.

Fourth, healthy ministry produces a healthy church culture. Church growth is not merely about increasing attendance; it is about developing a culture where people are encouraged, equipped, trusted, and released into ministry.

Finally, Lay Pastors Ministry promotes genuine team ministry. Team ministry is not limited to pastors and church staff. It includes lay people serving alongside one another with a shared vision. The church must move beyond the mentality of "you and me" and embrace the biblical vision of "we."

This shift from individualism to partnership is essential for building a healthy and effective church.

Lay Ministry and Pastoral Care

What is the relationship between lay ministry and pastoral care? This is an important and fascinating question. Although they are closely related, they are not identical. Lay ministry is one field of ministry, while pastoral care is another. Many theological schools offer courses in lay ministry, whereas others specialize in pastoral care. During my studies in Canada, I found that these two disciplines were usually taught as separate subjects.

The uniqueness of the Lay Pastors Ministry (LPM), however, is that it brings these two concepts together into one ministry system. Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron began with the biblical foundation of lay ministry in Ephesians 4:11–12, emphasizing the equipping of all believers for ministry. As he continued to develop this vision, he recognized that one of the greatest needs in the local church was pastoral care. Consequently, he combined the biblical teaching on lay ministry with the practical ministry of pastoral care.

Dr. Steinbron recognized that the local church has two essential missions. The first is evangelism, based on the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19–20). The second is pastoral care, reflected in Jesus' command to Peter, "Feed my sheep" (John 21:15–17). While churches have produced countless materials, programs, and training resources for evangelism, comparatively few have developed effective systems for pastoral care. This observation led Dr. Steinbron to establish Lay Pastors Ministry—a ministry that equips ordinary believers to care for God's people.

Both dimensions are indispensable. Lay ministry changes the way we understand the church. It requires a paradigm shift from viewing ministry as the responsibility of pastors alone to recognizing that every believer is called to minister. Without this change in mindset, neither pastors nor lay members can fully accomplish the work God intends for His church.

Over the years, I have become convinced that Dr. Steinbron's insight was correct.

Consider the work of Professor Paul Stevens of Regent College in Vancouver, Canada. He is widely recognized as one of the world's leading theologians and practitioners in the field of lay ministry. Although he primarily writes about lay ministry rather than pastoral care, his writings clearly demonstrate the close relationship between the two.

In his book *The Equipper's Guide to Every-Member Ministry*(1992), Chapter 3, "Lay Pastors and Caregivers," Stevens presents three outstanding models of lay ministry: Stephen Ministry, Howard Stone's *The Caring Church*, and Melvin Steinbron's Lay Pastors Ministry.

Interestingly, all three models emphasize caring ministry.

Stephen Ministry is designed primarily for people experiencing crises. Stephen Ministers visit individuals, listen to them, encourage them, and provide Christian care during difficult times. Once the crisis has passed, their formal caring relationship usually comes to an end. Stephen Ministry offers an excellent system and outstanding training materials. However, its training is lengthy and relatively expensive. In many cases, the training requires an intensive week-long course, and the cost may exceed two hundred U.S. dollars per participant. By comparison, Lay Pastors Ministry provides a simpler, shorter, and more affordable approach that many churches can implement more easily.

Howard Stone's *The Caring Church*also focuses on developing a caring congregation in which members minister to one another through intentional pastoral care.

Lay Pastors Ministry and PACE likewise center on caring ministry. Therefore, even though Professor Paul Stevens is known primarily as a scholar of lay ministry, the ministry models he highlights all focus on pastoral care. This suggests that caring ministry is one of the most practical and effective expressions of lay ministry. Lay ministry is not identical with pastoral care, but in practice the two are inseparably connected.

For this reason, I believe Dr. Steinbron's approach is both biblically sound and highly beneficial for today's church.

This does not mean that evangelism is neglected. In fact, Dr. Steinbron clearly affirms both ministries. In his second book, *Lay Driven Church*, he writes about "striking a balance between the Great Commission and the Great Charter." Healthy churches need both evangelism and pastoral care. Dr. Steinbron simply chose to concentrate on developing the second ministry because churches already possess abundant resources for the first.

When we examine the Gospels, we also notice that much of Jesus' earthly ministry consisted of pastoral care. He comforted the grieving, healed the sick, restored the brokenhearted, welcomed the outcast, and patiently cared for individuals one by one. These acts of compassionate care became a powerful witness to the Kingdom of God.

Through my own ministry experience, I have also discovered that the churches in Nagaland have a great need for pastoral care. During PACE training in Korea, I had the privilege of teaching several students from Nagaland, including a doctoral student in archaeology and a theology student. Later, I worked with them in international ministry. Their experiences convinced me that while evangelistic passion is strong in Nagaland, there is also a significant need for trained lay people who can provide ongoing pastoral care within the local church.

This conviction has only grown stronger through the years. The church flourishes not only when it proclaims the gospel but also when it faithfully cares for the people whom God has entrusted to it. Evangelism brings people into the family of God; pastoral care helps them grow to maturity in Christ. A healthy church must faithfully embrace both ministries.

Visiting Churches in Nagaland and Introducing CPE

In Nagaland, I had the opportunity to visit two churches officially. During my stay, Dr. Aloto and I were invited to preach at both churches.

The first church was located in a rural area, where about one hundred people attended the worship service. There we preached on **Ephesians 4:11–12**, emphasizing God's call to equip all believers for ministry.

The second church was located in downtown Nagaland, where nearly one thousand people attended the service. Again, we preached from the same passage, but this time I placed special emphasis on the concept of "**partners in ministry**." I explained that ministry is not the responsibility of the pastor alone but a shared calling of both pastors and lay members working together as God's co-workers.

After the worship service, I had the opportunity to speak with the senior pastor. Since he was not comfortable speaking English, his son served as our interpreter. I asked him what he thought about my message. He replied that it was very good and that the idea of "partners in ministry" was completely new to him. He expressed his appreciation, saying that it had given both him and his church a fresh perspective on ministry.

These two church visits greatly encouraged Dr. Aloto and me. They strengthened our confidence that the churches in Nagaland are ready for Lay Pastors Ministry and that this ministry can make a significant contribution to their future growth.

Adapting Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)

While studying in Canada, I received formal training in **Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)**. This background made it much easier for me to adapt many of its principles to our ministry.

CPE is a specialized program designed primarily for seminary students preparing for pastoral ministry. It is widely used in theological schools throughout the United States and Canada. As an M.Div. student at **McMaster Divinity College** in Hamilton, Canada, I was required to complete a unit of CPE as part of my degree requirements. I completed my first unit at Woodstock, serving people with intellectual disabilities, and later completed a

second unit at a psychiatric hospital in Whitby. These experiences taught me invaluable lessons about pastoral care, self-awareness, listening, and caring ministry.

Traditionally, CPE is intended for future pastors, although lay people occasionally participate in the program. Our ministry, however, is different. Lay Pastors Ministry is designed specifically for ordinary church members. While it certainly benefits pastors and strengthens the church, its primary focus is the growth and development of lay people. They, too, are called by God and need opportunities to mature spiritually and minister effectively.

During my ministry in Nagaland, I began adapting selected CPE principles for our students. The results were very encouraging. Since the students had already completed the twelve PACE Training Modules, they were well prepared to understand and apply the reflective learning methods of CPE.

Through this experience, I became convinced that combining **PACE** with **Clinical Pastoral Education** creates an excellent model for developing caring lay ministers. PACE provides the biblical foundation and practical ministry skills, while CPE deepens self-understanding, pastoral sensitivity, and the ability to care for others with wisdom and compassion. Together, **PACE + CPE** offers a powerful approach to equipping lay people for effective pastoral ministry within the local church.

Why Is Lay Pastoral Care Important?

In today's rapidly changing world, it is increasingly difficult for a pastor alone to understand everything that is happening in the lives of the congregation and in society. Pastors carry many responsibilities, including preaching, teaching, administration, and leadership. Consequently, they cannot always be fully aware of the daily struggles, relationships, and experiences of every church member. This is where lay pastoral care becomes essential. Laypeople live and work among ordinary people every day. They understand the realities

of family life, workplaces, schools, neighborhoods, and society in ways that complement the pastor's ministry.

One experience impressed this truth upon me. I attended a revival meeting at a church where the main speaker had come from the United States. Surprisingly, the church invited him to preach for two consecutive weeks, even though traveling from Los Angeles to Seoul requires approximately fourteen hours of flight time. It was unusual for the same overseas speaker to be invited twice.

Why did the church do this? Although he was an ordained minister with his own congregation, he also owned and operated a business, using part of his church building for that purpose. In many ways, he lived as both a pastor and a layperson. During his messages, he spoke naturally about people he met through his business, everyday conversations, and ordinary life experiences. His sermons were filled with practical illustrations that connected immediately with the congregation. While several well-known pastors also preached during the revival, he alone was invited to speak twice. His effectiveness came not only from his biblical knowledge but also from his close contact with ordinary people and their daily lives.

I am not suggesting that every pastor should have two occupations. Rather, this experience illustrates the unique perspective that laypeople bring to ministry. Their daily interaction with society provides valuable insights that enrich the church's pastoral ministry.

Another example comes from my own devotional life. For many years I paid little attention to *The Upper Room* devotional booklet. However, while serving at the PACE School in Nagaland, India, I began reading it every morning at 6:00 a.m. on the second floor of the school building. Those quiet mornings became one of the happiest moments of my day. Since returning to Korea, I have continued this habit.

Why did this devotional become so meaningful to me? One reason is that many of its contributors are ordinary lay Christians. They write honestly about

their everyday experiences—their struggles, disappointments, fears, losses, and God's faithfulness through them. These are not merely theological discussions but authentic stories from real life. People are naturally drawn to practical testimonies because they can identify with them.

Pastors certainly share true stories as well, but their primary responsibility is to teach Scripture and communicate biblical truth. Consequently, their messages often emphasize instruction and doctrine. Laypeople, on the other hand, often communicate faith through everyday experiences. Both are necessary, but the testimonies of laypeople frequently build a bridge between biblical teaching and daily living.

Laypeople also have another important advantage. They often know the members of the congregation more personally than the pastor does. They work together, raise children together, share similar occupations, and experience many of the same pressures of life. Because of these common experiences, people often find it easier to share their deepest struggles, disappointments, grief, and personal pain with a trusted fellow believer. This does not mean they distrust their pastors. Rather, they often feel more comfortable opening their hearts to someone they see as a peer who understands their situation firsthand. Wise pastors recognize this reality and welcome lay pastoral ministry as a valuable extension of the church's pastoral care.

For this reason, I believe lay pastoral care brings new hope to the church. It benefits the congregation, supports the senior pastor, and transforms the lay ministers themselves. Most laypeople sincerely desire to serve God in meaningful ways. They want their lives to make a lasting contribution to the church and to God's kingdom. What many lack is not willingness but opportunity and authorization.

During PACE training seminars, I usually organize participants into a Ministry Leadership Group (MLG) before the training concludes. At the end of the PACE Training Manual, participants complete a motivation checklist, rating themselves on a scale from one to ten. Most participants score themselves

between seven and eight, indicating that they are already 70 to 80 percent motivated. Some even select ten, expressing complete readiness for ministry. These responses consistently reveal the same truth: many laypeople have been waiting for an opportunity like this for years. They have long desired to care for others but had never been equipped, encouraged, or officially entrusted with such a ministry. In many churches, they lacked both the training and the authority to minister pastorally to others.

Lay Pastors Ministry addresses this need. It equips willing believers, commissions them for ministry, and gives them the confidence and responsibility to care for others under the leadership of the church. In doing so, it not only multiplies pastoral care but also fulfills the biblical vision of "equipping the saints for the work of ministry" (Ephesians 4:12). The church becomes healthier because ministry is shared, relationships are strengthened, and every believer is encouraged to participate in the care of Christ's body.

Hope for Lay People

I have witnessed many remarkable transformations through the PACE ministry. One example is a woman who attended one of my PACE training sessions. During the training, participants were asked to indicate their level of commitment by choosing a number from one to ten. She circled **10**, expressing her desire to devote herself to this ministry for the rest of her life.

For many years she had already been caring for people faithfully. In fact, her ministry was often more effective than that of some associate pastors. However, she had been serving alone. No one in the church officially recognized or affirmed her ministry, and her caring gifts remained largely unnoticed. As a result, her passion gradually began to fade.

The PACE equipping sessions rekindled the fire that had once burned so strongly in her heart. She became the PACE Ministry Leader in her church, later served as one of the national leaders, and eventually helped establish

the PACE School in Nagaland, India. Her story demonstrates what can happen when a church recognizes, equips, and releases a gifted layperson into ministry.

Another example comes from one of the pastors in our PACE network. He told me that one day the PACE Ministry Leader, Mrs. Oakja Kim, came to his office to express her gratitude. She thanked him for giving her the opportunity to lead the PACE ministry because it had given her a new sense of purpose and dignity.

Mrs. Kim was an ordinary farmer's wife and had spent her entire life working on the farm alongside her husband. She believed that her life would simply end as a poor farmer's wife. Yet through PACE she discovered that God had entrusted her with an important ministry in her church. Leading and caring for others greatly strengthened her self-esteem and gave her a deep sense of fulfillment. It was a moving testimony of how God can use ordinary believers in extraordinary ways.

Another unforgettable story took place during a PACE training program at a rural church. The training lasted for two evenings, beginning on Wednesday night and continuing on Thursday night. We usually started at 8:00 p.m. and finished around 11:00 p.m. or midnight. However, on the second evening, our discussion became so meaningful that we continued until 4:00 the following morning.

When the session ended, I invited the nineteen participants to share their thoughts. One man, Mr. Han, who appeared to be about fifty years old, stood up and said that he wanted to make two promises.

First, he apologized publicly to his wife, who was also attending the training. She looked much younger than he did, perhaps in her late twenties or early thirties. He confessed that he had been drunk almost every day for many years. He suffered from the effects of defoliant exposure during the Vietnam War, and because of his physical and emotional pain, he had treated his wife very badly. With tears in his eyes, he sincerely asked for her forgiveness.

His second promise was that from that day forward he wanted to do God's work. At that time, none of us knew exactly what he meant.

Over the following years, however, I saw the evidence of his transformed life. His pastor also confirmed it. Mr. Han built a Lay Pastors Ministry office on the church grounds that could accommodate fifteen to twenty people. Lay pastors gathered there regularly for fellowship, prayer, and ministry. Whenever I visited the church for re-equipping sessions, I enjoyed spending time with them there.

He also created a beautiful fish pond in front of the church, helping to make the church grounds welcoming and attractive. More importantly, every morning, even during the freezing winter months, he woke up at 4:00 a.m., went to the church, and rang the traditional church bell to call people to the 5:00 a.m. dawn prayer service. He faithfully continued this ministry for many years.

PACE did not merely teach him new ministry skills—it transformed his life. He kept the promises he had made that early morning and became a faithful servant of God.

Mrs. Yoon provides another inspiring example. She was a member of Hallelujah Church. One day, Pastor David asked her to assist with the PACE ministry. At that time, approximately 5,000 people attended the church. She knew very little about either PACE or the Lay Pastors Ministry when she accepted the invitation. Nevertheless, she faithfully devoted more than thirteen years to this ministry, serving both her church and the Lord with dedication and joy.

These stories reveal a common pattern. Lay people discover hope through this ministry. They are not merely given responsibilities; they are given opportunities to grow spiritually, develop their God-given gifts, and make a meaningful contribution to the life of the church. They experience genuine fulfillment because they know their service matters.

As they minister to others, their self-esteem grows, their confidence increases, and they find the freedom to use the spiritual gifts God has given them. This is one of the greatest strengths of the Lay Pastors Ministry. It transforms not only those who receive care but also those who provide it.

Freedom for Lay People

When we speak about the freedom of lay people, we should avoid misunderstanding. Freedom does not mean that lay people are somehow in bondage to the pastor. Rather, it means they should be free to discover, develop, and use the spiritual gifts God has given them.

As we know, every believer has spiritual gifts. There are, however, different opinions regarding the number of gifts mentioned in Scripture. For example, Dr. Melvin Steinbron identifies 27 gifts; John Maxwell lists 24; James Garlow identifies 20; Ronald E. Osborn lists 15; and others suggest around 20. The major difference comes from the interpretation of Ephesians 4:11–12. Some scholars regard the ministries listed there as spiritual gifts, while others distinguish between spiritual gifts and ministry gifts. This explains why there is no universal agreement on the exact number of gifts.

Many years ago, while attending an international conference in the United States, I completed a spiritual gifts assessment. The results showed that my primary gifts were wisdom, administration, and teaching. Before that experience, I had suspected I possessed those gifts, but the assessment gave me greater confidence and clarity. Likewise, lay people need opportunities to discover their own gifts so that they can serve God more effectively. This is what we mean by *freedom*—the freedom to exercise the spiritual gifts God has entrusted to them for His ministry.

Pastors also have the responsibility of helping lay people discover their spiritual gifts. Many believers do not know what their gifts are, and some are not even aware of where the Bible teaches about them. Throughout their Christian journey, they need to learn that God has given a rich variety of

gifts to His people. Some Christians assume there are only three or four spiritual gifts because those are the ones most often mentioned in church. However, Scripture presents many different gifts, each of which is valuable and necessary for the health of the body of Christ. When believers understand this truth, they begin to appreciate that every spiritual gift has equal dignity and importance in God's work. Therefore, there should be no misunderstanding or unhealthy competition regarding spiritual gifts.

General Care and Particular Care

Another key concept in Lay Pastors Ministry is the distinction between **general care** and **particular care**.

This distinction is similar to the difference between *evangelizing* and being an *evangelist*. In many churches, pastors regularly encourage members to evangelize. Yet many people pay little attention because they assume someone else will do it. The announcement becomes so common that it loses its urgency.

The same thing often happens with pastoral care. Most people practice only general care. They greet others warmly, saying, "Hello," or "How are you?" Many Christians are genuinely kind, polite, and friendly. However, they often stop at the surface and never become involved in another person's real life. Modern society is increasingly self-centered, and churches are not immune to this cultural influence. As a result, much of what is called care remains superficial.

General care certainly has value, but it is not the same as intentional pastoral care. It expresses concern on the surface without entering into the deeper needs, struggles, and spiritual journey of another person.

Many theological schools primarily teach general pastoral care from an academic perspective. Students study theories and earn degrees, but practical, long-term caring relationships often receive less attention. Clinical Pastoral

Education (CPE) moves closer to personal care by placing students in hospitals, correctional facilities, nursing homes, and similar institutions. These settings provide valuable learning experiences. However, they are primarily training environments, and the caring relationships are often temporary rather than lifelong.

For this reason, Dr. Melvin Steinbron developed the Lay Pastors Ministry model. His vision was not simply to train people for short-term visitation, but to establish long-term, intentional, one-to-one pastoral care within the local church. Unlike ministries that provide temporary support, Lay Pastors Ministry emphasizes continuing relationships characterized by commitment, faithfulness, and longevity.

Individual care is essential. Some people are gifted at leading groups, and group ministry certainly has its place. However, group leadership is not always the same as pastoral care. In many churches, discipleship groups consist of ten to twelve members led by one leader. Such groups are excellent for teaching, fellowship, and spiritual growth. Nevertheless, it is difficult for one leader to provide deep, personal care for every individual in a group of that size. In many cases, the leader is primarily organizing, teaching, and managing the group rather than offering sustained personal care.

This is why Lay Pastors Ministry places such a strong emphasis on **particular care**—the intentional, personal, one-to-one ministry of caring for individuals over an extended period. General care is everyone's responsibility, but particular care requires commitment, relationship, and faithful presence. It is in this kind of ministry that people often experience the love of Christ most personally and most deeply.

Particular Care

What is **particular care**? In Lay Pastors Ministry, one caregiver should care for no more than three or four people. It is simply not realistic to provide

meaningful pastoral care to a larger number. Genuine care requires time, attention, and a personal relationship.

Through this kind of individual care, caregivers also grow spiritually and personally. When we observe people only from a distance, we cannot truly understand their lives. However, when we enter into their everyday experiences, listen to their stories, and walk with them through their struggles, we begin to see the details of their lives. This close relationship deepens not only our understanding of others but also our own spiritual maturity.

Our motto is **"Love with skin on."** Love is more than words or good intentions; it is love expressed through presence, compassion, and practical action. People today desperately need this kind of caring relationship. In Dr. Melvin Steinbron's first book, we find many true stories that demonstrate how personal, one-to-one care transforms lives.

Individual believers can certainly provide this kind of care. However, if a church desires to become truly effective and experience the power of multiplied ministry, it needs a systematic approach. A caring ministry should not depend on a few compassionate individuals alone. It should become part of the life and culture of the entire church.

Both individual growth and church growth are important. The kingdom of God works like yeast that gradually permeates the whole dough. Likewise, a culture of caring should spread throughout the church until every member is touched by it. When this happens, genuine synergy is created. This is also an important aspect of pastoral leadership.

Pastoral care should benefit not only those who receive care but also those who provide it. Ministry certainly requires commitment and sacrifice, but caregivers should also continue to grow in wisdom, understanding, and practical skills. The management thinker Peter Drucker often emphasized that an organization should first contribute to the growth of its people before seeking its own success. A healthy organization exists not merely for profit

but for the well-being of its employees and for society. The same principle applies to the church. Pastoral care should help caregivers mature because they, too, are disciples who are continually growing.

How do caregivers grow? They grow through real ministry experience. Without practical experience, growth remains limited. Caring for people means facing real problems, wrestling with difficult situations, listening carefully to life stories, and learning how God works in the midst of suffering. These experiences challenge us, deepen our faith, and prepare us for future ministry.

The Bible also illustrates this principle. Jesus taught His followers to love one another and to care for others. This is the general calling of every believer. Yet after His resurrection, Jesus asked Peter three times, "Do you love Me?" Each time Peter answered, Jesus replied, "Feed My sheep" and "Take care of My sheep" (John 21:15–17). Here Jesus entrusted Peter with the responsibility of caring for specific people. While general care is important, particular care—personal, intentional, one-to-one care—is at the heart of Christian ministry.

People today do not simply need large gatherings or general messages. They need someone who knows them, listens to them, prays with them, and walks beside them. This is the vision of Lay Pastors Ministry. It is a practical expression of Christ's command to shepherd His people through loving, personal, and faithful care.

Pitfalls in Caring

Although this is not one of the most serious issues in pastoral care, it is an important one that deserves careful attention. The PACE Training Manual identifies several cautions for those who care for others. One of them concerns money. The manual teaches that caregivers should avoid financial transactions with their flock families. We should neither borrow money from them nor create financial obligations that could damage the caring relationship. I have taught this principle many times in PACE training sessions.

Certainly, we must never borrow money from those under our care. Personally, I cannot recall ever borrowing money from any of my flock members. That has never been a problem for me. However, another question has challenged me throughout my ministry: Should we also be extremely cautious about giving or lending money to those we care for?

There are times when people face genuine financial crises. In such situations, helping them financially may seem appropriate. Yet this is a sensitive matter because money can easily complicate a pastoral relationship. For this reason, many caregivers become so cautious that they close their hearts before they have prayerfully considered the person's real need.

I believe we need balance. We should not ignore the wisdom of the PACE Manual, but neither should we allow fear to prevent us from showing compassion. There are occasions when God may lead us to give generously to someone in need or to support a ministry that is serving His kingdom. Financial giving should never be driven by pressure, guilt, or emotional manipulation, but by prayerful discernment and genuine love.

Of course, we cannot help everyone or support every ministry and organization. However, when we become aware of faithful ministries—especially those serving in poorer countries with limited resources—we should remain open to God's leading. We must guard against closing our hearts too quickly simply because financial involvement carries certain risks.

Dr. Melvin wisely advised us to exercise caution in financial matters, and that principle should be respected. At the same time, if we apply the rule so rigidly that we never respond to genuine needs, many ministries would struggle to survive and the work of God's kingdom would be hindered. Every ministry requires financial resources to fulfill its mission, and ultimately God knows how He will provide. Our responsibility is to exercise both wisdom and compassion.

Networking for Nurturing

Why do we need networking? The primary purpose is to help one another. As relationships grow stronger, we become better able to encourage, support, and strengthen each other. Through networking we discover one another's strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and needs, allowing us to minister more effectively.

I have come to believe that the most important purpose of networking is nurturing. Certainly, networking allows us to exchange information, share news, and communicate ministry opportunities. However, its deeper purpose is to nurture people in their spiritual lives and ministry.

Many churches have well-organized training systems. For example, members may progress through several stages such as:

1. New Member Class
2. Nurturing Class
3. Discipleship Training
4. Ministry or Service Training

In many Korean churches, each stage typically lasts around twelve weeks. These programs are valuable and provide an excellent foundation for spiritual growth.

However, true nurturing extends far beyond the classroom. We are nurtured through many different relationships and experiences, including peers, coworkers, ministry staff, board members, mentoring relationships, phone conversations, workshops, ministry partnerships, and healthy group dynamics. Therefore, we should remain open to every opportunity God provides for our growth.

Unfortunately, many believers depend almost entirely on classroom instruction, training manuals, coursework, and certificates. They complete one course after another and proudly collect certificates, believing they have fully matured spiritually. I am not criticizing these training programs, nor am I suggesting that they are unnecessary. They play an important role.

My concern is that classroom learning alone is not enough. It mainly informs the mind and gives us fresh knowledge, but knowledge by itself does not always transform our lives. Real nurturing occurs when biblical truth moves from our minds into our hearts, shaping our character and becoming part of our daily lives. The goal is not simply to learn information but to embody it until it becomes part of our very blood and flesh.

Networking is one of God's important means for this kind of lifelong growth. Through meaningful relationships we receive encouragement, correction, wisdom, accountability, and practical support. These experiences help us mature in ways that formal education alone cannot.

Jesus Himself modeled the power of networking. Throughout the Gospels, He intentionally built relationships with His disciples, met people where they were, connected individuals with one another, and nurtured them through daily life. Many of the stories recorded in Scripture demonstrate how Jesus used personal relationships to develop His followers. His ministry reminds us that people are transformed not only through teaching, but also through living and growing together in community.

Reopening the Back Door

There are two major caring ministries in the United States: **Lay Pastors Ministry** and **Stephen Ministry**. Many American churches adopt one of these ministries, while some churches implement both.

The primary textbook for Stephen Ministry is *Reopening the Back Door*, written by its founder, Kenneth Haugk. I read this book, translated it into Korean, and have used it extensively in training and seminars. Stephen Ministry has also developed an excellent training manual that focuses on caring for people who are experiencing crises. In this sense, it is primarily a crisis-care ministry.

The training manual identifies thirty-three reasons why people leave churches

they have attended for many years. This is a valuable resource for understanding church attrition. Among these reasons, three stand out as the most significant:

1. A lack of meaningful relationships within the church.
2. A sense that church life has become meaningless.
3. A deep hunger for genuine belonging.

When these needs remain unmet, many people quietly leave the church. Kenneth Haug wrote *Reopening the Back Door* to address this reality. His conviction is that through intentional caring ministries such as Stephen Ministry, churches can reconnect with those who have left and invite them back into fellowship. This explains the significance of the book's title: *Reopening the Back Door*.

According to statistics, approximately 40 percent of church members in the United States do not attend worship regularly. These inactive members represent a significant pastoral concern. I believe this challenge is not limited to America but is shared by churches throughout the world. Every congregation contains people who are at risk of drifting away, and church leaders must remain spiritually alert to this reality.

Haug argues that many churches close the back door too quickly once people leave. Instead, churches should keep reopening that door—continuing to care, pray, communicate, and welcome them. People often need time and space to reflect before they are ready to return.

A similar concern is expressed in another book, *Closing the Back Door*, written by the Korean pastor Rev. Myungseoun Hoon. However, the emphasis is different. Rather than focusing on people who have already left, he concentrates on those who are likely to leave in the near future. His goal is preventive care—keeping people connected before they drift away.

These two books provide complementary perspectives. One emphasizes **preventing people from leaving** by "closing the back door." The other emphasizes **bringing people back** by "reopening the back door." Within the

philosophy of Lay Pastors Ministry, both approaches are essential. We must faithfully care for those who remain within the church while also reaching out with compassion to those who have already left.

Lay Pastors and the Congregation

Another important issue concerns the relationship between lay pastors and the rest of the congregation. Effective pastoral care requires cooperation from both sides. Lay pastors must be willing to offer care, and church members must be willing to receive it.

Some members may resist receiving pastoral care from lay pastors for various reasons. One common reason is that they question whether lay pastors are qualified to care for them. Others may not regard lay pastors as "real" pastors.

For this reason, the identity and character of lay pastors must be emphasized. Once believers are commissioned as lay pastoral care ministers—whom we call **lay pastors**—they must take this calling seriously. It is not simply another church position or honorary title.

In many churches, members receive appointment certificates at the end of each year for various volunteer positions. Over time, these certificates become routine. Many believers display numerous certificates from different churches and different years, but because they receive them so frequently, they often fail to appreciate their significance.

The same attitude can develop toward the appointment of lay pastors if it is viewed merely as another annual certificate.

For this reason, during PACE seminars I stress that we should move beyond the idea of an **appointment certificate** and instead speak of a **Certificate of Sending**.

Sending is fundamentally different from appointment. We are sent only once into a lifelong ministry.

Personally, I received my own sending letter from Dr. Melvin approximately fifteen years ago. I still keep it and treasure it because it reminds me that God has sent me to carry out this ministry—not only for one nation but beyond national boundaries and, ultimately, for the world. I have always believed that this was God's calling on my life.

Likewise, lay pastors who are sent into ministry should regard their calling with the same seriousness and lifelong commitment.

Their responsibility extends far beyond simply practicing PACE. They are expected to demonstrate Christlike character through sincerity, perseverance, purity of heart, integrity, humility, and faithfulness. People naturally observe their lives and expect these qualities to be evident. If these qualities are absent, confidence in the ministry quickly diminishes.

The attitude of the senior pastor is equally important. Leadership always sets the tone. If the senior pastor treats Lay Pastors Ministry as an essential ministry, the congregation will recognize its importance. If the senior pastor treats it casually, the congregation will do the same.

Therefore, senior pastors have two essential responsibilities. First, they must model pastoral care by practicing PACE themselves. Second, they must consistently affirm and support the ministry of lay pastors.

Dr. Melvin Steinbron anticipated that some church members would resist receiving care from lay pastors. He devoted one of his monographs to the subject of "people who resist." Ultimately, this challenge becomes the responsibility of the senior pastor. He must continually teach the congregation that lay pastors are genuine pastoral caregivers because God has entrusted them with the spiritual gift of caring. Their ministry is grounded not merely in organizational structure but in biblical teaching and sound theology.

This message should not be communicated only once. Senior pastors must reinforce it repeatedly—in private conversations, public worship, sermons, Bible studies, leadership meetings, and every appropriate opportunity. Over time, the congregation develops confidence in the ministry.

An excellent example is Pastor David Kim of Hallelujah Church. He consistently preached and spoke about the PACE ministry every Sunday. As a result, the congregation came to recognize PACE as an essential ministry of the church. Eventually, the church established a policy that no one could become a cell group leader without first completing PACE training.

Consequently, thousands of members understood that PACE was not an optional program but an important step in Christian service. This commitment contributed not only to the success of the PACE ministry itself but also strengthened the effectiveness of many other ministries throughout the church.

PACE as a Ministry Engine

One of the remarkable strengths of the PACE ministry is its ability to generate and stimulate other ministries within the local church. Over the years, I have observed that PACE not only develops caregivers but also creates a culture of ministry.

One pastor shared an interesting experience with me. Before introducing PACE, he had attempted to train his congregation using *The Purpose Driven Church*. Although the book presents an excellent philosophy of ministry, he found it difficult to implement its strategies in his church of approximately one hundred members. The methods that had been developed in a church of more than twenty thousand people did not naturally fit the context of a much smaller congregation.

Several months after introducing PACE, however, he revisited the same material. This time the outcome was completely different. The lay pastors

who had completed the PACE training had already developed a biblical understanding of the church, ministry, teamwork, and servant leadership. Because their perspective had changed, they were able to understand, adapt, and implement the principles of purpose-driven ministry effectively. PACE had prepared the soil so that other ministry strategies could take root and flourish.

For this reason, I often describe PACE as a **"ministry engine."** It is a ministry that produces other ministries. One of our staff members once commented that PACE opens the door for many additional ministries because participants learn not only how to care for people but also how to begin, organize, and sustain ministry. As the congregation observes the effectiveness of the caring ministry, they begin asking, "What other needs exist in our church?"

Their vision expands. Some recognize the need for an elderly ministry. Others develop ministries for single adults, widows, young families, or people with special pastoral needs. In other words, PACE opens people's eyes to the many opportunities for Christian service that already exist within their congregation.

Another encouraging example came from a church where we had recently completed PACE training. A deaconess with a young baby began arriving at church every morning before dawn and then went out for evangelism. Her senior pastor was surprised and asked why she had suddenly become so devoted to outreach despite her family responsibilities.

She replied that although PACE focused primarily on caring ministry, the training had awakened in her a renewed passion for evangelism. Through the ministry she had experienced God's calling in a fresh way. This demonstrates that while PACE emphasizes pastoral care, the Holy Spirit often uses the training to inspire believers toward many different forms of ministry.

Many pastors agree that healthy church growth depends upon the development of diverse ministries. Preaching and worship are essential, but they alone are not sufficient to mobilize the entire congregation. Many

churches recognize the need for additional ministries but simply do not know where to begin. PACE provides both the vision and the practical pathway. Once people experience ministry personally, they gain the confidence to serve in many other areas of church life.

Different Gifts of Lay Pastors and Senior Pastors

Kenneth C. Haugk, founder of Stephen Ministries, explains in *Reopening the Back Door* that lay caregivers and senior pastors often possess different spiritual gifts. Those who provide direct pastoral care generally need gifts such as compassion, mercy, encouragement, and empathy. Those who oversee and manage ministry, however, more often require gifts such as leadership, teaching, administration, and equipping others.

This distinction is very helpful, although in practice we often observe the opposite pattern. Some senior pastors naturally excel in personal care but are less gifted in administration, while certain lay leaders possess exceptional leadership, organizational, or teaching abilities. Rather than viewing this as a problem, churches should recognize it as God's design. Leaders should simply place people where their gifts can be used most effectively.

For example, lay pastors with strong leadership or administrative abilities may serve effectively as shepherd leaders or members of the Ministry Leadership Group (MLG). In these positions they help organize, coordinate, and strengthen the overall ministry while continuing to serve others according to their gifts.

I once met the senior pastor of a university church who confessed that his primary gift was teaching rather than pastoral care. He felt inadequate because he believed a pastor should naturally excel in personal caregiving.

I encouraged him not to be discouraged. A senior pastor does not have to possess every spiritual gift. His responsibility is to equip God's people for ministry. If his primary strength is teaching, he can faithfully train and

empower lay pastors whose gifts are compassion, encouragement, and caregiving. Together they form a healthy ministry team.

One group primarily leads; the other primarily serves through direct ministry. Their functions are different, but both are equally essential. When each person serves according to God's calling, the church becomes healthier and more effective.

Dr. Melvin Steinbron frequently taught that caring gifts and equipping gifts are often found in different individuals. While some exceptional people may possess both sets of gifts, most believers have a primary area of strength. This diversity should not be viewed as a weakness but as part of God's wise design for the church.

Of course, those who possess both caring and equipping gifts are especially blessed. Yet every believer, regardless of gifting, has the responsibility to develop and refine the gifts God has entrusted to them. Spiritual gifts are given by God's grace, but faithful stewardship, practice, and continual growth remain our responsibility.

Generally speaking, caring ministry emphasizes compassion, warmth, patience, acceptance, and loving relationships. Equipping ministry, on the other hand, emphasizes teaching, training, discipline, organization, and leadership development. Caring is relational and nurturing, while equipping is formative and instructional.

These two dimensions complement one another. Like two sides of the same ministry, they create balance within the church. Senior pastors who understand this principle will avoid expecting every leader to possess identical gifts. Instead, they will celebrate the diversity of spiritual gifts and organize ministry accordingly.

When caring and equipping work together in harmony, the church reflects God's design and becomes stronger, healthier, and more fruitful in fulfilling its mission.

Church in Terms of Lay Pastors Ministry

During my years of ministry, I have found that many local churches have fears about lay ministry. The primary concern is that the energy of laypeople might be directed outside the church rather than toward the church itself. Many churches prefer to use the gifts and energy of their members for internal ministries. Smaller churches, in particular, often believe that outreach ministry is a luxury for large churches. They feel that all available energy is needed simply to maintain and strengthen the local congregation. As a result, they rarely encourage laypeople to engage in ministry beyond the church walls. Instead, they limit lay involvement to serving within the church, even though many laypeople in the Bible ministered both inside and outside their faith communities.

