Christian Education for Public Society: Based on Parker Palmer’s Educational Theory

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Abstract

This thesis proposes that the educational theory of Parker Palmer be used as a model for Christian education in the Korean Protestant conservative church. The church has been criticized for failing to interpret contemporary Korean society through a theological lens, and also for failing to recognize its responsibilities. These shortcomings originate from the shamanic spirituality of traditional Korean religious culture, and also from the conservative theology of the early Korean church. While this background contributed to the growth of the church, it also created the current crisis. The Korean Protestant conservative church and its Christian education should thus be reformed through dialogue with society and through the church reminding itself of its social responsibilities.

To effect this purpose, two views on public theology will form the theological foundation of the thesis: Moltmann’s understanding of the Trinity as the origin of love along with his recognition
of the vocation of the church towards society; and Stackhouse’s view of globalization and its relevance to the 21st century church. In addition, for educational approaches that emphasize the public purpose of Christian education, Dewey, Coe and Groome’s methods, which were formed out of the struggles of the North American churches to enter into dialogue with society in a changing social environment, will be reviewed in order to find applicable insights for Christian education in the context of the Korean Protestant conservative church.

As an educational model for the Korean Protestant conservative church, this thesis proposes the use of Palmer’s education theory. Palmer penetrates problems of modern education in terms of its broader relationship with society. Christian educators in the Korean Protestant conservative church can thus obtain wisdom from Palmer’s educational theory, which focuses on the nature of education, spirituality in education, and the purpose of education, particularly spiritual practice for authentic democracy. Finally, I propose to use Palmer’s theory as a stepping stone to develop a theory of Christian education for the broader community, based on the openness and hospitality which is embedded deeply in Korean culture, and which has been forgotten during Korea’s Christian history.
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INTRODUCTION

1. The Problem

One book that has proved popular in the early 21st century Korean Protestant church is Christ resurrects, when the Church dies.¹ This book strongly criticizes the church for focusing on its own glory through its growth, rather than on Jesus Christ. Consequently, the church does not imitate what Jesus showed through his life. The book paints a picture of the Korean Protestant church: its lack of interest in society; its lack of responsibility toward the public; and its lack of participation in social activities. It points also to those internal voices that are requesting the reformation of the church.

Just as importantly, there is growing criticism from the mass media and from thoughtful Christian leaders concerning the immorality of Christians in society. The mass media has also strongly criticized the Korean Protestant Church, especially the conservative church, for ignoring social issues, for its pro-government view of politics, for the immoral behavior of its leaders, and for focusing on internal church growth instead of making the contribution to society that the people would like to see.² These criticisms indicate that the general public thinks the Korean Protestant Church is not taking responsibility for public issues and is instead concentrating solely

¹ Yongsang Han, Christ resurrects, when the Church dies (교회가 죽어야 예수가 산다) (Seoul, South Korea: Haenuri, 2001).

on its own growth. There are also numerous voices inside the Korean Protestant Conservative Church demanding reformation in order to restore the church to its social vocation.

Scholarly research suggests that there are two major problems in the Korean Protestant Church, especially in the conservative wing. The first problem is that the KPCC is now viewed as having lost its sense of social responsibility. It no longer makes contributions to the development of the society as it did in its infancy. According to a recent survey, the church also has a social communication problem, and this is due to a lack of understanding about social phenomena and

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5 Until the 1950s, the Korean Protestant church was still in its infancy. The influence of western missionaries was rooted in the Korean Protestant church, and this influence was mostly conservative. After theological conflict over the issue of accepting more liberal theologies, as a result of Korean pastors studying in the United States, there was an expansion in theological variety. In 1959, the schism of the largest Korean Protestant denomination into the Habdong and the Tonghap denominations caused further conflicts, eventually resulting in more schisms. Denominations in the Korean Protestant church include Hapdong, Koshin and Daeshin, the most conservative denominations, and Kijang, the most progressive denomination. Lee Deok Joo, Study of History of early Korean Protestant Christianity (Seoul: Institute of Korean Christian History, 1995), 35-38. I am a pastor in Baekseok, a Presbyterian denomination. This denomination was established in 1976, and its theological foundation and emphases are similar to Hapdong’s. However, this denomination passed a church law allowing ordination of women in 2011. This means that the theological character of this denomination is changing from its extremely conservative theological background. However, conservative emphases in theology and Christian practice are still strong. Through this thesis, the past and present theological background and the development of church education in the conservative Korean Protestant church will be reviewed, and educational proposals will be put forward for the Korean Protestant conservative church.

6 From here on, the term Korean Protestant conservative church will be abbreviated as KPCC.

context. This problem is related to the theological and spiritual character of the KPCC, and this issue will be explored further in Chapter One.

The second problem relates to the character of the spirituality of the KPCC. The KPCC has focused primarily on ministries of private blessing and individual salvation, rather than on extending its vocation further afield. The spirituality of the KPCC is connected to remnants of Shamanism, which, as the oldest traditional religion in Korea, focuses on individual blessings for personal and family fortune. In fact, Shamanic spirituality in Korea has greatly influenced the culture and religious lives of Koreans, and the KPCC as well. Moreover, national tragedies—colonial times, the Korean War, and dictatorship during the twentieth century—caused national economic difficulties, and as a result Korean people have focused on individual economic growth for survival. They have developed a capital-centered mindset, and a focus on external growth, dating from the time of the national industrial period to modernity. These developments have contributed to the KPCC concentrating on individual spiritual growth and quantitative growth in church membership, rather than on contributing to society as a whole.

From my academic and pastoral experience, these problems are closely related to Christian church education in the KPCC. Christian education contributed greatly to the development of Korean society towards modernity, and in the early days churches established many Christian schools, hospitals, and social organizations. In its early days, the church helped Korean society

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become enlightened and modernized. Christian education nurtured human dignity in the society, contributed to a democratic social system in Korea, and introduced a scientifically advanced life. However, Christian education has gradually changed its emphasis, and has moved towards a focus on individual salvation and church growth. Since the industrial period in Korea especially, and from the 1960s to the 1980s in particular, the KPCC has jumped on a bandwagon that focuses on Christian education for church growth, becoming knowledge-focused, and individual morality-focused in its education rather than continuing the social contribution initiated by the missionaries.

2. Statement of Thesis

In this thesis, I will argue that the KPCC needs to be reminded of its social vocation through Christian education, and that its responsibility as a church toward the society goes beyond the current individual-focused spirituality. This reformation should be based not only on an understanding of the Korean social context of the 21st century, but also on an understanding of the public function of theology. Christian church education in the KPCC needs to promote a healthy society by reforming its focus and meeting the public expectations of Korean society. To this end, Parker Palmer’s educational model provides a promising theory for Christian education in the KPCC. His religious understanding, along with his integrated academic and practical approach, with its emphasis on public theology, offers an effective means of achieving a healthy form of Christian education in the KPCC.
3. Thesis Structure

First, in order to explore how the Korean church has come to emphasize an individual-focused spirituality, I will explore Shamanism in Korea and identify its remnants as found in the KPCC. I will also explore the theological emphases of the first western missionaries, since both of these factors shaped the current theology of the Korean Protestant church. Second, I will explore Jürgen Moltmann and Max Stackhouse’s theological approaches which provide an alternative theological foundation for Christian education for the public. Third, studies from North America concerning Christian education ‘for’, ‘with’, and ‘in’ society will be introduced; the educational methods of John Dewey, George Albert Coe, and Thomas Groome, in particular. Finally, I will introduce Parker Palmer’s educational method. With the goal of education being the building of a healthy society, Palmer’s method provides the necessary educational insight to re-shape church education in the KPCC.

