

성인 기독교 교육에 있어서 점진적인 개혁의 필요성

Call for a Quiet Revolution in Adult Christian Education

노 상 현

The practice of adult Christian education today is incongruous to its theory. The practice needs to be reconciled to its theory. We need a quiet revolution in practice.

한글초록

오늘날 교회에서의 성인교육은 이론과 실제의 괴리를 보여준다. 과거에 비해 현대인들은 여러 면에서 달라졌다. 무엇보다도 현대인들은 자신이 속한 집단에서 수동적인 수용자가 아니라 능동적인 참여자가 되길 원한다. 반면에 교회에서의 성인반에서 사용되는 교수법은 일방적인 강의 형태를 벗어나지 못하고 있다. 최근에 각종 시청각 자료들이 개발되고 있으나 사용되는 방법에 있어 맥락은 동일하다. 루터의 만인제사장설을 신봉하고 그리스도의 몸인 교회내에서 모든 지체의 참여의 당위성을 인정하는 개신교 지도자들은 이론에 그치지 말고 그 이론이 실재화될 수 있는 분위기를 형성하도록 노력해야 한다. 그리하여 독백적, 주입식 교육에서부터 문제제기식, 대화식 교육으로의 변환이 이루어져야 한다.

I. INTRODUCTION

There is a growing tension between Christian educators and adult learners. Realizing something wrong faith and practice in Christian education for adults, they sense that something must take place in faith and practice.

In his article, *Agenda for Renewal in Christian Education*, Plueddemann (1985) postulates that "the field of Christian education by its very nature needs renewal in

each generation" (p.2). In *Toward A Quiet Revolution in Christian Education*, stating that the crisis of Christian education today is the divorce of theory and practice, he proclaims that "a quiet revolution is needed in the theory and practice of Christian education" in this generation (19986,p.10).

As McKenzie (1982) concludes his brief historical overview of the religious education of adult Christian education today: the practice of adult Christian education is to indoctrinate (form) adult rather than provide programs of religious education that

stimulates critical inquiry (p.52). Then, he insists that contemporary practice in Christian education shaped by centuries of traditional practice must be reconsidered seriously, for it is incapable of coping with the changing needs of contemporary adults (p.77,78).

Agreeing with Plueddemann and McKenzie in that the practice of adult Christian education today is inadequate and divorced from its theory, I propose that the present practice of Christian education needs to be re-examined, renewed, and reconciled to its theory.

II. BODY

1. Contemporary Adults

The philosophies of Enlightenment and individualism and the socio-political and economic change that has been taking place for the last two centuries have made contemporary adults quite different from their forebears in pre-Enlightenment. McKenzie says that the consciousness of contemporary adult has become much more sophisticated, individualized, and liberalized (p.84, 85). Such transformation of human consciousness definitely affects the Christian community.

Contemporary adults are more sophisticated than their forebears in that they are intell-

actually well trained in their own discipline such as science, literature, history, social science, psychology, administration, and so on. Such sophistication causes McKenzie to say, "the typical twentieth century adult who lives in a developed society is intellectually (much) better prepared to address religious issues (than their forebears)" (p.92). In reality, many laymen in local churches are better educated than their pastors in various disciplines, so that they are better prepared to articulate their opinion on religious issues by using their own discipline than some pastors.

Contemporary adults are individualized. They emphasize the value and rights of each individual and challenge the absolute authority of civil rulers. "The contemporary adult wishes to set his own goals, make his own decisions, and select the means whereby the goals are achieved and the decisions implemented" (p.97) This is true of the Christian community.

The contemporary adults are very liberalized. They want to believe that they can direct their life in all matters. Accordingly, in their religious matter, "he (the contemporary adult) screens and selects religious doctrines, and affirms certain teachings not as a matter of capitulation to an absolute religious authority but as a matter of personal choice" (p.99). He takes pride in shaping his own belief in his social context.



필자소개

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In short, the contemporary adult are much more conscious of self as a self-directing being, regardless of religious or secular context.