Traditionally, many churches did not seriously consider the role of laypeople in ministry. There were several reasons for this, but one common attitude was summarized by the well-known expression describing the "three Ps" of laypeople: **Presence, Prayer, and Pay**—attend church, pray, give financially, and then go home. Although this does not describe every church, it has reflected the reality of many congregations over the past century.

Consequently, few churches developed specialists in lay ministry. Likewise, most seminaries concentrated almost exclusively on preparing full-time pastors. Only in recent decades have churches begun to recognize various forms of lay ministry, such as lay pastors, Bible study leaders, cell group leaders, caregivers, lay preachers, and other volunteer ministers. If churches are to develop these ministries effectively, both clergy and laypeople must experience a significant paradigm shift. Change often creates uncertainty, and both groups may initially feel uncomfortable.

Another important issue is that lay ministry requires a well-designed system. It is not enough to have a vision; churches must understand how to implement the ministry step by step. Lay Pastors Ministry (LPM), for example, combines two essential elements: **lay ministry** and **lay pastoral care**. In its early

years, LPMI USA used the name *Lay Pastoral Care Ministry*. Later, however, the ministry was restructured and renamed *Lay Pastors Ministry* to emphasize the broader pastoral role of trained lay leaders.

Many different forms of lay ministry exist throughout the world. LPM focuses specifically on lay pastoral care, which is both foundational and practical. Caring for people is one of the most basic ministries of the church. However, effective pastoral care also requires an appropriate ministry system. As Dr. Melvin Steinbron has emphasized, LPM is a **system of congregational care carried out by laypeople**. Every church must adapt this system to its own size, culture, and needs. Only then will the true character and effectiveness of LPM become evident.

There are also broader developments in contemporary theology that encourage the ministry of laypeople. One example is **Marketplace Theology**, promoted by Professor Paul Stevens of Regent College in Canada, which emphasizes ministry in everyday workplaces. Other influential movements include the **Missional Church** movement in the United States and **Mission-Shaped Church** in the United Kingdom. These approaches provide valuable theological insights. However, churches with more traditional perspectives often find them difficult to embrace immediately. While these models are excellent for theological education, they usually require considerable adaptation before they can be successfully applied in local congregations.

Church Growth Through Lay Pastors Ministry

One question I have been asked repeatedly by pastors is, "How does Lay Pastors Ministry contribute to church growth?" This question often made me feel somewhat uncomfortable because I have never served as the senior pastor of my own congregation. Nevertheless, after many years of observing churches that have implemented PACE and LPM, I have gained several important insights.

First, Lay Pastors Ministry can contribute to church growth, but **indirectly rather than directly**. Second, meaningful church growth through this ministry requires **time**. It cannot be expected within a few weeks or even a few months. In my observation, churches usually need at least two or three years before they begin to experience significant and lasting results.

I have visited many PACE churches. Some had practiced the ministry for only a few months, while others had faithfully continued for three or four years. The difference was striking. Churches that persevered experienced genuine fruit, while those that expected immediate results often became discouraged too quickly.

From these observations, I have concluded that the normal sequence is clear: **first comes spiritual maturity, then healthy growth**. Individual believers mature through faithful pastoral care. As individuals mature, the congregation becomes healthier. Only then does numerical church growth often follow. Therefore, church growth should be understood as the result of a healthy caring ministry rather than its immediate objective.

This distinction is extremely important. The heart of PACE is **pastoral care**, not church growth strategy or church growth programming. If we misunderstand this foundational purpose, we will also misunderstand the ministry itself. At the same time, pastoral care should not become an end in itself. Caring people is the beginning of a larger journey that ultimately leads believers toward maturity, leadership, and active participation in God's mission. As a national leader of this ministry, I have often wrestled with this question and have sought to provide a thoughtful answer.

I have observed three significant examples that illustrate this principle.

The first example comes from Dr. Melvin Steinbron himself. In his writings, particularly in *Letters to Lay Pastors*, he introduced the concept of **PACE Plus**. This approach adds further dimensions to the basic PACE ministry so that caring naturally develops into discipleship, leadership, organizational health, and eventually church growth. Rather than treating PACE as a fixed program,

Dr. Melvin viewed it as a foundation upon which additional ministries could be built. Through this gradual process, both individuals and congregations become healthier, and organizational transformation follows.

The second example is Hallelujah Church in Korea. By the time PACE was introduced, the church already had approximately 6,000 members. Although the church was already mature in many respects, PACE transformed its ministry culture. Members gradually came to understand that every believer could become a PACE minister. The emphasis shifted from simply attending church programs to becoming people who intentionally cared for others. This cultural transformation strengthened the congregation and indirectly contributed to continued church growth.

The third example is Rock Church in downtown Seoul, led by Pastor Park, one of our ministry staff members. Pastor Park is a gifted preacher who has faithfully practiced PACE for more than ten years. Over time, he discovered that the principles of PACE could be applied far beyond adult congregational care. The ministry expanded into children's ministry, youth ministry, workplace settings, correctional institutions, and various community organizations. As the congregation embraced this vision, the church became healthier, more active, and eventually experienced growth.

Finally, I have also experienced personal growth through this ministry. Before becoming deeply involved with PACE, I received training in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). CPE greatly developed my pastoral care skills and helped me mature as a caregiver. However, in comparison with PACE, I now see CPE as only the beginning of my ministry journey.

Both CPE and PACE develop pastoral care skills and deepen one's understanding of caring ministry. However, Dr. Melvin Steinbron's materials and ministry system extend pastoral care beyond the professional pastor by equipping ordinary laypeople to become effective caregivers. This broader vision profoundly influenced my own ministry.

Serving as the national leader of Lay Pastors Ministry has shaped not only

my understanding of pastoral care but also my leadership. Through PACE, I have learned that caring leadership develops mature disciples, healthy congregations, and stronger churches. Ultimately, the purpose of PACE is not simply to provide care indefinitely, but to cultivate mature believers who continue growing and serving in every area of ministry.

Becoming a Lay Pastor

I have found that becoming a lay pastor—or more accurately, becoming a **true lay pastor**—is not an easy task.

Many churches have developed a process for preparing lay leaders. One of our staff members, Rev. Jang, designed a training and commissioning process that includes four stages:

1. New Member
2. Training
3. Discipleship
4. Lay Minister (Lay Pastor)

In this process, the position of lay minister or lay pastor is placed at the final stage because the church believes that those who reach this level have been spiritually prepared to serve others.

However, simply receiving a title or being commissioned does not automatically make someone a quality lay pastor. Serving as a lay pastor involves much more than holding an office or receiving recognition. It requires spiritual maturity, Christlike character, and a servant's heart. From my perspective, several qualities are essential.

Above all, a lay pastor should not be self-centered. This is perhaps the most fundamental qualification because every person is naturally tempted to think primarily of himself or herself. Whether consciously or unconsciously, we tend to place our own interests first. In today's highly competitive society, people are often encouraged to become increasingly self-focused in order to survive.

Nevertheless, there is an important difference between being self-centered and being wise. Wisdom is necessary for living faithfully in today's world, but selfishness is incompatible with Christian ministry.

For example, if someone believes that God's love is primarily for himself or herself rather than equally for others, that attitude reflects a self-centered understanding of God's grace. Lay pastors must continually guard their hearts against such thinking and cultivate genuine concern for others.

Second, integrity is an indispensable quality. Although closely related to the first characteristic, integrity deserves separate attention. Integrity means being the same person in private as in public. Our outward behavior should reflect our inward character. In an age when appearances often matter more than authenticity, maintaining integrity is increasingly challenging. Yet without integrity, no ministry can earn lasting trust.

Another essential characteristic is self-discipline. Self-discipline may take different forms for different individuals, and Christians may practice it in various ways. Scripture presents many disciplines—such as prayer, Bible study, worship, obedience, and faithful stewardship—but each believer develops these habits according to his or her own spiritual journey. Regardless of the approach, a lay pastor must cultivate a disciplined spiritual life that enables faithful and consistent ministry.

Ultimately, becoming a faithful lay pastor is not easy in today's world. It requires people who are spiritually gifted, personally disciplined, and genuinely committed to serving Christ and His people. Such individuals are not merely appointed by the church; they are shaped by God through a life of spiritual formation and faithful obedience.

The Essence of Lay Pastors Ministry

What is the essence of Lay Pastors Ministry? From my experience, several essential elements define this ministry.

The first is **personal growth and a sense of fulfillment**. While responding to God's divine calling remains the highest motivation, those who faithfully serve also experience continual personal and spiritual growth.

For example, many members of the Board of Directors of Lay Pastors Ministry International (LPMI) USA have remained actively involved in this ministry for nearly thirty years. Why have they continued for so long? I believe it is because they have experienced ongoing growth—personally, spiritually, and even professionally—while faithfully responding to God's calling. They have discovered that ministry not only blesses others but also transforms the caregiver.

Closely related to this is the assurance of one's divine calling. When people ask, "Why are you doing this ministry?" the answer is simple: "Because God has called me." This conviction sustains faithful ministry through both joyful and difficult seasons.

A second essential element is **church growth**. Every ministry should ultimately contribute to the expansion of God's kingdom. A healthy, living tree naturally grows, and in the same way, a healthy church should continue to grow. Such growth is not measured only numerically but also spiritually and relationally. Lay Pastors Ministry strengthens the church both internally, through deeper pastoral care and discipleship, and externally, through outreach and witness.

A third essential element is the transformation of **church culture**. Many churches struggle with unhealthy traditions or passive congregational attitudes. Through Lay Pastors Ministry, the culture of a church can gradually change from one centered merely on attendance to one focused on ministry and service. Members begin to see themselves not simply as consumers of ministry but as participants in God's mission. A ministry-oriented culture encourages every believer to discover and use his or her spiritual gifts for the benefit of others.

Finally, the ultimate essence of Lay Pastors Ministry is the fulfillment of **God's will**. This ministry seeks to obey the biblical mandate given by Jesus. In John

21:15–17, Jesus repeatedly instructed Peter, "Feed my lambs," "Take care of my sheep," and "Feed my sheep." Likewise, in 1 Peter 5:1–4, church leaders are exhorted to shepherd God's flock willingly and faithfully. Dr. Melvin Steinbron often referred to these passages as the "Great Charge," emphasizing Christ's command to shepherd His people with love and responsibility.

The ministry also reflects the broader biblical command to love our neighbors as ourselves. Lay Pastors Ministry seeks to fulfill this calling intentionally, personally, and systematically by equipping ordinary believers to provide consistent pastoral care within the local church.

In summary, the essence of Lay Pastors Ministry lies in personal spiritual growth, faithful obedience to God's calling, the healthy growth of the church, the transformation of church culture, and the fulfillment of Christ's command to shepherd His people. These principles have sustained this ministry for decades and continue to define its mission today.

Chapter 2

PACE Training Manual

The **PACE Training Manual** consists of twelve chapters and is derived from Dr. Melvin Steinbron's first book, *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?* After launching the Lay Pastors Ministry at College Hill Presbyterian Church (CHPC) in Cincinnati, Ohio, Dr. Steinbron documented the principles and experiences of the ministry in that book. It later became the basis of his doctoral dissertation and was eventually published as a formal book.

From this work, Dr. Steinbron developed the **PACE Training Manual**, identifying twelve essential themes for equipping lay pastors. This manual has been used for more than **35 years in the United States, 15 years in Korea**, and is now being used to train students at PACE International Seminary in Nagaland, India.

Chapter 1: Concept and Theology

The first chapter establishes the biblical and theological foundation of the Lay Pastors Ministry. It examines key Scripture passages together with insights from respected Christian scholars and ministry leaders. This chapter answers the fundamental question: **What is the Lay Pastors Ministry?** Without a clear understanding of its concept and theology, the ministry cannot develop on a solid foundation.

Chapter 2: Caring—Who Needs It?

The second chapter focuses on the heart of the ministry: **caring**. It begins with a simple but profound question: **Who needs care?** The answer is equally simple—**everyone**. Every person needs love, encouragement, support, and spiritual care. Caring is not merely one activity of the ministry; it is the very heartbeat of the Lay Pastors Ministry.

Chapter 3: Job Description

This chapter explains the responsibilities of a PACE lay pastor. It introduces the ministry itself and outlines the commitments expected of those who serve. By understanding their role clearly, lay pastors gain confidence and embrace their responsibilities with greater commitment and purpose.

Chapter 4: Calling

Calling is one of the most important themes in the training. Just as pastors are called by God into ministry, lay believers are also called to serve His people. Developing a strong awareness of this divine calling is essential. My experience has shown that whether lay pastors possess this sense of calling directly affects the effectiveness and perseverance of their ministry. This chapter helps participants strengthen their understanding of God's call upon their lives.

Chapter 5: Relationship

Effective caring ministry is built upon healthy relationships. Unfortunately, many churches place greater emphasis on programs than on personal relationships. This chapter reminds lay pastors that ministry begins with genuine relationships characterized by trust, love, respect, and faithful presence.

Chapter 6: Listening

One of the greatest skills of a caring minister is the ability to listen well. This chapter teaches the importance of attentive and compassionate listening. Listening is not simply a technique learned once; it is a discipline that must be continually developed throughout one's ministry. For this reason, listening should also be reinforced during re-equipping sessions.

Chapter 7: Being and Doing

PACE ministry certainly involves **doing**, but effective ministry begins with **being**. Before serving others well, lay pastors must cultivate spiritual maturity, emotional health, and Christlike character. This chapter emphasizes that inward transformation is the foundation of outward ministry.

Chapter 8: Spirituality

Healthy ministry requires healthy spirituality. Most churches provide opportunities for spiritual growth, but this chapter encourages participants to examine their own spiritual lives once again. Lay pastors cannot effectively care for others unless they themselves maintain a vibrant relationship with God through prayer, Scripture, worship, and faithful obedience.

Chapter 9: Visitation

Visitation is one of the practical expressions of caring ministry. While some people enjoy visiting others, many feel uncomfortable or even fearful about entering the homes of those they do not know well. This chapter offers practical guidance to help lay pastors overcome these concerns and develop confidence in pastoral visitation.

Chapter 10: Professionalism

This chapter explores what it means to serve professionally. Society often defines a professional as someone who possesses academic degrees, certificates, or formal credentials. However, in the Lay Pastors Ministry, professionalism is demonstrated through faithful preparation, competence, responsibility, and excellence in ministry. As Rev. David Kim of Hallelujah Church often says, "**Lay Pastors are professionals in the PACE Ministry.**" They may not possess formal credentials, but they can minister with genuine professionalism.

Chapter 11: Confidentiality

Confidentiality is one of the most critical principles in any caring ministry. People will only share their deepest struggles when they trust that their conversations will remain confidential. During my Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) training in Canada, my supervisors repeatedly emphasized the importance of confidentiality. The same principle is essential in the Lay Pastors Ministry. Trust is difficult to build but easy to lose.

Chapter 12: Dealing with Difficulties

Every ministry encounters challenges, and the Lay Pastors Ministry is no exception. Some people believe they do not need a lay pastor. Others are too busy for visits. Some lay pastors may lose enthusiasm or become

inactive. Occasionally, situations arise that cannot be easily solved. Rather than becoming discouraged, we should view these difficulties as opportunities for learning and growth. When handled wisely and prayerfully, challenges not only strengthen the ministry but also mature those who serve in it.

Rethinking the Training Manual

For the past fifteen years, we have used Dr. Melvin Steinbron's PACE Training Manual in Korea. It was developed from his first book, *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?*, and has served us extremely well. The manual is simple—only about thirty A4 pages—but its simplicity has become one of its greatest strengths. Over the years, I have reflected on what makes a training manual truly effective. I have come to several conclusions.

1. A Training Manual Should Be Simple

A training manual should be simple without being superficial. There are generally two kinds of people. Some prefer a simple manual that presents clear concepts and is easy to understand. Others prefer a detailed manual of eighty to one hundred pages with extensive explanations.

I understand both preferences, but if I must choose, I would always choose simplicity.

Why?

Because most ministries begin with great enthusiasm, but sooner or later that initial passion fades. When difficulties arise, leaders naturally return to books for guidance. Unfortunately, many ministry books focus almost entirely on the beginning stage—what the ministry is, why it matters, and how to get started.

Those topics are important, but they are only the beginning.

If we describe ministry as a journey from stages one to ten, most training

manuals only cover stages one through three. Very little attention is given to stages four through ten, where real growth, maturity, and long-term development take place.

As a result, many ministries remain permanently at the starting line. They never move beyond the basics because their training never prepares them for the challenges of sustained ministry.

A training manual should introduce the ministry, not attempt to answer every possible question. It should provide a solid foundation upon which future learning can be built.

2. A Training Manual Exists to Start the Ministry

The primary purpose of a training manual is to help people begin.

Starting is often the hardest part of any ministry. Many churches spend months discussing visions, strategies, and possibilities but never actually begin. They have excellent intentions, but intentions alone never produce ministry.

Without a beginning, nothing else can happen.

For that reason, a training manual should function as a launching pad. It should remove unnecessary obstacles, inspire confidence, and move people from discussion to action.

Whatever ministry we pursue, we must eventually take the first step.

3. A Training Manual Should Give Direction

A training manual should provide direction rather than overwhelming detail.

Its purpose is to answer basic questions:

- Who are we?
- Why does this ministry exist?
- What are we called to do?
- How do we begin?

Everything does not need to be explained in detail at this stage. The manual should present the overall vision and establish a clear purpose.

For example, the purpose of the PACE Training Manual is to produce Lay Pastors. It clearly explains who they are, what they do, and why their ministry is important.

When the goal is clear, the training becomes meaningful.

4. Practice Comes Before Theory

One lesson I have learned, reinforced by Peter Drucker in *The Daily Drucker*, is that practice should come before theory.

Effective ministry is born in the field, not in the classroom.

The PACE ministry illustrates this principle perfectly. It began through actual ministry at College Hill Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. People experienced its effectiveness long before it became a book, a manual, or a complete ministry system.

First came practice.

Then came theory.

People naturally ask whether a ministry works before they study its principles. They want to see living evidence.

The PACE Training Manual did not begin as an academic project. It grew out of real pastoral experience, real people, and real ministry. That is why it has remained practical and effective for so many years.

The best theories are those that grow out of faithful practice.

Re-equipping: The Key to a Lasting Ministry

We also need to talk about **re-equipping**. What is it, and why is it so important?

Pre-study and basic equipping are essential. They provide the foundation for the ministry. A helpful illustration comes from military training.

In Korea, military service was compulsory for many years. Every new soldier first attended a national training camp, where he received several months of basic training. During this period, he learned the army's philosophy, basic knowledge, discipline, and essential skills. However, basic training was only the beginning. After completing it, each soldier was assigned to a permanent unit, where he would serve for the remainder of his military service.

Entering the unit was often a frightening experience. For the first time, the soldier faced the reality of military life rather than the controlled environment of the training camp. Everything was different. Therefore, the army continued to train him. This ongoing process was not basic training but **re-training**—continuous instruction, coaching, and practical learning in the real field. No longer was it an exercise; it was real life.

The same principle applies to the Lay Pastors Ministry.

Basic equipping prepares people to begin the ministry, but **re-equipping enables them to continue and grow in it**. In many ways, re-equipping is even more important than the initial training because it deals with real ministry situations rather than theoretical ones.

Unfortunately, re-equipping is often neglected. Many pastors invest enormous amounts of energy in launching the ministry. They prepare the vision, recruit candidates, conduct the training, organize the commissioning service, and establish the ministry structure. After all this work, they naturally feel that they have completed their responsibility.

Some pastors assume that from that point onward, the lay pastors will simply continue the ministry by themselves, developing it through their own creativity and experience. However, this is rarely the reality.

Lay pastors cannot effectively sustain and develop the ministry without ongoing encouragement, instruction, and spiritual support. They need continuous learning just as much as they needed their initial training.

Recognizing this need, Dr. Melvin Steinbron developed a variety of re-equipping resources, including:

- *Monographs*
- *Dynamite Meetings*
- *Essays*
- *Letters to Lay Pastors*

These resources provide excellent guidance and encouragement for lay pastors as they continue serving their flock families.

However, re-equipping is not only about using Dr. Melvin's materials. The senior pastor has a crucial responsibility in this process. Since the Lay Pastors Ministry belongs to the local church, the senior pastor is ultimately responsible for helping lay pastors continue to grow.

From my experience, about three months after the ministry begins, most lay pastors develop a strong desire to learn more. They have moved beyond theory and have entered real ministry. They begin facing situations they had never experienced during training.

Two needs become especially clear.

First, they desire a deeper understanding of the Bible. They discover that people ask difficult spiritual questions, and they want to answer them with greater confidence and biblical wisdom.

Second, they need practical pastoral skills. They encounter people

experiencing grief, family conflict, illness, loneliness, depression, financial struggles, and many other life situations. During the initial training, they heard that such problems would come, but hearing about them and experiencing them are very different. Now they are standing in the middle of real ministry.

This is exactly where re-equipping becomes invaluable.

Senior pastors should become familiar with the available training resources and use them regularly. Even better, they should develop additional materials that address the specific needs of their own congregation. Every pastor already possesses valuable resources—sermons, Bible studies, books, articles, personal experiences, and practical lessons. These can all become excellent re-equipping materials.

Re-equipping should never be viewed as an optional activity. It is an essential part of disciple-making. Just as a parent does not stop caring for a child after birth, and just as the military does not stop training a soldier after boot camp, the church must not stop equipping lay pastors after commissioning. Commissioning is not the finish line. It is the starting line.

Healthy lay pastors require continuous encouragement, ongoing learning, practical coaching, and spiritual renewal. When churches commit themselves to faithful re-equipping, lay pastors not only remain active in ministry but continue to mature, serve more effectively, and become lifelong partners in caring for Christ's flock.

How to Use Dr. Melvin's Materials

I am deeply grateful to Dr. Melvin Steinbron for developing such valuable resources for the Lay Pastors Ministry. At the same time, I have often regretted that we have not used all of these materials to their full potential. Dr. Melvin faithfully completed his part by creating these resources. The responsibility for using them effectively now belongs to us.

Over the years, he produced an outstanding collection of ministry resources:

Two textbooks

1. *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?*
2. *Lay Driven Church*

Four manuals

1. Start-Up Manual
2. Training Manual
3. Supporting Papers
4. Leader's Manual

Three re-equipping resources

1. Monographs
2. Dynamite Meetings
3. Essays

More recently, he also wrote approximately **30 Letters to Lay Pastors**. Others and I have developed additional training materials over the years, but almost all of them have been based upon Dr. Melvin's philosophy, concepts, and ministry experience.

1. *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?*

Dr. Melvin began the Lay Pastors Ministry at College Hill Presbyterian Church (CHPC) in Ohio, USA. While serving there, he developed the basic outline of what eventually became *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?* Because the book grew out of actual ministry experience, it is practical rather than merely theoretical.

Later, he expanded these ideas into his doctoral dissertation at United Theological Seminary (UTS) in Ohio. That dissertation was eventually revised and published as *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?* Since then, the book has been translated into several languages, including Korean by LPM Korea Institute.

Although pastors certainly benefit from reading this book, it was written primarily for lay people. It explains how ordinary believers can serve as Lay Pastors through the PACE ministry. Throughout the book, Dr. Melvin shares numerous real-life stories from churches and lay ministers. These illustrations

help readers understand both the challenges and the joys of caring ministry and prepare them for what they will experience themselves.

This book has been used successfully for over **35 years in the United States, 15 years in Korea**, and is now also being used at **PACE International Seminary (PIS)** in Nagaland, India.

2. Lay Driven Church

After many years of leading the Lay Pastors Ministry, Dr. Melvin realized there was a need for a more theological and leadership-oriented resource. That need resulted in *Lay Driven Church*.

Whereas *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?* focuses on equipping lay people for ministry, *Lay Driven Church* is written primarily for senior pastors and church leaders. It explains the biblical foundation, philosophy, leadership principles, and organizational structure behind the ministry.

For this reason, I recommend that every senior pastor read both books. The first provides the practical "how," while the second explains the theological "why." Effective ministry requires both practical skills and a solid biblical understanding.

3. The Four Manuals

Dr. Melvin also developed four manuals that guide the ministry from beginning to maturity.

Start-Up Manual

The Start-Up Manual should be read before a church begins the ministry. It explains the entire implementation process step by step. Without understanding the overall process, pastors may become confused or discouraged when unexpected situations arise. Every senior pastor should become familiar with this manual before launching the ministry.

Training Manual

The Training Manual is based on *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?*, but presents

the material in a more structured format through twelve training modules.

Ideally, every senior pastor would personally train the lay pastors in his or her church. However, in my experience, only a small number of pastors have done so. Among approximately 200 churches in Korea that introduced this ministry, most invited the LPM Korea Institute to conduct the training. I personally visited many churches to equip their lay pastors.

Even when outside trainers conduct the training, it is still important for the senior pastor to study the Training Manual beforehand so that he or she fully understands what the participants are learning.

Supporting Papers

The Supporting Papers provide additional explanations, examples, and practical tools that supplement the Training Manual. They help both trainers and participants gain a deeper understanding of the ministry and provide useful resources for discussion during training sessions.

Leader's Manual

The Leader's Manual is one of the most valuable resources Dr. Melvin produced. At approximately 80 pages, it is much more detailed than the 34-page Training Manual.

LPM Korea translated this manual into Korean, and we have used it extensively for many years. Personally, I have read both the Korean and English editions several times.

The Leader's Manual contains practical wisdom gained through decades of ministry experience. It is full of real-life guidance, leadership insights, and solutions to common ministry situations. Dr. Melvin carefully prepared this resource from years of faithful service, making it an indispensable guide for anyone leading this ministry.

4. Re-equipping Resources

Training is only the beginning. If lay pastors are to remain effective over

many years, they must continue to grow.

For this reason, Dr. Melvin developed three excellent re-equipping resources.

Monographs

The Monographs are especially helpful during the first six months after commissioning. The excitement of beginning a new ministry often fades after only a few weeks or months. During this period, lay pastors need encouragement, fresh vision, and renewed motivation.

The Monographs provide exactly that kind of spiritual renewal.

Dynamite Meetings

The Dynamite Meetings are designed for regular monthly re-equipping gatherings. These meetings help lay pastors continue learning together, share ministry experiences, solve problems, and encourage one another.

Essays

The Essays are excellent for personal reading or small-group discussion. They stimulate deeper thinking about ministry and encourage ongoing spiritual growth.

5. Letters to Lay Pastors

More recently, Dr. Melvin wrote approximately thirty **Letters to Lay Pastors**.

These letters are written in a warm and personal style, almost as though he were writing directly to each lay pastor individually. When I first read them, they refreshed my heart and opened my eyes once again to the beauty and importance of caring ministry.

I believe every lay pastor and ministry leader should read these letters regularly.

6. Network News

Finally, I strongly recommend reading **Network News**, the quarterly publication of the Lay Pastors Ministry.

For more than thirty years, Dr. Melvin contributed articles filled with ministry

stories, practical experiences, leadership insights, and biblical reflections. These newsletters provide an invaluable record of how the ministry has developed and how God has worked through lay pastors around the world.

Even today, I continue reading these newsletters. Every time I do, I discover fresh ideas, renewed inspiration, and practical wisdom that I can apply to my own ministry.

Dr. Melvin has faithfully provided the resources. Now it is our responsibility to study them, use them faithfully, and pass them on to the next generation of ministry leaders. If we do so, the vision of caring ministry will continue to grow and bear fruit for many years to come.

Is PACE Still Relevant for Today's Church?

This is not to suggest that the church no longer needs the PACE ministry. On the contrary, today's world needs PACE more than ever. However, society has changed dramatically since Dr. Melvin Steinbron developed PACE more than thirty years ago. The question is not whether PACE is needed, but whether the church is prepared to practice it faithfully in today's context.

PACE is a ministry of caring. It calls believers to **Pray** for others, be **Available** to them, **Contact** them regularly, and be an **Example** as followers of Christ. These four principles remain timeless because they are rooted in biblical truth. Yet practicing them has become increasingly difficult in modern society.

The Challenges of Practicing PACE Today

1. Prayer

People today live under tremendous pressure. Many are working long hours simply to survive in a difficult economy. Even faithful Christians often struggle with financial burdens, family responsibilities, and emotional stress. Outwardly they may appear successful, but inwardly many are discouraged, anxious, or exhausted.

Because people are so occupied with their own struggles, they often have little time or emotional energy to pray intentionally for others. Prayer may not require physical movement, but it still requires spiritual discipline, compassion, and a heart that looks beyond one's own needs.

2. Availability

Being available is even more demanding than prayer. Prayer can be offered wherever we are, but availability requires both emotional and physical commitment. It means making room in our schedules, listening patiently, visiting someone in need, or responding when people seek help.

When Dr. Melvin and his team developed PACE, they believed that caring relationships were essential to healthy church life. That conviction remains true today. However, modern life has become much busier. After long hours of work and family responsibilities, many people simply want to rest. As a result, they find it difficult to sacrifice their personal time for others.

3. Contact

PACE also calls believers to initiate regular contact with those under their care. Rather than waiting for people to ask for help, lay ministers are encouraged to take the first step by calling, visiting, or sending messages of encouragement.

This proactive approach requires consistency and commitment. In today's fast-paced culture, however, meaningful relationships are often replaced by brief online interactions. Regular personal contact has become increasingly rare.

4. Example

When believers faithfully practice prayer, availability, and regular contact, they naturally become examples of Christ's love. Their lives demonstrate the gospel more powerfully than words alone.

Is PACE Still Practical?

At first glance, PACE may seem difficult—even unrealistic—for the average Christian. Yet perhaps that is precisely why it is so necessary. The ministry of caring has never been easy. It requires spiritual maturity, sacrificial love, and dependence on God's grace.

Not every church member will be called to this ministry. Those whom God has gifted with mercy, compassion, encouragement, and shepherding are especially suited for PACE. Rather than lowering the standard, churches should identify, equip, and support those whom God has called.

How Can We Strengthen PACE Today?

I believe there are two essential solutions.

1. Regular Re-equipping

Ongoing re-equipping is indispensable. Initial training alone is not enough. Lay ministers need continual encouragement, renewal, and practical instruction.

Dr. Melvin provided many valuable resources beyond the basic manuals. His thirteen monographs, essays, and other training materials contain wisdom that directly addresses many of today's challenges. Whenever I revisited PACE network churches and used these materials, I found them remarkably effective. They renewed people's commitment, strengthened their confidence, and reminded them of their identity as lay ministers.

At the same time, churches should not hesitate to develop additional training resources that address today's realities while remaining faithful to the original vision of PACE.

2. Individual Supervision

The second key is regular individual supervision. Every lay minister needs a shepherd. Meeting consistently with a ministry leader provides encouragement, accountability, guidance, and spiritual care.

During my Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) training, I experienced two methods that greatly contributed to my growth: group learning and individual supervision. Both were essential. Group discussions helped us learn from one another, while one-on-one supervision allowed us to reflect personally on our ministry and receive specific guidance.

The same principle applies to PACE. Lay ministers should continue serving in the field while participating in regular group re-equipping sessions and meeting individually with their ministry leaders. These two forms of support complement one another and help sustain faithful ministry.

The principles of PACE have not become outdated. Prayer, availability, contact, and Christian example are timeless expressions of Christ's love. What has changed is the environment in which we practice them.

Because today's society is busier, more isolated, and more emotionally burdened than ever before, PACE is not less relevant—it is more necessary. However, its effectiveness depends on intentional re-equipping, faithful supervision, and a renewed commitment from those whom God has called to the ministry of caring.

The challenge before the church is not to replace PACE, but to strengthen it so that it can meet the needs of this generation with the same biblical vision that inspired it from the beginning.

Lay Pastors Ministry and PACE

Lay Pastors Ministry (LPM) presents the broad vision of ministry, while PACE is its practical and simplified expression. We sometimes describe this relationship with the phrase **SIBKIS**: *See It Big, Keep It Simple*. LPM provides the comprehensive philosophy, culture, and structure of lay pastoral ministry, whereas PACE focuses specifically on the caring ministry of lay pastors. In other words, PACE defines the job description, while LPM provides the overall framework within which that ministry operates.

There are several important distinctions between PACE and LPM. PACE emphasizes **one-to-one caring relationships**, while LPM focuses on the ministry of the **whole congregation**. PACE is built upon personal relationships between a lay pastor and the individual or family under his or her care. However, those individual relationships are not isolated from the church. They become part of the church's larger ministry through a shared vision, organized leadership, and an effective ministry system.

By definition, PACE is limited to the ministry of caring relationships. LPM, on the other hand, shapes the church's culture, direction, leadership, and organizational system. PACE is primarily the ministry carried out by laypeople, while LPM is the responsibility of the senior pastor, who establishes the vision, equips the church, and creates an environment in which lay ministry can flourish.

Dr. Melvin Steinbron reflected these two dimensions in his two major books. His first book, *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?*, explains the philosophy and practice of PACE. His second book, *Lay Driven Church*, presents the broader vision of Lay Pastors Ministry. Each book provides a complete picture on its own, but when they are understood together, they complement one another like two paintings displayed side by side. Together they create a much stronger vision by combining relational ministry with organizational structure.

PACE produces caring relationships one person at a time. However, if those individual ministries are to produce lasting results throughout the church, they must become a **shared ministry** rather than isolated acts of service. This is where LPM becomes essential. It provides the leadership, organization, and culture that enable hundreds of individual caring relationships to function as one unified ministry. When this happens, the ministry becomes far more effective than scattered individual efforts.

During the past fifteen years, I have helped more than 150 churches introduce this ministry. Although the ministry centers on the relationship between lay pastors and the people they care for, its influence extends throughout the entire congregation. Everyone eventually sees its impact,

experiences its benefits, and becomes connected to its caring culture.

One lesson I have learned is that the success of this ministry depends largely upon the senior pastor. While many people participate in the ministry, the senior pastor is ultimately responsible for deciding whether the ministry will be adopted, how it will be adapted to the local church, and how it will be supported over time.

Dr. Melvin Steinbron established what he called the **Ministry Leadership Group (MLG)**. This group usually consists of four to eight experienced lay pastors who share responsibility for the ministry's success or failure. Because most church members are unfamiliar with the ministry during its early stages, the MLG provides leadership, encouragement, and accountability.

In larger churches, an associate pastor may oversee the day-to-day administration of the ministry. However, administration is different from leadership. The associate pastor manages the ministry, but the senior pastor remains the primary leader who provides vision, direction, and long-term commitment.

For this reason, every senior pastor should understand both PACE and LPM. PACE explains the practical ministry of caring, while LPM provides the comprehensive understanding necessary to build a sustainable ministry throughout the church. Unfortunately, many pastors understand only part of the ministry and therefore struggle to lead it effectively.

One of the greatest challenges is an outdated leadership mindset. Many pastors have been trained in a highly centralized style of leadership in which almost every ministry depends upon the pastor. Lay Pastors Ministry cannot thrive under such a model. Instead, it requires pastors to trust, release, and empower laypeople to minister according to their God-given calling.

This ministry is not simply the pastor sharing some of his responsibilities because he is too busy. Rather, it is the restoration of the ministry that God originally intended for all believers. Laypeople are called by God, gifted by

the Holy Spirit, and equipped by the church to minister to others. Therefore, pastors must believe both the biblical principle and the people themselves. If pastors do not trust laypeople, laypeople will never minister with confidence or effectiveness.

The pastor's role is to mobilize believers, equip them, encourage them, and help them mature until they reach "the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11–13). This represents a significant shift from doing ministry alone to multiplying ministry through God's people.

From my experience, the most common reason churches struggle with this ministry is not a lack of willing volunteers but a lack of understanding by senior pastors. Many pastors simply do not understand what the ministry is, how it functions, or how it should be led. During the past fifteen years, I have visited churches, trained prospective lay pastors, and helped churches establish this ministry. Lay Pastors Ministries International in the United States has followed a similar approach. Nevertheless, our goal has never been to make churches dependent upon our institute. Instead, we seek to help senior pastors grow in their own leadership and management so that they can sustain the ministry long after the initial training has ended.

Another issue concerns the title given to lay pastors. The original designation is **Lay Pastor**, but churches have adopted various names according to their traditions and theological backgrounds. Dr. Melvin Steinbron addressed this issue in one of his thirteen monographs, *How We Call Them*. He recognized that churches in the United States use different titles, yet he reminded us that "a rose by any other name would smell as sweet." The ministry itself is more important than the title.

For example, one of the largest LPM churches in the United States, Frazer Memorial Church in Montgomery, Alabama, has practiced this ministry for many years but uses the title **Lay Minister** instead of **Lay Pastor**. Other churches have followed their example. This has worked well because they clearly understand the philosophy and practice of the ministry. However, the different terminology can create confusion for churches that are just

beginning, especially when "lay minister" already carries other meanings in many denominations.