Chapter One:
Korean Protestant Conservative Church Spirituality and Christian Education

This chapter will study the theological, spiritual, and educational background and character of the KPCC. Two religious and theological forces have shaped the KPCC in creating its conservative theological views and educational emphases. The first is an indigenous faith, Shamanism, and its religious leverage. Shamanism’s spiritual emphasis and practice is to be found right at the center of the KPCC, and therefore the relationship between Shamanic spirituality and the KPCC is important. The second is the particular theological character of early Christianity that was introduced by western missionaries. In this chapter, the theological
Chapter Two: Theological Foundation of Christian Education for Public Life

This chapter will deal with public theology as described in the theological writings of Jürgen Moltmann and Max Stackhouse. An interpretation of Jürgen Moltmann’s writings, especially his understanding of the theology of the Trinity and ecclesiology, will provide the KPCC with a foundation for understanding the relationship between the Trinitarian God and the church’s social vocation. Max Stackhouse’s understanding of the globalization and its application will provide a further theoretical foundation for church education in the KPCC. The combination of Moltmann’s focus on the Trinity and ecclesiology as the work of the Holy Spirit, and Stackhouse’s concentration on the work of Jesus Christ, creates a balance in terms of the theology of the Trinity.

9 The political situation in Korea has also had an impact on the formation of conservative theology and Christian spirituality. In the nineteenth century, the conservative views of western missionaries were reflected in the political decisions of the Korean Protestant Church. Korea continuously faced political issues with Japanese rule and the Korean War. Independence from Japan was led by western political powers, especially the United States of America and the UN. The first government of Korea had a President who was an elder in the conservative Protestant church, which was similar to the tradition in the United States, and Korean Protestant Christianity mostly became pro-government. The political views of the government and the views of Korean Protestant Christianity were anti-communist and concentrated on conservative values. Also, during the dictatorship government that lasted over thirty years, Korea’s industrial development into an advanced country was deeply dependent on the United States, and the Protestant Church also recognized that the United States had delivered Christianity and helped greatly in Korea’s industrial development. Because of Korea’s historical context, the majority of Korean Protestant Christians hold views that are pro-conservative government and pro United States. In addition many Korean theological students studied in conservative schools of theology in the United States in the early days of the Korean church. Allen Clark, A History of the Church in Korea (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1971), 239-240; History of Korean Protestant Christianity, ed. Institute of Korean Christian History (Seoul: Institute of Korean Christian History, 2009), 218-219; and Wi Jo Kang, Christ and Caesar in Modern Korea: A History of Christianity and Politics (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997), 109-110.
Chapter Three: Christian Education for Public Society in the 20th Century

This chapter will explore approaches to Christian education that focus on the broader society, particularly those of John Dewey, George Albert Coe, and Thomas Groome. John Dewey saw democracy as the goal of education, with democracy characterized as the embodiment of the Kingdom of God. Coe integrated Christian education with the social situation of the early 20th century in order to re-establish the goal of education in terms of his understanding of the democracy of God. He focused on Christian education for the broader society, because he understood human beings to be social persons living in society. Finally, through his understanding of the reign of God and his theory of ‘shared praxis,’ Thomas Groome promoted a balanced dialogue between the faith community and public society, so that both might share their stories and visions, and thus build interpretations that could be applied to the society.

Chapter Four: Parker Palmer’s Education Theory for Public Society

This chapter will explore Palmer’s educational method, and his insistence that the goal of education is to facilitate good communication and relationships between education and society. In order to pursue the embodiment of authentic democracy in public society, Palmer focused on the spiritual journey that starts with the cultivation of the heart as the origin of love and leads to loving relationships between all human beings in the community. He concentrated especially on

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those people who are heart-broken in an unfair and unjust world. The goal of education is thus to embody democracy in the human community.

**Chapter Five: Palmer’s Spirituality in Education for the Public**

This chapter will examine Palmer’s understanding of spirituality in education and trace its origin, thereby explaining Palmer’s success in achieving his educational goal. Spirituality for Palmer is not only active in the heart, but it also includes active attitudes towards others and the society. With openness and hospitality in the heart as the essence of the human being, spirituality in Palmer’s view encourages people to cultivate their heart to be healthy and to actively contribute to social development, especially the development of a democratic society.

**Chapter Six: Moving Towards Christian Education for Society**

This chapter will present the contribution Palmer’s education theory can make to Christian education in the KPCC. Firstly, it will deal with those aspects the KPCC should focus on: an emphasis on the relationship between Christian education in the KPCC and the society; an emphasis on the heart as the educational fountain for democracy; an emphasis on spirituality for the society; and an emphasis on the goal of Christian education in the KPCC. Secondly, the limitations of Palmer’s education theory will also be identified in terms of a comparison between his social context and the social context of the KPCC. Finally, the wisdom and heritage that the Korean traditional culture already possesses, but which the KPCC has ignored, will be brought to the fore, so that together with Palmer’s theory and practice, they might lead to a rebirth of the KPCC.
CHAPTER 1
KOREAN PROTESTANT CONSERVATIVE CHURCH SPIRITUALITY AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

This chapter explores the foundation and character of spirituality in the Korean Protestant Conservative Church, together with the theological background behind its Christian education practice. Two main streams have fed the theological leaning and unique style of Christian life in the Korean Protestant Church. The first is an indigenous faith, Shamanism, with its leverage as the traditional religious-cultural base in Korea. The second is the distinctive type of Christianity that was introduced by the western missionaries. These two streams created a fountain from which the conservative theological view of the Korean Protestant Church flowed. It is a view still held by the majority in the Korean Protestant Church, and one that continues to affect Christian life and education in the KPCC.

The religious and cultural characteristics of Shamanism have been identified as the dominant foundation of life in the Korean context. Shamanism has continuously influenced the KPCC and its church education with both a positive gain and a negative challenge. In this chapter, shamanic influence on the KPCC is studied in order to discover the roots of the conservative theological trend in Christian education. Also, the theological emphases and background of the first western missionaries to Korea are investigated in order to explore the theological characteristics of the early Korean church, characteristics that blossomed into a distinctive spirituality and style of Christian education. These two factors provide a lens through which the KPCC needs to look in

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13 The Korean political situation also had an impact on the formation of conservative theology and Christian spirituality. In the 19th century, the conservative views of western missionaries were reflected in the
order to review its social vocation, for it is the responsibility of both individual Christians and the wider church to look beyond the current individual-oriented spirituality.

1. Spirituality of Shamanism and Its Influence on the KPCC

Christianity arrived from the western world into a nation which was already made up of numerous religious backgrounds. This means that Christianity came to a place where various religions already co-existed, and interacted with them to form the unique religious atmosphere of present-day Korea. Shamanism, Confucianism, and Buddhism have been long popular and powerful in Korean, with Shamanism and its power particularly dominant. Shamanism, Buddhism, and Confucianism called the Eastern Asian religions have long co-existed together. These religions developed in similar cultural contexts throughout Eastern Asia, and they share similarities in their teachings and their views about human life. The teachings and religious political decisions of the Korean Protestant Church. Korea continuously faced political upheaval with Japanese rule and the Korean War. Independence from Japan was led by western political powers, especially the UN and the United States of America. The first government of Korea elected a President who was an elder in the conservative Protestant church, similar to the tradition in the United States, and Korean Protestant Christianity mostly became pro-government. The political views of the government and the views of Korean Protestant Christianity were anti-communist and concentrated on conservative values. Also, during the dictatorship that lasted over thirty years, Korea’s industrial development into an advanced country was deeply dependent on the United States. The Protestant Church also recognized that the United States had delivered Christianity and helped greatly in Korea’s industrial development. Because of Korea’s historical context, the majority of Korean Protestant Christians held views that were pro-conservative government and pro-United States. In addition, many Korean theological students studied in conservative schools of theology in the United States in the early days of the Korean church. Allen Clark, A History of the Church in Korea (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1971), 239-240; History of Korean Protestant Christianity, Ed. Institute of Korean Christian History (Seoul: Institute of Korean Christian History, 2009), 218-219; and Wi Jo Kang, Christ and Caesar in Modern Korea: A History of Christianity and Politics (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997), 109-110.