Is, however, the self-directedness of the contemporary adults verified empirically? Caffarella and O'Donnell conducted an extensive literature review on adult education in order to seek for the verification of the self-directedness of the contemporary adults. In the literature review, they found:

Several studies have verified that self-directed... exist in the general population, adults participating in Cooperative Extension programs, nurses, engineers, farmers, undereducated adults, older adults, professional practice, adult basic, clergy, and education students (1987,p.200).

Though a number of criticism were leveled at these studies, the self-directedness of contemporary adults are generally accepted by adult educators.

The contemporary adults are very different from their forebears in that they are much more self-directed. The paternalism and absolutism of civil and ecclesiastical rulers are no longer effective in all areas. They will be adults, regardless of secular or religious programs but want to participate actively : they want to participate not only in the determination of the content of religious programs but also in presentation. They do not wait to be formed and molded by the clergy any longer.

2. The practice of Christian Education

Let's look at the typical teaching ministry of local churches to see how much Christian educators take into account the self-directedness of contemporary adults. This self-directedness could be lead to a man of self-determination. The primary teaching method for adults in the Sunday school is the lecture which consists of narration and monologue. Adult learners come and sit to listen to their Sunday school teacher or

pastor. The main emphasis is on transmission of information which is always theological and explicitly religious. The topics and programs are determined and developed by Christian educators or publishing companies. Hence, today's typical teaching ministry of local churches encourages the mentality of paternalism and absolutism of the Medieval period and discourages the self-directedness /self-determination of the contemporary adult learners.

Some Christian educators who are concerned about the drop-outs rate in the adult Sunday school class propose creative teaching methods by means of audio materials, video materials, or attractive package programs. The most updated creative project of evangleical Christian publishers is to porduce cassettes and video tapes for adults which are mainly composed of the sermons of popular evangelical speakers with study guides. For example, one of the most recent adventurous porjects of David C.Cook Publishing Company where I had intern ship during the summer of 1987 is to produce video tapes for adults. Scripture Press which is less adventurous works on audio tapes in their Bible-in-life curriculum. However, regardless of their use of audio or video materials, the primary teaching method still consist of lectures. Audio or video materials are simply different various of lecturing. Ironically, the most updated curriculum materials discourage the self-directedness of the contemporary adults in a sense that they are not able to engage in dialogue with speakers.

3. Perceived Problem

Several centuries have passed by since the dawn of the Enlightenment movement in the European continent. Meanwhile, man has become more individualized, sophisticated, and liberalized. The contemporary adults are very different from their pre-enlightenment forebears in that they are much more self-directed. Yet, when they go to church, they are uninten-

tionally forced to go back to the pre-Enlightenment era. In his small article Plueddemann (1986) articulates the need for "a quiet revolution in Christian education", for theory is often divorced from practice in Christian education(p.1). Christian educators have a passionate concern for Luther's doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. They stress the important function of each individual in the local church as an essential part of the whole. Consciously or subconsciously they also recognize that the contemporary average adult Christians are more self-directed than their spiritual forebears. Nonetheless, when they come to practice, they have the tendency to minimize the active participation of adult Christian in planing, selecting, and implementing. Particularly such practice is more prevalent in authority-oriented countries in which democarcy has not been fully bloomed. Korean pastors bilieve that they must know everything and be able to answer any questions

raised by their congrigations. They continue to challenge lay persons to low their profile in their local churches. It is almost unthinkable that the lay persons are involved in the determination of topics for the congrigational Bible studies of lead them. As far as the practice of pastors' leadership is concerned, though they are still proud of their heritage from Luther, they become a little pope in their church. Time and again, Korean pastors emphasize their divine calling and so they claim that they are to be served and yet, forget or ignore that according to the divine calling of God as His children, we are to minister to and serve each other. Their belief and practice is divorced.