For this reason, churches should carefully consider the titles they use. I understand why some churches hesitate to use the term **Lay Pastor**, since many people assume that only seminary graduates who have been ordained should be called pastors. Nevertheless, terminology influences identity.

A good example comes from Hallelujah Church in Korea. The church successfully implemented PACE for many years and even established a PACE Training Center, producing more than one thousand lay pastors. Senior Pastor David Kim strongly believed that participants should be called **Lay Pastors**. His wife, however, was uncomfortable with the title because many people questioned whether laypeople should be called pastors. For years they discussed the issue, yet Pastor Kim continued to insist on using the original name.

He understood what Dr. Melvin often taught: names shape identity. The title "Lay Pastor" is more than a label; it reminds believers of their calling, influences how they understand their ministry, and strengthens their commitment to care for God's people. When people understand who they are, they are more likely to become what God has called them to be.

Chapter 3

Lay Pastors Ministry in Korea

In this chapter, I would like to describe the development of Lay Pastors Ministry (LPM) in Korea and its influence on Korean churches. I will begin with the history of LPM Korea.

LPM Korea was officially established in July 1999, although I had spent two to three years preparing before its formal launch. During those years, I introduced the PACE ministry to several churches and trained the first group of lay pastors. Among those early trainees, a few eventually joined me in building the ministry. They became the founding members of LPM Korea.

The development of our staff can be divided into three stages. In the beginning, three or four dedicated laypeople joined me with pure hearts and a genuine desire to serve. I had trained them in their own churches, and after experiencing the ministry personally, they recognized its value. They believed this ministry would not only help others but also deepen their own spiritual growth. Many of them remained faithfully involved for more than fifteen years.

Our staff met almost every day or every week. We discussed the vision of Lay Pastors Ministry, developed practical strategies for local churches, and planned how to expand the ministry nationwide. These regular meetings built a strong sense of unity and shared purpose.

One day, through one of our staff members, Rev. Lee, another man visited our office. At that time, he worked part-time for a Christian newspaper. Originally, he came only to interview me about Lay Pastors Ministry. However, after a long conversation about the vision and purpose of the ministry, he became deeply interested and eventually joined our staff.

His involvement proved to be a great blessing. Through his encouragement, I began writing a weekly column introducing Lay Pastors Ministry in the newspaper. For nearly two years I wrote approximately one hundred articles, each accompanied by my photograph. As a result, many pastors and church leaders throughout Korea came to recognize both the ministry and my role in promoting it. The newspaper also became an effective means of advertising our seminars and national conferences.

Another important milestone occurred when a Christian publisher contacted me and expressed interest in publishing my Korean translation of Dr. Melvin Steinbron's book, *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?*¹ I explained that I did not have the financial resources to publish the book, but the publisher generously offered to cover all publication costs. Dr. Sang-bok David Kim carefully reviewed the entire manuscript before publication.

The book was published in 2001 with an initial printing of 2,000 copies. This became one of the most significant events in the history of LPM Korea. After the opening of the LPM Korea Institute in July 1999, we held our first national conference in 2000. The publication of the book the following year enabled Lay Pastors Ministry to reach Christian bookstores throughout Korea, introducing the ministry to thousands of pastors and church members.

Through the combination of weekly newspaper columns, the publication of the book, seminars across the country, and frequent communication with Dr. Melvin Steinbron in the United States, the ministry continued to grow steadily.

One of the greatest turning points came after our conference at Hallelujah Church. The church established its own PACE Training Center, which became one of the most successful training centers in Korea. During the following ten years, it trained and commissioned more than 1,000 lay pastors.

Following the conference, Senior Pastor David Kim personally taught the pastoral staff, elders, and deacons about Lay Pastors Ministry and the PACE concept. As the leadership embraced the vision, the church officially launched

its PACE Training Center.

The center operated two training sessions each year, one in the spring and one in the fall. Approximately fifty participants completed each session, producing around one hundred trained lay pastors annually. I frequently visited the center to teach special topics, and our Institute maintained a close partnership with the training center.

Whenever our Institute held national conferences, we invited instructors from the Hallelujah Church PACE Training Center to teach workshops. Senior Pastor David Kim and Elder Lee were especially supportive of our ministry and contributed greatly to the success of our conferences.

As our partnership continued, two key leaders from Hallelujah Church joined our Institute: Rev. Jong-tae Kim and Rev. Kwang-seop Jung.

Rev. Jong-tae Kim served as the Chief Associate Pastor of Hallelujah Church, while Rev. Kwang-seop Jung served as a deacon. Their participation significantly strengthened our Institute. Rev. Jong-tae Kim later earned a Doctor of Ministry degree in Lay Pastors Ministry from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. Drawing upon his extensive ministry experience at Hallelujah Church, he contributed many valuable resources to our Institute. For many years we taught seminars and conferences together, and later he also became a professor at PACE International Seminary in Nagaland, India.

Three or four years after the establishment of our Institute, we recognized the need for our own permanent training center. We opened a dedicated classroom adjacent to our national office, where we trained both pastors and laypeople. In addition, international students studying in Korea attended our training courses using Dr. Melvin Steinbron's books, *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?* and *Lay Driven Church*. Although the number of international students was relatively small, this ministry laid an important foundation for our future international work.

Three individuals who studied at our training center became especially significant to the future of LPM Korea: Rev. Park, Rev. Jang, and Rev. Jo.

Rev. Park first contacted our office after discovering several preaching books that I had translated into Korean. He initially wanted to discuss preaching ministry, but during our conversation he learned about Lay Pastors Ministry. He enrolled in our training program, quickly joined our staff, and continues to serve LPM Korea today. His gifts in organization, curriculum development, and strategic planning greatly strengthened our ministry.

Rev. Jang and Rev. Jo also became indispensable members of our team. I had known Rev. Jo for many years because she had studied the English Bible with me, and we had maintained a close friendship. I invited her to join the ministry, and she introduced Rev. Jang, her classmate at Westminster Graduate University in Korea. In fact, all three joined our ministry at nearly the same time.

Their contributions helped our ministry flourish. Together they developed numerous training materials and educational resources. Rev. Jang, in particular, created a remarkable 350-page PowerPoint presentation based on Dr. Melvin Steinbron's second book, *Lay Driven Church*. Even today, those presentation materials continue to be used both in Korea and at PACE International Seminary in Nagaland, India.

Because many international students attended our training center, I often taught the PACE Training Manual in English. Through these experiences I became increasingly familiar with teaching the ministry in English and developed many relationships with foreign students and pastors living in Korea.

During this period I met Dr. Timothy Kaping, who had come from Nagaland, India, to study theology in Korea. He later became a Korean citizen through his marriage to a Korean woman. We first met at a church where I was teaching the English PACE program. He was deeply moved by the ministry, especially its central philosophy of "love with skin on." From that time

forward, we worked together to introduce PACE to international students and foreign pastors whenever opportunities arose.

Eventually we established PACE International Fellowship (PIF), recognizing the need for regular fellowship and training among international believers. We met every Sunday afternoon to study the PACE ministry together. Later we also launched an English worship service every Saturday at Vine Church in downtown Seoul.

Pastor Aloto served as the English-speaking preacher, and after each worship service we continued our study of PACE. Pastor Aloto had previously completed the PACE training program while pursuing his Master of Theology degree at Seoul Christian University. Like Dr. Timothy Kaping, he also came from Nagaland, India. I recommended him to Vine Church as their English-speaking pastor.

As Pastor Aloto prepared to complete his studies and return to Nagaland, he expressed concern about his future ministry. I encouraged him to consider establishing a PACE training school in his homeland. After much prayer and planning, we worked together to establish PACE International Seminary (PIS) in Dimapur, Nagaland, India. That decision marked the beginning of the international expansion of Lay Pastors Ministry beyond Korea and opened a new chapter in the history of PACE ministry.

LPM in Korean Churches

As we know, American Presbyterian and Methodist missionaries first arrived in Korea in April 1885. Today, the Korean church has a history of nearly 140 years. These missionaries initially entered the northern part of the Korean Peninsula and later expanded their ministry throughout what is now South Korea.

During the first four to five decades, the primary task was to establish

Christianity and lay a firm spiritual foundation. This was followed by several significant movements in the life of the Korean church: the Revival Movement (1930s–1950s), the Bible Study Movement (1950s–1980s), and the Church Growth Movement (1980s–2000). Through these developments, the Korean church experienced remarkable growth. Although many people in Korea still do not profess faith in Christ, the church itself matured significantly in both size and influence.

In the 1990s, a new emphasis emerged—the ministry of the laity. Several factors contributed to this shift.

First, lay believers had matured spiritually and wanted to serve God and their churches more actively. They desired to participate in meaningful ministry rather than remain passive church members. Second, many capable laypeople felt underutilized. They believed they had gifts and abilities that were not being fully used in the church. Third, a number of new ministry paradigms were introduced from the United States, offering fresh approaches to church ministry and leadership.

Among the earliest of these was the Cell Ministry (CM) movement, followed by Natural Church Development (NCD), and later Lay Pastors Ministry (LPM). Cell Ministry emphasized small-group fellowship and discipleship. NCD focused on evaluating and strengthening the health of local churches. LPM, however, concentrated on establishing a lay pastoral care system that equipped ordinary believers to shepherd and care for others.

Each of these ministry models made valuable contributions to Korean churches over the past two decades. However, LPM offered something unique. Its greatest strength was its intentional investment in laypeople, especially in the ministry of pastoral care. More importantly, it gave ordinary believers a genuine sense of ownership in the ministry of the church. This was one of the reasons churches embraced the LPM system so readily.

Why was LPM accepted so enthusiastically? One of its greatest strengths was that it represented a genuine paradigm shift. It was not merely another

church program—it was a practical and workable ministry model. Many laypeople had been waiting for an opportunity to serve more meaningfully. Through LPM they discovered that they could become lay ministers—even lay pastors in the caring ministry—without attending a theological seminary. Although they were not ordained pastors, they were entrusted with real pastoral responsibilities under the supervision of their senior pastor. This gave them confidence, dignity, and a renewed sense of calling.

This experience can be understood through Maslow's hierarchy of needs. At the highest level, people long for self-esteem and a sense of significance. They desire to know that their lives matter and that they are making a meaningful contribution. LPM met this need by challenging believers to participate in God's work. They willingly accepted the responsibility because they believed it was God's calling. As a result, many became deeply committed to the ministry and found great joy in serving others.

Of course, there was also a challenge. Many laypeople initially felt inadequate. They wondered whether they possessed the knowledge or ability to care for others effectively. They admired ordained pastors and often viewed them as spiritually superior, which sometimes left them feeling inferior. However, through training, mentoring, and practical ministry experience, these insecurities gradually disappeared. Instead of feeling inferior, they gained confidence while developing even greater respect for their pastors. They recognized that this ministry was entrusted to them by their senior pastor and carried out under pastoral leadership.

Pastors also benefited greatly from LPM. Many discovered a new understanding of leadership. Rather than carrying the entire burden of ministry themselves, they learned how to equip and mobilize the members of their congregation. They began to practice biblical leadership more intentionally, empowering others to minister rather than simply directing every ministry themselves. They soon realized that this approach strengthened pastoral care and contributed directly to healthy church growth.

Many church members who had previously complained about their churches

became more satisfied as they became personally involved in ministry. Instead of comparing their churches with others, they focused on serving the people God had entrusted to them. Participation replaced criticism.

At the same time, many pastors were searching for a way forward. About fifteen years earlier, many Korean churches had reached a plateau. They seemed to have hit a wall and were asking how they could move beyond it. LPM provided a practical answer. It offered not merely another program but a new ministry philosophy that empowered the entire congregation to participate in pastoral care and disciple-making.

The churches themselves also experienced significant transformation. As both pastors and laypeople embraced this new ministry, the culture of the church began to change. Members witnessed genuine care, acceptance, encouragement, and mutual responsibility. A culture of pastoral care gradually replaced a culture of passive attendance. Relationships became warmer, fellowship became deeper, and members developed a stronger sense of belonging.

In my observation, changing church culture is one of the greatest accomplishments of Lay Pastors Ministry. When a church becomes a caring community, people naturally experience the love of Christ through one another. Such an environment not only strengthens existing believers but also becomes a powerful witness to those outside the church. Healthy pastoral care creates healthy relationships, and healthy relationships become one of the strongest foundations for sustainable church growth.

Conferences in Korea

One of the most important ministries of LPM Korea has been organizing conferences. During our years of ministry, LPM Korea held five national conferences. In comparison, LPMI USA has held more than twenty international conferences over the past thirty years. Their long tradition helped us understand the value of conferences and inspired us to develop

the same ministry in Korea.

Why are conferences so important? They serve several purposes for both local churches and the national headquarters. For lay pastors, conferences provide an opportunity to renew their vision and refresh their ministry. After serving faithfully for several years, many lay pastors naturally become tired or discouraged. They want to learn new ideas, hear fresh testimonies, and discover how other churches are carrying out the same ministry. Annual or biennial conferences give them exactly that opportunity.

During the conference, participants attend workshops, share meals, build friendships, and exchange practical ministry experiences. They learn from both large and small churches and discover different approaches to caring ministry. As they listen to testimonies and practical stories, their commitment is renewed. They also realize that they are not serving alone. Hundreds of lay pastors are involved in the same ministry, and together they become part of one large spiritual family. That sense of belonging greatly strengthens their motivation.

Our conference ministry in Korea began with the conference hosted by Hallelujah Church in June 2001. Before that, I had attended the LPMI USA International Conference in St. Louis in April 2000. Seeing how well the American conference was organized gave me confidence that we could develop a similar ministry in Korea.

After returning from St. Louis, Hallelujah Church and LPM Korea Institute worked together to prepare Korea's first conference. Hallelujah Church generously hosted the event, and we invited Tom Parrish, the General Secretary of LPMI USA, as our keynote guest. Dr. Melvin Steinbron was unable to travel because of his age and health, but Tom Parrish represented the international ministry with great encouragement.

The conference was remarkably successful. Hallelujah Church invested significant financial and human resources into the event. Many PACE trainers and even the wife of the senior pastor participated in teaching workshops.

Their involvement encouraged both our Institute and the participating churches. The following year, LPM Korea organized its own conference through one of our network churches, and it was another successful gathering.

One lesson I learned is that preparing for a conference is often more valuable than the conference itself. While the conference primarily benefits local churches and lay pastors, the preparation process develops the headquarters and its leadership.

Planning a conference usually requires nearly a full year of preparation. During that time, our staff learned how to organize large events, coordinate volunteers, communicate with churches, develop teaching materials, and strengthen our nationwide network. In many ways, the preparation became a leadership training program for our own ministry team.

One of the greatest strengths of our conferences was the workshops. We usually needed twenty-five to thirty workshop leaders from churches throughout our PACE network. Many pastors and lay leaders gladly volunteered to teach. Rather than presenting only theories, they shared their own ministry experiences—their successes, failures, challenges, and lessons learned. These real-life stories became some of the most valuable learning experiences for conference participants.

The conference also became an excellent opportunity to discover and develop new leaders. Those who taught workshops gained confidence, and their own congregations were proud to see them serving as conference instructors. At the same time, the headquarters could evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each church's ministry. We learned which churches were flourishing, which needed additional support, and what new resources should be developed before the next conference.

One wise strategy we learned from LPMI USA was long-term planning. The American ministry held its international conference every other year during the last week of April. At the closing banquet of each conference, they

immediately announced the date and location of the next conference—two years in advance. This simple practice created anticipation and helped participants remember the schedule. Even after returning home, I found myself looking forward to the next conference.

Inspired by this model, LPM Korea decided to hold our conferences during the odd-numbered years, complementing the American schedule. This allowed Korean leaders to attend both domestic and international conferences whenever possible.

My first experience at the St. Louis International Conference in April 2000 was unforgettable. Our LPM Korea Institute had officially opened on July 1, 1999, so this was our first opportunity to participate in the international LPM family. I met Dr. Melvin Steinbron and many members of the LPMI USA leadership team. The conference gave me a fresh vision and convinced me that conferences would become an essential part of developing Lay Pastors Ministry in Korea.

Looking back, conferences have been one of the greatest driving forces behind the growth of LPM Korea. They renewed the vision of lay pastors, strengthened relationships among churches, developed new leaders, and provided valuable feedback for the headquarters. More than simply organizing an event, conferences created a learning community where churches encouraged one another and grew together. They became one of the most effective tools for strengthening and expanding Lay Pastors Ministry throughout Korea.

Why Are Regular Conferences Important?

Regular conferences are essential for both local churches and the national ministry. They provide opportunities for encouragement, evaluation, networking, and vision renewal. Every conference benefits four groups in different ways.

For Senior Pastors

Senior pastors meet other pastors from churches involved in the Lay Pastors Ministry network. They share ministry experiences, discuss challenges, ask questions, and encourage one another. These gatherings also give them an opportunity to evaluate the current state of their PACE ministry and discover new ideas for strengthening it. Ministry can often become lonely, but conferences remind pastors that they are part of a larger movement with a shared vision.

For Lay Pastors

Lay pastors have the opportunity to meet lay pastors from many different churches, both large and small. They learn from one another's experiences, exchange practical ideas, and receive fresh encouragement for their ministry. For example, the pastor's wife of Hallelujah Church regularly attended our conferences and encouraged both pastors and lay leaders. Having faithfully served in the PACE ministry for many years, she understood its value and was able to inspire others through her testimony and experience.

For Local Churches

Conferences motivate entire churches. As members hear testimonies, participate in workshops, and witness what God is doing in other congregations, they become more open to the Lay Pastors Ministry. Many churches that were hesitant at first gained a clearer understanding of the ministry and eventually embraced it after attending a conference.

For the National Headquarters

Preparing for a conference is itself an important ministry. The staff of LPM Korea becomes busy gathering materials, selecting workshop topics, recruiting instructors, reviewing previous conferences, and planning future improvements. Through this preparation process, we also develop new relationships with churches, pastors, teachers, professors, and ministry partners. Every conference not only serves existing churches but also expands the ministry network throughout the country.

The Staff of LPM Korea

The staff members are one of the greatest strengths of this ministry. Every organization has its own philosophy of staffing, but I believe the model we developed has been especially effective.

I have learned that every person possesses unique strengths and God-given gifts. Some are gifted teachers. Others naturally build fellowship and relationships. Some think analytically and make wise decisions. Others are gifted organizers with systematic minds, while some work quietly behind the scenes, carefully avoiding mistakes. Even within a small organization, we need people with different personalities, talents, and spiritual gifts. God never intended one person to do everything.

There are two important principles that shaped the staff of LPM Korea.

First: Build a Team

When I first began this ministry, Dr. Melvin gave me valuable advice:

"You can't do it alone. If you want to serve all the churches in Korea, build a national team."

His advice deeply influenced me.

Dr. Melvin had already written the monograph *Leadership Group for Lay Pastors Ministry*, originally designed for leadership teams in local churches. Although it focused on the local church, I believed its principles could be adapted to the national level. Using those ideas, I organized the staff of LPM Korea.

Different organizations use different titles for their workers, but we chose the simple name **Staff**. Following Dr. Melvin's vision, I invited people to join us in serving churches throughout Korea. One by one, they responded.

We began with only three people, but eventually our staff grew to eleven members.

Through experience I discovered that fewer than five people made the team too weak to carry the ministry effectively, while more than ten people became difficult to manage as a core leadership team. Therefore, I tried to maintain a core staff of eight to ten members, which proved to be an effective balance.

Second: Build a Family

From the very beginning, I emphasized that we were more than coworkers.

I often told our staff,

"We are family."

Even today, I still believe this is one of the greatest strengths of our ministry. Because our staff shared a clear mission—to serve Korean churches—and because we viewed one another as family, people rarely left the ministry. They were committed not simply to an organization but to one another and to God's calling.

Every member served as a volunteer. No one, including me or our full-time office staff, received a salary during the first ten years of the ministry.

We ate together, laughed together, cried together, prayed together, and faced every challenge together. When difficult problems arose or important assignments needed to be completed, many of us lost sleep. Yet even those hardships became meaningful because we faced them as a family with a common mission.

Looking back, I deeply appreciate the tremendous investment of time, energy, sacrifice, and love that every staff member gave to this ministry for the sake of Korean churches.

By God's grace, we accomplished far more than we could have imagined. My hope is that other countries will also build ministry teams with this same spirit of unity, commitment, and servant leadership.

Finally, I remain deeply grateful to Dr. Melvin, whose guidance helped us

establish this ministry, and to LPMI USA, which continues to serve as a model for all of us. Their leaders serve as Board Members at the international level, while our national team serves as staff for Korea. Though the titles are different, the purpose is the same—to equip God's people and strengthen His Church.

Hallelujah Church and LPM Korea

I first became connected with Hallelujah Church through Lay Pastors Ministry in the fall of 1999, shortly after the formal opening of LPM Korea Institute on July 1, 1999.

At that time, I sent a fax to Rev. Sangbok David Kim, the senior pastor of Hallelujah Church, one of the most influential churches in Korea. I invited him to serve on the Theology Committee of our Institute because his church had already operated an LPM Academy for more than ten years. I believed that his experience would greatly strengthen our ministry.

Soon afterward, Rev. Kim called me and asked for additional materials about Lay Pastors Ministry. He expressed genuine interest in the ministry and asked me to meet with his chief associate pastor, Rev. Jongtae Kim. We met at the Yangjae Torch Trinity Mission Center in November 1999. During our meeting, Rev. Jongtae Kim explained that several leaders from Hallelujah Church wanted to attend the International Lay Pastors Ministry Conference in the United States. As a result, we traveled together to the International Conference in St. Louis in April 2000.

After returning from the conference, Hallelujah Church began preparing to host Korea's first National Lay Pastors Ministry Conference. That historic conference was held at Hallelujah Church in June 2001.

The conference marked a turning point for Lay Pastors Ministry in Korea for several reasons.

First, it was an outstanding success and became a historic event in Korean Christianity.

Second, churches throughout Korea became aware of Lay Pastors Ministry for the first time.

Third, LPM Korea Institute entered a new stage of growth. Following the conference, invitations poured in from churches across the country, and I spent the next several years traveling, training, and equipping lay pastors.

I remain deeply grateful to Rev. Sangbok David Kim and Hallelujah Church. From the beginning, we worked together as true partners in ministry. Hallelujah Church served as a strong local church, while LPM Korea functioned as a nonprofit parachurch ministry. Together we created a powerful partnership centered on the biblical vision of "equipping the saints for the work of ministry" (Ephesians 4:12). We shared the same vision, and our ministries complemented one another beautifully.

Hallelujah Church developed Lay Pastors Ministry, especially the PACE Ministry, into one of its signature ministries. During the following ten years, approximately 6,000 members regularly heard about PACE through Sunday worship services, leadership meetings, and various church events. It became part of the church's culture.

Meanwhile, LPM Korea continued serving churches throughout the nation. Many pastors trusted our ministry because they knew of our close partnership with Hallelujah Church and Rev. Sangbok David Kim. In fact, some people assumed that LPM Korea and Hallelujah Church were essentially one family.

Occasionally, people even assumed that I was an associate pastor at Hallelujah Church. Although that was not true, it actually helped open doors for ministry, both in Korea and overseas. Our close relationship became a model of how a local church and a parachurch organization could work together effectively for the Kingdom of God.

Hallelujah Church also supported LPM Korea financially beginning in 2000. That support continued for more than ten years, until Rev. Sangbok David Kim retired around 2010 at the age of seventy. Because of their faithful partnership, LPM Korea was able to serve churches without major financial difficulties. They also encouraged us personally and stood beside us in countless ways. Looking back, those years were truly the golden age of our ministry.

Immediately after the first national conference, Hallelujah Church established its PACE Training Center. Over the next decade, more than 1,000 lay pastors were commissioned through the center. These lay pastors faithfully served throughout every area of church life, making the PACE Ministry one of the church's greatest success stories.

The partnership between the PACE Training Center and LPM Korea became even stronger. We grew together, shared resources, and encouraged one another. Hallelujah Church purchased and used our Korean translation of the LPM training textbook for more than ten years, providing valuable financial support for our Institute.

Around that time, I also read *The Prospering Parachurch*, a book that gave me many practical ideas for strengthening our own organization and ministry. Our relationship with Hallelujah Church also brought outstanding people into LPM Korea. Rev. Jongtae Kim, Rev. Kwangsup Jung, Haekyung Yoon, the staff of the PACE Training Center, and many other gifted leaders joined our work over the years. Their dedication greatly strengthened our ministry and enabled LPM Korea to serve hundreds of churches throughout Korea during the following decade.

Through these years, my own leadership matured, our staff developed, and our overseas ministry expanded into many countries. During this period, I also completed my Ph.D. and later had opportunities for postdoctoral study and research associated with Yale University and the University of Oxford.

Today, the ministry that began with those early partnerships has extended far

beyond Korea. LPM Korea helped establish PACE International Seminary (PIS) in Nagaland, India, and continues to support the training of Christian leaders around the world.

Looking back, I can clearly see God's faithful guidance through every stage of this journey. He brought together churches, leaders, friends, and partners at exactly the right time. I give thanks to God and to everyone who has participated in this remarkable ministry. May He continue to raise up faithful lay pastors to equip His Church and advance His Kingdom throughout the world.

Partners in Ministry

At the beginning of my teaching on lay pastoral care, I often ask this question: **"Do you think of yourselves and your pastors as partners in ministry?"** Almost without exception, elders, deacons, deaconesses, and other church members answer, "No." Most see themselves merely as helpers who assist their pastors in *the pastor's ministry*.

Many pastors think the same way. They regard church members as assistants whose role is to support the pastor's work. This traditional way of thinking has contributed to limited church growth, spiritual stagnation, and the need for continual revival—not only in Korea but throughout much of the global Church. Something must change.

Thankfully, that change has already begun in some churches. One large church in downtown Seoul adopted the New Year's theme, **"The Church of Partners in Ministry."** It had already become well known as a discipleship-oriented church. Likewise, Pastor James Garlow of Skyline Wesleyan Church in San Diego wrote *Partners in Ministry* (1998), emphasizing the biblical partnership between pastors and laypeople.

Several churches have demonstrated this vision in practice. Among them are Hallelujah Church in Seoul, where Dr. David Kim established the Lay Ministry

Academy in 1990, and Frazer Memorial United Methodist Church in Montgomery, Alabama, where thousands of members actively participate in various ministries.

Many respected Christian leaders and organizations have also championed the partnership of clergy and laity. Dr. Paul Stevens of Regent College emphasized the ministry of all God's people. Dr. Greg Ogden of Fuller Theological Seminary introduced the concept of *The New Reformation*(1990), calling the Church to recover the ministry of every believer. Dr. Robert Slocum, a lay leader, encouraged ordinary Christians through his book *Maximize Your Ministry*(1990). Most significantly for me, Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron developed the Lay Pastors Ministry in 1978 at College Hill Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati, Ohio, providing a practical model for shared congregational care.

Dr. David Kim once observed that God has given the Church a defining biblical emphasis in every era of Christian history (PACE Seminar, 2004):

- **The Reformation (Luther and Calvin):** *"The righteous shall live by faith"*(Romans 1:17).
- **The Wesleyan Revival:** *"For God so loved the world..."*(John 3:16).
- **Our present era:** *"Christ gave pastors and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry"*(Ephesians 4:11–12).

The great change needed today is a renewed understanding of ministry. Scripture teaches that pastors are not called to do all the ministry themselves. Rather, they are called to equip God's people so that every believer can serve according to his or her calling and spiritual gifts. This biblical shift has the power to rescue churches from stagnation, rekindle passion, and promote spiritual maturity.

One of the clearest expressions of this partnership is pastoral care through the Lay Pastors Ministry.

But what does **"partners in ministry"** actually mean?

James Garlow explains it well:

"Layperson, pastor—you are both ministers. God has called you to serve Him and to share His love with others. As laity and pastors, we are partners in ministry."

Partnership does not mean that laypeople perform every responsibility of ordained pastors. The distinction between clergy and laity is one of **function**, not **worth or spiritual identity**. We differ in our roles, not in our value before God.

Both pastors and church members are ministers. The foundational passage for this truth is Ephesians 4:11–12. The ministry of pastors is to equip God's people, while the ministry of believers is to serve according to their calling, gifts, and training. This is the biblical meaning of partnership in ministry.

I find two major themes in this passage:

1. **Equipping the saints**—the responsibility of pastors.
2. **The work of ministry**—the responsibility of God's people.

These two responsibilities unite pastors and members as partners in caring for God's people. The result, Paul tells us, is that **the Body of Christ is built up** (Ephesians 4:12). Neither clergy nor laity can accomplish this task alone.

God designed them to serve together.

For centuries, pastors have primarily given ministry while church members have mainly received it. In a true partnership, however, both pastors and laypeople give and receive ministry. This is a rediscovery of the New Testament pattern.

The Lay Pastors Ministry is the ministry to which God called me in Korea and in many other parts of the world, including the United States. My calling is to equip pastors and lay leaders so that they, in turn, can equip their own church members to provide pastoral care within their congregations.

As Director of the Lay Pastors Ministry in Korea, I also bring pastors and lay leaders together through seminars, conferences, and continuing education to encourage mutual learning and strengthen this ministry.

After more than ten years of ministry in Korea, I have discovered that this model adapts remarkably well to local churches of many sizes. One outstanding example is Hallelujah Church, a congregation of more than 6,000 members. Dr. David Kim had embraced the vision of Ephesians 4:11–12 for over ten years but was searching for a practical method to implement it. The Lay Pastors Ministry became that practical tool. Together, as partners in ministry, we held the first Lay Pastors Conference in Korean church history.

I have seen this ministry bless pastors, laypeople, and entire congregations. Pastors no longer minister alone. Church members become active participants rather than passive spectators. Church culture changes. People are mobilized. As one pastor told me, **"My church has become a happy church."**

No pastor is competent in every area of ministry. Every pastor has strengths, but no one possesses every gift. If congregations are to grow both numerically and spiritually, ministry cannot remain the exclusive responsibility of ordained clergy. It must be shared with gifted laypeople, who bring diverse abilities, experiences, and creativity to the work of God's Kingdom.

Lay involvement benefits not only the church but also the spiritual growth of each believer. However, before lay ministry can flourish, pastors must fulfill their biblical responsibility to equip God's people. This is the clear mandate of Ephesians 4:11–12. No church can fully accomplish its mission unless this command is faithfully obeyed.

God Himself intended clergy and laity to serve as partners in ministry. In the New Testament there is no spiritual class system separating God's people into superior and inferior groups. Every believer is called to serve. When churches entrust meaningful ministry to laypeople instead of limiting them to minor administrative tasks, believers respond with enthusiasm and commitment.

Dr. D. James Kennedy once observed that for too long many Christians have been content to let "ecclesiastical George do it." Since pastors are full-time professionals, people assume that ministry belongs exclusively to them. They

have the training, the time, and the tools, so the congregation simply watches (Melvin Steinbron, *Network News*, No. 16, p. 41).

On the other hand, some pastors hesitate to delegate ministry because they feel threatened by capable lay leaders whose gifts may equal—or even surpass—their own in certain areas. As a result, they attempt to do almost everything themselves instead of releasing gifted believers to serve according to God's calling.

Any church that desires genuine growth and seeks to obey the biblical mandate for ministry must wholeheartedly embrace a vibrant, equipped laity actively engaged in every aspect of the Church's mission. This is God's design. When pastors equip and believers minister, the Body of Christ grows, the Church becomes healthier, and God receives the glory.

Reactivating God's People

How, then, do we reactivate God's people? How can we help them leave "the comfortable pew," borrowing the phrase from Canadian author Pierre Berton's well-known book *The Comfortable Pew*?

The answer begins with pastoral leadership. Pastors must take the initiative in helping their congregations rediscover their calling as active partners in God's ministry. This can be accomplished in several practical ways.

1. Begin with the existing leadership.

Start with the Session, Consistory, Church Council, or whatever governing body serves as the spiritual leadership of your church. Train them, encourage them, and invest yourself in them just as Jesus invested in His twelve disciples. Spend meaningful time with them on a regular basis. Minister alongside them, mentor them, and prepare them to fulfill the command of **2 Timothy 2:2**: "Entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others also."

2. Recruit and equip others for ministry.

Gradually invite more members into a variety of ministry opportunities and provide them with appropriate training. Most believers are willing to serve when they know they will not be left to serve alone. Confidence grows when the church intentionally equips people before assigning them to ministry.

3. Publicly and personally affirm lay ministry.

Recognize and appreciate the work of lay ministers both privately and publicly. A personal word of encouragement strengthens the individual, while public recognition inspires the entire congregation. Both forms of affirmation are essential for building a culture of service.

4. Continually emphasize the importance of lay ministry.

Keep before the congregation the biblical vision that every believer is called to ministry. Regularly communicate the wide variety of ministry opportunities available and assure members that training and support will be provided. This vision should be reinforced through preaching, testimonies, church publications, announcements, seminars, and other forms of communication.

5. Multiply leaders who equip others.

As soon as possible, involve trained and experienced lay ministers in equipping new workers. Those who have already demonstrated faithfulness become the best trainers for the next generation of servants. God's purpose is not only the multiplication of believers through evangelism but also the multiplication of ministers through discipleship. Healthy churches continually reproduce both disciples and leaders.

Professor Paul Stevens of Regent College identifies three influential models of lay pastoral care ministry in his book *The Equipper's Guide: Lay Pastors Ministry*, founded by Dr. Mel Steinbron; Stephen Ministry, founded by Dr. Ken Haugk; and Caring Church, founded by Dr. Howard Stone. Although each model has its own distinct approach, they all share the same biblical conviction: God's people are called to be **partners in ministry**. The work of pastoral care is not reserved for ordained clergy alone. Rather, it is the shared responsibility of the whole Body of Christ, where pastors equip the saints and the saints faithfully minister to one another.

When pastors embrace this biblical vision and intentionally equip believers for service, the church moves from being a congregation of spectators to a community of ministers. The result is a healthier church, stronger disciples, and a more effective witness to the world. This is the pattern established by Christ, taught by the apostles, and needed by the Church today.

Chapter 4

How to Start and Make Progress

I have experienced the development of Lay Pastors Ministry (LPM/PACE) at two different levels: the national level and the local church level. Both experiences taught me valuable lessons about introducing a new ministry and helping it grow.

Starting at the National Level

LPM Korea officially began in July 1999. However, our preparation started two or three years earlier. During that period, we translated all of Dr. Melvin Steinbron's materials from English into Korean, including two textbooks, four training manuals, and three re-equipping resources. This preparation was essential because Korean churches needed materials that they could easily understand and use.

While preparing these resources, I also taught Lay Pastors Ministry for two or three years at Sungkyul University using Dr. Steinbron's books. At the same time, I was serving as an associate pastor in a church of about one hundred members in Seoul.

Our senior pastor encouraged me to train our own members first since the materials had already been translated into Korean. Looking back, I believe this was God's way of preparing me. We made several mistakes because neither our senior pastor nor I had any previous experience with this new ministry. Yet those mistakes became valuable lessons that prepared us for future ministry in many other churches.

Around 1996 and 1997, many churches invited me to conduct equipping seminars. However, I felt uncomfortable because I belonged to a local church as an associate pastor and could not freely travel to serve other congregations.

Eventually, I sensed that God was leading me to devote myself entirely to this ministry. I resigned from my church and established the LPM Korea Institute. This gave me the freedom to visit churches throughout Korea, conduct seminars for pastors, and speak at denominational gatherings.

Learning Through Partnership

In April 2000, I traveled to St. Louis with a group from Hallelujah Church. This became the beginning of a wonderful partnership between Hallelujah Church and LPM Korea.

About ten people, including one of the assistant pastors, attended the LPM International Conference in the United States. Before leaving Korea, Hallelujah Church had already decided to host a national conference the following year. Therefore, the purpose of our trip was not simply to attend the conference but to observe how it was organized and how the ministry operated in practice.

The vision came from the senior pastor, Rev. Sangbok David Kim. For nearly ten years he had preached and taught about the ministry of the laity, yet many church members still did not fully understand what lay ministry actually looked like. He believed that seeing the ministry in action would communicate the vision far more effectively than simply hearing sermons about it.

After returning to Korea, we spent many months preparing.

The First National Conference

In June 2001, Hallelujah Church and LPM Korea jointly hosted the first national LPM conference in Korea.

The three main speakers were:

- Rev. Sangbok David Kim, Senior Pastor of Hallelujah Church
- Rev. Hanhum Oak, Senior Pastor of Sarang Church
- Tom Parrish, Executive Director of LPM International (USA)

Rev. Hanhum Oak was invited because he had written *Call to Awaken the Laity*(CAL) and was widely respected for his commitment to lay ministry.