14 Buddhism was the official national religion in the Korea Dynasty (A.D. 918-1392), while the Chosun Dynasty adopted Confucianism and its academic theory as the national religion and ruling ideology (A.D. 1392-1910). This means that Korean society has strongly plural religious traditions with the dominance of shamanic practice, and that the three religious practices are deeply absorbed in the Korean consciousness, and are dominant in the lives of Koreans.

15 Kyungmi Park, the Independent Acceptance of the Western Christianity (Seoul, South Korea: Ewha Woman University Press, 2006), 17-18.
cultures of the three major religions have become mixed in many places and appear in the daily religious lives of Koreans. Among these religious traditions, Shamanism has not only been dominant, but has also generated a more individual-focused spirituality than the other religions in Korea. Thus it is essential to study shamanic influence on the KPCC in order to understand the way the KPCC formed its spirituality and educational characteristics.

1.1. Shamanism in Korea

Shamanism is best known as a religious phenomenon appearing in central and northern Asia, but in fact it appears around the world. Shamanism is considered as the oldest religion in Korea, and it has strongly influenced the formation of Korean culture, the ethical inclinations of Koreans, and their religious views and lifestyles. Its origin in Korea dates back to the earliest community that settled on the Korean Peninsula in 2300 BC. Shamanism is a kind of primitive animism, that is, “a belief in an unseen world of gods, demons, and ancestral spirits that affect daily life.”

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17 Korean traditional religions contributed to the formation of conservative faith and spirituality. As the oldest historical religions, their teachings encapsulated socially conservative views that taught obedience to higher powers, and that supported the hierarchical social classes, since leaders were chosen by heaven. Korean people understood that it was possible to pursue blessings and peace and avoid disaster through worshipping elements in nature, such as ancestors, sun and moon, trees, and local spirits. These beliefs caused many to think that progressive social participation and responsibility were not important. Instead, blessings for individuals and families came first, so political and social views remained conservative. In Confucianism, the important teachings people sought to live by included absolute obedience toward governors, elders, and those in high positions; promoting the reputation of the family through learning and success; dependence on classical teachings; and belief in hierarchical social classes. These emphases gradually led to the formation of conservative views in Korean society and Christianity. Don Baker, *Korean Spirituality* (Honolulu, HA: University of Hawai’i Press, 2008), 20-24, 51-54.


These spirits dwell in all creatures and deceased souls, and they reside in a place between heaven and earth.\textsuperscript{20}

According to Don Baker, the term Shamanism was not used in Korea until the 19th century, because shamanic religious and cultural phenomena were simply considered as the existing Korean faith and normal religious tradition.\textsuperscript{21} Baker states that Shamanism is equivalent to animism in Korea: “Korean animism and shamanism have been so closely intertwined and so prevalent on the Korean peninsula for centuries that most observers would say they form the original religion of Korea. They are often spoken of under the single term ‘shamanism.’”\textsuperscript{22} Shamanism in Korea is characterized by religious tolerance, in that its adherents have not persecuted or excluded other religions. Shamanism tends to embrace the characteristics of other religions and transform them into shamanized forms. It is also polytheistic, so it has tended to embrace other gods as part of its pantheon.

As the oldest religion in Korea, Shamanism is still very much a part of the life of the Korean people, in their culture, politics, and religion. Not only does it have religious power, but it also influences their lives and forms their worldviews. As a synthesized form of religion, Shamanism has been publically recognized as integral to Korean culture and its influence has thus spread out in the lives of Korean people. The power of Shamanism goes deep in Korea and it is a power that has been developed in three ways. Firstly, it is necessary to go back to the oral tradition in order


to understand the origin and development of Shamanism in Korea. According to *Samguk Yusa* (Memorabilia of the Three Kingdom, *Shinla, Goguryo, and Baekje*) authored by Ilyon, a renowned Buddhist monk in the *Koryo* Dynasty of the 13th century A.D, Shamanism in Korea took its religious form from the *Tangun* myth. The heavenly spiritual world and the earthly material world were brought together and personified in *Tangun*. In Korea, *Tangun* was considered as “the first great shaman to be initiated and capable of worshiping and praying to the Heavenly God on behalf of his people for an intimate relationship between the Heavenly God and earthly life.” One of the first missionaries, George Heber Jones, wrote that Koreans believe *Tangun* was the founder of Korea and the first great shaman.

Secondly, Shamanism gradually absorbed some of the teachings and cultures of other religions such as Buddhism and Confucianism, synthesizing them into the shamanic tradition in Korea. As result, Shamanism has been able to deeply influence the Korean people’s way of thinking.

23 In ancient times, *Hwan-in* (heavenly Kind) had a young son whose name was *Hwan-ung*. The boy wished to descend from heaven and live in the human world. With three thousand of his loyal subjects, *Hwan-ung* descended from heaven and appeared under a sandalwood tree on *Taebaek* Mountain as the place of the city of God. He led his ministers of wind, rain and clouds in teaching the people more than 360 useful arts, including agriculture and medicine; he inculcated moral principles and imposed a code of law. In those days there lived a she-bear and a tigress in the same cave, and they prayed to *Hwan-ung* to be incarnated as human beings. With *Hwan-ung*’s test being to eat only a bunch of mugwort (called tarragon, Artemisia, and sagebrush) and twenty pieces of garlic for one hundred days, she-bear alone passed this test and became a woman. *Hwan-ung* married her. She conceived and bore a son who was called *Tangun Wanggom*, the King of Sandalwood, and *Tangun* became the first person in the Korean peninsula, and the ancestor of Korea. Ilyon, *Samkuk Yusa* (The Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms), trans. Tae-hung Ha, Grafton K. Mints (Seoul, Korea: Yunsei University Press, 1972), 32-33.

24 John Kim, *Church Growth and Religious Culture in Korea* (Seoul, South Korea: Calvin Institute of the World Missions, 1996), 34.


26 In the time of the *Goryeo* Dynasty (AD 918-1392), Buddhism was the governmental religion, and its culture was popular throughout Korea. Before this time, Buddhism was the national power in religion, politics and culture. In the *Chosun* Dynasty (AD1392-1897), Confucianism occupied the same position as Buddhism. John Kim, *Church Growth and Religious Culture in Korea*, 36-38.
and worldview. As part of the synthesized Shamanic tradition, Buddhist gods have served as patron gods alongside shamanic gods, while followers of Confucianism have retained the tradition of worshipping dead ancestors as household patron gods. Tae Gon Kim explains Korean Shamanism as follows: there are approximately 273 gods and spirits in Korea, and 64 percent of these are natural gods, while the rest are the spirits of the dead. The highest god is a god who controls the heavens, and who also controls all lower gods and spirits. The character of Shamanism in Korea comes from a synthesis with the beliefs and traditions of Buddhism and Confucianism.

Thirdly, manifestation of the power of Shamanism is that shamans possess great charismatic authority and work as messengers of the gods. People are dependent on the shaman’s spiritual abilities, with the shaman’s rite, ‘Extasis,’ being a key performance that demonstrates their authority. The shaman’s role as a mediator between the general population and the gods means that in Korea shamans are also considered divine. “Charismatic Korean shamans contact spirits via a different technique. Rather than traveling to meet those invisible beings, they have the spirits come to them. A charismatic shaman in Korea goes into a trance in order to be possessed by a spirit and then lets that spirit speak through her to members of her audience.” In this sense, people depend on shamans for their own blessings in life and for their fortune in the near future.

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29 John Kim, *Church Growth and Religious Culture in Korea*, 36-40.