Frankena(1965) proposes the conceptual tool to analyze a philosophy of education (p.7-9). He presents five conceptual boxes which I call "Frankena's boxes". The foolowing Figure 1 is an adapted form of Frankena's boxes (Frankena, 1965,7-9)

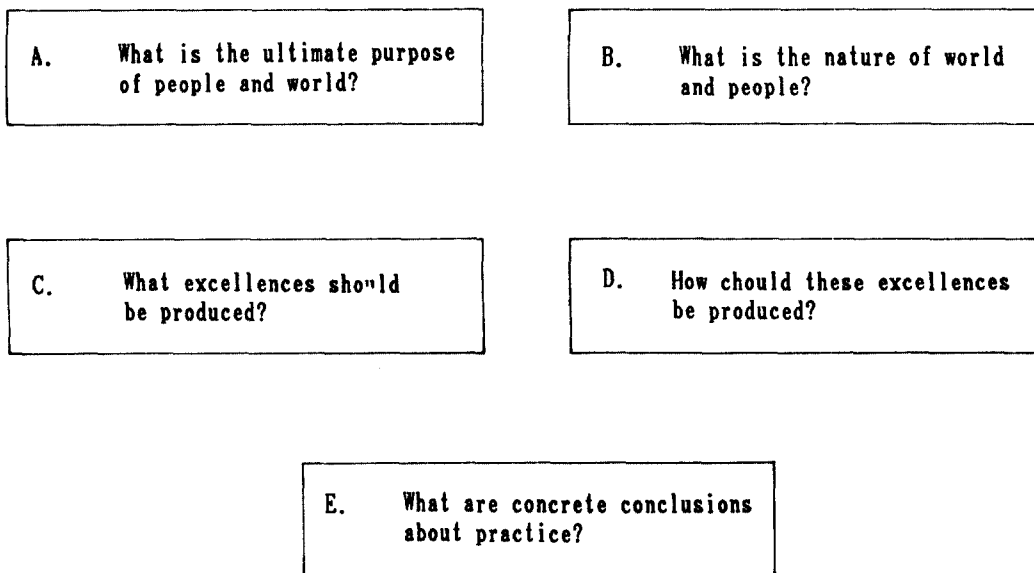


Figure 1

The box A and the box B are concerned with the philosophy of education, the box C and the box D are related to educational theory, and the box E has to do with the practice of the educational theory. As far as the functional relationship is concerned, answers from the boxes A and B generate the box C, and answers from the boxes C and D generate the box E.

According to Frankena's boxes, let's re-examine the Christian education for adults among evangelical Christian educators today. Theologically they believe the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and theory of members in church(I Cor.12) The priesthood of all believers and the participation of all members of the body of Christ must be promoted (the box C). Then, they recognize that because of empirical information and the

philosophical, socio-political, and economical change that has taken place for the last several centuries, the contemporary adults are more self-directed than their forebears (the box D). Hence, what needs to be promoted and how it should be promoted demands active participation of average adults in Christian education (the box E). However, what Christian educators actually do in their practice does not reflect what they think they should do.

As I mentioned previously, Christian educators are still holding to traditional teaching practices which minimize active participation of adult learners. They determine topics and programs for their adult students: instead of thinking along with their adult students, they think for them. They are primarily concerned with the transmission of theological or biblical content. They are depositors, and their adult learners are the depositories. Accordingly, teaching methods consist of monologue and narration. The practice of evangelical Christian educators today is embedded in "Cultural transmission"(Kohlberg & Mayer, 1972, p.451-455) and "Banking education" (Freire, 1970, p.57-61). The following list is the attitude and

practices of the banking education that Freire (1970) describes in his book,

Pedagogy of the Oppressed:

- (1) the teacher teaches and the students are taught;
- (2) the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;
- (3) the teacher thinks and the students are thought about;
- (4) the teacher talks and the students listen;
- (5) the teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply;
- (6) the teacher chooses the program content and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it;
- (7) the teacher is the Subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects (p.59).

The attitude and practice of the banking education which is blamed for domestication and oppression by Freire remarkably resemble those of evangelical Christian education for adults today.