In addition to the keynote speakers, ten workshop leaders, including myself, led practical training sessions. Most of the conference focused on the biblical and theological foundations of LPM/PACE rather than simply explaining ministry techniques.

This conference became a turning point for Lay Pastors Ministry in Korea.
Following Up with Churches

After the conference, Hallelujah Church asked LPM Korea to follow up with the churches that had attended. As a result, I received the contact information for many pastors across the country.

I personally called each pastor to hear their feedback.

Most responded very positively. However, some expressed concern about the title "Lay Pastor." Since the term was unfamiliar, many believed that only ordained ministers could legitimately be called pastors.

Rev. David Kim often addressed this concern. He intentionally chose the title "Lay Pastor" because he wanted to emphasize that while laypeople are not ordained pastors, they can still carry out genuine pastoral care. His message was simple: the office of pastor belongs to the ordained ministry, but the work of caring for people belongs to the whole church.

He consistently explained this understanding at conferences, helping many pastors develop a broader view of ministry.

One encouraging response came from participants from Yoido Full Gospel Church, one of the world's largest churches. They told me that their members were already practicing similar forms of caring ministry. However, the conference gave them the biblical and theological foundation for what they had been doing, and they greatly appreciated that perspective.

Visiting Samki First Church

One memorable experience involved Samki First Church, a traditional Presbyterian church located in a rural area.

When I called the pastor after the conference, he said, "The conference was excellent, but I think this ministry is more suitable for city churches than for rural churches."

I asked him one simple question.

"Would you like to have this ministry in your church?"

He immediately replied, "Yes, we definitely need it."

Because I was fully committed to helping churches succeed, I decided to visit him personally. I wanted to discover whether LPM could truly work in a rural setting.

Without giving advance notice, I traveled to his church. It was located deep in the countryside, and after arriving, I walked nearly an hour to reach the church building.

When I arrived, no one was there because the entire church was away at a summer retreat.

I waited for many hours until they returned.

At first the pastor did not recognize me. After I introduced myself as one of the conference leaders, he warmly welcomed me. We spent the evening together, and I stayed overnight in his home. We talked late into the night about ministry, the needs of his congregation, and the future of the church. That visit became the beginning of a lasting friendship.

Over the following years, I visited his church many times. Eventually he became one of the national leaders of LPM Korea. Later, he traveled with me

to an LPM conference in the United States—the first overseas trip of his life. He was filled with joy and excitement.

Later, his church even hosted one of our national conferences. He introduced LPM/PACE to pastors throughout his district and denomination.

In many ways, LPM Korea truly began through the faith and commitment of this small rural church.

After introducing the ministry to the congregation during a Wednesday evening service attended by about eighty people, I trained nineteen lay pastor candidates. The following week I returned for their commissioning service and encouraged them as they began their ministry.

They continued faithfully for many years. The ministry flourished, the church grew, and the people matured spiritually.

Visiting KyungJoo Dongbu Church

Another memorable experience was at KyungJoo Dongbu Church, a Presbyterian church belonging to a more conservative denomination.

The pastor attended one of our conferences, and afterward I called him. He invited me to visit his church.

We spent the evening talking about ministry, and I stayed overnight at the pastor's home. They kindly prepared a small guest room for me. In later visits I stayed at a nearby hotel.

The pastor fully embraced the vision and sincerely wanted to implement the ministry.

About one month later I returned and trained eleven lay pastor candidates.

At the conclusion of the training, I asked the senior pastor, "Are you willing to accept these lay pastors as your partners in ministry?"

He answered, "Yes."

Then I turned to the lay pastors and asked, "Your pastor has accepted you as his partners in ministry. Will you faithfully carry out this ministry with commitment?"

They all answered, "Yes."

That moment represented the paradigm shift that LPM seeks to create. Pastor and laypeople accepted one another as partners serving the same Lord.

I believe one of my most important responsibilities when visiting a church was helping both groups make this commitment to each other.

A Difficult Experience

Not every experience was successful.

At one church about three hours south of Seoul, a man approached me during a break between training sessions.

He said rather strongly, "Our pastor has to change first. Then maybe we will change."

His words revealed deep frustration. It became obvious that there was tension between him and the senior pastor.

After the training, during dinner, I asked the pastor about the situation. He explained that the man had been unhappy with his pastoral leadership for some time.

That experience reminded me of something Dr. Melvin Steinbron had often told me.

He advised me never to begin LPM in two situations:

1. If the senior pastor does not genuinely accept the vision and

paradigm shift of Lay Pastors Ministry.

2. If there is serious conflict between the pastor and the congregation.

He would often say, "If you enter those situations, you may only make the conflict worse."

Through experience, I discovered that his advice was absolutely correct.

That is why I always begin by meeting privately with the senior pastor. Before I train anyone, I ask whether he truly accepts the theology and partnership model of this ministry. If the answer is yes, then I gladly proceed with the training. If not, it is wiser to wait until the church is ready.

Introducing Lay Pastors Ministry is not simply about conducting seminars. It is about building trust, creating a new understanding of ministry, and helping pastors and laypeople become genuine partners in caring for God's people.

The Meaning of the Twelve Foundations

The **Twelve Foundations** provide an excellent framework for starting any ministry and guiding it through its early years. They were invaluable when I began this ministry because they served as my guideline and my compass—like the North Star directing me toward my destination.

After ten years of ministry, Dr. Melvin Steinbron and Lay Pastors Ministry International (LPMI) USA identified and documented these twelve essential elements. They were not developed in a classroom but through years of practical ministry. Dr. Melvin reflected on both the successes and failures of the ministry and asked what had made the difference. From those lessons, he developed the Twelve Foundations.

When I began this ministry in Korea in 1999, Dr. Melvin had already led the ministry in the United States for nearly twenty years. He had accumulated

invaluable experience, and I was able to benefit from his wisdom rather than learning everything through trial and error.

From the very beginning, I followed these principles faithfully. After more than fifteen years of applying them, many of these practices have become second nature to me. Nevertheless, I strongly recommend these foundations to anyone beginning a ministry. They remain an excellent guide for the first several years.

The Twelve Foundations begin with **Vision** and end with **Maintenance**. This order is intentional. Vision is where ministry begins, while maintenance ensures that it continues faithfully until the finish line. Ministry is not only about starting well but also about finishing well.

Personally, it took me about six years to master these principles. Every new ministry should intentionally practice them for at least two to four years. Eventually, they become part of the ministry's culture and leadership.

Many ministry books focus almost entirely on how to start a ministry. Few explain how to sustain it over decades. Many ministries begin with enthusiasm but disappear after only a few years because leaders do not know how to continue growing, adapting, and maintaining the work. Dr. Melvin's Twelve Foundations address not only the beginning of ministry but also its long-term health.

1. Vision

Everything begins with vision.

Every ministry starts when God places a burden in someone's heart for the church, society, or people. That burden becomes the starting point of the ministry.

My own vision emerged while I was teaching pastoral care at a theological school around 1995. Pastoral care was my academic specialty at that time. During my preparation, I discovered Dr. Melvin Steinbron's book *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?* I used it as a textbook for my students. At the end of

the course, many students encouraged me to translate the book into Korean. I still remember that moment vividly. As I considered their request, I sensed a powerful conviction within me. Something was compelling me to act. Looking back, I believe that was the moment God gave me the vision for this ministry.

Dr. Melvin experienced something similar. After serving three different churches, he became increasingly dissatisfied because he felt he was not adequately equipping his congregation for ministry. Rather than accepting the situation, he stopped and reflected deeply. That became his visioning moment.

Every ministry leader needs such a moment. Although each person's experience is different, a clear vision is essential because it provides the motivation to begin and the strength to persevere.

2. Ownership

Vision must grow into ownership.

Dr. Melvin repeatedly encouraged me to develop a genuine sense of ownership for this ministry. Several experiences helped me embrace that responsibility.

First, the vision came from within my own heart. It was not imposed on me by someone else.

Second, LPMI USA appointed me as the National Director for Korea and sent me an official Certificate of Appointment. Although it was only a single sheet of paper, it carried tremendous responsibility. That appointment strengthened my commitment.

Finally, local churches continually invited me to train their leaders. There were weeks when I visited three churches to conduct training sessions. Through these experiences, my ownership deepened until I became committed to serving this ministry for the rest of my life.

3. Structure

A ministry needs structure, but the structure should remain simple.

Many ministries become overly complicated before they even begin. Too many committees, too many leaders, and too many opinions often create unnecessary confusion during the startup stage.

Complexity can come later. At the beginning, simplicity is essential.

Jesus Himself began with a small group of disciples. Following that example, I believe a startup leadership team of seven to nine people is usually sufficient.

When Dr. Aloto and I established PACE International Seminary (PIS) in Nagaland, India, we initially discussed everything together as just the two of us. I repeatedly told him, "Let's start first. We can involve more people later." That simple approach allowed us to launch successfully. Once the ministry had begun, many others joined and contributed.

4. Call and 5. Equipping

Every ministry leader has the responsibility not only to recruit people but also to equip them continually.

Equipping never ends. It includes church-based training, visiting churches that have successful ministries, participating in regional conferences, and attending national or international conferences.

One memorable experience involved two LPM churches. One church had several more years of experience than the other. Their lay pastors met together, shared testimonies, discussed challenges, and learned from one another. I witnessed those conversations personally, and both groups benefited greatly.

International conferences have also shaped my own ministry. Since 2000, I have attended nearly every international LPM conference in the United States. Each conference strengthened my leadership and broadened my understanding.

Likewise, LPM Korea organized five national conferences over a ten-year period, bringing together lay pastors from many churches for encouragement and re-equipping.

Growth never stops, and neither should equipping.

6–10. Building Healthy Relationships

The remaining foundations include Communication, Accountability, Affirmation, Support, and Fellowship. Each one is essential because ministry flourishes through healthy relationships.

Among them, communication deserves special attention.

When I first started this ministry, Dr. Melvin advised me to publish a simple one-page monthly newsletter. I followed his advice faithfully.

Eventually, I expanded it beyond a monthly newsletter. I began producing weekly newsletters, quarterly editions, and sometimes publications of two, four, or even eight pages.

At first, I believed I was producing the newsletter.

Later I realized something remarkable—the newsletter was leading me.

People began waiting for each issue. That expectation motivated me to continue serving, collecting testimonies, recording ministry stories, and encouraging churches. The newsletter became one of the driving forces behind the ministry's growth.

I remain deeply grateful for Dr. Melvin's practical wisdom. I later gave the same advice to Dr. Aloto, who now faithfully publishes newsletters for LPM India. He also discovered how effective consistent communication can be.

11. Evaluation

Healthy ministries regularly evaluate their progress.

Evaluation allows leaders to celebrate victories, identify weaknesses, solve problems, and adjust their direction. Without honest evaluation, ministries often drift away from their original vision.

Evaluation keeps the ministry healthy and focused.

12. Maintenance

The final foundation is Maintenance.

When I teach these Twelve Foundations, I always emphasize two of them above all the others: **Vision** and **Maintenance**.

Vision begins the journey.

Maintenance enables the journey to continue.

Maintenance may appear to involve only small, routine tasks, but those ordinary responsibilities determine whether a ministry survives. Without maintenance, even the most exciting ministry will eventually decline.

I often compare ministry to an airplane. A successful takeoff is exciting, but the airplane reaches its destination safely only because it is carefully maintained throughout the journey.

Marriage offers another illustration. A wedding ceremony lasts only a short time, but marriage itself lasts decades. Beginning is relatively easy. Remaining faithful year after year requires continual care.

Ministry is no different.

Faithful maintenance—through prayer, communication, evaluation, encouragement, and consistent leadership—is what allows a ministry to remain fruitful for many years.

When I taught this principle to the students at PACE International Seminary, many told me afterward that it completely changed the way they viewed ministry. They realized that success is not measured simply by how well a ministry begins, but by how faithfully it continues and finishes.

Institute, Local Church, and School: A Strategic Partnership for Ministry

Institute and the Local Church

Local churches and the Institute need one another. After many years of ministry, I have become convinced that neither can flourish alone. Their relationship is one of mutual support, encouragement, and shared mission.

Why Local Churches Need the Institute

The Institute serves as the national headquarters, providing guidance, resources, and support for local churches. Pastors and church leaders often need someone with whom they can discuss ministry challenges, seek counsel, and explore new ideas. This has been one of the most important functions of our National Office.

When churches think of the headquarters, they should feel confidence and pride. They should know that there is a capable team standing behind them—a "big brother" with experience, wisdom, and the ability to help solve difficult ministry issues. Every church encounters challenges, whether internal or external. During such times, leaders naturally look for someone outside their own church who has specialized knowledge and practical experience.

This is why a strong headquarters is essential. Churches expect the national office to be available whenever they need assistance. Although modern communication makes physical distance less important, the headquarters still symbolizes stability and leadership. For many years, I remained in the National Office because pastors expected me to be there, ready to help whenever they needed guidance.

The experience of Lay Pastors Ministry International (LPMI) USA illustrates this principle. Originally, the headquarters was located in Ohio, where Dr. Melvin Steinbron lived. Later it moved to New Jersey, where the ministry's administrative leadership was based, while the president resided in South Carolina. Although technology allows leaders to serve from anywhere, churches still appreciate a visible and accessible headquarters.

Another important responsibility of the Institute is providing continual upgrading and re-equipping. Ministry never remains at the same level. Lay ministers, pastors, and church leaders all need ongoing training. Throughout

the years, I have conducted numerous re-equipping seminars for churches whose lay pastors were actively serving in PACE ministry.

Highly disciplined leaders may continue learning on their own, but most believers depend upon structured training provided by experienced instructors. Therefore, the headquarters must continually develop seminars, workshops, and advanced training opportunities to strengthen ministry in local churches.

Why the Institute Needs Local Churches

The relationship is equally important from the Institute's perspective.

First, local churches provide the ministry field where new materials can be tested. Whenever we develop new resources based on Dr. Melvin Steinbron's original concepts, they must first be evaluated in real ministry situations. We need to know whether they are practical, understandable, and useful.

I have seen many organizations spend enormous amounts of money and effort producing materials that were never actually used. Such resources may be academically impressive but fail to serve churches effectively. Our goal has always been different. We develop resources not simply to publish books but to meet real ministry needs. Every manual, workbook, or training guide should be practical enough to be used immediately by local churches.

Second, local churches are the financial partners who sustain the Institute. The headquarters provides training, resources, and consultation, while churches support the ministry through training fees, resource purchases, and hospitality.

When I visited churches for training, they normally covered transportation, accommodation, training expenses, and the cost of textbooks. For example, if there were ten lay pastor candidates, I would bring ten textbooks, which were purchased separately from the training fee. A typical training event often generated approximately US\$500 for the National Office.

I never received a regular salary from the Institute. All ministry income went directly into the office to support its operation and long-term survival. By

God's grace, both the ministry and my family were sustained through this model of partnership.

Finally, local churches provide valuable feedback. They share ministry experiences, identify new challenges, and introduce us to ideas from other organizations. Since our primary focus has always been Lay Pastors Ministry, conversations with local pastors often broadened my perspective and provided fresh insights. Their feedback enabled us to improve our ministry continuously and adapt to changing needs.

In short, local churches need the Institute for leadership, encouragement, and continuing education, while the Institute depends upon local churches for practical ministry experience, financial partnership, and ongoing evaluation. This mutual relationship has been one of the greatest strengths of our ministry.

Institute and School

LPM Korea Institute was established in July 1999. From the beginning, our founding members believed that the word *Institute* best described our mission. Several names were considered, including *Training Center* and *School*, but we concluded that *Institute* most accurately reflected our purpose.

Our vision was twofold:

1. To study and develop Lay Pastors Ministry.
2. To serve and strengthen local churches.

Looking back, I believe this decision was successful. As an Institute, we devoted ourselves to studying Dr. Melvin Steinbron's materials and adapting them to the Korean church context. This strengthened us academically, theologically, and practically. Our staff grew both intellectually and ministerially, and our organizational identity became well established.

From Institute to Training Center

After two years, we recognized another need. The Institute alone was not enough. We therefore established a Training Center alongside it.

The Training Center welcomed pastors, theological students, and laypeople. Together we studied Dr. Melvin's first and second books while providing practical ministry training.

Through the Training Center I met many new people, including numerous international students. Some had attended seminars where I was invited to teach, while others came after hearing about the ministry. We encouraged them to organize groups in their own countries and visit Korea for intensive training. Sometimes we held retreats together, allowing us to build deeper relationships.

These experiences gradually expanded our ministry beyond Korea and opened doors for international partnerships.

The Vision for a School

A major turning point came in 2006 while I was serving as a postdoctoral researcher at Yale Divinity School in New Haven.

During that summer, I reflected on the previous seven years of ministry. Two important realizations became clear.

First, our staff had stopped growing. During our early years everyone learned rapidly, but after seven years we had shared nearly every idea, experience, and insight together. There were few new challenges left. Without fresh opportunities, I feared that our leaders would eventually lose motivation and perhaps leave the ministry.

Second, we had nearly exhausted the basic materials written by Dr. Melvin Steinbron. Churches were satisfied using only the basic 32-page PACE Training Manual. Even large congregations such as Hallelujah Church, with more than 6,000 members, continued using only the introductory materials year after year. They rarely desired more advanced study.

These realities convinced me that we needed an educational institution where advanced materials could be studied systematically.

While still at Yale, I repeatedly emailed our staff in Korea, saying, "We need to establish a school. As soon as I return from New Haven, we should begin, even if it starts as a small and informal educational program."

After returning to Korea, we immediately launched a small private school. We had no dedicated campus or classrooms, so we borrowed the basement of one of our staff members' churches. Though modest, it became the beginning of something much larger.

International Expansion

After two years of operating the school, we expanded into international ministry by establishing PACE International Fellowship (PIF) together with Dr. Timothy Kaping.

At the same time, we continued pursuing the dream of establishing a fully accredited institution. We purchased land and explored the possibility of constructing a campus in Korea.

During this process, Dr. Timothy Kaping and several students from Nagaland, India, suggested that establishing a PACE seminary in Nagaland would be far more affordable than building one in Korea.

Their proposal proved to be God's direction.

As a result, PACE International Seminary (PIS) was established in Dimapur, Nagaland, in July 2015. Today the seminary continues to grow steadily and serves students from many regions.

Why the School Was Necessary

Looking back, I remain convinced that establishing a school was essential.

A school provided continuous intellectual growth for our staff. It created opportunities to develop advanced curriculum, conduct research, and produce new educational resources. It also allowed us to make full use of Dr. Melvin Steinbron's extensive writings, including his second book, monographs, and other advanced materials that most local churches rarely used.

Most importantly, the school answered a deeper question that had occupied my mind:

"What is the ultimate future of this ministry?"

As I studied various parachurch organizations, particularly in the United States, I noticed a consistent pattern. Many ministries functioned effectively for only five or six years before declining or closing. Companies often survived fifteen to twenty years. Educational institutions, however, frequently continued for forty or fifty years—or even longer.

This observation convinced me that a school offered the strongest foundation for long-term ministry.

An Institute provides research. A Training Center equips workers. But a School preserves vision, develops future leaders, and creates lasting influence across generations.

For that reason, I believe the natural progression of a healthy ministry is:

Institute → Training Center → School.

This progression has shaped the development of our ministry over the past twenty-five years and continues to provide a foundation for its future.

Characteristics of Lay Pastors Ministry (LPM)

Ensuring the Continuity of the Ministry

One of my greatest concerns over the years has been the future of the ministry after the founder passes away. Throughout church history, many ministries have declined or even disappeared after the death of their founders. Some have continued under new leadership, but few have maintained the same vision and effectiveness.

For example, after the death of evangelist Billy Graham, his ministry continued under the leadership of his son, Franklin Graham, while his

daughter Anne Graham Lotz also became a respected international Bible teacher. Nevertheless, it is often difficult for any successor to carry the same influence as the founder. Many other ministries have not survived beyond the first generation.

This reality led me to ask two important questions: *What would happen to Lay Pastors Ministry International (LPMI) in the United States if Dr. Melvin Steinbron were no longer with us? likewise, what would happen to LPM Korea after my ministry comes to an end?* Carrying this ministry is not easy. It requires theological conviction, practical experience, leadership development, and long-term commitment. It cannot simply be handed to another person overnight.

For many years I wrestled with this concern and discussed it with our closest staff members. I explained that if we wanted this ministry to continue beyond one generation, we needed an institution that could systematically prepare future leaders. That conviction became one of the strongest reasons for establishing a school. Although not everyone immediately understood the vision, we moved forward in faith.

Since opening the school on July 22, 2015, many of these fears have disappeared. We now have a place where future leaders can be trained, equipped, and prepared to continue the vision. This has given hope not only to LPM Korea but also to LPM International in the United States and many other countries where the ministry is expanding. We thank God for providing this important foundation for the future.

The Name of the Ministry

The official name of this ministry is **Lay Pastors Ministry (LPM)**, meaning a ministry of **lay pastoral care**. While many churches focus primarily on evangelism and discipleship (Matthew 28:19–20), Lay Pastors Ministry concentrates on the ministry of caring for God's people (John 21:15–17).

Dr. Melvin Steinbron often emphasized that churches already possess abundant resources for evangelism and discipleship, but comparatively few

practical resources for pastoral care. Therefore, LPM seeks to restore this essential dimension of the church's mission.

The church has two equally important responsibilities:

- **The Great Commission**(Matthew 28:19–20): Evangelism and making disciples.
- **The Great Shepherd Commission**(John 21:15–17): Caring for God's people.

A healthy church must maintain a biblical balance between these two callings.
Ministry Tasks: P.A.C.E.

The ministry is summarized by the acronym **P.A.C.E.**:

- **P**– Prayer
- **A**– Availability
- **C**– Contact
- **E**– Example

Pastors who have implemented this ministry consistently report four significant outcomes:

1. A stronger church infrastructure.
2. A transformed lifestyle among members.
3. A healthier church culture.
4. A sustainable ministry engine that continues caring for people.

What Should They Be Called?

Churches use various titles for trained lay caregivers, including *Lay Pastor*, *Lay Minister*, and *PACE Minister*. The official title adopted by both LPM International and LPM Korea is **Lay Pastor**.

Large churches often influence smaller churches in their terminology. Some churches in Korea and the United States prefer "Lay Minister," while others adopt names that best fit their own culture or theological tradition. Although the terminology may differ, the ministry itself remains the same.

Length of Training

Training methods vary according to local circumstances. Some churches complete the training over two evenings (approximately twelve hours), while others spread it over several weeks.

From my experience of training churches over many years, a concentrated twelve-hour course has proven to be both practical and effective. We often refer to this as **Basic Training**, similar to military basic training. Its primary purpose is to produce a paradigm shift—from being passive church members to becoming active lay ministers prepared for pastoral care.

The goal is not to teach everything in twelve hours but to motivate, equip, and prepare participants to begin serving.

Who Is Responsible?

Lay Pastors Ministry is not directed primarily by the senior pastor or assistant pastors. Instead, responsibility is entrusted to a **Ministry Leadership Group (MLG)** composed of trained lay leaders.

In smaller churches, this group may consist of four or five members, while larger churches may have seven to ten leaders.

Pastors remain essential by providing vision, encouragement, supervision, and spiritual oversight. However, if pastors continue doing all the ministry themselves, the church simply repeats the traditional model. When trained laypeople assume responsibility, they demonstrate genuine team ministry, allowing the biblical model of shared ministry to become visible throughout the congregation.

Biblical Foundations

Lay Pastors Ministry rests upon four major biblical foundations:

- **Ephesians 4:11–12**— The theological foundation of equipping the saints.
- **John 21:15–17**— The ministry foundation of shepherding God's people.

- **1 Peter 5:1–4**— The pastoral foundation for servant leadership.
- **Exodus 18**— The organizational foundation of shared leadership.

Together these passages provide a comprehensive biblical basis for the ministry.

Not a Program but a Ministry

Dr. Melvin Steinbron consistently emphasized that Lay Pastors Ministry is **not another church program**. Rather, it is pastoral ministry itself carried out through equipped laypeople.

Programs often focus on activities with limited personal involvement. LPM, however, centers on relationships, ongoing care, and a well-organized system of congregational ministry. For this reason, it is best described as **a systematic model of congregational pastoral care through equipped laypeople**.

A Change of Roles

One of the most significant changes introduced by LPM is the biblical understanding of ministry roles.

Traditionally, pastors have been viewed as the primary ministers while laypeople were expected to receive ministry. According to Ephesians 4:11–12, however, pastors are called to equip the saints, and the saints are called to do the work of ministry.

Therefore, pastors become **equippers**, while laypeople become **ministers**. As churches embrace this biblical pattern, the functions of both clergy and laity are gradually transformed.

Equipping Rather Than Education

Equipping differs from both education and training.

Education primarily communicates knowledge and theory. Training develops practical skills. Equipping goes one step further by providing believers with the spiritual tools, confidence, and opportunities necessary for effective

ministry.

Equipping prepares people to minister in real-life situations rather than merely understand ministry intellectually.

The Two Textbooks

Two textbooks form the foundation of this ministry.

The first presents the theological vision and practical model of entrusting pastoral care to trained laypeople. It also serves as an excellent resource for seminaries preparing future pastors to equip their congregations.

The second expands and strengthens this vision by encouraging churches to partner effectively with laypeople in the vital ministry of pastoral care.

Together these books provide both the theological foundation and the practical guidance for implementing Lay Pastors Ministry.

Individual Maturity Before Church Growth

Lay Pastors Ministry emphasizes spiritual maturity before numerical growth.

Many church programs focus primarily on visible results and rapid expansion. While growth is important, excessive emphasis on results often produces discouragement and spiritual immaturity.

LPM instead emphasizes the process of spiritual formation. As believers faithfully care for others, they gradually mature in Christ. Healthy church growth naturally follows healthy spiritual maturity.

Developing Lay Leadership

Church growth expert Karl George observed that one of the keys to healthy churches is the intentional development of lay leadership.

Our experience confirms this principle. Lay Pastors Ministry provides an effective framework for developing leaders through meaningful ministry rather than merely assigning church positions.

The goal is not simply to manage programs but to develop mature servant leaders who care for God's people.

Training Modules

The core training modules include:

- Concept and Theology
- Who Needs Care?
- Commitments
- The Call
- Building Relationships
- Listening Skills
- Being Before Doing
- Keeping Spiritually Fit
- Anatomy of a Visit
- Being Professional
- Confidentiality
- Turning Difficulties into Opportunities

These modules were developed primarily from Dr. Melvin Steinbron's first book and refined through more than fifteen years of practical ministry. In my experience, they successfully accomplish approximately eighty-five percent of the preparation needed for new PACE Ministers. Additional subjects, such as the work of the Holy Spirit and pastoral supervision, may be added according to local needs.

One-to-One Ministry

Lay Pastors Ministry is fundamentally a **one-to-one caring ministry**.

Many church ministries emphasize one leader serving many people, which is effective for teaching and organizational leadership. In contrast, one-to-one ministry excels in personal care, encouragement, and relationship building.

Both approaches have strengths and limitations. Rather than competing, they should complement one another. Healthy churches need both effective group leadership and intentional personal shepherding.

Lay Pastors Ministry represents a significant shift in the philosophy of ministry. Rather than expecting pastors to perform all pastoral responsibilities, it equips ordinary believers to participate actively in shepherding God's people.

Pastors remain responsible for vision, equipping, supervision, and spiritual leadership. Equipped laypeople become the primary caregivers within the congregation.

This partnership reflects the biblical pattern of Ephesians 4:11–12, where leaders equip the saints and the saints carry out the work of ministry. As churches embrace this model, pastoral care becomes more personal, more comprehensive, and more sustainable for future generations.

PACE – Example: What Does It Mean?

What does **Example** really mean? Can we become an example? If so, how? Is it easy?

Among the four elements of PACE—**Prayer, Availability, Contact, and Example**—I have found that **Example** is the most difficult. Prayer can be learned. Availability requires commitment. Contact requires initiative. But becoming an example demands our entire life.

An example is more than good behavior. It is a life that demonstrates something worth following. An example is someone who influences others, earns their respect, and points them toward Christ. In short, an example is:

- Someone who shows the right way.
- Someone whose life positively influences others.
- Someone others can confidently follow.
- Someone whose character earns respect.
- Someone whose life glorifies God.

The PACE Training Manual teaches that those who **love God, love the church, and love people** become examples. This is certainly true. A loving person

naturally influences others. Yet love alone is only the beginning. The question is, **how is that love expressed in everyday ministry?**

The greatest example is Jesus Christ Himself. Throughout His earthly ministry, He demonstrated a life worthy of imitation. Among His many qualities, three stand out:

1. He lived according to the Word of God.
2. He obeyed His Father completely.
3. He loved people faithfully and unconditionally.

Many believers possess sincere faith, but faith alone does not automatically make someone an example in ministry. Some Christians are devoted in their personal spiritual lives, yet hesitate to serve others. They may be inward-looking, protective of their own comfort, or focused mainly on themselves. Genuine ministry always moves outward. It gives rather than merely receives.

What, then, was the ultimate example of Jesus?

I believe it was **sacrifice**.

Jesus did not live to accumulate possessions or build personal wealth. Everything He had belonged to the Father and was used for the Father's mission. Even His own life was willingly offered for the salvation of the world. Someone may object, "That was the first century. Today we live in a very different world."

Certainly our circumstances are different, but the principle has not changed. The greatest test of our discipleship is often not our words but our willingness to surrender what we value most—our time, our comfort, our possessions, and our resources—for God's kingdom.

God does not expect us to neglect our families. We need food, clothing, and a home. Scripture affirms our responsibility to care for those entrusted to us. But once our basic needs are met, we should ask ourselves an important

question:

How much more do we really need, and how much can be invested in God's work?

This is why I believe becoming an example is the most challenging part of PACE.

Examples also differ in duration. Some inspire others only briefly.

- Some are examples for a short season.
- Others remain examples for many years.
- A few become lifelong examples whose influence continues even after their death.

Why do some lose their influence after only a few weeks or years, while others leave a lasting legacy? People such as Dr. Melvin Steinbron and, above all, Jesus Christ continue to inspire because their lives were marked by consistent faithfulness and enduring sacrifice.

A genuine example is contagious. It quietly shapes hearts and encourages others to follow the same path. The influence of an exemplary life often spreads farther than words ever can.

The final question each of us must answer is not simply, **"Did I believe?"** but also, **"Did my life encourage others to love Christ, serve His people, and continue His ministry?"**

That is the true meaning of becoming an example.

Chapter 5

Melvin & me

Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron: My Teacher, Mentor, and Spiritual Father

I first came to know Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron through one of his books, *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?* In the early 1990s, while teaching at Sungkyul University, I used this book as one of my textbooks. At that time, I assumed he was simply the senior pastor of a church in the United States. Later, however, I discovered that he was leading the Lay Pastors Ministry not only across America but also around the world.

For more than ten years, I translated his books and ministry materials into Korean and used them to train churches throughout Korea. Then, at the 2000 International Conference in St. Louis, I met Dr. Steinbron face to face for the first time. He appeared to be in his late sixties, and during the conference he introduced me to all of the participants. That first meeting marked the beginning of a relationship that would profoundly shape my life and ministry. A few years later, I had the opportunity to visit his home in Minneapolis, Minnesota, while attending another conference. During my second visit, his wife was ill and resting in bed. Dr. Steinbron and I spent several hours talking in his study in the basement of his home. We discussed the Lay Pastors Ministry in depth, and that conversation became one of the most encouraging and practical experiences of my ministry. After committing myself to this ministry, every opportunity to talk with him became a precious time of learning and encouragement.

Although I had formally begun preparing for this ministry in 1995, my close communication with Dr. Steinbron grew steadily over the years. In the beginning, he was my teacher. Later, he became my mentor in ministry.

In those days, before email became common, we communicated almost entirely by fax. We exchanged hundreds of pages of letters, and I still keep nearly 200 pages of those faxes today. Much of our correspondence focused

on practical ministry issues—how to begin the ministry in Korea, how to establish a Ministry Leadership Group, and how to develop and use training materials. He generously gave me permission to translate all of his major resources, including two books, four training manuals, and three re-equipping materials.

He invested an extraordinary amount of time, energy, and love in helping me grow. Looking back, I realize how much of my own ministry was built upon his patient guidance.

I have rarely met a person like Dr. Steinbron. He never rushed our conversations and always listened carefully. Whenever I needed him, he made himself available. Even when he was away from home, I could often reach him by phone. After every PACE Training seminar or ministry meeting, I would call him to give a report. He always enjoyed hearing what God was doing and faithfully offered wise counsel and practical advice.

To me, he became much more than a mentor—he was like a father.

Because of his encouragement and our close communication, I was able to continue this ministry faithfully for many years. We remained in close contact for over fifteen years, and even today I continue to communicate with him. In recent years, we have exchanged emails instead of faxes. Now, at around ninety-five years of age and after several surgeries, he is no longer able to respond regularly. Occasionally he replies and tells me that he reads every email I send, even though he cannot answer each one personally.

His words have deeply encouraged me. Although I often receive no reply, I still send him an email almost every week, just as I have done for many years. It has become a way of expressing my gratitude, sharing the progress of the ministry, and honoring the man whom God used to shape my life.

Through this experience, I have learned that no ministry succeeds alone. Every servant of God needs someone who believes in them, guides them, encourages them, and walks beside them. Without that kind of mentor, it is

very difficult to build a lasting ministry.

Dr. Steinbron also developed exceptional ministry resources. They were not merely academic writings but materials born out of years of practical ministry experience. Because he personally pioneered the Lay Pastors Ministry, he understood exactly what leaders needed. His books, manuals, and training materials have become invaluable resources for churches around the world.

Among his most meaningful writings are his *Letters to Lay Pastors*. He has written twenty-five of these letters, along with many articles published in the *LPMI Network News*. For over fifteen years, I carefully collected these newsletters, translated them into Korean, edited them, and used them to train churches and students. I often say that these writings are the "flesh and blood" of this ministry because they contain the wisdom, experience, and heart of a faithful servant of God.

Humanly speaking, whatever success I have experienced in this ministry has been possible because God placed Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron in my life. His example has challenged me to become the same kind of leader for others. I must honestly admit that it is not easy. I do not naturally possess his patience, generosity, or ability to invest in people as he did. Yet I continue to try, because I know that this is one of the greatest legacies he has left me.

The greatest gift Dr. Steinbron gave me was not simply his books, manuals, or ministry methods. He gave me himself. He invested his life in another servant of God. That example has become one of the most valuable lessons of my own ministry, and it is a legacy I hope to pass on to the next generation.

LPM Inc. USA and My Ministry Journey

I have known Lay Pastors Ministry International (LPMI) USA for more than

fifteen years, perhaps even longer. Throughout those years, I have come to admire its organizational structure, ministry system, national leadership, and the deep commitment of its people. One of the most impressive aspects of LPMI USA is that many of its core team members have continued serving together for more than thirty years. Their faithfulness and stability have become one of the greatest strengths of the ministry.

LPMI USA has provided significant training for churches throughout the United States, particularly in the areas of lay pastors and lay caregiving. As we know, most American churches have traditionally emphasized clergy-centered ministry because theological seminaries primarily focus on preparing ordained ministers for denominational service. In that context, the concept of Lay Pastors Ministry was both fresh and innovative, introducing many churches to the biblical vision of equipping laypeople for ministry.

As the National Director of LPM Korea, I was able to serve Korean churches for many years because LPMI USA stood behind us. They continually encouraged me, occasionally challenged me, and faithfully supported our ministry. I followed much of their ministry philosophy, organizational system, and administrative approach, adapting them to the Korean context. As a result, LPM Korea developed a ministry style that closely resembled LPMI USA, and we have maintained a close relationship over the years.

The commitment of the LPMI USA leadership has always inspired me. I especially remember Tom Corbell, Marie Parma, Else Rodland, Marianna Wigmann, and many other faithful leaders. Although I cannot recall every name, there were about ten key members who formed the heart of the organization, and many of them are still faithfully serving today. Their long-term dedication demonstrates that ministry is built not only on vision but also on perseverance.

I especially appreciate Tom Corbell, Else Rodland, and Marie Parma, who visited Korea to participate in our conferences. Their presence encouraged Korean churches, lay pastors, and the staff of LPM Korea. We enjoyed wonderful fellowship together, and meeting them personally strengthened the

partnership between our ministries. Likewise, whenever I attended international conferences in the United States, I learned many new ideas that I later adapted for Korean churches and the Lay Pastors Ministry in Korea.

One of the unforgettable experiences of visiting the United States was the warm hospitality I received. Whenever I attended an international conference, members of LPMI USA welcomed me at the airport, arranged transportation, and provided accommodations. Rather than staying in hotels, I often stayed with host families in places such as Kentucky, Pennsylvania, St. Louis, and Alabama. Those visits allowed me to experience authentic American family life, understand their culture and values, and observe firsthand how lay ministry functioned within local churches. Those experiences became valuable lessons that no classroom could ever teach.