30 Young Dong Kim, “Missional Duty of the Korean Protestant Church faced by Challenge of Shamanistic Spirituality,” 558.

Through shamans, “Koreans are able to plead with spirits to stop afflicting them with physical, financial, or personal problems, or are able to talk once again with recently deceased loved ones. Charismatic shamans are the most dramatic representatives of Korean shamanism, and they are thriving in modern South Korea.”32 The Kut, in particular, is performed by shamans at holy places such as a “divine hall (shindang) a shrine (sadang), or a square for the spirits to fall into.” The Kut is one of the representative rituals of Shamanism in Korea and has four functions: “a priestly role intermediating between human beings and divine spirits, a prophetic function conveying the will of the divine spirit to the followers, a role of relieving the sick from their disease, and entertaining the public with singing and dancing.”33 This ritual has three main stages: the invocation of the spirits, the entertaining of and asking favors of the spirits, and the sending off of the spirit.34 The shamans call on the spirits to resolve the problems of the host of the performance, and also ask a blessing upon the host’s family and business.35 This rite is still popular in Korea.

1.2. Characteristics of Spirituality of Shamanism in Korea

According to Baker, Korean spirituality can be broadly classified into two types: anthropocentric and anthropomorphic. The former focuses on seeking the universal good and common rules, as well as blessings for peace and wealth through personal meditation and academic training in East Asian religious traditions. The latter seeks transcendence, and emphasizes a mysteriously

33 John Kim, Church Growth and Religious Culture in Korea, 41.
34 Baker, Korean Spirituality, 133.
35 John Kim, Church Growth and Religious Culture in Korea, 41-43.
personal experience that can be supernatural. These two types of characteristics have been synthesized to form the unique spirituality of the Korean people.\textsuperscript{36}

Three characteristics of spirituality of Shamanism have been particularly important in Korea. First, the spirituality of Shamanism focuses on the present world. It does not emphasize hope and peace in the future or the afterlife, but concentrates on the present situation. For pleasure in the present, Koreans regularly seek blessings for themselves, their families and their communities from Shamanic divine powers, believing that the divine spirits can resolve their current problems and heal their diseases.\textsuperscript{37} If blessings or healings do not occur, people tend to think their efforts or their faith were not satisfactory to the spirits, or that the spirits were angry with them for asking. This present-oriented style of religion means people consider their fate to be dependent on the assistance of the spirits, rather than on their own efforts.

Second, the spirituality of Shamanism seeks blessings from the spirits of ancestors, so the worship of ancestors is a very popular rite when it comes to asking for blessings. Korean people believe that the souls of the deceased ancestors and ghosts control all the blessings and misfortunes of this present world and they worship and depend on all kinds of creatures as the super-natures for peace, health, family, and business and the overcoming of poverty and suffering.\textsuperscript{38} In fact, most Koreans who are not Protestant Christians regularly worship their ancestors—even Buddhists, Confucianists, and non-religious people tend to follow the shamanic

\textsuperscript{36} Baker, 19, 96-99.


\textsuperscript{38} Dae Young Ryou, Christianity and Modern Korean History (Seoul, South Korea: Pureun History, 2009), 157-160.
tradition. While Roman Catholic Christians also follow this rite, ancestor worship was strongly prohibited by the first missionaries of Protestant Christianity. The rite of ancestor worship is usually performed on New Year’s Day on the lunar calendar, on Thanksgiving Day, and on days that ancestors died.

Third, the spirituality of Shamanism seeks individual success and satisfaction through widespread dependence on divination in ordinary lives. There are several kinds of diviners who perform divination or fortune-telling. “Shamans read the words of the spirits in the throw of coins or rice grains. . . . They sit in offices in Korea’s cities and quietly offer advice to their customers based on their interpretation of signs from the spirits.” The purpose of going to shamanic diviners in the 21st century is simple. “People go to shamans seeking solutions to practical problems, such as family financial woes, worry over a daughter’s marriage prospects or a son’s chances of getting into a good university, or health problems within a family.” Every New Year’s day, a great number of people go to shamans to learn their yearly fortunes, and they are dependent on the shaman’s guidance in solving problems. People sometimes seek blessings, peace, and fortune for their communities, but usually they focus on their own individual issues.

Spirituality of Shamanism in Korea characteristically focused on blessings in the present. However, it has fallen short in the areas of morality and ethics, because it has not emphasized ethical behaviour or moral lifestyles, but has instead emphasized the worship of all kinds of ghosts—both good and evil—to ensure the individual’s well-being and fortune. Based on

39 Dae Young Ryou, Christianity and Modern Korean History, 158.

dependence on the shaman’s spiritual role as the spiritual mediator, Shamanism seeks to protect followers’ health, wealth, and family peace, and to provide a peaceful balance in local communities. As shamanic practices in Korea are deeply rooted in the Korean people’s minds, culture, and lives, these remnants of Shamanism have remained in the lives of Korean Christians.\textsuperscript{41} The spirituality of Shamanism is an individual-focused spirituality in which people seek the will of heaven with devoted hearts through prayer, sacrificial offerings, and the sincere worship of idols.\textsuperscript{42} Through these shamanistic rites, people seek material and individual blessings, such as a safe personal and family life, an abundant harvest, rain, safety and good business. Thus, through the spirituality of Shamanism in the Korean context, Koreans have concentrated on mythical actions and incantations to fulfill their desires and avoid suffering. Shamanism and its cultural influences have spread out to touch all areas of the lives of the Korean people—Christians included.\textsuperscript{43}

1.3. Shamanism’s Influence on the KPCC

Clearly the powerful influence of Shamanism in Korea also functioned as a driver for the development of the Korean Protestant Church. In particular, the conservative church received the benefit of fast growth from existing shamanic spiritual practices. However, this influence also produced a crucial weakness in the KPCC.


\textsuperscript{43} Baker, \textit{Korean Spirituality}, 22-23.
From the perspective of foreigners, shamanic power was seen as dominant in Korea. The first western missionaries observed this shamanic power, and the first Presbyterian missionary, Horace G. Underwood, commented as follows: “Before Confucianism and Buddhism ever entered Korea it held sway and, from all that we can learn from history, and from what we see today, it is very evident that even when Buddhism and Confucianism were at their prime, under all, and through all, Shamanism still held its own.”

Even though missionaries were aware of the deeply-rooted religiosity of Koreans stemming from the shamanic tradition, they viewed it negatively. In the opinion of Underwood and also in the eyes of most missionaries, Shamanism was full of negative spirits like demons, and was a syncretic folk religion that controlled the Korean people.

1.3.1. Shamanic Contribution to the KPCC

There are two ways in which Shamanism positively impacted on the growth and the unique style of spirituality of the KPCC. First, Shamanism in Korea functioned as ‘praeparatio evangelica.’ This means ‘preparation for the gospel.’ Even though Shamanism in Korea was considered by western missionaries to be a superstition that had to be removed, it was also a contact point

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46 According to Eusebius of Caesarea who first used this term, as the true religion, Christianity uses other religions as preparation. Faith and belief in other religions help people to accept Christianity easily. Thus, other religions function for Christianity. Young Dong Kim, “Missional Duty of the Korean Protestant Church faced by Challenge of Shamanistic Spirituality,” 564; http://www.ccel.org/cCEL/pearse/morefathers/files/eusebius_pe_01_book1.htm. (Accessed April 16, 2014).
between the western religion and the passionate religious tradition already existing in Korea.\footnote{Sang Hui Mun, “Shamanism in Korea,” \textit{Korean Thought} (International Cultural Foundation. Ed. 1982), 34, quoted in Young Dong Kim, “Missional Duty of the Korean Protestant Church faced by Challenge of Shamanistic Spirituality,” 564.}

Even though the gods in Shamanism were not the same God that Christians believed in, the transcendence of the shamanist god was, for Koreans, redolent with the meaning of the Christian God. Some of the first missionaries, such as Underwood, Gale, Hulbert, and Clark, pointed out that the shamanist god was a ‘heavenly being’ and a ‘single being,’ who was similar to the God of Christianity.\footnote{James Gale, \textit{Korea in Transition} (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1909), 78; Homer Hulbert, \textit{The Passing of Korea} (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1906), 404; Charles Clark, \textit{Religions of Old Korea} (New York: Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1961), 195-196 in Young Dong Kim, “Missional Duty of the Korean Protestant Church faced by Challenge of Shamanistic Spirituality,” 564-565.} For this reason, Koreans could easily understand the idea of the existence of a supernatural God. However, Koreans still tended to understand God primarily as a giver of blessings, and tended to seek the material and present blessing for individuals as in the shamanistic understanding. Shamanism, with its plural views of gods, was the biggest concern to missionaries, but the religious cultural context and the deep religiosity of Koreans were helpful for Koreans in accepting a new religion.