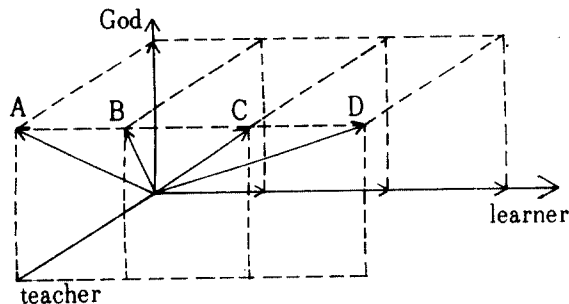
Plueddemann (1986) suggests several metaphors of a teacher in Christian education: the teacher as a salesperson, the teacher as a medical doctor, the teacher as an assembly line worker, the teacher as a farmer, the teacher as a soccer coach, and the teacher as a pilgrim (p.40-47). Each metaphor allows for the degree of learners' participation (See Figure 2). He proposes that the most helpful metaphors of the teacher in Christian education are farmer, coach, and pilgrim, because these metaphors emphasize the ongoing interaction between teachers and learners. Indicating that the prevalent metaphors of the teacher in evangelical Christian education today are more or less a medical doctor or an assembly line worker, he postulates that "we need a quiet revolution in Christian education." (p.47)

Hersey and Blanchard (1982) mention four kinds of leadership styles: "telling"

style, "selling" style, "participating" style, and "delegating" style (p.152). Each leadership style reflects how a leader views his followers in terms of follower's maturity.

They suggest that as followers move from immaturity to maturity, their leader needs to change his leadership style from the telling to the selling to the participating to the delegating style (p.151-155). That is, if a leader uses the telling leadership style, he views his followers as immature ones consciously. Unfortunately, the most typical leadership style among evangelical Christian educators today is the telling style. They speak, and their adult students sit and listen.

Figure 2 indicates the degree of participation of God, teacher, and learner (I assume that God is involved equally and that each teacher does their best).



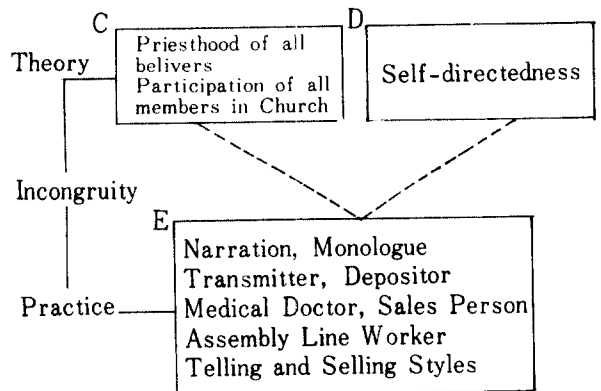
- A : telling, medical doctor assembly line worker
 B : Selling, Sales person
 C : Participating } Farmer Coach
 D : Negotiating } Pilgrim

(Learner's participation & teaching and leadership style) Figure 2.

A teacher as a medical doctor, an assembly line worker, or a salesperson and a leader whose leadership style is the telling or the selling style actually discourage the participation of learners and followers.

Christian educators believe the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and that they are to promote it. They also recognize that the contemporary adults are much more self directed than adults in any other period. Nevertheless, the concrete practice

of Christian education for adults among evangelical Christian educators contradicts their educational theory, for narration, monologue, and the telling and selling styles of evangelical Christian's practice, based on cultural transmission and the banking system, minimize the concept of the priesthood of all believers the participation of all members of the body of Christ, and the self-directedness / self-determination of the contemporary adults.



(Contradiction of Theory and Practice)
 Figure 3.

Evangelical Christian publishing companies take pride in producing very innovative resource materials such as video or audio tapes, but video and audio tapes are a simply different version of story-telling. Figure 3 depicts the contradiction of theory and practice in evangelical Christian education for adults in terms of Frankena's boxes.

The priesthood of all believers and the participation of all members of the body of Christ cannot be promoted by narration, monologue. Christian educators who are a transmitter, a depositor, a medical doctor, or an assembly line worker cannot help their adult learners to be self-directed. Christian educators who demonstrate the telling or the selling leadership styles are actually against their belief of the priesthood of all believers and the self-directedness of the contemporary adults. They demonstrate

such leadership styles, because they may not have much trust on their adult learners or because they may do in the habitual mind-set which came from the pre-Enlightenment era. Their belief is incongruous with their practice. The theory and practice of Christian education for adults among evangelical Christian educators is in the stage of crisis. The crisis is the divorce of theory and practice.