LPMI USA has effectively ministered at every level—international, national, regional, and local churches. I believe I followed this ministry model very closely in Korea. Because I had seen it practiced with my own eyes, I was able to adapt it to Korean churches with confidence. As a result, LPM Korea was able to serve churches smoothly and effectively using a proven ministry system.

Another strength of LPMI USA has been its *Network Newsletter*, which has been published quarterly for more than thirty years. It has been an important resource for communication, encouragement, and networking among churches and ministry leaders.

Today, however, LPMI USA faces a new challenge. After decades of faithful ministry, many of its leaders are growing older and are asking what the next stage of the ministry should be. In my opinion, they have served remarkably well, but the future will require intentional preparation. They need to expand their network by connecting with more churches, developing a new generation of leaders, and strengthening partnerships across the United States. Greater networking and leadership succession will be essential if the vision of Lay Pastors Ministry is to continue impacting churches for many years to come.

I remain deeply grateful to LPMI USA. They were not only our ministry partner but also our model, mentor, and encouragement. Many of the successes of LPM Korea were possible because we first learned from their faithful example. Their investment in us has produced fruit far beyond the United States, and I pray that God will continue to bless and guide LPMI USA as it enters its next chapter of ministry.

My Personal Growth

Looking back on my life, I often ask myself, *How have I grown over the years?* It is both interesting and humbling to reflect on the journey God has led me through.

Before I became involved in Lay Pastors Ministry, I do not believe I experienced significant personal growth. Meeting Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron and becoming part of this ministry changed the direction of my life. I thank God for bringing us together because this ministry became one of the greatest instruments of my personal and spiritual development.

First, I grew through the ministry itself. It was a new and demanding responsibility, but I found it both exciting and rewarding. Rather than feeling overwhelmed, I genuinely enjoyed the work. Looking back over more than fifteen years of ministry, I can honestly say those years were among the happiest and most fulfilling of my life because I was serving people for the glory of God.

The ministry kept me busy every day. I visited churches throughout Korea, prepared weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual newsletters, edited a yearly journal of nearly 150 pages, conducted staff meetings, and met with pastors and church leaders both formally and informally. Every responsibility became a classroom where I learned practical leadership, administration, communication, and ministry.

Second, I grew through the mentoring of Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron, the founder

of LPMI and my personal mentor from the very beginning. For more than fifteen years he faithfully guided me, and we often spoke through international phone calls. Humanly speaking, I am who I am today because of his investment in my life.

When I first met him, I was a novice. I knew very little about leading a national ministry. Through his teaching and example, however, my perspective expanded dramatically. My eyes were opened to the needs of churches around the world and to the possibilities of lay ministry. He taught me not only ministry philosophy but also practical leadership, organizational management, and strategic planning.

Building upon his original materials, I developed additional training resources adapted for Korean churches. Whenever I faced difficult decisions or uncertain directions, Dr. Melvin patiently guided me. I trusted his counsel because he possessed decades of ministry experience. At that time, he had served for more than thirty years, while I had only about ten years of ministry experience. Occasionally he corrected or challenged me. Those moments were not frequent—I remember perhaps only two significant occasions over ten years—but they became valuable lessons that strengthened both my character and my leadership.

His life convinced me that every leader needs a mentor. Personal growth rarely happens in isolation. We grow much faster when someone wiser walks beside us, encourages us, and lovingly corrects us.

Finally, I grew through challenges and difficulties, both from within and from outside the ministry. We often say that failure is the mother of success. I would add another saying: **"Challenge is the cousin of growth."** Without challenges, there is little growth.

Some of those challenges came unexpectedly, while others I deliberately accepted because I enjoy pioneering new ministries and taking calculated risks. Looking back, I realize that every obstacle became another opportunity for God to shape my faith, strengthen my leadership, and deepen my

dependence upon Him.

Personal growth is not achieved by comfort but by commitment. God used ministry, mentoring, and challenges together to transform my life. For that, I remain deeply grateful.

The Function of a National Leader

I served as the National Director of Lay Pastors Ministry Korea for approximately fifteen years. Today, I serve as President of PACE International Seminary (PIS) in Nagaland, India. My leadership role there is quite different because our Principal, Mr. Aloto Anche, provides excellent day-to-day leadership. He is doing a wonderful job, allowing me to focus more on encouragement, vision, and long-term development.

During my years as National Director of LPM Korea, I discovered that the first responsibility of leadership is vision casting. Vision must be communicated continually—at every stage, every level, and in every area of ministry. Vision motivates people to persevere, inspires them to move forward, gives them pride in belonging to the ministry, encourages sacrifice, and ultimately develops a deep sense of ownership. Without vision, people simply work. With vision, people dedicate themselves to a mission.

Especially during the early years, I personally carried much of the ministry's workload. Leadership changes as an organization grows, but in the beginning a leader must be willing to work harder than anyone else. At that time I was the only full-time staff member, so I personally supervised almost every aspect of the ministry. Although our office secretary faithfully handled administrative responsibilities, I remain deeply grateful for the dedication of every staff member who served alongside me.

Our ultimate goal was always to help local churches grow both spiritually and numerically. We wanted believers to mature in their faith while churches became stronger and healthier through effective lay ministry.

Another essential responsibility of a national leader is building strong

relationships with local churches and their pastors. Networking is not merely exchanging information; it is building genuine partnerships. The word *network* suggests many threads woven together into one strong fabric. Through regular communication we remained aware of the needs, concerns, and ministries of local churches, while churches remained connected with the national ministry. Such relationships strengthened both the churches and the ministry. Healthy networking is indispensable for long-term ministry growth.

One practical tool that greatly strengthened our ministry was the regular publication of newsletters. At the very beginning of my ministry, Dr. Melvin strongly advised me to publish newsletters consistently. Following his advice, I personally prepared weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual publications. Looking back, I realized that the newsletters did more than communicate information—they sustained the ministry itself. They continually reminded pastors, lay leaders, and supporters of our shared vision. This is why "Communication" is listed as one of the Twelve Foundations for Successful Lay Pastors Ministry.

Planning conferences also became an important responsibility. LPMI USA began with consultations, later developed seminars, and eventually established national conferences every two years. LPM Korea followed the same model from the beginning. These conferences renewed vision, strengthened relationships, equipped leaders, and encouraged churches to continue expanding lay ministry.

Finally, I must express my deepest gratitude to our staff. Without them, our ministry would never have grown as it did. They served with remarkable commitment and sacrifice because they shared one common vision—to strengthen Korean churches through Lay Pastors Ministry. That shared vision kept many of them serving faithfully for more than ten years.

One of the greatest blessings was that we grew together. Most of us did not hold doctoral degrees when we began the ministry. As our ministry expanded, many staff members pursued advanced education, earning Ph.D., Th.D., or D.Min. degrees. I experienced the same journey. When I began the

ministry, I was not yet a doctor. During the years of ministry, I completed my doctoral studies and later pursued postdoctoral studies at Yale and Oxford University. Our educational growth reflected our spiritual and ministerial growth. We learned together, served together, and matured together.

Looking back, I realize that leadership is not about accomplishing great things alone. It is about helping others grow while growing together with them. That may be one of the greatest joys and privileges God has given me in ministry.

Centralized or Decentralized Leadership

When we are engaged in ministry, we eventually face an important question: **Should leadership be centralized or decentralized?**

Some people point to Moses' leadership as an example of decentralization. In Exodus 18:21, Moses appointed leaders over groups of tens, fifties, hundreds, and thousands. This was certainly a decentralized system, and such a structure is necessary. However, there are also times when ministry requires centralized leadership. In reality, effective leadership often requires both.

From my experience, a new ministry usually needs strong centralized leadership at the beginning. Once the ministry becomes established and begins to grow, leadership should gradually become more decentralized. Yet when the ministry reaches a new level of growth or faces major transitions, it may need to become more centralized again.

There are times when leaders must take risks. During periods of significant change—a new project, a new vision, a new direction, or a major promotion—the leader often needs to make clear and decisive decisions. If leadership becomes overly decentralized too early, the ministry may struggle to make decisions or move forward.

Of course, leaders should seek counsel from their committed core team. Wise

advice is always valuable. However, there will always be people who are negative or uninvolved. We cannot allow fear of criticism to prevent us from pursuing God's purpose. Once the ministry is firmly established, leadership can become more decentralized. Therefore, both approaches are necessary, depending on the season. Sometimes they even operate simultaneously. Leadership is, in many ways, an art.

For example, when we established PACE International Seminary (PIS) in Nagaland, India, my leadership had to be highly centralized. I was deeply convinced that the seminary was necessary. There was no doubt in my mind. Some people supported the idea, while others opposed it. In the end, I made the decision firmly. Without that decisive leadership, the school would never have been established. Once it began, most people agreed that it had been the right decision.

Every organization possesses tremendous energy. The key is knowing when and how to create synergy from that energy. As Peter Drucker said, "**Timing is everything.**" I have found that to be true in ministry.

Width or Depth

During the early years of ministry, leaders often wrestle with one important question: **Should we focus on widening the ministry or deepening it?**

This question stayed with me for many years.

Every ministry goes through a life cycle: beginning, growth, maturity, and eventually decline. During the beginning stage, our primary responsibility is to establish strong roots. A ministry without deep roots cannot survive long.

Once the ministry becomes stable, we naturally begin thinking about expansion. However, this can become a temptation. We often try to expand beyond our actual capacity, ability, or available resources. Certainly, we learn through trial and error, but we should avoid making unnecessary mistakes.

This is one of the greatest lessons I have learned through ministry.

Unless there is a compelling reason, I believe we should focus primarily on **deepening** the ministry. Expansion should come as a natural overflow rather than as an artificial goal. If we attempt to widen the ministry before it has matured, we scatter our energy and divide people's attention.

A convex lens illustrates this principle well. When sunlight is focused through the lens, the concentrated energy eventually creates fire. If the light is scattered, nothing happens. Ministry works the same way. We must focus our energy in one place for a long enough time. Then, when the ministry becomes full of life and strength, expansion happens naturally—like a river overflowing its banks.

Therefore, rather than forcing growth, let us continue deepening the ministry. In due time, healthy expansion will come naturally. That has been my experience.

Two Types of People: Emotional and Intellectual

Through many years of ministry, I have observed that people generally fall into two broad groups: **emotional people** and **intellectual people**.

I am not suggesting that one group is better than the other. They simply serve different functions and contribute in different ways.

When I first started this ministry, Dr. Melvin advised me to gather a group of people who shared the vision. As I invited people to join, the first ones who came were mostly emotional people. They were ordinary lay believers with burning hearts for God and His church. They willingly sacrificed without calculating the cost. Something within them compelled them to respond, and they threw themselves into the work with great passion.

I discovered that these kinds of people are often the pioneers of ministry. They are willing to step into the fire because they are driven by conviction rather than convenience. LPM Korea was started by people like this.

As time passed, another group gradually joined us. They were more intellectual in their approach. Their motivation was different. They may not have expressed the same outward passion, but they recognized that they could contribute through their knowledge, skills, strategic thinking, and professional experience. They wanted to find their place within the ministry. At the same time, many of them were also evaluating me as a leader and trying to understand the direction of the organization.

Both emotional and intellectual people worked together remarkably well toward the same vision. I am not sure which group I belong to, but I never experienced serious conflict between them. Occasionally there were small misunderstandings because they approached ministry differently, but those were only minor issues.

Interestingly, the greater challenges often occurred among the intellectual people themselves. They enjoyed discussion, debate, and sometimes strong disagreement because each person had confidence in his or her own ideas. Yet despite these differences, they remained together for more than ten years without division.

Looking back, I believe the intellectual people played a major role in expanding our ministry throughout Korea. They provided strategy, structure, and long-term planning that enabled sustainable growth.

In many ministries, emotional people come first. Their passion starts the movement. Later, intellectual people join and help strengthen, organize, and expand it. This seems to be a natural and healthy pattern of growth.

The leader's responsibility is not to choose one group over the other but to understand both and help them work together toward God's purpose.

I believe God sends both kinds of people to accomplish His work. I am deeply grateful for every person who contributed to this ministry. The birth and growth of PACE became possible because emotional people gave their passion, while intellectual people offered their wisdom, experience, and

resources. Together, God used both to build a healthy and growing ministry.

Being Professional

Being professional is one of the topics in the twelve PACE Training Modules. Dr. Melvin made an important distinction between **being a professional** and **being professional**.

A **professional** is someone who has earned a degree or professional credential, secured a position, and is recognized in a particular field. Whether that person performs the job well or poorly, he or she is still regarded as a professional because of formal education and certification.

Being professional, however, focuses not on credentials but on competence, commitment, and excellence in a specific area of service. A layperson may not hold a university degree or professional certificate, yet he or she can become highly skilled and effective in the PACE ministry. In that sense, lay ministers are professionals in caring ministry because they have developed genuine expertise through training, experience, and faithful service. This was Dr. Melvin's understanding, and it has also become mine.

Rev. David Kim, former senior pastor of Hallelujah Church, expressed it well. He believed that well-trained lay pastors were truly professionals in their ministry. In his view, they were not only *being professional* but were, in every practical sense, *professionals*. PACE ministry was their God-given calling, and they carried it out with excellence in the presence of God.

Rather than debating the distinction between these two expressions, I want to focus on a more practical question: **How can lay people become both professional and professionals in their ministry?**

I believe there are two essential factors:

1. **They must continually develop themselves.**
2. **They must receive recognition and affirmation from their senior pastor.**

The first responsibility belongs to the lay ministers themselves. Today, opportunities for growth are everywhere. Churches provide training, books, seminars, and mentoring. Outside the church, there are community education programs, online courses, and many free learning resources. Anyone who truly desires to grow can continue developing knowledge, skills, and character. Becoming professional is ultimately their own responsibility.

The second factor may be even more important. Lay ministers need the recognition and trust of their senior pastor. This recognition is not something they demand but something the pastor willingly grants as they demonstrate faithfulness and competence.

This is not always easy. Most pastors are trained in seminaries to preach, teach, and shepherd congregations, but few receive instruction on how to recognize, empower, and affirm lay ministers as ministry specialists. Yet this is one of the pastor's important responsibilities.

Lay ministers are responsible for their own growth, but pastors are responsible for empowering them to serve effectively. Without the pastor's confidence and approval, lay ministers often become hesitant. Even when they serve faithfully, they may limit themselves to only the minimum because they do not feel fully trusted.

Therefore, pastors should intentionally acknowledge lay ministers as professionals in their particular areas of ministry, just as pastors themselves are recognized as professionals in pastoral leadership. Pastors are generally called to oversee the whole ministry of the church, while lay ministers often become specialists in specific areas of care and service. As Professor John Patton observed in *Pastoral Care in Context*(1993), effective ministry requires both generalists and specialists. When pastors and lay ministers appreciate one another's unique roles, the entire church becomes stronger.

Commitments

Commitment develops in stages and is essential for a lifelong ministry.

The first stage begins with a special experience, a life-changing event, or a strong inner calling. For me, it was the latter. I experienced a powerful conviction deep within my heart that God was calling me into this ministry. It was as if I made a personal promise to God. That became the beginning of my commitment.

The second stage comes when we discover that our work has meaning. Ministry is not simply something to do; it becomes part of who we are. As we begin helping others, we experience joy and a sense of fulfillment. Even small successes encourage us to continue. Seeing people grow, heal, and rejoice in the Lord gives us a deep sense of accomplishment. Without this meaning, long-term commitment becomes difficult.

The third stage is quite different. We encounter obstacles, disappointments, and difficult people. We learn that ministry is not always easy. We wrestle with problems, gain practical experience, and grow through hardships. Instead of quitting, we continue moving forward. Looking back, we realize that our greatest growth often came through our greatest challenges.

One important turning point in my own life came when I read an article by management scholar Peter Drucker. He wrote that if we work without expecting personal benefit, our work is much more likely to succeed. Those words deeply challenged me.

I realized that true ministry must never be driven by personal gain. We serve because the ministry itself matters and because God has entrusted it to us. Of course, I did not fully understand this lesson immediately. It became clearer over many years of ministry. Since then, this principle has become one of my lifelong companions. I continually ask myself, *"Why am I doing this?"* The answer remains the same: *Because God has called me to do it—nothing more and nothing less.*

This conviction has renewed my commitment again and again throughout my ministry.

Finally, what is the highest level of commitment?

I believe it is to faithfully accomplish the work God has entrusted to us throughout our lifetime. Our greatest desire should be to finish well. Like our Lord Jesus Christ, we want to reach the end of our lives knowing that we have completed the work the Father gave us to do (John 17:4).

May we continue serving with faithfulness, perseverance, and unwavering commitment until the very end. Only then will we hear our Master's words:

"Well done, good and faithful servant." (Matthew 25:23)

Effective and Productive

I remember reading an article titled **"Effective and Productive,"** written by Dr. Melvin. Since then, I have reflected on those two words for many years. Whenever I am involved in a ministry or a new project, I often ask myself, **"Is what I am doing effective? Is it productive?"**

These are two important questions that every leader should ask. They serve as an excellent checklist for evaluating our ministry, leadership, and daily work.

Several years ago, I attempted to establish a school in Iksan, a city about two hours south of Seoul, Korea. I devoted nearly three years to the project. It was a difficult and exhausting season. I worked hard and persevered, yet there was very little progress.

Eventually, Dr. Melvin challenged me with a simple but profound question: **"Is what you are doing effective and productive?"**

I believe he was not questioning my commitment or my work ethic. Both of us knew that I was willing to work hard. Hard work was never the problem. Rather, he was asking me to examine my leadership, my strategy, my methods, and my overall direction. Until then, I had never seriously evaluated

my work through the lens of effectiveness and productivity.

If years of effort produce little progress, we must honestly ask ourselves why we continue doing the same thing. Looking back, I realize that I was not wise in that situation. I sincerely wanted to establish the school and believed I was making the right decisions and following the proper procedures. In the end, however, I was mistaken. I accepted Dr. Melvin's counsel and decided to stop pursuing that path.

That experience taught me a valuable leadership lesson.
How can we become more **effective**?

First, we need **concentration**. Whatever ministry God has placed before us deserves our full attention. When we focus completely on the task at hand, our work becomes far more effective.

Second, we need to **use the right tools**. God has provided many helpful resources. Personally, I regularly read new books because they often give me fresh ideas and practical insights that improve my ministry.

Third, we must **respect the process**. Every ministry develops over time. We cannot rush people. We need to win people's hearts, build trust, and move forward together. Healthy ministry always follows a process.

Fourth, we need a **systematic approach**. We should learn to balance two ways of thinking: automatic and reflective thinking, quick and slow thinking, emotional and intellectual thinking. Effective leaders know when to respond quickly and when to pause and reflect. Both are necessary for wise leadership.

How, then, can we become more **productive**?

First, we need a **clear target**. We must know exactly what we are trying to accomplish. What is our destination? What is our purpose? Without a clear goal, productivity is impossible.

Second, we need a **results-oriented mindset**. This does not mean ignoring people, but it does mean remaining focused on the mission. Without clear goals, we can easily become distracted by different opinions or unnecessary activities.

Third, we should not become trapped by **routine**. Many people simply continue doing things because that is how they have always been done. From time to time, we should honestly ask ourselves, *"Is this approach still producing good results?"* If it is not, we should be willing to adjust our methods and change our course.

One of the greatest gifts Dr. Melvin gave me was not merely an answer but a question—a question that continues to guide my leadership today:

"Is what you are doing now effective and productive in accomplishing your God-given goal?"

Every leader should ask this question regularly. Hard work alone is not enough. Faithfulness is essential, but faithful leaders must also pursue effectiveness and productivity so that their efforts bear lasting fruit for the Kingdom of God.

Chapter 6

Overseas ministry

Overseas Ministry: Taking PACE to the Nations

For many years I have been involved in overseas ministry. There have been two major approaches to this work: first, visiting other countries to introduce the PACE ministry; and second, ministering to foreigners who are living and studying in Korea. God has faithfully used both approaches to expand this ministry beyond Korea.

Romania: My First Overseas Ministry

While I was studying at Oxford University, I had the opportunity to visit Romania to train local believers in the PACE ministry. I came to know a Korean missionary couple serving there through one of the pastors in our rural church network in Korea. The pastor introduced them to me because he knew I would be traveling to the United Kingdom.

Before my trip, the missionary couple visited us, and together with several of our staff members we introduced the PACE ministry to them over several hours of discussion. They became very interested and invited me to come to Romania and train the people in their church. I agreed and planned to fly there after completing my studies at Oxford.

After finishing my program in England, I flew from Heathrow Airport in London to Bucharest, Romania. I still remember my difficult experience upon arriving there. The area around the airport was very poor, and many people were wandering around. While I was boarding a bus, a young boy appeared to help me with my luggage. Later I discovered that he had stolen my wallet from my suitcase.

I immediately went to the police station and explained what had happened.

The police contacted the missionary couple, but they discovered that I had arrived one day earlier than expected because of my misunderstanding of the time difference between Korea, the United Kingdom, and Romania. Their home was nearly twenty hours away by train, so they could not come immediately. They told me to take the train to their village, but I had no money because my wallet had been stolen. Thankfully, the police kindly helped me board the train.

The train reminded me of Korea's railways in the 1950s. Although it was old and uncomfortable, I actually enjoyed the experience because everything was new to me. After nearly ten hours of travel, I arrived early the next morning, where the missionary couple was waiting for me.

Their home also served as their church. They had rented a house with one large room for worship and ministry. There I conducted three evenings of PACE training for local Romanian believers, most of whom came from rural villages and humble backgrounds. The seminar was very meaningful, and after completing the training I returned safely to Korea. Looking back, this was my very first overseas ministry experience, and God used it to broaden my vision for international missions.

Expanding to Other Nations

After Romania, God opened doors to several other countries, including Japan, Thailand, Pakistan, and Myanmar.

One of our staff members knew a Korean missionary serving in Japan. Through that connection, four of us traveled to Japan for one week to conduct a PACE seminar for Korean missionaries serving there.

Later, I received an email from Rev. Chand in Pakistan. He wanted to learn more about the Lay Pastors Ministry and PACE, and he invited me to visit Pakistan and conduct a seminar. After corresponding by email for nearly a year, I finally traveled there for eleven days. The trip was fruitful and productive. Our relationship continued to grow, and later we invited Rev. Chand to Korea to teach at one of our conferences. He visited Korea twice,

and we developed a close fellowship in ministry.

A friend also introduced me to a Korean missionary in Thailand. Through that connection, I spent one week in Thailand conducting PACE seminars for Thai pastors. It was another valuable opportunity to share the vision of lay ministry.

Myanmar: Preparing for India

Another significant opportunity came through one of the international students studying in Korea. He invited me to visit his home country of Myanmar. I spent a week there conducting PACE seminars in churches and theological schools.

Myanmar gave me a deeper understanding of ministry in developing Asian countries. The experience became valuable preparation for what God was about to do in Nagaland, India. Looking back, I can clearly see that God was preparing me step by step for a much greater ministry.

Opening PACE International Seminary

After returning from Myanmar, I began making preparations to establish a PACE training school in Nagaland, India. After much planning and prayer, I visited Nagaland and conducted seminars in local churches.

Finally, on July 22, 2015, we officially opened **PACE International Seminary (PIS)** in Nagaland. It was a historic milestone—not only for our ministry but also for the worldwide Lay Pastors Ministry movement that began in 1978 when Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron started the ministry in Ohio, USA.

As I look back, I am deeply grateful to God for allowing us to establish this school. What began with one small ministry in the United States has now reached many nations. Every difficult journey, every unexpected challenge, and every open door became part of God's preparation to expand His kingdom through the vision of equipping ordinary believers for extraordinary ministry. To God alone be the glory.

Visits to Overseas Schools

Through the work of Lay Pastors Ministry, I have had the privilege of visiting several distinguished theological institutions in the United Kingdom and the United States, including the University of Oxford, the University of Cambridge, Ridley Hall, Yale Divinity School, and New York Theological Seminary.

University of Oxford

I have visited the University of Oxford many times over the years. During these visits, I had opportunities to study, meet professors and scholars from around the world, and introduce the vision of Lay Pastors Ministry. I often presented Dr. Melvin Steinbron's two books and explained the theology and philosophy behind our ministry.

In addition to studying at Oxford, I stayed at Wycliffe Hall as a Visiting Scholar for one month. It was a wonderful experience because I had the freedom to organize my own schedule, conduct research, and spend time in reflection and writing. During my stay, I built meaningful friendships with faculty members and fellow scholars from many countries.

One of the most significant people I met at Oxford was Dr. Vincent Strudwick of Kellogg College. He later became the advisor for my Ph.D. dissertation on Lay Pastors Ministry at the Graduate Theological Foundation. Dr. Strudwick was not only an outstanding scholar but also a gracious and caring person. Beyond guiding my dissertation, he encouraged me to apply for a postdoctoral program at Yale Divinity School in the United States.

During my time at Oxford, I also met several influential scholars, including Dr. Jane Shaw, then Dean of Christ Church and Director of our studies; Dr. John Morgan, President of the Graduate Theological Foundation; and Dr. Robin, an Old Testament professor who later became one of my postdoctoral advisors.

University of Cambridge

Cambridge University was another important place in my academic journey. I

visited several colleges and institutions, including the Cambridge Divinity Faculty, King's College, and Ridley Hall.

Originally, I hoped to become a Visiting Scholar at Cambridge Divinity Faculty. However, the admission requirements were beyond what I could meet at that time. Although I was unable to join the program, I had the opportunity to meet several professors and visit the university library. I searched for books on lay ministry but found only a few resources. This experience helped me realize that much of Cambridge's theological research has traditionally focused on biblical studies, ancient languages, and historical theology rather than practical church ministry.

One memorable meeting was with Dr. Jeremy Morris, Dean of King's College. Before traveling to England, I had contacted several professors and deans to introduce Lay Pastors Ministry. Dr. Morris kindly agreed to meet with me. During our conversation, we discussed our respective ministries in depth. He expressed strong agreement with the theology and philosophy of Lay Pastors Ministry but explained that implementing it within the Anglican Church would not be easy because of its hierarchical structure. Nevertheless, our dialogue was encouraging and fruitful, and I was pleased to present him with Dr. Melvin's two books.

I also applied to Ridley Hall as a Visiting Scholar and was accepted. Unfortunately, I was unable to stay for several months because of my ministry responsibilities in Korea. During my visit, I met Dr. Adrian, who directed the Visiting Scholar program. We had meaningful conversations about our ministries, and he introduced me to Mission Shaped Ministry, a program that also emphasizes developing and equipping lay people for Christian service.

Yale Divinity School

After completing my Ph.D., I desired to continue my academic journey through a postdoctoral program at Yale Divinity School in New Haven, Connecticut.

I applied to the program and had a one-hour interview with Dr. Paul Stenberg, the program director. At the end of the interview, he accepted my application. The following year, in 2007, I spent one month at Yale as a postdoctoral scholar.

My time at Yale was an enriching experience. I met professors, students, and researchers from around the world. During my stay, I also became acquainted with the Overseas Ministries Study Center (OMSC), located just one block from Yale Divinity School. The center became another valuable place where I learned about global Christianity and mission.

New York Theological Seminary

Another meaningful visit was to New York Theological Seminary, where I met Professor Dr. Kim, who taught pastoral care.

Professor Kim agreed wholeheartedly with the vision of Lay Pastors Ministry and emphasized its importance, especially for immigrant churches. He observed that many Korean churches in the New York area are quite conservative. Therefore, he suggested that introducing Lay Pastors Ministry would require patience. Senior pastors would first need to understand and embrace its philosophy before it could be effectively implemented. Since Lay Pastors Ministry is fundamentally a lay movement within the church, leadership support is essential for its success.

Through my visits to these internationally respected institutions, I gained even greater confidence in the theological foundation and practical value of Lay Pastors Ministry. Although each school has its own academic emphasis and denominational tradition, I found that professors and church leaders generally appreciated the theology, philosophy, and vision behind this ministry.

These experiences convinced me that Lay Pastors Ministry is not limited by culture, denomination, or nationality. Rather, it is a biblical and practical ministry model that can serve churches around the world. My conversations with scholars and church leaders strengthened my conviction that this ministry has the potential to be used effectively in many countries and

educational institutions for the advancement of God's Kingdom.

Nagaland and the Lay Pastors Ministry

How I Came to Know Nagaland: *"Love with Skin On"*

I first became acquainted with Nagaland through several Naga students who came to Korea to study theology. I often attended their monthly fellowship gatherings, where they worshiped together, enjoyed fellowship, and prayed not only for one another but also for Korean churches and for their homeland.

Among them, two people became especially significant in my relationship with Nagaland: Dr. Timothy Kaping and Mr. Aloto Anche.

I first met Dr. Timothy Kaping through the ministry of PACE International Fellowship. He deeply appreciated the vision of the Lay Pastors Ministry, so I suggested that we begin a PACE ministry together for international students in Korea. This fellowship continued for about two years. During that time, we began discussing the possibility of establishing a PACE training school in Nagaland.

Later, through the same ministry, I met Mr. Aloto Anche, who was studying for his Th.M. degree at Seoul Christian University. We spent many hours discussing how to introduce the Lay Pastors Ministry to Nagaland. Through the commitment and vision of these two men, the dream of opening a PACE school in Nagaland gradually became a reality.

For nearly two years, both Dr. Timothy and Mr. Aloto studied the principles of the Lay Pastors Ministry with me. They came to understand not only its biblical foundation but also its practical value. Among the many concepts they learned, one especially captured their hearts: **"Love with skin on."** They believed that their churches needed a ministry that expressed God's love through practical care rather than words alone. Their passion became my

motivation to serve Nagaland.

Before visiting Nagaland, I learned much about the region through these Naga students. They often described their homeland as economically poor. Most families owned their homes, but many had very little cash income. They also explained that approximately 95 percent of the population identified as Christians, although many were Christians more by tradition than by personal commitment.

Finally, on July 15, 2015, I arrived in Dimapur, Nagaland, to establish the school. It was the middle of a very hot summer. Normally, schools begin their academic year in June, but because Mr. Aloto needed to complete his Th.M. dissertation and finish his semester in Korea, we delayed the opening until his return. As a result, **PACE International Seminary officially opened on July 22, 2015.** This became a historic milestone in the global development of the Lay Pastors Ministry.

While living in Dimapur, I witnessed firsthand many of the realities I had previously heard about. Nagaland was economically underdeveloped compared with Korea and many developed nations. Employment opportunities were limited because there were very few companies or industries. Most people earned their living through daily labor or small businesses.

I also observed that many people became Christians simply because they were born into Christian families. Some Korean Naga students had warned me that nominal Christianity might result in weak moral standards. However, after spending time among the people, I did not find this to be a major concern. Every country faces spiritual and moral challenges, including highly developed nations. In many respects, I found the people of Nagaland sincere, hospitable, and deeply respectful.

Nagaland's economic challenges are also connected to its unique political history. As one of the northeastern states of India, Nagaland experienced a long struggle for greater independence, during which many young people sacrificed their lives. Because of this historical conflict, economic development

has been slow, and opportunities for outside investment and international assistance have been limited.

The Churches of Nagaland

Most churches in Nagaland belong to Baptist denominations because Baptist missionaries first brought the gospel there more than one hundred years ago. In many ways, the history of Christianity in Nagaland resembles the early history of the Korean church.

The Baptist denomination has exercised significant leadership throughout the region. This has brought both strengths and weaknesses. On the positive side, denominational leadership has helped prevent the uncontrolled multiplication of churches that has sometimes occurred in Korea. On the other hand, the strong hierarchical structure has also made it difficult for young pastors and newly graduated seminary students to plant new churches freely.

I believe the churches of Nagaland will gradually become more open to encouraging younger leaders. Society is constantly changing, and churches must also adapt wisely while remaining faithful to biblical truth.

One of the greatest opportunities for the Lay Pastors Ministry is that many churches in Nagaland have had little exposure to biblical lay ministry. The teaching of Ephesians 4:11–12—equipping all believers for the work of ministry—is not yet widely understood or practiced. Because of this, the Lay Pastors Ministry offers a fresh and biblical vision that many churches find both interesting and attractive.

The ministry combines two powerful biblical principles: **lay ministry** and **practical caring ministry**. Its emphasis on *"Love with skin on"* provides a visible demonstration of Christ's love through personal relationships and compassionate care. These two concepts together form a unified ministry that equips pastors and lay believers to serve as ministry partners.

Ultimately, the Lay Pastors Ministry helps pastors and congregations discover

a biblical partnership in ministry. Although many churches desire such cooperation, they often do not know how to put it into practice. This ministry provides both the theology and the practical system to make that partnership a reality.

Naturally, this requires a significant **paradigm shift**. Both pastors and church members must move from a clergy-centered ministry to a shared ministry in which every believer participates. Such change is not easy, but once churches experience the benefits of this biblical model, they gradually embrace it, both consciously and unconsciously.

I also discovered that many churches in Nagaland would benefit from guidance from experienced leaders outside their own context. Having lived within the same structures and leadership patterns for many years, change does not come easily. Therefore, I believe churches in Nagaland need partnerships with ministries such as the Lay Pastors Ministry International (USA) and LPM Korea. Regular conferences, seminars, and leadership training led by experienced teachers from outside can help introduce new biblical perspectives while encouraging and strengthening local churches.

Looking back, I believe God prepared this ministry long before I ever set foot in Nagaland. Through faithful Naga students studying in Korea, through the vision of Dr. Timothy Kaping and Mr. Aloto Anche, and through God's providential timing, the Lay Pastors Ministry was planted in Nagaland. My prayer is that this ministry will continue to equip believers, strengthen pastors, and transform churches through the biblical vision of equipping the saints and demonstrating Christ's **"love with skin on."**

PACE in Three Countries: USA, Korea, and Nagaland

I believe there are different reasons why PACE (Lay Pastors Ministry) has been adopted in the United States, Korea, and Nagaland. Although the ministry is the same, the needs and contexts of each country are different.

The United States

When Dr. Melvin Steinbron developed Lay Pastors Ministry in the United States, his church had more than 2,000 members. While there were many small churches, large churches especially needed a way to provide personal care for every member. Under the traditional church system, it was impossible for pastors alone to care for so many people.

During that period, many American churches had concentrated primarily on evangelism. As people came to Christ and entered the church, they also needed ongoing care, encouragement, and discipleship. At the same time, parachurch ministries were flourishing, and many organizations emerged to support local churches. Lay Pastors Ministry became one of these significant ministries and effectively met the growing need for personal pastoral care.

Another reason for its success was that it challenged churches to recognize the biblical role of laypeople. Rather than viewing ministry as the responsibility of pastors alone, churches began to see that every believer could participate in caring for others. In this sense, Lay Pastors Ministry became part of a broader lay ministry movement in America.

South Korea

By the time PACE was introduced to Korea, Korean Christianity had already celebrated nearly one hundred years of history. During that century, Korean churches had experienced remarkable growth and had invested heavily in evangelism. However, by the 1990s, church growth had slowed, and many churches began to decline numerically.

Both pastors and laypeople realized that simply doing more of the same would not solve the problem. They were searching for the next stage of church ministry and development. When they experienced PACE, many immediately recognized its value.

PACE helped churches move beyond numerical growth by focusing on spiritual growth, discipleship, and caring relationships. Laypeople, who had already matured to some extent, desired greater opportunities to serve God

meaningfully. Through PACE they discovered their calling, developed their spiritual gifts, and experienced the joy of serving others. As a result, both pastors and lay members found renewed purpose and satisfaction in ministry.

Nagaland India

The situation in Nagaland is quite different. Many people live with limited resources and naturally long for care, encouragement, and practical help. Therefore, the central PACE principle of "love with skin on" fits their situation remarkably well.

Although Christianity has existed in Nagaland for nearly one hundred years—similar to Korea—the concept of lay ministry had received very little attention. Ministry had traditionally been centered almost entirely on ordained pastors. Many churches focused on what I call the "Three Ps": Presence, Prayer, and Pay. While these are important, laypeople were rarely viewed as partners in ministry.

Furthermore, denominational structures strongly influenced local churches. Headquarters often exercised considerable authority over pastors and congregations, creating a highly centralized system. Within such a structure, planting new churches or developing lay leadership was often difficult.

When I introduced the biblical teaching on Lay Ministry, Lay Pastors Ministry, and PACE, many pastors and church leaders were surprised. They expressed sincere gratitude and said their eyes had been opened to a completely new understanding of ministry. They accepted this teaching as a biblical model rather than merely another church program.

I believe this movement has the potential to become a "Second Reformation" for the churches of Nagaland by restoring the biblical ministry of all believers. In this vision, PACE International Seminary (PIS) has an important role in equipping future generations of pastors and lay leaders.