Second, Shamanism’s focus on individual blessing led to the development of the Korean church, especially in terms of its quantitative growth.\footnote{The Number of Major Religious Temples in Korea in 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Protestant Christianity</th>
<th>Roman Catholic Christianity</th>
<th>Buddhism</th>
<th>Confucianism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Numbers</td>
<td>77,966</td>
<td>1,609</td>
<td>26,791</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ministries of Culture, Sports, and Tourism, \textit{Religious Statistics in Korea} (Seoul: Ministries of Culture, Sports, and Tourism, 2012), 9.} In the middle of the 20th century, Korean society experienced social difficulties. Sorrowful memories from the Japanese annexation and the Korean War were still affecting the minds of the people. As a result of these two major tragedies,
Korean society faced extreme economic difficulty, mental chaos, and national division between the North and South. There were extreme social conflicts caused by a deteriorating labour environment, political oppression, and political issues relating to North Korea. During these days, the Korean Protestant Church functioned to release people from suffering. The Korean Protestant Church created in people a positive mindset through preaching, blessing for individuals and family, and hope for the future. This style of ministry in the church was completely under the influence of the shamanic tradition.

With the national focus on industrial and social development, the church also focused on growth in its size and grew rapidly from the 1970s and 1980s. Usually Shamanism in Korea focused on individual and physical blessing, good financial wealth, health, and peace in the present world, and this emphasis directly impacted upon the style of ministries in the KPCC. As a result of adopting the ‘me-focused’ blessing, and the present-oriented beliefs in Shamanism, the growth of the Korean Protestant Church was rapid. People could release their sufferings through the messages from the church. However, there were also negative influences on the Korean Protestant Church that damaged the essence of the Christian gospel and its practice. These are the main influences that gave rise to the social issues the KPCC is now facing.

1.3.2. Negative Influence of Shamanism on the KPCC

The shamanic tradition has produced a serious situation in the KPCC as a result of the negative impact of its three traditional elements. First, the church has become the place to ask for material and individual blessings just as the shamanic rite did. This means that the church functions as a shamanic temple, and is considered the place where people seek happiness and peace for their
own selves, families and businesses. Tack Jin Im said that “the reason for the enormous church growth is social anxiety. The people want blessings; blessings are a part of the church, although they are not the only part.”

50 John Kim demonstrated that “the desire for earthly blessings draws many people to churches where the sermon of material blessing is emphasized in preaching. . . . God’s material blessings in the present life bring about explosive church growth.”

51 As in Shamanism, the blessing-oriented ministries attach people to the church, and people naturally pass on their shamanic tradition. The KPCC is thus characterized as the source of individual blessing and fortune in the present world.

Second, the negative impact of Shamanism is that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and its work have been misunderstood in the KPCC because of the shamanic understanding of the spirit. The Korean people are familiar with spirits in Shamanism and tend to depend on their power. This attitude of depending on the spirits is conveyed through the KPCC in an understanding of the Holy Spirit that is very like the shamanic understanding. Based on this understanding, people rely on the Holy Spirit for blessing and to overcome suffering. The evidence of being ‘filled with the Holy Spirit’ has come to be considered the power to perform healing and to drive out demons.

52 Thus people believe that the Holy Spirit works for them, their family, and their business. This is identical to the shamanic understanding. Also, just as those shamans who experience ecstasy and exorcism are considered the most highly qualified shamans, pastors who

50 Taek Jin Im, in a lecture during a Koinonia Meeting in the Third World Church Leadership Center in Seoul on October 21, 1987, quoted in John Kim, Church Growth and Religious Culture in Korea, 214-215.

51 John Kim, Church Growth and Religious Culture in Korea, 215-216.

seek spiritual power with ecstasy and mystical experience are considered the ones whom the Holy Spirit works through.\textsuperscript{53} John Kim describes this phenomenon:

In the Korean Christian Church the experience of ecstasy and becoming one with God stands out as the characteristic feature of charismatic movements. At the revival meetings the charismatic leaders emphasize their subjective mystic experiences as the means of control and authority over the believers. The believers also seek spiritual experiences, such as visions, psychic observation, trance, etc. as was found in the shaman tradition, many charismatic Christians consider this ecstatic experience that they seek a mysterious “union with God.”\textsuperscript{54}

Christians in the KPCC have thus tended to seek mysterious spiritual experiences through the Holy Spirit, just as shamans did.

Third, the unhealthy leadership in the KPCC has caused the lack of social responsibility demonstrated by the church. Pastors’ roles have become similar to the shamans’ roles. Pastors do not lead Christians to a balanced point of view about the society in which they live, but instead lead them to focus on Christian life in the church only. Pastors emphasize that Christians should focus on passionate participation in church worship and programs, and Christians who follow pastors’ directions are considered the faithful ones. Moreover, pastors have the same authority that shamans have.\textsuperscript{55} For example, in the Korean tradition, when people open new businesses, they tend to invite the \textit{Mudang}, who is a shaman in Korea, for the rituals of material blessing and to remove evil spirits from the new business. Ministers in the church now act like the \textit{Mudang}.\textsuperscript{56}

\textsuperscript{53} John Kim, \textit{Church Growth and Religious Culture in Korea}, 219.


\textsuperscript{55} John Kim, \textit{Church Growth and Religious Culture in Korea}, 217.

\textsuperscript{56} John Kim, \textit{Church Growth and Religious Culture in Korea}, 220-221.
Christians invite ministers to bless their new businesses through worship services. Bu Yong Lee says that “Korean Shamanistic faith, especially in healing of the body, is flowering under the banner of Christianity.” Kim also states that shamanistic initiation and spiritual power are both emphasized in the church, and prayer meetings on the mountain with the uniqueness of the Korean prayer style have also been influenced by the shamanic tradition of the Mudang. Pastors lead Christians to focus on present blessings and the church’s ministries, but they do not seek to teach Christians how to live in society as Christians, or what social vocation Christians have in society.

In sum, the KPCC remains at the deeply intertwined shamanistic spirituality. Although this shamanic spirituality and its tradition has helped the church in some respects, it has also created a great obstacle in that the KPCC has lost its health and social vocation. This has ultimately created a shamanistic style of Protestant Christianity in Korea. The KPCC needs to go beyond a ‘me-focused’ mindset, a ‘my church-focused’ ministry, and a present world-focused spirituality, and it needs to realize its responsibility and restore its vocation in society.

2. Influence of the Spirituality of Western Missionaries on the KPCC

Along with the shamanic tradition in Korea, the theological and spiritual leanings of the western missionaries functioned to form the conservative theology and spirituality of the KPCC. In particular, emphases on eschatological theology and pious Christian practice based on the

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57 In Hoe Kim, a Comprehensive Study of Korean Shamanism (Seoul, Korea: Korea University Press, 1982), 156.
understanding of the new millennium became the foundation of early Korean Protestant Christian theology and spirituality.