4. Call For A Quiet Revolution in Adult Christian Education

We need a quiet revolution of theory and practice in Christian education for adults. McKenzie (1982) states that the lack of theory in Christian education for adults is the problem (p.101). I agree with him and at the same time disagree. I agree with him in that Christian educators lack in the current theory of adult education, and yet I disagree with him in that the real problem does not come from the absolute lack of theory but rather from their uncritical mind and habitual practice which make them unable to reflect and evaluate their practice. Hence, the quiet revolution must take place first in the present practice of Christian education for adults among evangelical Christian educators. They need to search for practices that are congruous with their belief and knowledge.

5. Proposed practice

As for critical and self-directed education, Freire (1970) proposes problem-posing approach to education, instead of banking approach to education (p.57-118). He says that banking (p.60), whereas problem-posing education enables learners to engage in dialogue with their teachers and to develop their self-directedness /self-determination. Freire says on the problem-posing education:

Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the student-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges:

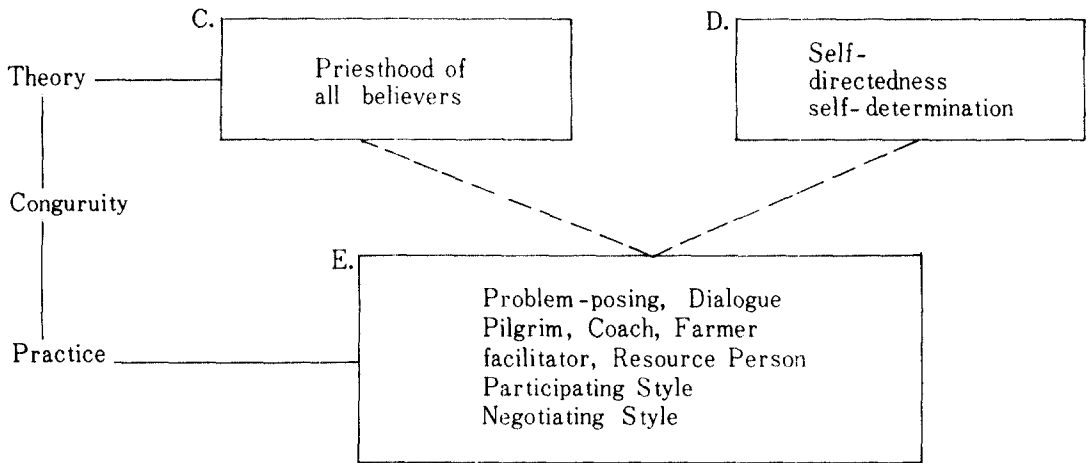
teacher-student with students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow. In this process, arguments based on authority are no longer valid: in order to function, authority must be on the side of freedom, not against it (p.67).

His comment on the problem-posing education is exactly what Plueddemann tries to communicate when he says that teachers are pilgrims along with students. Plueddeman says:

Since we are all pilgrims, we need to be concerned not only with helping other pilgrims along the road, but with our own pilgrimage as well. Christian education is not only the art of helping pilgrims, but also the

Accordingly, the right metaphors of a teacher in the context of problem-posing education is pilgrim, soccer coach, helper, resource person, and facilitator. The leadership style of teachers is not the telling style or the selling style but the participating style or the negotiating style.

I believe that the quiet revolution in Christian education for adults must take place to reconcile theory and practice. What evangelical Christian educators believe they promote and what they think the contemporary adults must reflect their practice, I propose the Figure 4 as the solution to the problem of the incongruity of theory and practice in evangelical Christian education for adults today.



(Congruity of Theory and Practice)

Figure 4.