Leadership Baton

Many years ago, I witnessed the passing of the leadership baton of Lay Pastors Ministry International from Dr. Melvin Steinbron, the founder, to Tom Parrish, the General Secretary, during the U.S. National Conference. It reminded me of Moses passing leadership to Joshua and Elijah passing his mantle to Elisha. Watching Dr. Melvin place the mantle on Tom Parrish's shoulders was a deeply moving experience.

Today, I feel that I have experienced something similar by passing leadership responsibilities to Mr. Aloto Anche, the National Director of LPM India. This was not merely a formal transfer of authority. I felt that my burden became lighter while his became much heavier.

I first met Mr. Aloto about two years ago. During the following year, I trained him in PACE ministry and gradually entrusted the ownership of LPM India to him. Together we established PACE International Seminary in Nagaland, where he now serves both as Principal and National Director of LPM India.

During this process, I shared everything I could—from the beginning to the end of the ministry. I gave him the resources that I had collected and developed over many years, including documents, teaching materials, ministry experiences, and files from my personal computer.

I believe we began well, and so far our partnership has been successful. We have faithfully received the leadership baton from Dr. Melvin and passed it on to the next generation.

However, passing the baton is only the beginning.

The real challenge begins after the transfer. Leadership is not simply receiving authority; it is accepting responsibility.

As I observe Mr. Aloto's ministry, I naturally ask myself: Is he doing well? Is he building a strong foundation? Does he still carry the same vision and passion?

When people first receive leadership, they are usually full of excitement and energy. Yet over time, that initial enthusiasm can gradually fade. Therefore, new leaders need continual encouragement, mentoring, and spiritual nurturing.

Although I have given Mr. Aloto many materials, ideas, and experiences, some challenges can only be learned through experience. The church situation in Nagaland differs greatly from Korea and the United States. New ideas are often met with hesitation, and people may not immediately recognize either his leadership or the vision he carries. It will take time, patience, and faithful perseverance before others fully appreciate the significance of the ministry entrusted to him.

Passing the baton is important, but nurturing the one who carries it is even more important.

Plan and Preparation

Which is more important—planning or preparation?

When Mr. Aloto and I were preparing to establish the seminary, we spent many hours discussing our vision. We repeatedly said to one another, "Let's pray about it."

During that period, I read a summary of a book prepared by Auano. One statement deeply impressed me: **"Preparation is more important than planning."**

I believe this is true.

Planning is necessary, and we should never neglect it. However, after making a plan, our greatest energy should be devoted to preparation. Preparation transforms vision into reality.

Even writing this book is part of my preparation. It is more than simply

making a plan. Preparation is an ongoing process that continues throughout our lives. It keeps us growing, learning, and moving toward God's calling. Preparation is not a slogan or a one-time event. It is continuous action. Even after one project is completed, we begin preparing for the next assignment God gives us.

As we prepare, God often provides unexpected ideas, wisdom, resources, and relationships. If we stop after making a plan, we may never discover these opportunities. But once we begin taking practical steps, doors begin to open and people begin to join the vision.

This reminds me of Robert Fritz's concept of "the path of least resistance" and his teaching on structural dynamics. He explains that when we clearly commit ourselves to a primary goal and begin moving toward it, circumstances and relationships gradually align to support that goal.

I have experienced this truth in ministry. When we faithfully prepare for God's work, God works alongside us.

Planning alone is never enough. Many people create excellent plans, but relatively few move beyond the planning stage into active preparation. They wait for something to happen automatically, but little changes.

As we prepared to establish PACE International Seminary, we experienced firsthand how preparation opened unexpected opportunities. Had we only made plans and done nothing more, the seminary would never have become a reality.

Sadly, many dreams end at the planning stage. People spend so much time developing plans that they assume success will eventually come by itself. But ministry grows not through planning alone, but through faithful preparation, persistent action, and God's guidance.

Ministry Cycle: The Six-Year Pattern

Every ministry has a life cycle. Many books on leadership and ministry describe this reality. Some compare it to the human life cycle—birth, growth, aging, sickness, and death. Others compare it to the four seasons: spring, summer, autumn, and winter. This pattern is common in every organization.

A ministry normally passes through four stages:

1. Beginning
2. Growth
3. Peak (Climax)
4. Decline

Experienced ministry leaders say that before a ministry reaches the stage of decline, it must intentionally renew itself. In many cases, this need for renewal appears after about six years. Without a deliberate change in direction, strategy, or structure, a ministry may gradually lose its vitality and eventually die.

Our experience at LPM Korea clearly followed this pattern.

- **1999:** Beginning
- **2000–2005:** Growth
- **2006–2008:** Peak

After 2008, however, I began to sense that we were entering a period of decline. During our first several years, we focused on serving individual churches by visiting them and providing training. After about five years, we realized that this approach alone would not sustain the ministry. We needed a more systematic way to equip people, so we established a regular Training Center. This was a minor change in our ministry procedure.

A few years later, however, we recognized that a much greater change was necessary. We needed not only to improve our methods but also to change our direction for the future.

During that period, I discovered a helpful model of transition consisting of three stages:

1. Letting Go
2. The Neutral Zone
3. The New Beginning

While walking through this transition, I read many books on organizational change. They gave me ideas, insights, and encouragement.

The first step was **letting go**. We had to release old habits, familiar methods, established concepts, and former directions. This did not mean forgetting our past experiences or achievements. On the contrary, those experiences became valuable resources for the future. We carried those lessons with us as we entered the next stage.

The second stage was the **Neutral Zone**. We could no longer return to the past, but we had not yet discovered the future. During this season, our staff wrestled with many questions. We found ourselves in what seemed like an empty and quiet place, uncertain about what lay ahead. Yet God was preparing us there.

Finally, we entered the **New Beginning**. Gradually the door opened. Building upon everything we had learned in the past, we discovered a new direction and began a new adventure.

Looking back, I believe we experienced two significant transitions. The first was a minor adjustment in our ministry procedures. The second was a major shift in our overall direction. Without these changes, we could not have grown to the next level. Eventually, our organization might have closed. By God's grace, LPM Korea found the right path. We shifted our focus toward education and established schools and training institutions. This transition happened gradually and smoothly.

Several factors made this possible.

First, the mindset of the leader was essential. Leadership provides vision and

energy for change.

Second, God revealed a new direction for the future.

Third, our staff understood the reality of our situation and embraced the new vision.

Finally, we received tremendous encouragement from many people, especially Dr. Melvin, who supported us throughout the entire transition.

I believe we remained in the Neutral Zone for nearly two or three years. During that period, it often felt as though we were riding three boats at the same time—letting go of the past, living in the uncertainty of transition, and beginning something new.

By God's grace, we successfully crossed that difficult season. Today we continue moving forward with renewed vision and confidence, following the direction God has given us.

What Is Ministry?

While I was teaching at PACE International Seminary (PIS) in Nagaland, India, Dr. Aloto asked me a simple but profound question:

"Byeong, what is ministry?"

His question caught me by surprise. I had never seriously asked myself that question before. I had simply been doing ministry for more than fifteen years after receiving this vision from Dr. Melvin. Yet when I was asked to define it, I realized how difficult it was.

Perhaps Dr. Aloto was really asking another question: **What is the difference between a job and a ministry?**

I still cannot claim to have a perfect answer, but through years of experience I have come to several convictions.

1. Ministry Exists for God's Purpose, Not for Money

The primary purpose of ministry is never to make money.

Certainly, financial support is necessary. Every ministry needs resources to operate, and many blessings come as by-products of faithful service. However, money must never become the primary goal.

For this reason, churches and ministry organizations should function as non-profit ministries. When a ministry begins to pursue money rather than its calling, people quickly recognize the change. It becomes money-oriented instead of ministry-oriented, and trust gradually disappears.

When we faithfully dedicate ourselves to God's work, He provides what we need. We may never become wealthy, but God continually supplies our daily bread. As Jesus taught us to pray, God faithfully provides "our daily bread."

2. Ministry Focuses on Its Mission and on People

The purpose of ministry is to serve people according to God's calling, not merely to preserve an organization.

Many secular organizations eventually become more concerned about their own survival than about their original mission. Ministry must never fall into that trap.

The mission always comes first, and people come next. Buildings, institutions, and organizational structures exist to support that mission—not to replace it. This responsibility especially belongs to the leader. A ministry leader must continually keep the organization focused on God's calling. When leaders remain faithful to the mission, dedicated staff and volunteers naturally work together to sustain the organization.

Looking back over the past fifteen years, I realize that I consistently emphasized our mission. Meanwhile, our staff faithfully worked to maintain

and strengthen the organization. That balance proved to be a healthy system.

3. Software Comes Before Hardware

Another important principle is the development of what I call "software."

By software I mean vision, ideas, leadership training, educational materials, ministry systems, and spiritual resources.

Hardware refers to buildings, offices, equipment, and physical facilities.

Many organizations concentrate first on hardware, but lasting ministry begins with software. If we continue developing people, resources, and ministry systems, the hardware will eventually follow. People are willing to invest in a ministry that has meaningful content and a clear vision.

Buildings alone cannot sustain a ministry, but strong resources and faithful leadership can.

4. The Leader's Mindset Matters

Finally, the mindset of the leader is crucial.

A ministry leader should earn the respect of the people not because of position or authority, but because of character and commitment.

Such leaders should demonstrate four qualities:

- They dedicate their entire lives to God's calling.
- They are willing to take risks by faith when necessary.
- They live simply rather than pursuing wealth or personal comfort.
- They willingly sacrifice for the sake of God's kingdom.

If I were to describe a true ministry leader in one word, it would be **sacrifice**. A genuine ministry leader is willing to give up personal comfort in order to fulfill God's calling. Such leaders become examples for others, inspiring people not merely through words but through their lives.

Chapter 7

Theory and Practice

There are two common approaches to learning and ministry. One is **Theory First, then Practice**. The other is **Practice First, then Theory**.

Some people begin by studying principles and then applying them in real ministry. Others begin by serving in the field and later develop principles from their experience. Both approaches have value, and neither is necessarily better than the other. The appropriate approach often depends on the situation.

Most schools follow the first model. Students learn theories in the classroom and then seek to apply them in practical settings. However, experienced practitioners often learn in the opposite direction. They gain wisdom through ministry and later reflect on their experiences to develop sound theological and practical principles.

Dr. Melvin expressed this balance well in his second book:

"Theory without practice bears no fruit, but practice without theory has no direction."

This statement captures an important truth. Healthy ministry requires both sound theology and faithful practice.

Theory in Lay Pastors Ministry

Lay Pastors Ministry (LPM) is built upon strong biblical and practical foundations. Throughout his books, monographs, and training materials, Dr. Melvin developed a comprehensive theology of lay ministry. These resources provide biblical principles, leadership philosophy, and practical guidance for those who serve.

PACE ministry benefits greatly from these theoretical foundations because they give purpose, direction, and consistency.

Practice in Lay Pastors Ministry

LPM and PACE are not merely academic concepts. They are ministries that come alive through daily relationships and caring for people.

The ministry is practiced one person at a time—visiting families, listening to people, praying with them, encouraging them, and walking alongside them through life's joys and struggles. In this way, ministry becomes part of everyday life.

However, practice alone is not enough. When ministry becomes routine without continued learning, people often stop growing. They simply repeat the same activities without improving. Likewise, theory alone can become dry if it is never practiced.

For this reason, ministry should be a continual cycle:

- Learn the theory.
- Put it into practice.
- Reflect on the experience.
- Return to study.
- Practice again with greater wisdom.

This ongoing process develops maturity and excellence.

Those who become strong in both theory and practice become true **specialists**. At first, we depend upon experienced leaders to guide us, but over time we ourselves become specialists who can teach and mentor others. Such balance contributes not only to successful ministry but also to long-term sustainability.

Theory comes through studying Scripture, reading books, learning from teachers, discussing with peers, and reflecting intellectually. Practice develops through intentional ministry, interpersonal relationships, emotional maturity,

and personal experience.

Personally, I have spent many years in practical ministry. Yet I continue to read books on leadership and pastoral care because they help me evaluate and improve my ministry. Continuous learning strengthens both my personal growth and my professional development.

Motivation in Ministry

Starting a ministry and sustaining a ministry require two different kinds of motivation.

Many ministries begin with enthusiastic people who are eager to serve. However, motivation does not continue automatically. Like a fire, it must be continually renewed.

One of the greatest responsibilities of a leader is not merely to organize ministry but to continually motivate those who serve.

Throughout my ministry, this has often been one of my greatest burdens. I frequently asked myself:

"How can I keep people motivated? How can they continue serving faithfully year after year?"

Maintaining motivation is relatively easy in the beginning. The real challenge comes after weeks become months and months become years.

To meet this challenge, I continually sought personal growth. I read leadership books, reflected deeply on ministry, developed new ideas, and intentionally helped our staff continue growing. By God's grace, many of our staff members have served faithfully for more than ten years.

The Changing Nature of Motivation

Motivation today is very different from what it was forty years ago.

Human motivation has developed through different stages.

The earliest form might be called "**carrot and stick**." People were primarily motivated by rewards and punishment because their basic needs had not yet been met.

Later, organizations emphasized **empowerment**. Leaders encouraged people by giving them greater responsibility, training, and opportunities to develop.

Today, however, many people seek **autonomy**. They want meaningful work, freedom to make decisions, opportunities for creativity, and ownership of their responsibilities.

This progression is both natural and healthy.

The challenge is no longer with followers alone. The challenge belongs to leaders.

How can leaders guide capable people who already possess knowledge, experience, and confidence? These individuals often prefer to accomplish ministry according to their own style and philosophy. Wise leaders learn to trust them while continuing to provide vision and encouragement.

I have witnessed this transformation personally.

Fifteen years ago, many of our staff members depended heavily upon my direction. They needed guidance regarding ministry goals, decisions, and future plans.

Today, many of them have matured significantly. They rarely need my direct instruction. Instead, my role has changed. Rather than constantly giving answers, I spend more time listening, encouraging, affirming, and helping them think through new possibilities.

The same is true at PACE International Seminary. Our teachers, staff members, and administrators have grown into capable leaders. They no longer require

constant counseling or coaching. They understand their responsibilities and know how to fulfill them well. My presence has become less about directing every detail and more about supporting and encouraging them.

Today's congregations have also changed. People desire continual growth. If they feel they are no longer developing, they often lose interest in a ministry. Rather than criticizing this reality, we should recognize it as part of human development. The responsibility rests upon leaders to create environments where people continue to grow.

Motivation According to Dr. Melvin

Dr. Melvin devoted one of his monographs, **Motivating Lay Pastors**, to this subject.

He pointed out that Jesus continually motivated His disciples. Motivation, he wrote, includes inspiring people, stimulating their spirits, renewing commitment, restoring vision, and moving people to action.

Paul expressed the same idea when he encouraged Timothy to "fan into flame the gift of God."

Without motivation, ministry gradually loses its vitality.

Dr. Melvin also distinguished between **extrinsic motivation** and **intrinsic motivation**. Daniel H. Pink makes the same distinction in his book *Drive*.

Both forms of motivation are important. External encouragement remains valuable, but today's leaders must increasingly help people discover motivation from within. Most people already possess God-given potential. Our task is to awaken that potential rather than simply control people.

Ownership Produces Motivation

In my experience, motivation is closely connected with ownership.

When people genuinely feel that a ministry belongs to them, they naturally become motivated and committed.

Ownership means saying,

"This is my ministry. This is my responsibility. This is my calling from God."

Leaders cannot force ownership upon people, but they can create an environment where ownership develops. Wise leaders share responsibility, trust people with meaningful work, and allow them to contribute creatively.

Without ownership, commitment remains shallow. People become less dedicated, less creative, and less willing to grow.

Creativity is essential because it enables people to discover new ways to serve God effectively. Growth requires creativity, and creativity flourishes where ownership exists.

Of course, leaders must carefully distinguish between **motivation** and **manipulation**.

Both can move people to action, but manipulation eventually destroys trust. Motivation inspires people from within, while manipulation pressures them from without.

Long-term ministry should be built upon genuine motivation rather than manipulation.

Every lasting ministry begins with motivated people who believe that God has called them.

As Dr. Melvin often reminded us:

"God wants this ministry in our church, so we have to make it work."

When people embrace that conviction as their own, motivation becomes more than enthusiasm—it becomes a lifelong commitment.

Ownership and Paradigm Shift in Lay Pastors Ministry

Ownership of the Ministry

Every ministry needs someone who truly **owns** it. Ownership means that someone accepts responsibility for the ministry, manages it faithfully, and remains accountable for its health and future. Rather than depending on one individual, a small group of people should share the vision and take collective responsibility.

Jethro reminded Moses of a truth that Moses probably already knew: it was foolish to try to do the work alone (Exodus 18). This principle applies not only to caring for a congregation but also to leading and managing the ministry that provides that care.

In Dr. Melvin Steinbron's church of approximately 2,500 members, the Lay Pastors Ministry was led by a Ministry Leadership Group of eight people. They shared the vision and provided leadership together.

Dr. Melvin identified at least five signs of true ownership:

1. Attending meetings faithfully.
2. Thinking about the ministry even outside meetings.
3. Talking about the ministry with family, friends, and others.
4. Carrying the burden of its problems—even losing sleep over them.
5. Rejoicing in the ministry's successes.

Ownership is not merely holding a title; it is carrying the ministry in one's heart.

How I Developed Ownership of This Ministry

My own journey toward ownership began in 1995.

At that time, I was teaching at my alma mater, SungKyul University, and was asked to teach a course on pastoral care because of my Clinical Pastoral

Education (CPE) training in Canada. While preparing my lectures, I searched for suitable English textbooks on pastoral care but could not find one that fully met my needs. I expanded my search to other theological schools and eventually visited the Asian Center for Theological Studies (ACTS).

There I met Professor Ruth Elsner, who was teaching pastoral care using Dr. Melvin Steinbron's book *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?* The book introduced the concept of Lay Pastoral Care Ministry. Professor Elsner believed strongly that this ministry represented the future direction of the Korean church. She enthusiastically recommended the book and gave me a copy.

When I introduced the ideas from *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?* to senior students at Sungkyul University, they became excited by the biblical vision of "equipping the saints for the work of ministry" (Ephesians 4:11–12). They especially appreciated the paradigm shift that redefined the pastor as the **equipper** and the laity as the **ministers**.

Soon afterward, I was encouraged to translate the book into Korean. I contacted its author, Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron. Initially I assumed he was simply the senior pastor of a local church, but I soon learned that he was the Founder and President of Lay Pastors Ministry Incorporated (LPMI) in the United States. Through our continuing correspondence, I became increasingly convinced that this ministry should be introduced in Korea.

On July 1, 1999, I established the Lay Pastors Ministry Institute Korea in Seoul while serving as a part-time pastor in a local church. Later we rented our own office, enabling me to devote myself full-time to the ministry.

When I founded the institute, Dr. Melvin gave me one important piece of advice:

"Form a Leadership Group."

He explained that a Leadership Group consists of people who genuinely believe in the ministry, share its vision, and take ownership of its success. This concept became one of the foundational principles described in the first

of his thirteen monographs.

I began sharing the vision of Lay Pastors Ministry with both pastors and lay leaders. Four committed laypeople joined me, and together we launched Lay Pastors Ministry in Korea. They embraced the vision and accepted ownership alongside me.

One of our very first tasks was to publish a one-page monthly newsletter, following Dr. Melvin's recommendation. Through this simple publication we introduced Lay Pastors Ministry to churches, pastors, and individuals interested in developing caring ministries.

During the following ten years, I visited more than one hundred churches throughout Korea, conducting twelve-hour Lay Pastors Ministry Equipping Seminars, usually over two evenings. I also led seminars for pastors and lay leaders, organized five national conferences, translated the ministry materials into Korean, and adapted them to the Korean church context.

Looking back, I realize that ownership did not come simply because I founded the ministry. It developed through years of prayer, sacrifice, teaching, translating, traveling, equipping leaders, and seeing lives transformed through the ministry.

Change and Paradigm Shift

Lay Pastors Ministry requires more than introducing a new program. It requires a genuine paradigm shift.

Whenever we begin this ministry, we must be willing to change our mindset, our leadership style, our understanding of church growth and maturity, our use of resources, and even our personal preparation.

Above all, this ministry is rooted in Ephesians 4:11–12, where Paul teaches that church leaders are called "to equip the saints for the work of ministry."

For many years pastors have done most ministry themselves. Lay Pastors

Ministry calls us to a different approach. Instead of doing everything ourselves, we equip God's people so they can minister to others. At first the pastor introduces the vision and provides training, but gradually the ownership of ministry is placed into the hands of lay believers.

This is the essence of the paradigm shift.

However, I have discovered that changing our thinking is easier than changing our behavior. A paradigm shift begins in the mind, but unless it is reflected in new leadership, new attitudes, and new practices, real change has not yet taken place.

Some writers distinguish between **change** and **transition**. Change is external—it refers to moving from one place or method to another. Transition is internal—it is the psychological and spiritual process of embracing that change. Although the comparison is not perfect, leaders in Lay Pastors Ministry need both. We must change not only our ideas but also our actions because people carefully watch whether we ourselves have truly changed.

Many people accept change quickly, but churches and pastors often find change difficult. One essential change is recognizing that lay people are equal partners in God's mission. They have received spiritual gifts from the Holy Spirit and are fully capable of meaningful ministry.

A century ago, pastors were often among the few highly educated people in their communities, so they naturally occupied positions of authority. Today, however, many church members are highly educated professionals with valuable experience, wisdom, and leadership ability. The pastor is no longer the only capable leader.

Ordination does not make someone spiritually superior; it identifies a particular calling and function within the Body of Christ. If we emphasize ordination in a way that separates clergy from ordinary believers, we risk returning to an Old Testament model in which only the high priest approached God on behalf of the people.

The New Testament presents a different picture. Through Jesus Christ, all believers are members of the royal priesthood and are called to serve God together. This is why many contemporary ministry models speak of returning to the New Testament church.

When pastors truly embrace this biblical understanding, their leadership naturally changes. Such change is never easy. I still remember someone saying that change feels like having a gun pointed at your mouth. Although dramatic, the illustration reminds us that genuine change often feels threatening because it requires us to surrender familiar ways of leading. Yet the greater the challenge, the greater the potential blessing. As the saying goes, "No pain, no gain."

Dr. Melvin wisely wrote:

"No change means death; radical and sudden change also means death. Balance is the key."

One of the great discoveries of Lay Pastors Ministry is that when pastors entrust meaningful responsibility to lay people, they receive even greater blessings in return. As Dr. Melvin often reminded us, "If we give one to lay people, they give back two." Experience repeatedly confirms this truth.

Through this process both pastors and lay people grow spiritually.

Many pastors complain that their members are not growing. Perhaps the better question is, "Why are they not growing?" Growth requires responsibility, challenge, sacrifice, and opportunities to serve. If believers are never entrusted with meaningful ministry, they have little opportunity to develop their gifts or mature in faith.

When pastors are willing to change first, lay people notice. As they witness authentic servant leadership and genuine trust, they also become willing to embrace change. Together, pastors and lay leaders grow into the kind of church envisioned in Ephesians 4—a church where every believer is equipped, every gift is valued, and every member participates in the work of ministry.

Preparing Pastors for Changing Ministry

Pastors must continually prepare themselves for ministry. This preparation involves far more than studying the Bible and theology alone. Today's pastors also need to learn from a wide range of disciplines, including leadership, management, psychology, education, communication, and organizational development. Unfortunately, many pastors limit their reading to theological books. As a result, they often struggle to understand the broader challenges of ministry in today's rapidly changing world.

Pastors should intentionally seek valuable resources from various fields. One well-known example is Peter Drucker, widely regarded as the father of modern management. Although Drucker was not a pastor, he was a committed Christian whose insights have influenced countless churches. Many pastors of large churches studied his writings because they discovered practical principles that could be applied to church leadership. Some even invited Drucker to speak to their pastoral teams, and he regularly taught groups of ministers. His example reminds us that pastors can grow significantly by learning from faithful Christians who are experts in other disciplines.

Just as leadership must change, pastoral training must also change. Traditional methods of training are no longer sufficient for today's church. For many years, ministry training relied primarily on textbooks, training manuals, and classroom lectures. While these resources remain valuable, they are not enough by themselves. People may gain knowledge, but knowledge alone does not produce mature ministry.

The responsibility of church leaders is not merely to teach information but to involve people in ministry. Learning becomes meaningful when people actually serve. As they encounter real situations, experience difficulties, wrestle with challenges, and seek solutions, they develop practical wisdom and spiritual maturity. Therefore, ministry training should combine classroom instruction with supervised ministry experience. Churches must intentionally

build systems that allow people to practice what they have learned. Without such opportunities, ministry will stagnate and people will not grow. It is the responsibility of leaders to create these opportunities and encourage people to participate.

Another essential element of effective training is feedback. Without feedback, people rarely know whether they are serving effectively or whether they need improvement. Most people genuinely want to know whether they are doing well.

During my Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) training, I experienced the value of constructive feedback. Supervisors carefully reviewed the papers we submitted. Some wrote detailed comments, while others simply checked the paper and wrote a brief word of encouragement such as "Good." Although the amount of written feedback varied, every response helped us learn and improve. Even simple encouragement motivated us to continue growing.

Lay Pastors Ministry has adopted this principle by holding regular meetings for lay pastors. These gatherings are essential because participants share their ministry experiences, discuss their challenges, and learn from one another. Every lay pastor encounters difficulties while caring for people. Listening to how others have handled similar situations provides practical wisdom that cannot be gained from books alone. Dr. Melvin Steinbron also discusses many of these challenges in the Lay Pastors Ministry Training Manual. Through regular reflection, mutual encouragement, and shared experience, lay pastors continue to grow in both confidence and competence. Church leaders should intentionally provide these opportunities and continue developing effective systems for ongoing learning.

One of the greatest challenges in implementing this ministry is what is often called a *paradigm shift*. Changing long-established ways of thinking is never easy. Many pastors have served in the same manner for decades, making significant change difficult. I once heard someone say, somewhat humorously, "Don't recruit pastors over fifty years old," because they believed older pastors would find it more difficult to change their mindset. While this

statement may be an exaggeration, it illustrates a real challenge. Change requires humility, flexibility, and a willingness to learn.

Perhaps the most difficult paradigm shift is giving genuine ownership of ministry to lay people. When responsibility is first entrusted to them, they will inevitably make mistakes. This is a normal and necessary part of growth. Leaders must patiently allow people to learn through experience. Mistakes should become opportunities for learning rather than reasons to take ministry back from them.

If pastors cannot patiently endure this learning process, lay people will never mature. They will remain spiritual infants because they have never been given the opportunity to exercise responsibility. Growth requires both responsibility and experience.

I once spoke with a pastor who complained that his congregation—including many elders and deacons—had never matured spiritually. He told me, "I have preached to them for twenty or thirty years, but they are the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow." He sincerely wondered why they had not grown.

In my opinion, this was not primarily the fault of the congregation. The deeper issue was the leadership system itself. The members had not been trained through practical ministry, nor had they been entrusted with meaningful responsibility. Without opportunities to serve, make decisions, and learn from experience, they simply remained dependent on the pastor.

Ironically, some pastors desire church growth while unintentionally preventing the very growth they seek. They want mature leaders, but they hesitate to share authority. They expect members to become responsible without ever allowing them to practice responsibility. Such expectations cannot produce mature disciples.

Eventually, I understood why this situation occurred. First, the members did not know what they were expected to do. Second, they had never been trained, motivated, or given the freedom to serve. Without intentional training

and delegated responsibility, spiritual maturity cannot develop.

Over the years, I have come to recognize an important principle. If there is a problem in the church, it is usually a leadership problem. If there is a leadership problem, it often reflects weaknesses in pastoral preparation. If pastors consistently face the same challenges, theological education must also examine whether it has adequately prepared future leaders for the realities of ministry.

Seminaries should prepare pastors not only to preach and teach but also to equip, empower, supervise, mentor, and develop others for ministry. Unfortunately, many pastors discover these leadership challenges only after they have entered ministry, when it is much more difficult to learn through trial and error. Therefore, theological education must intentionally prepare future pastors to build healthy systems that develop mature disciples and effective lay leaders.

One Thing: The Fox and the Hedgehog

There are two kinds of people in the world. The philosopher **Isaiah Berlin**, in his famous essay *The Fox and the Hedgehog*, describes these two types of thinkers. After studying many successful and unsuccessful people throughout history, he concluded that those who devote themselves to one central purpose often accomplish more than those who constantly pursue many different interests.

Berlin illustrates this idea with the fox and the hedgehog. The fox is clever and knows many strategies, while the hedgehog knows only one great strategy. Whenever danger comes, the hedgehog curls into a ball, exposing its sharp spines. Although the fox tries many different approaches, the hedgehog survives because it concentrates all of its strength on one effective defense. The lesson is simple: focused energy is often more powerful than scattered effort.

This principle reminds us of the **Domino Effect**. When one domino falls, it knocks down the next, creating a chain reaction. A small amount of energy, consistently applied, produces remarkable results over time. In the same way, if we faithfully pursue one meaningful task day after day and year after year, the accumulated effort eventually produces results beyond what we first imagined.

Of course, every person and every situation is different. Nevertheless, in most cases, doing one thing well is better than attempting many things at once. Sometimes we see people who have worked on one ministry for years without visible results. Others may criticize them, suggesting that they should abandon it and try something new. Such voices can become a temptation for every servant of God.

Consider Dr. Melvin Steinbron and the Lay Pastors Ministry. Throughout his ministry there must have been opportunities to change direction or pursue something more popular. Yet he remained faithful because he believed this ministry was God's calling. I share the same conviction. I believe God has called me to devote my life to Lay Pastors Ministry. Faithfulness to one calling requires perseverance, patience, and unwavering commitment.

Doing the same ministry for many years can sometimes become monotonous. We may think the ministry has become outdated simply because it is familiar. However, the answer is not always to replace the ministry with something new. Often, the better approach is to bring fresh perspectives and creative methods to the same unchanging mission. A new approach to an old truth can be more valuable than constantly chasing new ideas.

Many influential books teach this same principle of focused simplicity, including *The One Thing*, *Simple Church*, *Small Is Beautiful*, *First Things First*, *Good to Great*, and *Built to Last*. Though each book has its own emphasis, they all encourage us to simplify, focus on what matters most, and pursue it faithfully over time.

Lay Pastors Ministry follows this same principle. We must remain committed

to our calling because lasting fruit comes through faithful perseverance, not constant change.

Leadership and Management

Leadership is primarily concerned with the future. It asks, "**Where are we going?**" Management, on the other hand, focuses on the present. It asks, "**How do we faithfully maintain what God has entrusted to us today?**"

What is the future of Lay Pastors Ministry? Dr. Melvin's **Twelve Foundations** begin with **Vision**. This teaches us that Lay Pastors Ministry must always be a **vision-driven ministry**. Without vision, no ministry can continue to grow.

Why does the church in Nagaland need Lay Pastors Ministry? Because it offers biblical principles that many churches long for:

- A paradigm shift from pastor-centered ministry to equipping ministry (Ephesians 4:11–12).
- Pastors and laypeople serving as partners in ministry.
- "Love with skin on" through personal pastoral care.
- Both general care for the congregation and specific care for individuals.
- A renewed awareness that God's calling belongs not only to pastors but also to every believer.
- Opportunities for the spiritual growth and development of lay ministers.

While leadership gives vision, management preserves it.

The twelfth foundation of Lay Pastors Ministry is **Maintenance**. Maintenance protects everything that comes before it—from Vision through Evaluation. Dr. Melvin compared this to marriage. A wedding ceremony is beautiful, but marriage begins after the wedding. Likewise, starting a ministry is exciting, but maintaining it year after year is far more challenging.

Maintenance keeps the ministry healthy. It strengthens every foundation, unites all the elements, and prepares the ministry for future growth. Leadership launches the vision, while management sustains the vision.

Today, one of my responsibilities is writing. Writing may not appear as exciting as launching a new ministry, but it is an important part of maintenance. By writing, teaching, mentoring, and encouraging others, I help preserve the vision for the next generation.

In the early stages of ministry, leadership is especially important because people first need vision and direction. They must understand why the ministry exists before they are willing to follow it. Once the ministry begins, however, management becomes equally essential.

Earlier in my ministry, I believed leadership was everything. As the years passed, I realized that management is just as important. Today much of my work involves maintaining, strengthening, and expanding what has already been established. Yet management alone is not enough. Without fresh leadership, ministries lose momentum. Without faithful management, visions disappear.

Healthy ministry continually alternates between leadership and management:

- Yesterday's leadership becomes today's management.
- Today's leadership becomes tomorrow's management.

Both must work together continuously. Leadership without management produces unfinished dreams. Management without leadership produces stagnation.

Many excellent authors have written on these subjects. Peter Drucker and Ken Blanchard have contributed greatly to management, while countless writers have explored leadership from various perspectives. Some focus on the character of leaders, while others examine motivation, organizational culture, and strategic thinking. Wise ministry leaders should continue learning from both fields.

Long-Term Vision and Short-Term Expectations

Over the years I have often asked why some churches discontinue Lay Pastors Ministry within only a few months. In many cases, the answer is simple—they expect results too quickly.

Every living thing needs time to grow. A baby requires months before birth. Bamboo may remain almost invisible for several years before suddenly growing rapidly. Fruit trees require seasons before producing harvests. Ministry follows the same principle.

Many churches expect visible results within a few weeks or months. When immediate success does not appear, they conclude that the ministry has failed. In reality, the ministry has simply not had enough time to mature.

Change itself requires time. It normally passes through three stages:

1. Ending
2. Neutral Zone
3. New Beginning

Because Lay Pastors Ministry introduces a new way of thinking, people must first let go of old assumptions. This process cannot be rushed. Leaders often understand this intellectually, but emotionally they become impatient. They want immediate transformation, while people need time to grow.

As a result, churches sometimes abandon the ministry before it reaches maturity.

Another common mistake is constantly replacing one ministry with another. A church adopts a new program for several months, then replaces it with another, and then another. Eventually members lose confidence in leadership because they assume their leaders lack direction.

Such instability creates discouragement and eventually burnout. Both pastors

and laypeople become exhausted. Instead of trying again, they return to old habits and conclude, "Nothing works in our church."

I believe the answer is patience.

Every significant ministry requires time. Some ministries bear fruit after ten years, others after twenty or thirty. The exact number of years is not important. What matters is remaining faithful long enough for God to produce lasting fruit.

Two qualities grow together: **patience and maturity.**

As we patiently continue serving, both we and the ministry mature. Spiritual maturity cannot be hurried. Ministry maturity cannot be manufactured. Both require faithful perseverance.

There are seasons when progress seems painfully slow. We may feel that we are wasting time or accomplishing very little. Yet these hidden years are often God's way of preparing both His servants and His ministry.

Therefore, do not give up during the Neutral Zone. Continue serving faithfully. Wait with hope. Encourage your people without pushing them beyond what they can bear, because excessive pressure often produces burnout instead of growth.

God's timing is always wiser than our own. If we remain faithful, the harvest will come in due season.

Parachurch Ministry

A parachurch ministry is an organization that exists to serve and strengthen the local church. Examples include mission agencies, theological seminaries, training centers, Christian institutes, and other ministries that work alongside churches. Although these organizations are not local churches themselves, they are closely connected with them. Their primary purpose is to help local churches become healthier, more mature, and more effective in fulfilling

God's mission.

Parachurch organizations carry out ministries that are different from those of local churches. Around the world, many ministry models have been developed to support and strengthen the church. Looking back, I consider it one of God's blessings that I discovered the concept of parachurch ministry early in my own ministry. From the very beginning, I understood that our Institute was called to serve the church rather than compete with it.

One book that greatly influenced my thinking was *The Prospering Parachurch* by Dr. Wesley K. Wilmer, Vice President of Biola University. In this book, Dr. Wilmer explains the philosophy and structure of parachurch ministry. One statement especially impressed me: many Christians invest generously in parachurch ministries because they believe these organizations effectively advance the Kingdom of God. While local churches often devote much of their energy to caring for their own congregations, parachurch ministries are designed to strengthen churches and expand their ministry beyond their own walls.

Successful parachurch leaders usually possess a strong sense of calling and a clear philosophy of ministry. A well-known example is Billy Graham's worldwide evangelistic ministry, which faithfully served churches around the world while maintaining its own distinct mission. His ministry demonstrated how a parachurch organization can effectively cooperate with local churches without replacing them.

From the beginning, I also held a firm conviction that our Institute exists to help local churches. This clear identity answered three important questions: Who are we? What do we do? Why do we exist? Because our purpose was clear, it became much easier to make ministry decisions and remain faithful to our calling.