2.1. The Western Missionaries and the Korean Context

Western missionaries were the first messengers to deliver Protestant Christianity into the Korean Peninsula in 1844.\textsuperscript{58} Their theological leanings became part of the foundation of the Korean Protestant Church. When western missionaries arrived, Korean society was at the end of a feudal dynasty, the \textit{Chosun Dynasty} (1392-1897), and the society was extremely chaotic. The autonomy of the country was in collapse, and the political situation was chaotic by powerful countries around Korea. This historical situation led to the rapid acceptance of this western religion. Based on this social context, Christianity and advanced western science introduced by western missionaries contributed to the development of Korean society and the Korean Protestant church in Korea.\textsuperscript{59}

The conservative theological emphasis and practice of the first missionaries from North America impacted on how the KPCC developed its own theologically conservative view and particular emphasis in Christian education. Charles Clark has identified ten strategies that characterized the passionate and successful evangelism that took place in Korea. Among these, a conservative theology and an emphasis on a conservative Christian life were the main keys to successful evangelism in Korea. This approach was aimed at reforming personal lifestyles and solving

\textsuperscript{58} Roman Catholic Christianity entered Korea 150 years earlier than Protestant Christianity. But the former had mostly disappeared by the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century due to governmental persecution. Deuk Joo Lee, \textit{The early Story of the Korean Church} (Seoul, South Korea: Hongsungs, 2006), 21-26.

\textsuperscript{59} The social contribution to the development of the Korean society by the western missionaries and their teaching that the church worked for society will be explored further in Chapter 6.
social issues. According to Clark, missionaries from North America were under the influence of the Great Awakening Movement of the 18th and 19th centuries, a movement based on the tenets of Puritanism. Puritanism focused on piety in the Christian life, and upheld theological beliefs such as the inerrancy of the Bible, the virgin birth of Christ, the substitutionary atonement of Christ, the physical resurrection of Christ, and the imminent physical second coming of Christ. These emphases were at the heart of conservative theology.

Practically speaking, the conservative theological position favored a pious Christian life, which included passionate participation in activities of the church such as worship, Bible study, prayer meetings, and also the adoption of a moderate lifestyle. Furthermore, this pious Christian life was based on an understanding of eschatology that had become popular in the late 19th century, in terms of which the Second Coming was expected to take place before the new millennium. This eschatological expectation led Christians to realize the timely urgency and the importance of a pious life. As the result of this emphasis on eschatology, the first missionaries also advocated strong moral behavior, which was also considered to be part of a pious Christian life.

2.2. Eschatological Spirituality and a Pious Christian Life

The eschatological view became popular in North America as the 19th century drew to a close. Belief in the imminent return of Christ produced a passionate evangelism and the importance of


61 Ryou Dae Young, Early American Missionaries in Korea (Seoul: Institute of Korean Christian History, 2001), 92-93, 113-115.
living a pious Christian life. Pious Christianity became a kind of re-emphasis, because piety had always been a major focus of the conservative church in the North America under the Puritan tradition. These two characteristics—eschatological expectation and piety were closely related and they became popular in the Korean Protestant Church also.

2.2.1. North American Eschatology in the 19th Century

Based on the influence of the Great Awakening Movement, the theology of eschatological expectation was one of the most popular theologies of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, because of its timing before the new millennium.62 It was a set of beliefs that was influential in changing cultural trends and Christian life, and also greatly enhanced the popularity of theology.63 According to Gundry, “by the end of the nineteenth century, and at least by the beginning of the twentieth century, premillennialism had become the most vocal eschatology among American evangelicals.”64

In fact, public understanding of the theology of eschatology was not clearly defined or uniform in the 19th century, and there were different views about millennialism among the various American churches. Before the new millennium, the theological view of the millennium was

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62 James Orr predicted that the 21st century would be the age of eschatology. He said that one of the hallmarks of the 21st century would be the theology of eschatology, and that that would continue to be central. James Orr, *the Progress of Dogma* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1901), 345.

63 In the 21st century, the theological majority of the Korean Protestant church is fundamentalist, though various other theological trends exist. The popularity of eschatology in the 19th and 20th centuries in the North American church, as the mother church of Korean missionaries, was essentially based in theological fundamentalism. Thus, along with eschatology, other general features of fundamentalism were also delivered into the Korean Protestant church.

focused on the American church, and within that, premillennialism was the common view. Davis states that, “virtually all American evangelicals were at least implicitly premillennial until the Civil War.” Ung Kyu Pak also says that, “in the decades following the Civil War, much of the optimism about society’s perfectibility began to dissipate, and the popularity of premillennialism increased publically.” However, premillennialism confronted a strong opponent, dispensational premillennialism, which became popular in some evangelical circles. This dispensational premillennialism divided biblical history and subsequent history into successive periods, or dispensations. From this point of view, people thought that they were facing the end of this universe with the return of Jesus Christ. This eschatological belief led to a movement of revivalism of which Pak wrote: “God was preparing a new chosen people for a significant role in world evangelism. Waves of revival swept the churches and while speculation about the time of the advent of the millennium and Christ’s return was rife, there was a tendency to focus on a specific period of time and place.” Most significantly, eschatological expectation led to the renewal of Christian life and stimulated cultural trends aimed at preparing for the return of Jesus Christ with piety.

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65 Premillennialism as Christian eschatology is the belief that Jesus will literally and physically return to the earth before Christ’s reign for 1,000 years during a golden age. Postmillennialism is the period after 1,000 years of Christ’s reign. Geoffrey. W. Bromiley, (ed.) the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Vol. III (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986), 356-361.


67 Ung Kyu Pak, Millennialism in the Korean Protestant Church, 53.


69 Ung Kyu Pak, Millennialism in the Korean Protestant Church, 54-55.
The popularity of eschatology led to revivalism and changes in Christian lifestyle in order to focus on matters of piety and moral importance. Premillennialists saw this world as being on a rapid downward course, awaiting the final judgment, and they also saw the world “as a sinking vessel whose doomed passengers could be saved only by coming one at a time into the lifeboats of personal conversion.” Thus, many ministers followed a theology of premillennialism. Evangelists emphasized the imminent return of Christ with a certain sense of urgency. Because of this understanding, evangelists urged unbelievers not to delay making their response lest it be too late. Revivalism sparked by the popularity of eschatology in the 19th and 20th centuries led to a number of converts, and many of these became missionaries, as evangelical urgency to reach the third world grew rapidly.

2.2.2. Eschatological Spirituality in Korea

Between 1880 and 1910, American missionaries to Korea were largely evangelical. Marsden explains that during that time “almost all nineteenth-century American Protestants had been evangelical that is, part of a coalition reflecting a merger of pietist and Reformed heritages and growing out of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century awakenings in America.” Many of the first missionaries to Korea were influenced by this theological trend and practice, and contributed to building the first theological style in Korea. In particular, missionaries who were

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in the SVM (Students Volunteer Movement), which was established by the influence of the Great Awakening Movement, were dominant.\footnote{Dae Young Ryu, \textit{Early American Missionaries in Korea (1884-1910): Understanding Missionaries from Their Middle-Class Background} (Seoul: Institute of Korean Christian History, 2001), 38-40.}

Eschatological expectation and its advocacy by missionaries, dominated the early Korean Protestant churches. For example, one of the first seven pastors in the Korean Protestant Church educated by missionaries, Sun Joo Kil, usually preached the words of Revelation to emphasize the importance of the end times and the eternal hope of heaven.\footnote{Sang Kyu Lee, \textit{the History and Theology of the Korean Church} (Seoul, South Korea: Bread of Life, 2007), 280-285.} This theme of preaching gained in popularity and spoke to the eager desire of Koreans to overcome their sufferings, because the church provided the hope beyond present suffering. Yang Won Son, one of the first pastors, who also often preached about the imminent end of this world, stated:

\begin{quote}
The end has already come and the Second Coming of Christ is very imminent. This is the time to destroy the present ruling system of every country, Christianity’s enemy. The period of the Second Coming of Christ for 7 years will be revealed by the Armageddon war, which means the fight between the believer and non-believer in each country. The believers will gain victory by the power of God, and Christ will come again and put all non-believers into prison. Therefore, the emperor of Japan will be put into prison with non-believers. Christ will come as the ruler of all nations. Then the Kingdom of God will appear with the peaceful, blissful and eternal world.\footnote{Rev. Son, Yang Won (1902-1968) was a Presbyterian pastor. He took care of lepers in Sorokdo, which was a concentration camp for lepers on an isolated island, and was known as the apostle of love in the early Korean Protestant church. Quoted in Sun Joong Joo, “A Study on the Sermon of the martyrs of the Korean Protestant Church” (MA Dissertation. Presbyterian Theological University, 1987). 70.}
\end{quote}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
Year & Total Number of New Missionaries & The Number of Missionaries in SVM \\
\hline
1906 & 14 & 8 \\
1907 & 43 & 23 \\
1908 & 48 & 29 \\
1909 & 30 & 21 \\
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\end{tabular}
\caption{The Number of American Missionaries in Korea}
\end{table}