6. Issue Raised: Mechanics vs. Attitude

By this time I think it is very legitimate to raise a critical question: How much can Christian educators allow their adult learners to be self-directed in a realistic sense? There are various testing materials that Christian educators can use to measure adult learners' readiness for self-directedness / self-determination. Kolb's learning style inventory can be used, for "the majority of successful self-directed learners, based on Kolb's classification, were accommodators" (Caffarella & O'Donnell, 1987, p.205). The Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS) is widely used. The Manager's Rating Form and the Self-Rating Form developed by Blanchard and Hersey can be also used to measure maturity (self-directedness) (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969, p.158). These materials, however, are the answer to the mechanical side of the question. There is a more fundamental and important issue that we need to explore: What should be the answer to the attitudinal side of the question?

Now that Jesus Christ is the one that all

Christian are to imitate, let's investigate the attitude of Jesus Christ, God and Man, toward men? The attitude of Jesus Christ to people was love. Because of love (John 3:16), he "become flesh" (John 1:14). He was the very personification of love. He said,

"Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love, If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love: just as I have kept My Father's commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you (John 12:9,10,12).

Humility was the attitude of Jesus Christ. As Paul wrote to the Philippians in his epistle, he exhorted them to have the attitude of Jesus's humility:

...although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross (2:5-8).

Trust was demonstrated as Jesus' attitude to people. In the midst of human failure of

his disciples Jesus continued to demonstrate his trusting relationship to his disciples. After Peter fell asleep in the mountain of Transfiguration three times and denied Him three times, Jesus trusted him enough to appear to him after His resurrection and commissioned him to carry out the message of God along with the other disciples who also deserted Him.

Nonetheless, when Jesus dealt with the matter of truth, he demanded that not only Saduces, Pharisees, and Scribes but also his own disciples should critically examine their faith and practice. For example, when Scribes and Pharisees brought Jesus a woman caught in the act of adultery in order to test him, he said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her"(John 8:7). He put people in such a position that first, they had to evaluate themselves critically and then, judge situations with their own criteria. It is no wonder that one of his primary pedagogical principles was to formulate right questions which are appropriate for reflection and induction.

Jesus' attitudes toward people was characterized by love, humility, trust, and critical evaluation. These are the attitudes that all Christians must have. Only when Christian educators are able to demonstrate such attitude toward adult learners, do they have the right to ask the mechanical side of the question: How much can we allow adult learners to have chances of self-determination? I believe that if Christian educators can demonstrate the attitude of Jesus to adult learners, they can carry out the proposed practices, regardless of the degree of self-directedness of their adult learners. Freire(1973) says, "when two 'poles' of the dialogue are linked by love, (humility), hope, and mutual trust, they can join in critical search for meaning" (p.45) Even if mechanical quantitative tests indicate that they are fully self-directed, a teacher would not be able to carry out the proposed practice, unless he has Jesus' attitudes.

III. CONCLUSION

Our belief in the priesthood of all believers the participation of all members in church, and the self-directedness / self-determination of contemporary adults demand adult learners' active participation. Nevertheless, the practice of Christian education for adults today consist of narration and monologue which are characteristics of banking education and the cultural transmission. The practice of Christian education for adults is incongruous with its belief and theory. We need a quiet revolution in Christian education for adults. We need to change the present practice from narration, monologue of banking education and cultural transmission to dialogue of the problem-posing approach to education.

There are two ways that we can lead Bible studies. One is to teach the Bible in such a way that the congregation have to be dependent on us and remain under our authority, which happens to be the Roman Catholic position. The other is that we can teach the Bible in such a way that they can slowly liberate themselves from our (church) authority and dependence to Christ's authority, which many Protestant reformers risked their lives for this. As time passes, we forget where we came from and what we stand for now. The more the church becomes institutionalized, the more easily we fall into the trap of Roman Catholic church. Maybe this is the time for us to study the history of the Reformation and to remind ourselves of our spiritual heritage.

I believe that the proposed practices will help Korean believers be prepared to participate in the coming democracy in Korea. It is not necessary that the church as a whole participate in street demonstration. As long as we help Korean Christians accept their responsibility that self-determination brings in their spiritual lives, they contribute to the process of democracy in Korea.

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