My philosophy of ministry was shaped by two major influences. First, I learned from Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron, the founder of Lay Pastors Ministry International (LPMI), whose life demonstrated what it means to dedicate

oneself to serving local churches. Through many years of working with him, I learned not only his ministry methods but also his heart for the church. Second, *The Prospering Parachurch* provided a broader theological, academic, and organizational framework for understanding how parachurch ministries can operate effectively.

These two influences helped me remain committed to one central principle: our ministry exists to help local churches. For more than fifteen years, this philosophy has guided every aspect of my ministry. It has given me confidence in my calling, shaped my attitude, and gradually transformed my own way of thinking and living.

Because this philosophy became deeply rooted in my heart, I was able to adopt Dr. Melvin's ministry vision without conflict. His philosophy became my philosophy. As a result, I have been able to serve churches of many different denominations, pastors with different backgrounds, and various ministry settings. Throughout the years, I have never forgotten that our Institute is fundamentally a nonprofit parachurch organization whose purpose is to strengthen the local church and contribute to the expansion of God's Kingdom.

Making a Dream into Reality

How can we turn a dream into reality?

First, our dream must be important to us. It should not be vague or uncertain. Rather, it must become increasingly clear through careful prayer, reflection, and God's guidance. A genuine vision should become as transparent as crystal or pure water. It should be so clear that there is little room for confusion or doubt.

When I began this ministry, my vision was simple and clear: **"I will help Korean churches through Lay Pastors Ministry."**Over the years, that vision expanded, matured, and reached other countries. Yet the original purpose has remained unchanged. A clear beginning gave consistent direction throughout

the journey.

Second, our dream should bring joy. If pursuing a dream becomes nothing but pain and obligation, it is difficult to persevere. I have genuinely enjoyed this ministry for many reasons. I found joy in helping churches and pastors, in experiencing my own personal growth, in working together with faithful staff members, in developing ministry resources, and in seeing the ministry expand into other nations. These experiences continually renewed my passion for the vision God had given me.

Third, our dream should benefit others, not merely ourselves. It is natural to desire personal fulfillment, but a dream that serves only ourselves brings only temporary satisfaction. Lasting ministry is built upon the desire to bless others. Dr. Melvin Steinbron modeled this principle throughout his life. His ministry consistently focused on serving local churches rather than promoting himself. I believe this servant-hearted philosophy is one of the reasons his ministry has remained fruitful for so many years.

Fourth, we must remain faithful to the dream. Receiving a vision is important, but remaining committed to it is equally important. Vision and perseverance are like two sides of the same coin. One without the other cannot accomplish God's purpose.

Finally, we must continually nurture the dream. A vision is like a seed. It must be cultivated with prayer, learning, faithful work, patience, and perseverance. As it grows, it develops roots, branches, blossoms, and eventually bears fruit. In time, we not only enjoy the fruit ourselves but also witness others benefiting from what God has produced through our lives. This is how a God-given dream becomes reality.

NOTES

PREFACE

1. With This Key Verse

The key biblical foundation for this ministry is **Ephesians 4:11–12**. Dr. David Kim taught that throughout church history, God has emphasized different biblical truths for different eras (PACE Seminar, 2004).

- **The Reformation (Luther and Calvin):** *Romans 1:17*— "The righteous shall live by faith."
- **The Wesleyan Era:** *John 3:16*— "For God so loved the world..."
- **Our Era:** *Ephesians 4:11–12*— "Pastors... are to equip the saints for the work of ministry."

The major change needed in today's church is not merely a change of programs but a change in the **concept of ministry**. God calls pastors not to perform every ministry themselves but to equip ordinary believers to serve. Ministries that were once reserved almost exclusively for clergy should now be shared with the whole body of Christ through proper training and equipping.

2. Because of Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron

I first became acquainted with Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron through his book *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?*

After returning to Korea from Canada, Sungkyul Christian University, my alma mater, invited me to teach. The university encouraged professors to use English textbooks so that students could improve both their theological knowledge and their English proficiency.

Since pastoral care was my primary area of interest—and because I had completed Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) in two Canadian hospitals—I searched for an appropriate English textbook. During that search, I visited the Asian Center for Theological Studies (ACTS) in Chungjeong-ro, Seodaemun, Seoul.

There I met Professor Ruth Elsner (although I may not remember the exact spelling of her name because it was many years ago). She recommended Dr. Melvin Steinbron's book, *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?* She told me that this book would be valuable not only for the Korean church at that time but also for its future.

At that moment, I did not fully understand what she meant. However, many years later, after implementing the Lay Pastors Ministry in numerous Korean churches, I came to realize how prophetic her words had been.

I eventually adopted Dr. Steinbron's book as the primary textbook for my senior students, and it became the beginning of a ministry journey that has continued for many years.

Chapter 1

What Is the Lay Pastors Ministry?

1. A System of Congregational Care

The Lay Pastors Ministry is fundamentally a **system of congregational care**.

The Participant's Manual describes it on its cover as "**A System of Congregational Care by Laypeople**." Page 3 further explains:

"The Lay Pastors Ministry is a system of congregational care by laypeople. It is a one-on-one, hands-on, grassroots, ongoing pastoral care ministry."

These statements clearly define the ministry as an organized system through which trained laypeople provide continuous pastoral care within the local church.

2. It Is a System

Paul Stevens emphasizes the importance of developing ministry systems rather than depending solely on individuals. Effective ministry requires intentional structures that enable believers to use their gifts for the growth of the church.

*Reference:*Paul Stevens, *The Equipping Pastor*(Washington: Alban Institute, 1993), 34–36.

3. Why People Come First

Before discussing programs, structures, or strategies, we must recognize that **people come first**. Jim Collins demonstrates in *Good to Great* that successful organizations first place the right people in the right positions before determining the direction of the organization. This principle applies equally to the church.

*Reference:*Jim Collins, *Good to Great*(New York: HarperCollins, 2001).

4. Totally Different from Yesterday

Many people say that the church is one of the institutions that changes the least. While the gospel never changes, ministry methods and organizational structures must continually adapt to new generations and changing circumstances.

Church leaders must remain alert to this challenge and continually seek biblical yet effective ways to minister in today's world.

5. Ministerium

Rev. Oscar Fuchet frequently used the term *Ministerium*. When I taught PACE seminars, I often introduced this concept and emphasized its importance. Laypeople especially appreciated learning that ministry belongs to the entire people of God, not only to ordained pastors.

6. From "Me" to "Us"

Healthy ministry moves from individual effort to shared ministry. Alan Nelson describes this transition as moving from "Me" to "Us," emphasizing teamwork, cooperation, and shared responsibility within the body of Christ.

*Reference:*Alan Nelson, *Me to We*(Colorado: Group Publishing, 2007).

Lay Ministry and Pastoral Care

1. Paul Stevens of Regent College

Paul Stevens has been one of the strongest advocates of every-member ministry. He argues that every believer is called into ministry and that pastors should equip members rather than perform all ministry themselves.

*Reference:*Paul R. Stevens, *The Equipper's Guide to Every-Member Ministry*(Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 55–69.

2. Dr. Melvin's Second Book

Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron expands these ideas in his second book, *Lay-Driven Church*. In Chapter 4, "A Ministry-Balanced Church," he explains how churches become healthier when ministry responsibilities are shared among trained lay leaders rather than concentrated solely on pastors.

*Reference:*Melvin J. Steinbron, *Lay-Driven Church*(Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1997), 67–74.

3. Two Illustrations

Two people greatly encouraged the international development of the PACE Ministry: **Dr. Timothy** and **Pastor Aloto**.

During one of my international training programs, Dr. Timothy told me that the phrase "**love with skin on**" deeply impressed him. Later he wrote to me:

"The phrase 'with the skin on' fascinates me."

He also encouraged the continued development of PACE, expressing his conviction that God would continue using Dr. Melvin Steinbron and our ministry to equip more believers for personal pastoral care.

In 2013, Dr. Timothy and I established the **PACE International Fellowship (PIF)** in Korea. Pastor Aloto from Nagaland, India, was similarly inspired by the concept of **"care with skin on."** He explained that this practical expression of Christian care was something largely absent from the churches in Nagaland. Motivated by this vision, Pastor Aloto and I established **PACE International Seminary (PIS)** in Nagaland in 2015.

Both Dr. Timothy and Pastor Aloto played significant roles in expanding the ministry internationally.

4. My Clinical Pastoral Education in Canada

Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) profoundly influenced my understanding of pastoral care. My first CPE program was at the Oxford Regional Centre (ORC) in Woodstock, Ontario, a residential institution serving people with intellectual disabilities. My supervisor was **Dr. Muriel Carder**.

Originally, I had hoped to complete CPE in Toronto, where I was living. However, because my English was still limited, I was unable to obtain a placement there. Instead, my school introduced me to Dr. Carder, who had served as a missionary in India for many years. Because of her experience in Asia, she understood the challenges faced by international students and became a gracious and patient mentor.

Later, I completed a second CPE program at **Whitby Psychiatric Hospital**, where my supervisor was **Rev. Grant**. I chose to pursue this additional training because I wanted a broader understanding of pastoral care in different clinical settings.

Having both a female and a male supervisor enriched my learning experience. Each brought unique perspectives, strengths, and teaching methods. Looking back, I remain deeply grateful to both supervisors for their guidance and for the lasting impact they had on my ministry.

Why Lay Pastoral Care Is Important

1. A Testimony from Mrs. Yoon

One of the best examples of the importance of Lay Pastoral Care comes from Mrs. Yoon, who served at the PACE Training Center of Hallelujah Church in Seoul. About thirteen years after the ministry began, she wrote an article entitled *"13 Years with the PACE Training Center at Hallelujah Church, Seoul."* She reflected:

"When I was about to write this article, memories of the last thirteen years came flooding back into my mind. One day Rev. Sang-bok Kim, who was our senior pastor at the time, asked me, 'Can you work with me for the Lay Pastors Ministry?' I knew nothing about this ministry, but I accepted his invitation.

In June 2000, our church hosted the Lay Pastors Ministry Conference, and the Lay Pastors Ministry Training officially began. Fourteen volunteers, including myself, became the first team. In 2001, Rev. Kim taught PACE to the elders and deaconesses, while the associate pastor trained the cell leaders. In 2002, after passing through many difficulties, we finally recruited the first class of lay pastors.

Looking back over twenty-two semesters, there have been countless moments of laughter, tears, joy, and perseverance. More than 1,000 people have now graduated from the training program. I am deeply grateful to Rev. Kim for introducing and faithfully teaching the PACE Ministry, and to Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron, who developed the original

PACE Ministry and generously shared this precious gift with us." Her testimony demonstrates that Lay Pastoral Care is not merely a training program but a long-term ministry that transforms both individuals and the culture of a church through faithful service and perseverance.

2. Discovering and Using Spiritual Gifts

Lay Pastoral Care is built upon the biblical teaching that every believer has spiritual gifts for ministry. In Supporting Paper No. 8 of the PACE Training Manual, Dr. Melvin Steinbron identifies twenty-seven spiritual gifts based on Romans 12:4–8, 1 Corinthians 12–14, 1 Peter 4:8–11, and Ephesians 4:7–13. He also includes the five ministry functions mentioned in Ephesians 4:11—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers—as gifts Christ has given to the church.

The purpose of discovering spiritual gifts is not simply to gain knowledge but to equip believers to serve effectively according to God's calling.

3. Discovering Spiritual Gifts Through Assessment

When I attended one of the international Lay Pastors Ministry conferences, I was curious about how spiritual gifts could be identified. During one workshop, the leader distributed a questionnaire containing sixty statements. Each participant rated every statement on a scale from 0 to 5, depending on the level of personal interest or experience.

The questionnaire took about twenty to twenty-five minutes to complete. Afterward, the facilitators evaluated the responses and soon returned with each participant's spiritual gift profile. It was exciting to discover our primary gifts and understand how God had prepared each of us for ministry.

Later, I introduced the same assessment to students at PACE International Seminary (PIS). Many students expressed great appreciation because the assessment helped them recognize their God-given strengths and encouraged them to serve with greater confidence.

Networking for Nurturing

Training Alone Is Not Enough

Training manuals and classroom instruction provide an excellent foundation, but they cannot fully prepare lay pastors for effective ministry. Some churches wisely provide opportunities for trainees to practice ministry in real-life situations. While this is an important step, practical experience alone is still not enough.

Lay pastors need continuous mentoring, networking, encouragement, and ongoing re-equipping. As ministry experience grows, so must spiritual maturity, practical wisdom, and pastoral skills. Networking among lay pastors creates opportunities for mutual learning, accountability, and long-term development.

Lay Pastors and the Congregation

1. Understanding Resistance

Not everyone immediately welcomes the ministry of a lay pastor. Dr. Melvin Steinbron explains that resistance often appears in several forms:

- Timidity
- Fear
- Unfamiliarity with the ministry
- Spiritual simplicity or misunderstanding
- Personal pride (ego)
- Subconscious resistance

When lay pastors encounter resistance, they often draw incorrect conclusions such as:

1. "These people do not need a lay pastor."
2. "They are rejecting me personally."
3. "I should only care for people who welcome me."

These conclusions are usually mistaken. Resistance often reflects uncertainty rather than rejection. Lay pastors should continue serving with patience, humility, and genuine love.

2. The Importance of Character

Throughout his books and training materials, Dr. Melvin repeatedly emphasizes the importance of personal character. A ministry model, no matter how effective, cannot succeed without faithful and mature servants.

Long-term ministry depends not only on methods but also on character. In *The PACER* (April 2014), Dr. Melvin highlights the virtues found in 2 Peter 1:5–8:

- Faith
- Goodness
- Knowledge
- Self-control
- Perseverance
- Godliness
- Brotherly kindness
- Love

These qualities enable lay pastors to minister effectively, remain faithful over many years, and produce lasting spiritual fruit.

3. Lay Pastoral Care Changes Church Culture

One of the greatest benefits of Lay Pastoral Care is its influence on church culture.

Different leaders have described its impact in different ways. Some have called it a ministry engine because it drives healthy ministry throughout the church. Others describe it as a new lifestyle because caring becomes part of everyday Christian living.

From my own experience leading seminars in many local churches, I have found that the greatest transformation occurs in the church's culture. Many churches begin with a culture where people attend worship but know little about one another. As Lay Pastoral Care develops, members begin to love, visit, encourage, pray for, and support one another. Gradually the atmosphere of the church changes. Members feel that they belong to a caring family rather than simply attending weekly services.

Samuel R. Chand rightly emphasizes the importance of culture in his book *Cracking Your Church Culture* (2011):

"Vision statements, strategies, and goals are valuable tools, but they cannot compare in importance to organizational culture. Culture is the fertile soil in which creativity, passion, excellence, and lasting growth flourish."

Lay Pastoral Care helps create this healthy culture by making pastoral care a shared ministry of the entire church.

4. Lay Pastoral Care and Church Growth

Every pastor desires to see the church grow. Many methods and strategies have been proposed for church growth, but Lay Pastoral Care contributes in a unique way.

Its influence is primarily indirect rather than direct. Lay Pastoral Care focuses first on helping people grow spiritually, emotionally, and relationally. As believers become healthier disciples and stronger servants, the church itself becomes healthier.

Healthy churches naturally become attractive to others because people experience genuine love, belonging, and pastoral care. Therefore, Lay Pastoral Care does not simply increase attendance; it strengthens disciples, builds healthy relationships, develops mature leaders, and creates a caring community. In the long run, these qualities become a solid foundation for sustainable church

growth.

Different Gifts of Pastors

1. Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry is an excellent pastoral care training resource. It is highly specialized and places particular emphasis on crisis care. However, compared with Lay Pastors Ministry, I have found several weaknesses, especially in the context of Asian churches.

First, the initial training schedule is too long for beginners. The formal start-up training requires approximately one full week, which can discourage many laypeople from participating.

Second, the training cost is very expensive. The total fee is reported to be around US\$2,000.

While some professional training programs may justifiably be expensive—such as executive programs at Harvard Business School or coaching programs for CEOs—Lay Pastors Ministry and Stephen Ministry exist to serve local churches and ordinary Christians. Therefore, the training should be simple, practical, and affordable so that every church can begin the ministry without unnecessary financial barriers.

Chapter 2: Prestudy and Re-equipping

1. Training Through Many Churches

Over the years, I have trained leaders in more than 150 local churches, producing approximately 700 lay pastors. Beyond these churches, I have also used the Lay Pastors Ministry Training Manual in hundreds of seminars, conferences, pastors' gatherings, theological schools, and ministry training programs.

2. Developing Re-equipping Materials

Dr. Melvin Steinbron developed several excellent re-equipping resources to strengthen and upgrade the ministry of lay pastors. These include **13 Monographs**, **Dynamite Meetings**, **22 Essays**, and later **Letters to Lay Pastors**.

Whenever I revisited churches that had implemented Lay Pastors Ministry, I used one monograph during each re-equipping session. Participants appreciated the opportunity to refresh their understanding and felt renewed in their ministry.

The **Monographs** primarily strengthen the concepts and theology of ministry, while the **Dynamite Meetings** focus on practical ministry skills. The **22 Essays** provide spiritual encouragement and deeper reflection for lay pastors. Finally, the **Letters to Lay Pastors** help develop pastoral character, integrity, and spiritual maturity.

These resources have proven valuable not only for group re-equipping sessions but also for the personal growth of individual lay pastors.

3. Experience Matters

Dr. Melvin often said that many people fail in ministry because they lack real experience. I believe he was right. Experience is essential for success in any ministry. Only by wrestling with real problems and serving real people do ministers gain the wisdom and confidence necessary for effective pastoral care.

Chapter 3: Lay Pastors Ministry

1. Staff Members of LPM Korea

Many faithful staff members devoted themselves to serving Korean churches through Lay Pastors Ministry. They deserve recognition for their dedication and hard work.

Among them were Mr. Minsik Song, Mrs. Inoak Kim, Rev. Hoorak Lee, Rev. Kwangsung Jeon, Rev.

Jongtae Kim, Mr. Kwangsup Jung, Rev. Jaekwang Jang, Mr. Jinseok Park, and Mrs. Daekyung Jo. Their commitment greatly contributed to the growth and development of the ministry throughout Korea.

2. Rev. Kwangsung Jeon

Rev. Kwangsung Jeon studied at Yonsei University in Seoul while working part-time for a Christian newspaper. After joining our ministry staff, he faithfully served and visited our office almost every day. I remain deeply grateful for his dedication.

Later, he moved to the United States, graduated from Harvard Divinity School, and eventually became the senior pastor of a church in New York.

3. The Korean Translation

The Korean translation of *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?* was first published in 2001. It was subsequently reprinted three or four times and continued to serve Korean churches for more than ten years.

4. The PACE Training Center

The PACE Training Center at Hallelujah Church became an outstanding example of systematic lay ministry training.

Following the national conference, Hallelujah Church recognized the need for an organized training system. Senior Pastor Rev. David Sangbok Kim appointed Deaconess Haekyun Yoon as director of the PACE Training Center. Through her commitment, leadership, and passion, the center developed successfully.

The center used Dr. Melvin Steinbron's PACE Training Manual as its primary curriculum.

Approximately six or seven instructors served faithfully over the following ten years, including the senior pastor's wife as a member of the teaching team.

Through this center, hundreds of lay pastors were trained, and many ministry leaders emerged. It was truly one of the most successful examples of Lay Pastors Ministry in Korea.

5. National Conferences

LPM Korea has organized five national conferences. Each conference provided valuable experience and significantly contributed to the expansion and strengthening of Lay Pastors Ministry throughout Korea.

LPM in Korean Churches

Several years ago, I summarized the distinctive characteristics of Lay Pastors Ministry and later taught them at the PACE School in Nagaland, India. These topics included the naming of the ministry, ministry responsibilities, appropriate titles for lay pastors, the length of training, and other practical considerations for implementing the ministry effectively.

Conferences in Korea

Rev. David Sangbok Kim had long desired to hold a national conference on lay ministry. For more than twenty years, he had preached and taught about the biblical importance of lay ministry, and he wanted his congregation to experience a practical model rather than merely hearing about it in sermons.

Many volunteers who completed PACE training also became instructors in their own churches. Their willingness to serve enabled PACE Training Centers to be established and strengthened throughout Korea.

Hallelujah Church and LPM Korea

The partnership between Hallelujah Church and LPM Korea closely resembles the relationship between Frazer Memorial Methodist Church in Montgomery, Alabama, and Lay Pastors Ministries International in the United States.

Frazer Memorial Church first learned about Lay Pastors Ministry through Associate Pastor Rev.

Earl Andrews. While traveling by airplane to Israel, he read Dr. Melvin Steinbron's book *Can the Pastor Do It Alone?* He was so impressed that he recommended it to Senior Pastor Rev. John Mathison.

Eventually, the church invited Dr. Melvin to conduct a two-day equipping seminar. This became Frazer Memorial Church's first encounter with Lay Pastors Ministry. Rev. John Mathison embraced the ministry enthusiastically, much like Rev. David Sangbok Kim did at Hallelujah Church in Korea.

Partners in Ministry

1. Evangelism Without Enough Care

Dr. Melvin founded Lay Pastors Ministry because many churches, including those in Korea, emphasized evangelism and church growth but often neglected pastoral care. During the early years of Korean Christianity, numerical growth received far greater attention than caring for believers after they entered the church.

2. A Balanced Ministry

These two ministries—evangelism and pastoral care—must remain in balance.

In Chapter 4 of *Lay Driven Church*, entitled "**A Ministry-Balanced Church**," Dr. Melvin explains that healthy churches faithfully practice both the **Great Commission** and the **Great Commandment**. In other words, they are committed both to evangelizing the lost and caring for believers.

3. A Ministry Engine

Different pastors describe the impact of PACE ministry in different ways, depending on their priorities.

Some pastors describe it as the church's **infrastructure**, providing a strong foundation for every ministry.

Rev. David Kim often described it as a **lifestyle**, encouraging church leaders to live according to the principles of PACE.

From my own observation after serving many churches, I believe PACE shapes the **culture of the church**.

Others describe it as the **engine of ministry** because it strengthens and energizes every other ministry in the church.

Whatever terminology is used, churches consistently experience significant benefits through this ministry.

4. Lay Minister or Lay Pastor

Frazer Memorial Church chose to use the title **Lay Minister** rather than **Lay Pastor**. Since their primary emphasis was caring ministry, they were comfortable with that terminology.

Dr. Melvin himself believed either title was acceptable, provided the biblical role and responsibilities were clearly understood. The title itself is less important than faithfully carrying out the ministry of pastoral care.

5. Ministry in the Front Lines

Rev. David Kim often said that **PACE is a ministry tool**. Equipping means placing practical ministry tools into the hands of ordinary believers so they can minister effectively in the real world.

Although there are many theological discussions about equipping, one of the finest books on this subject remains Greg Ogden's *The New Reformation* (Zondervan, 1990).

6. The Ministry of Pastoral Care

Dr. Melvin's second book differs significantly from his first.

Can the Pastor Do It Alone? was written shortly after he began practicing Lay Pastors Ministry and served as his doctoral dissertation. Approximately ten years later, after gaining much more practical experience, he wrote *Lay Driven Church*. This second book was intended primarily for pastors who desired to implement Lay Pastors Ministry in their own congregations and provides a broader theological and practical framework for building a balanced, caring church.

Chapter 4

How to Start and Make Progress

1. People Need to See Before They Understand

I often wondered why many people did not fully understand what Dr. David Kim had been teaching for many years, even after hearing him repeatedly over a period of ten years. Much later, I discovered the reason.

I had opportunities to talk with both pastoral staff members and senior pastors. The pastoral staff admitted that they did not clearly understand the vision of lay ministry because their senior pastor explained it only in abstract terms. At the same time, the senior pastor expressed disappointment that his staff had not understood what he had been trying to communicate for many years. Both sides were frustrated.

Eventually I realized what was missing. The senior pastor had taught the biblical concept of lay ministry based on Ephesians 4:11–12, but concepts alone were not enough. People also needed something concrete—a ministry model, a system, training manuals, and practical examples.

On the very first evening of one conference, I had dinner with several church elders. They confessed that, for the first time, they finally understood what their pastor had been trying to teach over the previous ten years. The reason was simple. Tom Parrish, the speaker from Lay Pastors Ministry International (LPMI), introduced the PACE Ministry in practical terms. At that moment, they realized that lay ministry was not merely a theological concept—it could actually be practiced through the PACE Ministry.

The solution was surprisingly simple but extremely important. People cannot fully understand a vision through concepts alone. They need visible models, practical systems, and training resources. I believe many pastors still make the same mistake today.

2. The Beginning of LPM/PACE Ministry in Korea

That conference became a historic event in Korean church history. Before that time, the term "lay ministry" was rarely discussed publicly. During the 1950s through the 1970s, Korean churches emphasized revival meetings. During the 1970s through the 1990s, the primary focus shifted to Bible study. Both movements contributed greatly to church growth, but many churches were waiting for the next stage of ministry.

Before the conference, only Rev. David Kim, Hallelujah Church, and our institute actively promoted lay ministry. After the conference, however, pastors and churches throughout Korea began talking seriously about lay ministry.

Rev. David Kim made a remarkable contribution by introducing this biblical vision to the Korean church. His leadership helped prepare the way for a new ministry paradigm centered on equipping lay believers for pastoral care and ministry.

The Meaning of the Twelve Foundations

1. Twelve Foundations for a Healthy Ministry

Dr. Melvin Steinbron identified twelve essential foundations through many years of ministry experience. These principles were not developed in a classroom but through practical ministry. While teaching and training leaders, I continue to emphasize these foundations because they remain essential for building a healthy ministry.

Dr. Steinbron sometimes described them as "Failure Resistant" principles. I believe this expression is even more meaningful than simply speaking about success. Rather than pursuing success directly, we build a ministry that resists failure. When a ministry consistently avoids the causes of failure, success naturally follows.

2. Six Years to Internalize the Foundations

Lay Pastors Ministry Korea officially began in July 1999. From the beginning, I intentionally applied these Twelve Foundations in every area of ministry.

After about six years, something interesting happened. We no longer had to think consciously about applying them because they had become part of our ministry culture. They had become part of our lives.

At that stage, we felt that our ministry should move beyond functioning merely as an institute. We began pursuing the vision of establishing a school where leaders could receive more systematic theological and ministry training.

One practical example was the Certificate of Appointment. I asked Tom Corbell, President of LPMI USA, to prepare the same certificate for Dr. Aloto and send it directly to the school because I understood how valuable official recognition would be for his ministry.

Institute and School

Our staff devoted themselves to study. During staff meetings, retreats, and sometimes even all-night discussions, we carefully examined the concepts and theology behind Lay Pastors Ministry.

We also studied the two primary textbooks in depth. One of our staff members developed approximately 350 pages of PowerPoint presentations, which became valuable teaching resources for training pastors and lay leaders.

These years of study built a strong theological and practical foundation for the ministry.

Chapter 5 Melvin and Me

1. Learning Availability

Dr. Melvin Steinbron was truly available to me whenever I needed his guidance. His willingness to invest his time deeply influenced my own ministry philosophy.

Because of his example, I have also tried to make myself available to others whenever possible. I have traveled to many countries simply because churches invited me to introduce this ministry. The principle of "Availability," one of the four elements of PACE, became more than a teaching. It became part of my life. Since I had committed myself to God for this ministry, I often felt compelled to respond whenever there was an opportunity to serve.

2. Books Alone Are Not Enough

I have read many excellent books throughout my life. However, most books remained only books. Few provided practical follow-up systems or training manuals that churches could immediately implement.

During my postdoctoral studies at Yale Divinity School, I searched the library for materials on lay ministry. Although I found many valuable books, there were very few practical manuals designed for ministry training.

Currently, while supervising Rev. Chia's Doctor of Ministry project in Singapore, I have encouraged him not only to complete his dissertation but also to develop a practical training

manual. A doctoral degree alone is not enough. A ministry needs practical resources that can equip others long after the research is finished.

Reflections on LPMI USA

The history of a ministry is valuable because it reminds us of God's faithfulness. However, history can also become a burden if it causes an organization to rely too heavily on the past. Every ministry must remain alert. If LPMI continues to focus primarily on helping local churches directly, it must continually renew that mission. Otherwise, it should carefully adjust its future direction.

Every ministry naturally passes through stages of growth, maturity, decline, and renewal. Wise leaders recognize these cycles and make necessary changes before decline begins.

The Function of a National Leader

One of the indispensable responsibilities of a National Leader is building networks.

For more than thirty-five years, LPMI USA has published a quarterly newsletter titled *Network*.

The title itself expresses the ministry's philosophy.

Everyone involved in Lay Pastors Ministry belongs to one ministry family connected through relationships, encouragement, training, and shared vision. Strong ministries grow through strong networks rather than isolated individuals.

Chapter 6

Visits to Overseas Schools

As part of my ministry development, I visited several important mission and theological institutions around the world.

These included the Overseas Ministries Study Center (OMSC) in New Haven, the World Mission Center at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, and the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies (OCMS) in Oxford, England.

Each institution contributed valuable insights into mission, theological education, and leadership development.

On another occasion, I traveled to New York to attend the installation service of Rev. Kwangsung Jeon, who had previously served on the staff of LPM Korea. While in New York, I also visited New York Theological Seminary, where I had the opportunity to meet with one of the professors and exchange ideas about ministry education.

Nagaland and Lay Pastors Ministry

One of the greatest needs in introducing Lay Pastors Ministry is a genuine paradigm shift.

Meaningful change normally takes place in three stages: **Ending, the Neutral Zone, and New Beginning.**

Two major paradigm shifts are necessary.

The first is for pastors. They must develop an adaptable leadership style that welcomes partnership with lay believers. Pastors and lay leaders have different functions, but they share the same mission of serving Christ and His Church.

The second is for lay believers. They must first recognize why change is necessary. They need to understand the problems with the old way of thinking and prepare themselves for a new way of serving.

Such transformation requires patience. Like preparing for the future, paradigm shifts do not happen overnight. They develop gradually as people embrace a biblical vision and begin practicing it faithfully.

Chapter 7

Motivation

1. Motivation in Today's World

Today's understanding of motivation is very different from what it was a generation ago. One of the most influential books on this subject is *Drive* by Daniel H. Pink (New York: Riverhead Books, 2009). I greatly enjoyed reading this book while serving in Nagaland, India, and later taught several of its concepts to students at PACE International Seminary. They especially appreciated Chapter 2, which discusses the limitations of "carrots and sticks" as methods of motivation. This challenged me to rethink how we motivate today's students and church members. Society has changed dramatically, and the attitudes, expectations, and values of younger generations are different from those of previous generations. Churches must therefore adopt new approaches to motivation that fit today's realities, changing cultures, and contemporary ministry contexts. Effective ministry requires us to understand these changes rather than simply repeat methods that worked in the past.

2. The Nature of Human Motivation

Although developed many years ago, Abraham Maslow's theory of human motivation continues to provide valuable insight. As a former president of the American Psychological Association, Maslow believed that much could be learned by studying healthy, well-adjusted people rather than focusing only on those with psychological problems.

Maslow proposed that human beings are motivated by a hierarchy of needs. As one level of need is satisfied, people naturally seek to fulfill the next. These five levels are:

- Physiological needs
- Safety needs
- Social (belonging) needs
- Esteem needs
- Self-actualization needs

Understanding these needs helps church leaders recognize that volunteers and lay ministers are motivated by more than duty alone. They seek purpose, belonging, appreciation, growth, and opportunities to fulfill God's calling in their lives.

Marlene Wilson, How to Mobilize Church Volunteers (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1983), 36–37.

3. Motivating Lay Pastors

Dr. Melvin Steinbron identified twelve essential pillars that sustain a successful Lay Pastors Ministry. After many years of experience, he concluded that these principles consistently motivate and strengthen lay ministers:

1. Vision
2. Ownership
3. Design
4. Calling
5. Equipping
6. Accountability
7. Affirmation
8. Support
9. Fellowship
10. Communication
11. Evaluation
12. Maintenance

These pillars demonstrate that lasting motivation comes from meaningful relationships, shared vision, proper training, and continuous encouragement rather than external rewards alone.

Daniel H. Pink also argues in *Drive* that long-term motivation is fueled by intrinsic factors rather than external incentives. People become most effective when they experience autonomy, mastery, and purpose (Chapter 4, p. 83). This insight aligns remarkably well with biblical ministry, where believers are motivated by God's calling rather than by rewards or recognition.

4. The Birth of Lay Pastors Ministry

Dr. Melvin Steinbron developed Lay Pastors Ministry while serving at College Hill Presbyterian Church, a congregation of approximately 2,500 members.

Having served in three different churches over fifteen years, he came to a life-changing realization: although he was faithfully carrying out pastoral duties, he had not truly been "equipping the saints for the work of ministry" (Ephesians 4:12). This conviction led him to stop and carefully study the biblical model of equipping believers.

After accepting the call to College Hill Presbyterian Church, he began developing what was first called **Lay Pastoral Care Ministry**. As the ministry matured, its name was changed to **Lay Pastors Ministry** to emphasize that trained lay believers were serving as true pastoral caregivers under the leadership of ordained pastors.

The ministry eventually became internationally recognized, spreading from the United States to Korea and later to Nagaland, India, where it also became the foundation for formal theological education and leadership training.

Change: A Paradigm Shift

1. Understanding Transition

William Bridges, in *Managing Transitions* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2003), explains that genuine change occurs in three stages:

1. Ending
2. The Neutral Zone
3. New Beginning

One of the strengths of Bridges' model is his recognition that people do not change overnight. Even after accepting a new idea intellectually, they need time to process it emotionally and practically. Effective leaders understand these stages and patiently guide people through the transition rather than expecting immediate acceptance.

2. A Lay-Driven Church

Melvin Steinbron further developed this concept in his book *Lay Driven Church* (1997), emphasizing that churches become healthier when ministry is shared among the entire body of Christ rather than being carried primarily by ordained pastors. This represents a significant paradigm shift in church leadership and ministry philosophy.

3. Learning Through Feedback

Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) has taught me the tremendous value of feedback.

We receive feedback in several ways:

- Written evaluations from our supervisors.
- Individual supervision sessions.
- Peer feedback during group meetings, often called group dynamics.

Growth comes through both supervisory guidance and honest peer interaction. Constructive feedback helps ministers become more self-aware, more effective, and more compassionate in pastoral care.

4. Challenges in Lay Pastors Ministry

Dr. Melvin Steinbron identifies several common challenges faced in Lay Pastors Ministry (Training Manual, Lesson 12):

1. Some church members believe they do not need a lay pastor.
2. Some members are simply too busy.
3. Lay pastors themselves may have limited time.
4. Certain problems are beyond the ability of lay pastors to resolve.
5. Ministry effectiveness varies from person to person.
6. Some members show no obvious needs or crises.
7. Some individuals prefer to receive care only from ordained pastors.

These challenges are normal and should not discourage churches. Instead, they remind ministry leaders to remain flexible, patient, and faithful while continuing to equip God's people for ministry.

Parachurch Ministry

1. Serving the Local Church

Parachurch organizations exist to support, strengthen, and serve local churches rather than replace them. They provide specialized ministries such as missions, theological education, leadership training, counseling, publishing, and humanitarian work.

Because these organizations serve the church, it is natural for local churches to provide financial support and partnership. Healthy cooperation between churches and parachurch ministries enables the body of Christ to accomplish ministries that individual congregations often cannot undertake alone.

2. The Growth of Parachurch Organizations

It has been estimated that there are more than 100,000 parachurch organizations in North America. In Korea, the number is considerably smaller but continues to grow as churches increasingly recognize the value of specialized ministries working alongside local congregations. Throughout church history, many significant movements—including missions, theological education, Bible translation, leadership development, and humanitarian ministries—have been advanced through effective partnerships between local churches and parachurch organizations.

Appendix

I have written weekly columns for two years in the daily newspaper, JOONGANG-ILBO(general newspaper) in Toronto, Canada. so I uploaded some of the columns here.

Is Failure Necessary?

I wrote this column after reflecting on the meaning of failure in both ministry and everyday life.

Rev. Melvin Steinbron, founder of Lay Pastors Ministry International, once wrote that failure is never the end. Instead, it is often one of life's greatest teachers. We may not enjoy failure, but we can certainly learn from it.

History is filled with people who experienced failure before achieving success. In most cases, their failures were only temporary.

Thomas Edison is a well-known example. His teacher reportedly considered him too slow to learn. Yet Edison went on to invent the practical electric light bulb after thousands of experiments. Every unsuccessful attempt brought him one step closer to success.

Walt Disney also faced rejection. Early in his career, he was dismissed from a newspaper because his editor believed he lacked imagination and creativity. Today, Disney's name is recognized around the world as a symbol of imagination and innovation.

Vincent van Gogh experienced almost complete failure during his lifetime. Although he painted more than 900 works in only ten years, he sold just one painting while he was alive. Today, his paintings are valued at millions of dollars and admired throughout the world.