\footnote{Dae Young Ryu, \textit{Early American Missionaries in Korea (1884-1910): Understanding Missionaries from Their Middle-Class Background} (Seoul: Institute of Korean Christian History, 2001), 38-40.}
The continuous suffering of the Korean War (1950-1953) after liberation in 1945 was addressed by this eschatological teaching and preaching. Kyung Bae Min describes this effect as follows: “The eschatological and frantic piety inside the believer began to appear here and there” and Korean Christians yearned for an eternity of peace.76 In addition, Korean society experienced political, social, and economic suffering and chaos as Koreans sought to develop a democratic country before the 1990s.77 Social issues such as the struggle for rights for women, conditions faced by factory workers and manual labourers, and the suffering of those who fought for democracy against the dictatorship government were extreme, and the church accordingly taught people to have hope in the future rather than in the present time.78 However, hope for eternity and a peaceful life deteriorated into simply seeking material happiness and wealth in this world and this became the main characteristic of the KPCC.

Eschatological spirituality in Korea can be understood as having three emphases. First, Christians focused on passionate evangelism and living a pious Christian life, because Christ’s second coming was considered imminent. Second, Christians were patient in the face of sufferings and difficulties, because present sufferings were offset by hope in heaven. Third, political oppression and social injustice were considered less important than individual salvation and church growth, because of the imminence of Christ’s coming. Based on the personal sufferings endured during this period of national affliction in the 19th and 20th centuries, the people struggled to overcome their suffering, and their eschatological hope promised an afterlife

76 Kyung Bae Min, the Korean Church History (Seoul, South Korea: The Christian Literature Society, 1983), 470.

77 After the Korean War (1950-1953) the terms Korean society and Korean church indicate the Republic of Korea (South Korea) as the result of the division in the country.

that spoke to the Korean situation. However, this eschatologically-focused theological worldview created various heresies that made Christian social concerns murky in the Korean Protestant Church, and it also accentuated social problems that existed.

2.2.3. Spirituality for a Pious Christian Life

Focusing on a pious Christian life became the contextual theological emphasis of the KPCC. The early Korean Church emphasized three strong Christian attitudes in ordinary life. First, the early Korean Protestant Church accepted new members into the church with strict regulations. Missionaries produced many converts in a short period, but they did not readily accept them as members. Missionaries educated converts for about one year to prepare them for baptism, and to instil the highly specific regulations that they must follow in their lives as Christians. For example, new converts had to be seen to be strictly observing the Lord’s Day. This meant that they could not work at anything, and had to focus on pious matters such as worship, reading the Bible, and prayer, because these were considered elements of a pious Christian life. Korean society was agriculturally-based, and so Koreans worked every day. Furthermore, since there was no concept of holidays or Sabbath in Korean history and culture, it was not easy to abstain

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80. Among a number of heresies focusing on the contrived interpretation of eschatology, The Dami Mission caused a serious social problem. The Dami Mission was a Christian religious movement founded in South Korea by Lee Jang Rim. It received worldwide attention after Lee predicted that the rapture and end of the world would occur on 28 October 1992.

from work on the Lord’s Day. The passionate observation of the Lord’s Day was thus considered the sign of the born-again Christian.\textsuperscript{82}

Second, the early Korean church members had regulated Christian lifestyles. This included prohibitions against smoking, drinking, drug-taking, and gambling. While these practices were popular in Korea, they were considered as immoral habits that weakened people’s minds and lives. Thus church leaders strongly prohibited these habits and addictions. Further, those who did these things could not be baptized, because Christians were considered as people who did not practice them.

Third, the early Korean Protestant church strongly prohibited worship of other gods. Shamanism included various gods that the Korean people had originally believed in. The first Christians in Korea were confused about the gods in the shamanic tradition and God in Christianity, and did not find it easy to remove their shamanic traditions.\textsuperscript{83} The first converts in the Korean Protestant Church thus needed to obey the church’s strict regulations in order to be distinguished from non-Christians. According to Ryu, these regulations were almost the same as the regulations of the Puritan Church in 17th century Massachusetts.\textsuperscript{84} One of first missionaries, Appenzeller, argued that the purity of the church in Korea was more important than the size of the church.\textsuperscript{85} The three emphases outlined above are classified as the pious Christian life which also involved a deeply church-centred life.

\textsuperscript{82} Dae Young Ryu, \textit{Early American Missionaries in Korea}, 105-106.

\textsuperscript{83} Dae Young Ryu, \textit{Early American Missionaries in Korea}, 107-109.

\textsuperscript{84} Dae Young Ryu, \textit{Early American Missionaries in Korea}, 114-115.

Myung Heok Kim also wrote that the one of main characteristics of the Korean Protestant Church was its emphasis on the importance of living a pious Christian life.\textsuperscript{86} Kyung Bae Min asserted that the Pyeong Yang Revival Movement of 1907 was a milestone in the formation of the theological emphasis of Korean Protestant Christianity on the pious Christian life.\textsuperscript{87} The emphasis on pious Christian living brought by the missionaries was, as noted, based on eschatology. Missionaries emphasized the importance of attendance at worship as one of the most important Christian traditions, and one that included a financial dedication of tithing as an expression of appreciation to God. This emphasis naturally connected the focus on the church-centred Christian life with passionate prayer, service, financial commitment, and ardent participation in various weekly worship services. This lifestyle of Christians was considered a pious Christian life and spirituality.

In sum, a spirituality emphasizing that a pious Christian life characterized a mature Christian emerged out of the pluralistic religious context of late 19th century Korea. A pious Christian life was seen as the condition for membership in the Protestant Church. This characterization was helpful in distinguishing who the Christians were in the Korean context. Furthermore, Christian church education in the KPCC focused on nurturing believers in understanding what a pious Christian was. However, this emphasis tended to produce dedicated Christians characterized by

\textsuperscript{86} Kim Myung Heok, “The Evangelicalism Movement and the Korean Church” \textit{Mission and Theology}, No. 5 (Seoul, South Korea: Center for World Mission, 2000), 7.

\textsuperscript{87} Kyung Bae Min, \textit{the Revised History of Korean Protestant Church} (Seoul: The Korean Christian Literature, 1993), 262-263.
active participation in church activities, rather than Christians living a pious life in the wider society.

3. Types of Church Education in the KPCC

The KPCC produced a unique Christian education that was closely related to the historical situation of Korean society. Not only did Christian education in the KPCC contribute to church growth, but it also created the challenges the KPCC is currently facing.

First of all, Christian education in the Korean Protestant Church is still under the influence of the first missionaries. Their style of education contributed not only to the introduction of Christianity into Korea, but also to the development of Korean society through the establishment of schools which then became the roots of modern Korean public education. The characteristic education of the KPCC was knowledge-focused, individual-morality focused, and church growth-focused. However, these three educational foci revealed the weakness in the relationship between church and society, and caused the challenges now faced by the KPCC in the 21st century.

3.1. Knowledge-Focused Church Education

Knowledge-focused church education is focused on the biblical knowledge. Usually Christian education is used to educate converts and new members in the church, but it has also become a

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88 The positive contribution to education by missionaries in Korea will be explored further in Chapter 6.

major Christian education for all ages and levels of education in Korea. The early Korean church applied knowledge-focused education in order to introduce new believers to the beliefs of Christianity and to nurture them into becoming Christians.