Perhaps there are two kinds of failure: temporary failure and permanent failure. In reality, many failures are only temporary. Yet people sometimes treat a temporary setback as though it were a permanent defeat. Tragically, some even make irreversible decisions because they lose hope.

Instead, temporary failure should be viewed as an opportunity to grow. God does not delight in our suffering, but He often uses difficult experiences to shape our character, deepen our faith, and prepare us for future service.

At a recent graduation ceremony, I spoke briefly about failure. I did not want to overshadow the celebration, but I wanted the graduates to remember one important lesson: do not fear failure. I even said, "Failure is necessary." I did not mean that we should seek failure, but that if it comes, we should accept it as part of the journey. As the old saying reminds us, "Failure is the mother of success."

Young people often dream that everything will go according to plan. Life, however, teaches us that setbacks are part of the path toward maturity.

Christopher Columbus provides another example. Although he is remembered today for opening the way to the New World, his life also included humiliation, imprisonment, and disappointment. At one point, many would have considered him a failure. Yet history remembers him quite differently. His name lives on in places such as the District of Columbia and British Columbia.

Perhaps failure is not a final verdict after all. Time often reveals that what seemed like failure was actually preparation for something greater.

Temporary failure is not the end of our story. For those who still have dreams to pursue and a future before them, it may become one of God's greatest gifts.

The Importance of a Good Personality

Research has suggested that many people purchase life insurance not simply because of the product itself, but because they trust the character and personality of the insurance agent. People often buy from someone they know, like, and trust.

Not everyone is naturally gifted in sales. I certainly was not.

While I was attending seminary, I worked part-time selling books and other products to help pay my tuition. It was my first experience in sales, and I quickly discovered how difficult it was to persuade complete strangers. In the end, I sold very little.

Looking back, I realize that the missing ingredient was rapport.

Rapport is built on mutual understanding, trust, and genuine concern for others. Rev. Melvin Steinbron often emphasized this principle in his letters to lay pastors. He described rapport as the key that opens another person's heart. It grows through harmony, familiarity, respect, and sincere friendship.

A difficult personality often damages relationships. People who constantly criticize others, ignore the rights of others, or create conflict usually struggle to earn trust. By contrast, those who listen well, cooperate with others, and build healthy relationships are far more likely to succeed in both ministry and everyday life.

This is why character matters so much.

I have read Stephen Covey's books several times. Although he discusses many principles of leadership and effectiveness, his central message ultimately points to character. Lasting success is built not only on ability but also on integrity.

Can a good personality be developed?

I believe it can. While some aspects of personality may be inherited, our attitudes, habits, and character can certainly grow. That is one reason education and training are so valuable. Many people who seem difficult today were not always that way. Life's circumstances, disappointments, and painful experiences often shape their attitudes.

One quality I especially appreciate is being teachable. A teachable person is willing to learn, accept correction, and continue growing. In leadership development, many organizations look for three qualities summarized by the acronym FAT: Faithful, Available, and Teachable.

Why is a good personality so important?

First, it benefits us personally. A bitter or unhealthy attitude often hurts us before it hurts anyone else. It steals our peace, damages our relationships, and leaves emotional wounds that spread from one relationship to another. Second, it blesses the people around us. Those who demonstrate kindness, humility, patience, and understanding create an atmosphere where others feel valued and respected.

As Christians, we are called to help and encourage people, not to wound them. A good personality is not merely a pleasant quality—it is an expression of Christian maturity and the love of Christ working through our lives.

May we continue to grow not only in knowledge and ability but also in character, becoming people whose lives draw others closer to God.

Characteristics of Short-Term Projects

I have done long-term "ministry"(15 years) and short-term "projects"(15 months). What is different between the two characteristics? As a keyword, the short-term project was "Sense of Urgency". The long-term ministry was

"Long-term Leadership". I will talk here about the completion of the "Short-term Project" through my experience. Short-term projects should literally be completed in a short time. Therefore, you should be quick to judge and not think for too long. Motivation to mobilize people should also be strongly communicated in the short term.

A short-term project needs external compelling force. It is the role of a leader to create an internal automatic and spontaneous motivation (impelling: willingness, I wish to do). That is why all energy must be mobilized. There's no room for sidetracks. Even a small amount of energy cannot be wasted on unnecessary conflicts, competition, and unproductive things.

It is sometimes too much to do so, we can't care about anything else, so we have no choice but to neglect our family sometimes. We can never accomplish a given task with everything.

We must be crazy about the ministry we are given. According to the book "Built to Last," written by Professor James Collins of Stanford University, successful organizations, companies, and individuals are completely crazy about a given task. It used the expression cults-like. If we look at those cults groups, we're going to think that they're crazy.

As it seems, to succeed in anything, we have to be completely all-in and crazy.

The success of short-term projects requires great concentration, high leadership, and simple management, and it must be clear when it ends if added.

When we invest energy from concentration, people think, and they want to know the time of when to finish. Our leadership, our energy is exhausted, but also the energy of the people we work with is also poured out in a short period of time.

Longer and unlimited time investment is actually too much. So from my

experience, short-term projects shouldn't last more than two years. The best thing is between a year or/and a year and a half. It doesn't seem wise to cross the year twice. If you say short-term projects after Christmas twice, you can't give trust to the people and there is a high probability that it will end in failure.

Personal growth and organizational leadership

No matter what organization or institution it is, there is bound to be a leader. He needs two things, then the organization believes that it can succeed.

But there is a book that clearly shows two things. One was Stephen Covey's Seven Habits, and the other was Jim Collins' Good to Great. Readers may have better resources, but personally, two books were useful.

First, the Good to Great book was published after researching a number of successful companies around the world, using the term Disciplined Thought, which ultimately boils down to two things. One is that even if there were difficulties in reality, they continued to push ahead. The other is that it focuses on the most important thing. So by leading the company, they were able to create eleven great companies out of hundreds of successful, good companies.

On the other hand, Stephen Covey's book is about developing good character and good personality. In a way, I came to the conclusion that good character is good in human relations, but that is not enough to succeed and lead a good organization or institution. It's not bad to be named "He's such a nice guy". However, if the meaning of 'no ability' is implied in it, it cannot be accepted only as a compliment. It's a nuance that it's not enough. I am concerned about this. I think the relationship between individual growth and organizational leadership has this relationship. So Stephen Covey's book is so good, but it will be the additional attraction if the corresponding leadership is developed. This is also an inevitable task for a leader. The problem will be

how individual growth harmonizes with the leadership of the organization and creates synergy. It is natural to have both. In a word, it can be described as "a humble person with expertise." Professional & Humility.

Maybe this is a contradictory thing. However, it is an inevitable task because you can become a top leader only when you have both. Or else, he can only play the role of a staff member.

Two kinds of Motivation

What I've been thinking about since my ministry in Korea has been about motivation, and it's become clear that there are two motivations: whatever ministry it is, strong motivation is needed to "start." Another is the motivation to "keep up" the ministry.

Of course, there are many books about motivation and theories about it. Pastor Melvin also wrote a short paper titled Motivation. Of course, the essay was about "internal motivation and external motivation." It's close to motivation in the beginning stage. Another one is Dr. Daniel Pink's book DRIVE, which is written about three levels of motivation: the primitive age, and before post-modern, and after; the first is carrot and stick, and the next is ownership, and now autonomy.

All these books and materials helped me to understand my own motivations. But these theories and books didn't solve my curiosity, and the motivation which is "to start" now, and the motivation "after" that, were completely different, so these basic theories and materials shouldn't work. Since most of the resources focus only on the motivation needed for the "beginning stage," it is a necessary process for those who are starting something, and for students who are just learning leadership at school, so these books are very popular and selling well. Almost all of them introduce their books as must-read books, as textbooks. As a result, most leaders stop at this stage, are satisfied, and conclude that "I've done my job."

But what I'm interested in here is the question of "what happens to the motivated people at the beginning after that?" So, most pastors are embarrassed at this stage, thinking about whether to continue or stop. Since the lay people can't wait long, if pastors don't get an answer within two or three weeks, the credibility of leadership slowly begins to weaken, saying, "Now our pastors are quitting again." This phenomenon is usually evident four to five months after starting ministry. From here, different leadership should be exercised, but it cannot be done in the way it has been done so far, so they began to worry.

While the pastor is agonizing, it is inevitable that the lay people will soon quit their ministry. They used to ask, "what's next?" And if they stay in this ministry, they realize that they can't grow. Because they no longer feel the need to stay in the ministry. So many ministry workers stop at this stage and close the door because they don't solve these problems.

So, motivation to continue like this, especially in long-term ministry, is an inevitable task. Leaders have to learn many ways. Fortunately, I overcame this problem by solving it. First, I started to read many books about learned how to endure and to solve it in these times. When I saw our staff growing up in the ministry, I also felt a challenge, and I recognized that I had to grow up as well, and at the same time, I had no choice but to find an exit. So I slowly overcame it by looking for ideas from many books and advice from my mentor, Pastor Melvin.

At this point, we leaders need quite technical leadership. Only textbook and theoretical basic leaderships cannot overcome this stage. Such leadership has long been mastered and obsolete. At this stage, different materials, different approaches, and different leadership are needed. People who follow us as they watch us want to check our thoughts, directions, and minds from time to time. In particular, where we "want to go" and "where we are headed" are an absolute factor that gives them a sense of certainty.

Success and Achievement

For Christians, the concept of **achievement** is more appropriate than **success**.

The word *success* often belongs to the business world, where people measure results by wealth, status, or recognition. *Achievement*, however, describes the completion of the work God has entrusted to us. Our greatest desire should be to hear our Lord say,

"Well done, good and faithful servant." (Matthew 25:23)

We rarely say that Jesus was "successful." Instead, we say that He **completed the work** the Father had given Him. Before His death, Jesus declared,

"I have brought You glory on earth by finishing the work You gave Me to do." (John 17:4)

His life was not defined by worldly success but by faithful completion of His mission.

Completing God's assignment is not easy. It requires our whole life. In many ways, we can only say that our work is finished when our earthly journey is complete. As long as we still have strength, there is always more ministry to accomplish.

Deep within every person is the desire to leave behind something meaningful. It is a tragedy to finish life without completing even one God-given assignment. Therefore, rather than pursuing success, I have tried to fulfill the mission God has entrusted to me.

This reminds me of Dr. Melvin Steinbron, who often emphasized that our priority is not perfection but moving in the right direction. Likewise, our goal should not simply be success but faithful completion of the task God has given us.

Most people experience more failures than successes during their lifetime. Very few can honestly say they succeeded in everything they attempted. Yet

even if we faithfully complete one ministry entrusted by God, that life has lasting value. For this reason, I prefer the word **achievement** to **success**.

God gives pastors a pastoral mission, but He also gives lay believers their own ministry. This second calling is equally important.

Too often, lay people are viewed merely as helpers who assist the pastor in fulfilling his mission. I believe this understanding is incomplete. Lay believers should receive ministries that belong to them personally. As they faithfully serve in those ministries, they experience purpose, growth, and eternal reward.

One pastoral theologian wisely observed that when a person comes to faith in Christ, God gives two gifts simultaneously:

Salvation and Ministry.

Every believer is saved to serve.

The Growth of Lay People

Every church member desires spiritual growth.

I once heard a pastor confess,

"I have preached for more than twenty years, yet many of my members still remain spiritual children."

This raises an important question: Why does this happen?

Many church members respond,

"Our pastor never helped us grow."

Meanwhile, pastors often say,

"The people simply are not growing."

In reality, responsibility exists on both sides.

From my perspective, many lay people fail to mature because they are never entrusted with meaningful responsibility. Without a ministry of their own, church life can become routine. Worship becomes a habit, difficult service is

avoided, and comfortable religious activity gradually replaces spiritual growth. Such believers may faithfully attend church for years while remaining spiritually immature.

When asked why they have not matured, they often shift the responsibility to the pastor.

On the other hand, why do many pastors hesitate to entrust ministry to lay people?

Often, it is a matter of trust. Lay people usually do not produce immediate results, and pastors may become discouraged when progress is slower than expected. However, spiritual development requires patience. Pastors must be willing to wait while people grow.

The atmosphere of the church is also crucial. Churches should continually communicate that every believer has the opportunity to grow personally. Pastors should recognize that the growth of individual believers is just as important as the numerical growth of the church itself. A healthy church grows because its people grow.

Beyond vision, churches also need a practical system that makes growth possible. Individual effort alone has limitations. When pastors intentionally provide training, mentoring, opportunities to serve, and ongoing encouragement, growth becomes visible and sustainable.

Finally, ownership is essential.

When believers are entrusted with genuine responsibility in a ministry—not ownership of the church itself, but ownership of a specific ministry—they mature rapidly. Ownership produces responsibility. Responsibility requires problem-solving. Through those experiences, believers develop spiritually, emotionally, and practically.

Growth is often the fruit of responsibility.

The sooner the better

Effective ministry moves from decisive action to faithful preparation and sustained ownership. The ideas are strong, but the manuscript will be more persuasive if it is organized into clear sections and the English is polished for a broader readership.

Some observations:

- My central argument is not that decisions should be careless, but that once a decision has been prayerfully made, energy should shift from deciding to executing. That distinction should be emphasized.
- The section on planning versus preparation is particularly valuable because it is based on your own experience in Nagaland. Personal stories make the principles credible.
- The final section on ownership and motivation connects naturally with the previous sections. Preparation succeeds because people take ownership.

A possible chapter title could be:

- From Decision to Action
- Decide, Prepare, and Proceed
- The Power of Decisive Ministry
- Beyond Planning: The Ministry of Preparation
- Ownership: The Key to Ministry Motivation

I would also recommend dividing the chapter into three major headings:

1. Make Decisions Quickly
2. Move from Planning to Preparation
3. Cultivate Ownership and Motivation

One theological emphasis could tie the entire chapter together:

"Prayerful decisions begin the journey, preparation builds the road, and faithful ownership carries the ministry to completion."

One statement I especially liked is your observation that "The decision is only the starting point." That is memorable. I would strengthen it slightly:

A decision takes only a moment, but carrying it out may require years of faithful work. The true challenge is rarely making the decision; it is persevering until the work is finished.

Another sentence worth refining is:

"Preparation is more important than planning."

You could expand it into a stronger principle:

Planning determines where we want to go; preparation equips us to get there. A good plan without preparation remains only an idea, but steady preparation turns vision into reality.

Your discussion of ownership is also insightful. I would summarize the concept this way:

People become fully motivated when they no longer see a ministry as someone else's responsibility but as God's assignment entrusted to them. Ownership transforms volunteers into committed servants.

Finally, my five signs of ownership are excellent because they are practical.

You might present them more concisely:

1. They faithfully attend meetings.
2. They continue thinking about the ministry outside the meetings.
3. They naturally talk about the ministry with family and friends.
4. They carry its burdens and pray about its challenges.
5. They rejoice personally when the ministry succeeds.

Overall, this chapter communicates a coherent leadership philosophy:

- Decide prayerfully but without unnecessary delay.
- Shift quickly from planning to preparation.
- Prepare consistently until opportunities become reality.
- Build ownership so people become deeply motivated.
- Focus on faithful execution rather than endless deliberation.

These principles fit well with your decades of ministry experience and provide practical wisdom for pastors, missionaries, and Christian leaders. They also complement the themes that appear throughout your manuscript: leadership, execution, lay ministry, and completing the work God has entrusted to us.

The Hedgehog and the Fox: The Power of Focus

Many years ago, I read *The Hedgehog and the Fox*, the famous essay by philosopher Isaiah Berlin. Although Berlin borrowed the central idea from Leo Tolstoy's view of history, he developed it into a memorable way of understanding people and leadership.

Berlin suggested that there are two kinds of people in the world: **foxes** and **hedgehogs**. The fox knows many things. It is clever, adaptable, and pursues many different strategies. The hedgehog, however, knows one big thing. It concentrates all of its energy on a single, decisive strategy.

Berlin observed that many of history's most influential thinkers resembled hedgehogs. They organized their lives around one central vision rather than scattering their efforts in many directions. Among them were Plato, Dante, Pascal, Hegel, and others.

The illustration of the fox and the hedgehog is simple but profound. The fox tries many approaches to defeat the hedgehog, but the hedgehog consistently survives because it knows exactly what to do and when to do it. Its strength is not variety but focus.

This reminds me of the **Domino Effect**. When one domino falls, it pushes the next, creating a chain reaction. A small force, applied consistently in one direction, eventually produces remarkable results. Likewise, when we devote ourselves to one worthwhile goal day after day, year after year, our accumulated efforts create momentum that can accomplish what once seemed impossible.

Today's culture often encourages us to do everything at once. We admire multitasking and broad interests. Yet there is an old saying: "**Dig one well deeply.**" If someone spends years pursuing one calling without immediate results, others may criticize and ask, "Why are you still doing that?" But true achievement often requires perseverance that outsiders cannot understand.

Of course, every person's calling is different, and circumstances vary. Nevertheless, I believe most of us cannot accomplish everything we dream of within one lifetime. Wisdom lies in identifying the one or two things God has uniquely called us to do and giving ourselves wholeheartedly to those pursuits.

Great accomplishments are rarely the result of doing many things reasonably well. More often, they come from doing one important thing exceptionally well.

For Christian leaders, this principle is especially meaningful. Jesus Himself never allowed distractions to divert Him from His Father's mission. He completed the work entrusted to Him. Likewise, our calling is not merely to be busy, but to remain faithful to the work God has given us. Focus is not limitation—it is stewardship.

How Does Change Come About?

Change is one of the most uncomfortable words in church ministry. Yet it is also one of the most necessary. Every growing church and ministry eventually reaches a point where change is unavoidable, and the primary responsibility for leading that change belongs to the leader.

Ironically, when church members begin saying, "Our church needs to change," many pastors feel uneasy. Ideally, however, the leader should recognize the need for change before anyone else. Wise leaders learn to recognize the signs that change is necessary.

Yet announcing change does not create change.

Many pastors believe that if they simply explain a new vision or make an announcement, people will naturally follow. Experience teaches otherwise. Talking about change is easy; leading people through change is difficult. The

real question is not *whether* change is needed but *how* change actually happens.

Two books greatly influenced my understanding of this subject.

The first is *Leading Change* by John P. Kotter of Harvard Business School. Among his eight principles, the idea of creating a sense of urgency deeply impressed me. Without urgency, people rarely move from their comfort zones.

The second is *Managing Transitions* by William Bridges. His insights became even more practical in my own ministry.

Bridges distinguishes between change and transition.

Change refers to external events—changing positions, moving to another place, beginning a new ministry, or receiving a promotion.

Transition, however, is internal. It is the psychological and spiritual adjustment that people must make before external change becomes part of their lives. For example, a deacon may be ordained as an elder. His title changes immediately, but his thinking, responsibility, and identity may take much longer to change. The position changes overnight; the person changes gradually.

This distinction helped me understand why so many organizational changes fail.

Bridges also explains that healthy transition normally passes through three stages:

1. Ending—letting go of the past.
2. The Neutral Zone—living between the old and the new.
3. New Beginning—embracing a new future.

The stage that fascinated me most was the Neutral Zone.

Before reading Bridges, I had never fully appreciated this stage. The Israelites experienced it after leaving Egypt. Egypt was behind them, but Canaan was still ahead. Between the two lay the wilderness.

The wilderness was more than a geographical location; it was a transition. People became tired, discouraged, and uncertain. Some wanted to continue toward the Promised Land, while others wanted to return to Egypt. Moses faced constant tension.

Leadership often feels like that wilderness.

Sometimes it is like turning on a radio and hearing only static, or flipping a light switch and finding no light. Followers wonder what is happening. They begin questioning the leader's vision.

Bridges uses the word oscillation to describe this experience—the back-and-forth movement that naturally occurs during transition.

Every leader experiences some uncertainty. Minor oscillations are normal. Major oscillations, however, are dangerous.

If a leader continually debates whether to move forward or return to the past, people immediately recognize the hesitation. Before long they begin saying, "Our leader is losing confidence."

Leaders do not need perfect certainty, but they do need steady conviction.

I experienced this personally during the transition from the LPM Korea Institute to establishing a seminary.

Around the sixth year of the Institute, I began sensing that our ministry needed a school to prepare future leaders. While studying at Yale Divinity School, I discussed this vision with our staff and ministry leaders.

The responses were mixed.

Some welcomed the idea enthusiastically.

Others questioned whether it was necessary. Some even argued, "Even the ministry headquarters in the United States has not established a school. Why should Korea begin one?"

Those reactions taught me two valuable lessons.

First, leaders and team members often see the future differently.

Second, although leaders must listen carefully to every opinion, they must not become controlled by every opinion.

As I listened to both encouragement and criticism, my conviction became even stronger. I accepted full responsibility for either the success or failure of establishing the school.

Looking back, Bridges' three stages unfolded almost exactly as he described.

First came the Ending, as people slowly let go of old assumptions.

Next came the Neutral Zone, when uncertainty and discussion filled the ministry.

Finally came the New Beginning, as people gradually embraced the vision of establishing the school.

These stages were not sharply separated. They overlapped. Some people were still letting go while others were already embracing the future.

Leading change, therefore, was not simply moving people from one stage to another. It was helping everyone travel through the overlapping process with patience and confidence.

This taught me an important leadership principle.

People need time.

No healthy transition happens overnight.

Just as mushrooms need time to grow, bamboo develops slowly beneath the surface before shooting upward, and a child requires months before birth,

people also need time to accept new ideas, process uncertainty, and prepare for a new beginning.

We cannot rush transition.

Our responsibility as leaders is to provide clear direction, steady encouragement, and sufficient time for people to embrace the future.

Real change is not merely changing structures.

Real change happens when people's hearts, minds, and commitments make the journey from the old reality into the new one.

That journey is called transition, and leading people through it is one of the greatest responsibilities of Christian leadership.

The Relationship Between Vision and Culture

Every great ministry or organization begins with a vision. A vision usually starts in the heart of one person, but it can only be fulfilled through a community of people working together. Whether that vision succeeds or fails depends largely on the culture of the organization.

Vision is about direction, goals, strategy, and achievement. Culture, however, is about people. It is the atmosphere people experience every day. It shapes how they think, communicate, trust one another, and work together. In many ways, culture determines whether a vision will flourish or quietly disappear.

Culture Determines the Future

Imagine organizational culture on a scale from **-5 to +5**.

- **-5** represents a toxic culture filled with distrust, conflict, and discouragement. It is a culture moving toward decline.
- **+5** represents a healthy culture marked by trust, encouragement, creativity, and hope. It is a culture moving toward growth.

One study suggests that people in most organizations naturally fall into five

groups:

- **2%**are consistently negative and oppose almost everything.
- **25%**feel discouraged and see themselves as victims, although they have little influence to change the atmosphere.
- **50%**are neutral or stagnant but can become positive with the right leadership and environment.
- **22%**are productive contributors who strengthen the organization.
- **2%**inspire others, spread positive energy, and accomplish what seems impossible through creativity and commitment.

The challenge for leaders is not simply managing these groups but creating a culture that moves people toward the positive end of the spectrum.

Bad Culture vs. Good Culture

A **bad culture** is characterized by distrust, unhealthy competition, jealousy, and conflict. People protect their own positions rather than serve a common mission. Existing members often resist newcomers, saying, "We already have our own culture. Either adapt to us or leave."

Such attitudes eventually destroy innovation and discourage gifted people from contributing their best.

A **good culture**, on the other hand, is built on understanding, acceptance, trust, and mutual respect. It welcomes diversity rather than fearing it.

A choir beautifully illustrates this principle. Sopranos, altos, tenors, and basses all sing different notes, yet together they create harmony. Unity does not require uniformity.

Healthy organizations recognize that different personalities, experiences, and gifts make the entire ministry stronger.

Leadership Shapes Culture

The culture of an organization rarely happens by accident. It is largely shaped by its leaders.

Unfortunately, leaders sometimes become the greatest threat to the culture

they are responsible for protecting.

Years ago I read Simon Sinek's book *Leaders Eat Last*. Even the title contains an important lesson. Leaders who consistently put themselves first eventually create organizations where everyone else also begins looking after themselves. In contrast, servant leaders create cultures of trust, loyalty, and cooperation.

Culture first develops in people's hearts. It then appears in conversations, attitudes, and relationships. Eventually it becomes visible in the organization's behavior and results.

When negative words become common, distrust grows. When distrust grows, people begin questioning the vision itself. Finally, confidence in leadership disappears, leaving only disappointment, hurt, and regret.

Culture Is More Valuable Than Money

Every ministry needs financial resources. Money is important.

However, I have often observed that the culture of an organization is even more important than its finances. A healthy culture can overcome limited resources. A toxic culture can waste abundant resources.

Culture multiplies—or diminishes—the value of everything else.

Diversity Is Essential

Recently I read the book *A Peacock in the Land of Penguins*. It describes the challenges of talented people entering organizations that expect everyone to think and behave exactly alike. Eventually, the peacock leaves because the organization cannot appreciate its uniqueness.

The book's appendix introduces thirteen strategies that describe different

ways people contribute within organizations. Each has strengths and weaknesses, but together they illustrate the importance of diversity.

Some examples include:

- **Bluebird Strategy**– Remaining optimistic during difficult situations.
- **Mockingbird Strategy**– Learning by observing and adapting quickly to the surrounding culture.
- **Sparrow Strategy**– Working quietly behind the scenes while steadily building credibility.
- **Hummingbird Strategy**– Moving quickly and producing immediate results.
- **Canary Strategy**– Bringing enthusiasm, visibility, and encouragement.
- **Swan Strategy**– Earning respect through dignity, excellence, and consistency.
- **Vulture Strategy**– Willingly taking on difficult tasks that others avoid.
- **Owl Strategy**– Becoming a recognized expert in a specialized field.
- **Hawk Strategy**– Developing innovative strategies and new opportunities.
- **Dove Strategy**– Serving as a peacemaker and resolving conflicts.
- **Eagle Strategy**– Providing courageous leadership and leading positive change.
- **Peacock Strategy**– Contributing exceptional talent and creativity, even if it sometimes makes others uncomfortable.
- **Ostrich Strategy**– Avoiding difficult realities. This may provide temporary comfort but creates long-term problems.

Every organization benefits from having people with different strengths.

Welcoming New People

Every organization eventually welcomes new members—whether it is a church, university, ministry, or institute.

The real question is not whether new people will come, but whether existing members will welcome them.

The penguins in *A Peacock in the Land of Penguins* struggled because they

expected everyone to become another penguin. They viewed differences as threats instead of opportunities.

Melvin University, like every growing institution, needs professors, staff members, and leaders with different gifts, experiences, and perspectives. Fresh people often bring fresh ideas.

Organizations that rely only on long-time members eventually become predictable. After five or six years, many of the same ideas have already been tried. Growth often comes through welcoming new voices while remaining faithful to the organization's core mission.

New Wine Requires New Wineskins

Jesus taught that new wine should be put into new wineskins. The principle applies to organizations as well.

New people, new ideas, and new opportunities require leaders with open hearts and flexible minds. Wise leadership does not fear diversity; it channels diversity toward a shared vision.

A compelling vision may begin with one leader, but it is sustained by a healthy culture.

Vision tells us where to go. Culture determines whether we will ever arrive.

Small Things Can Have a Big Impact

Many years ago in Toronto, a woman named Sameera experienced an unforgettable lesson about the power of a small act of kindness.

Her parents had come to visit her. After their visit, they boarded a plane to return home. Tragically, during the flight, her mother suffered a heart attack and passed away.

Two days later, at the funeral, Sameera noticed many people she did not recognize. She asked her father and brothers who they were, and they explained each person's relationship to her mother. But there was one woman, probably in her late fifties, whom no one seemed to know.

Curious, Sameera introduced herself.

"I'm the only daughter in this family," she said. "I've asked everyone, but no one seems to know you. Did you know my mother?"

The woman paused for a moment before replying.

"I'm sorry to say this, but I never actually knew your mother."

Surprised, Sameera asked, "Then why are you here?"

The woman answered quietly.

"It's a long story. About five years ago, I was going through the darkest season of my life. I had decided to end my life. That day, I boarded a bus.

A woman was sitting beside me, completely absorbed in reading a book. Halfway through the journey, she closed her book, looked at me, and gently said, 'I think you want to talk to someone.'"

"I don't know why, but I trusted her immediately. During that twenty-minute bus ride, I poured out everything that was in my heart. As we talked, the darkness that had filled my mind slowly disappeared. When I arrived home, I made a different decision. I decided to live."

"We became so engaged in conversation that we never even exchanged our names. Two days ago, I saw your mother's picture in the newspaper announcing her death. I realized she was the woman who had saved my life. I came today simply to thank her family."

One twenty-minute conversation changed the course of another person's life. There is another well-known story.

A man was walking along a beach in Mexico at sunset. In the distance, he

noticed another man repeatedly bending down, picking something up, and throwing it into the sea.

As he came closer, he realized the man was throwing stranded starfish back into the ocean.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

"The tide has gone out," the man replied. "These starfish have been washed onto the shore. If they stay here, they will die."

The first man looked down the endless beach.

"There are thousands of starfish here. You can't possibly save them all. Doesn't your effort make very little difference?"

The man smiled, picked up another starfish, gently tossed it into the sea, and replied,

"It made all the difference to that one."

Both stories remind us of the same truth: small actions often produce enormous results.

Sameera's mother simply noticed another person's pain while riding an ordinary bus. She could have continued reading her book. Instead, she chose to care. That simple decision saved a life.

Most of our daily acts may seem insignificant. Yet we never know how God may use a brief conversation, a kind word, or a simple act of compassion to change someone's future.

Major movements are usually accomplished by many people working together. Yet almost every great movement begins with one person—one person who notices a need, accepts responsibility, and decides to act.

The question is, who will be that person?

Usually, it is the first person who sees the need. The one who feels

compassion. The one who chooses responsibility instead of indifference.
We may never know the eternal impact of a simple act of kindness.

Never underestimate the power of small things.

A single conversation may save a life.

A single act of kindness may restore hope.

A single person, willing to care, may become God's instrument to change another person's future.

The Perfect One or the Right Direction?

Rev. Melvin often reminded us of a simple but profound truth: *No human being is perfect. What matters most is whether we are moving in the right direction.*

Many people hesitate because they want everything to be perfect before they begin. Of course, striving for excellence is good. We should always do our best. But if we become obsessed with perfection, we may never take the first step.

Learning English is a good example. Many people dream of speaking perfect English, but perfection often becomes a barrier rather than a goal.

I had a friend in seminary who majored in English. Whenever he talked with Americans, he concentrated so hard on using perfect grammar that he could hardly speak. While he was mentally checking every sentence, the American standing in front of him often lost patience and walked away. It sounds humorous, but it really happened. His desire for perfection prevented genuine communication.

The same principle applies to leadership and ministry. If we wait until every

plan is perfect, we may never accomplish anything. Most leadership books do not encourage perfection before action. Instead, they emphasize taking action, learning from experience, and improving along the way. As the saying goes, "Try many things, and keep what works."

Starting something requires a personal decision. In many cases, only two or three key people will initially support the vision, while most others remain skeptical or even opposed.

That was certainly my experience when we began establishing a university in Kenya. Many people questioned the idea and doubted it could succeed. Had I waited for everyone's approval or for the perfect conditions, the university would never have been built.

The important thing was simply to begin.

Once we started, something remarkable happened. We could no longer stop. The project developed its own momentum. Those who had once been skeptical gradually became supporters, encouraging us to continue. What seemed impossible at first became unstoppable.

I also discovered that progress does not always have to be fast. Some seasons require the speed of a sprinter, while others demand the endurance of a marathon runner. Sometimes we move quickly; sometimes we move slowly. What matters is not the speed but the direction.

Looking back, I realize that beginning was far more important than being perfectly prepared. If our direction is right and we continue faithfully, we will eventually reach our destination—even if the journey takes longer than expected.

That is how Melvin University came into existence. It was not because everything was perfect, but because we kept moving in the right direction.

Never Give Up

The United States Military Academy at West Point, New York, is one of the most demanding leadership institutions in the world. Each year, more than 14,000 high school students across the United States apply for admission. After a rigorous selection process involving academic records, physical fitness, leadership evaluations, and interviews, only about 1,200 applicants are admitted.

Yet admission is only the beginning.

During the first summer, new cadets must complete an intense seven-week training program known as **BEAST**(Beast Barracks). This is designed to transform civilians into military cadets by reshaping their habits, discipline, and mindset. Their days begin at 5:00 a.m. and end around 10:00 p.m. There are no weekends, very little free time, and no opportunities to see family or friends outside the academy. The physical and mental demands are relentless, especially during the heat of summer.

As a result, approximately 200 to 300 cadets withdraw before completing the training.

What is surprising is that these dropouts had already passed one of the most competitive admission processes in the country. They possessed excellent academic records, strong leadership experience, and outstanding physical fitness. Admission to West Point is often compared to gaining acceptance to one of the top Ivy League universities.

So why did some quit while others endured?

Researchers found that the greatest difference was not intelligence, talent, or physical ability. It was **perseverance**—what psychologist Dr. Angela Duckworth later popularized as **grit**: the combination of passion and perseverance for long-term goals.

Many highly successful people are not necessarily those with the highest IQs or the greatest natural gifts. More often, they are people who continue working faithfully through difficulties. Likewise, Stanford psychologist Dr. Carol Dweck's research on the *growth mindsets* suggests that people who recognize they still have room to grow are often more willing to persevere and ultimately achieve more.

Personally, I have often thought about this.

Those who believe they already possess 100 percent of the necessary talent may feel little need to keep striving. But those who honestly recognize their limitations continue learning, practicing, and improving. They work to reach 100 percent—and often go beyond it. Their progress reaches 120 percent, 150 percent, or even more.

The difference is not where they begin but the direction in which they continue to move.

Among all the talented people in the world, the greatest are often those who never stop growing.

The Apostle Paul expressed this attitude beautifully:

"Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on..." (Philippians 3:13–14)

West Point seeks to develop cadets mentally, physically, morally, and socially. Throughout the training, many discover weaknesses they never knew they had. Some lose confidence and give up. Others face the same struggles but refuse to quit.

Those are the ones who eventually stand at graduation four years later. This principle extends far beyond the military. It applies to business leaders, pastors, teachers, students, missionaries, and professionals in every field. When we study people who make a lasting impact, two qualities appear

repeatedly: **passion** and **perseverance**.

Passion ignites the journey.

Perseverance carries it to completion.

Talent may open the door, but perseverance keeps us walking through it.

The people who ultimately succeed are not always the most gifted. More often, they are simply the ones who never give up.

Note:

The English word *grit* refers to courage and determination in the face of difficulty. The expression "grit your teeth" means to endure hardship with determination and refuse to quit.

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Dr. Byeong is a Christian educator, pastoral care specialist, and international ministry leader dedicated to equipping lay leaders for effective pastoral ministry.

From 1999 to 2014, he served as the National Director of Lay Pastors Ministry Korea, where he founded the Lay Pastors Ministry Korea Institute in 1999. During his fifteen years of leadership, he worked alongside a ministry staff to equip Korean churches in developing lay pastoral care ministries.

Dr. Byeong later expanded his ministry internationally. He became the founding President of PACE International Seminary (PIS) in Nagaland, India, and currently serves as the President of Melvin University in Kenya, Africa. Through these institutions, he continues to train Christian leaders and promote biblical pastoral care and leadership development across many nations.

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Throughout his ministry, Dr. Byeong has translated, written, and edited numerous books on pastoral care, church leadership, lay ministry, preaching, organizational leadership, and church growth. His publications include:

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8. *The Equipping Church*
9. *Practice of Lay Pastors Ministry*
10. *Me to Us*
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13. *Creative Life*
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- 15. Preaching and Imagination*
- 16. Preaching Practice*
- 17. Managing Change*
- 18. Good to Great*
- 19. Church Growth with PACE*
- 20. To Equip the Saints*
- 21. Built to Last*
- 22. In Search of Excellence*
- 23. Theology of Lay Pastors Ministry*(Ph.D. Dissertation)

Dr. Byeong has also developed practical ministry resources that have been used to train and sustain lay pastoral ministries, including:

Training Manuals

- Participant's Manual
- Supporting Paper
- Leader's Manual
- Start-up Manual

Re-equipping Series

- Who We Are
- What We Are Doing
- Where We Are Headed

Nurturing Resources

- Counseling or Pastoring
- Caregiver or Healer
- Maturity or Immaturity
- Being an Example
- Biblical Ministry

Dr. Byeong's lifelong vision is to equip believers for ministry in accordance with Ephesians 4:11–12, empowering local churches to build effective pastoral care ministries through trained lay leaders. His work continues to influence pastors, church leaders, and Christian institutions throughout Asia, Africa, and beyond.