This knowledge-focused education began with the translation of the Bible from English into Korean. Many missionaries were involved in creating the Korean Bible and they made biblical knowledge the foundation for their knowledge-focused education. Also, there were many women who distributed Bibles to converts, to new members, and to people who were interested in Christianity. Their work also helped create the foundation for this style of education that was pivotal in the Korean church context. Because of the plural religious tradition and the dominance of Shamanism, the church needed to educate people about what distinguished Christianity from other religions and what the Christian message said.

Knowledge-focused education in the church had similarities with the traditional Korean educational focus which was useful for the Korean Church as well. The similarity lays in the historical educational tradition of the Seodang or village school, where learning revolved around reading, memorizing and writing the Chinese classics. In the Korean context, education was thus always considered to be about obtaining knowledge from books. Furthermore, the national test for achieving an official position in the government consisted of producing a piece of writing that demonstrated understanding and memorization of the classics.

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90 Seodang was the small village school in Korean history and culture. This school system was spread through the whole nation, and usually educated students below the age of twenty. This type of school existed from A.D. 1000 up until the early 20th century. This village school functioned as the primary educational institute before the establishment of the modern school system by western missionaries.
Korean society required new knowledge to overcome social difficulties and to advance into modernity. After the Korean War, Korea needed to acquire new and advanced information and knowledge from western countries in order to develop the society at large. Educational opportunity was not available for all levels of people before the arrival of Christianity in Korea. Upon their arrival, the first missionaries focused on social services such as education and medical service based on their realizing the nature of the Korean social and historical contexts. Many schools built by missionaries were places designed to cultivate people of intelligence, people who would then work for their own enlightenment and to overcome the national crises. In these schools, students learned subjects such as mathematics, science, music, literature, and art, but Bible study was the most important class. At that time, school education by missionaries was closely connected to Christian education in the church, because missionaries provided school education as one of their Christian educational approaches.

The Protestant church symbolized a new wave of education and the advancement of science during the infancy of modernity in Korea. Imported social thinking and science from the western world were considered to be the solution to personal and national crises. Thus the first Korean Christians concentrated on knowledge-focused learning of a new religious teaching that was imbued with western thought. Learning was facilitated through educational programs aimed at disseminating biblical knowledge. Educational curricula for children concentrated on them mastering biblical information through reading the Bible, listening to preaching, Bible quizzes,

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91 Dae Young Ryou, *Christianity and Modern Korean History*, 35-49.


93 John Kim, *Church Growth and Religious Culture in Korea*, 178.
memorizing contests, and Bible study. Education mostly focused on providing information about
the Bible rather than on how to practice what had been taught. These types of educational
programs are still in place as the main educational methods in church education. One of
strongest characteristics of Christian education in the KPCC is the emphasis on Sunday School,
which runs from toddler level through to adult level. The educational process in Sunday School
usually consists of listening to preaching, participating in Bible study in small groups, and
engaging in biblical activities. Also, the church offers educational programs on weekdays, aimed
at teaching each of the books in the Bible, how to read the Bible, Quiet Time with the Bible, and
other programs related to the Bible.

This knowledge-focused church education contributed to the growth of the Korean Protestant
Church. The emphasis on achieving biblical knowledge as part of the process of entering into
membership in the church was intended to nurture dedicated Christians. Also, knowledge-
focused Christian education was pivotal because Korean Christians needed to realize what
Christian beliefs were and how Christians needed to live. However, this educational emphasis of
the KPCC is currently revealing its limitations and weaknesses in terms of the relationship
between church and society. These limitations and weaknesses center on the absence of the
practice of Christianity in the wider society. While knowledge gained through Bible studies was
helpful for Christians to grow into adulthood as Christians, education in the KPCC failed to

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94 Won Young Son, *Korean Culture and Spirituality in Christian Education* (Seoul, South Korea, Korean Christian Literature, 2009), 21-22.


96 Choon Ki Han, *the History of Church Education in Korea*, 24-25.
educate Christians in applying this biblical knowledge in their own lives, or in how the church should act out the biblical teachings in society.

3.2. Individual Morality-Focused Church Education

Church education is focused on stringent requirements for individual morality. Hyung Tae Kim demonstrates that morality drives most of the preaching, is the major content of Sunday school teaching, and is the main purpose behind Christian day schools.97

Christian education focused on individual morality contributed somewhat to the social enlightenment of Korean society. As mentioned previously, in the eyes of the first missionaries, Korean political society seemed chaotic, and individual levels of morality low. Missionaries observed the intemperate addictions of drinking, smoking, and gambling among Koreans. The popularity of these activities was considered unhealthy from the point of view of the missionaries: they thought these social phenomena led to serious individual and social problems. So they strongly prohibited them as a requirement for becoming a Christian.98 This emphasis proved useful to the Korean people, for it led to individual and social moral improvement, and remains the character of Korean Protestant Church education in the 21st century. However, this particular focus of Christian education has its limitations and problems, because it concentrates on individual morality. As a result, Church education has tended to emphasize the development of high moral standards in the inner life of individual, rather than moral behaviour for the benefit of others in the society. Hyung Tae Kim suggests two reasons for this emphasis.


First, it is based on the conservative theology and practice which is the main characteristic of the Korean Protestant church. Conservative theology emphasizes personal salvation, personal growth, and personal experience with God. Second, Kim explains that moral education in the church has long had an individual orientation. He gives examples of pastors and education in the church emphasizing humility, loyalty, moderation, and the fruits of the Holy Spirit. According to Kim, these elements are the dominant themes in preaching and Christian education, but they are mainly concerned with the personal virtues Christians need to develop.99

Kim argues that even though this form of individual morality might be considered virtuous in the church, it has not been translated into performance in the public square. The silence of Christians and the church, especially which of the conservative Protestant church, during the governmental dictatorship of 30 years, and through the industrial period with its labour movement, are cases in point. Furthermore, economic difficulty and personal suffering in the social situation of Korea meant people did not participate in building social morality, even though they had the requisite moral consciousness in their hearts.100 Yongsoo Ko emphasizes that moral education in the church must lead to the society, and be based in love and justice, and the desire to build a just, loving and fair society through the service and participation of Christians.101


100 Hyung Tae Kim “Moral Education and Christian Education,” 82-83.

101 Yongsoo Ko, “Church Education for Recovering Morality” 636-638.
3.3. Church Growth-Focused Church Education

Church growth-focused Christian education means that Christian education in the KPCC has focused on church growth through its educational activities, especially quantitative growth. Missionaries were originally keen to evangelize Korea because the country was extremely syncretic. Most missionaries had received education beyond the level of graduate-school and they urgently wanted to enlighten Korean society in order to lead the people into an advanced social system. Furthermore, Korea was reported to be a country where missionaries produced much fruit, with a great number of converts and new churches. Missionaries spread out to most areas of the Korean peninsula, and the church grew very quickly. Church growth-focused education appeared strongly again after the Korean War. While the dictatorship of 1961 to 1979 focused on economic development in the nation, and waves of industrial movement spread to all areas, the KPCC also focused on growth, the growth of the church.

There were three types of church education that focused on church growth. First, there were sermons intentionally aimed at securing increase in numbers. Preaching was considered one of the major educational programs in the KPCC, and because the church provided various worship services, preaching functioned as a major educational tool. Pastors preached intensively about developing a positive attitude towards suffering, and this emphasis encouraged Christians to pursue individual success and church growth during the industrial period. In most worship services and prayer meetings, passionate evangelism for church growth was emphasized, and sermons headed towards seeking individual and family blessings. However, this emphasis caused

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102 Sung Jeon Lee, *the American Missionaries and Korean Modern Education*, 20, 66. In fact, most classes were taught by missionaries.

two main problems in the KPCC. The first was that pastors lost the original meaning of the Bible, and what the Bible said in a certain context. The second was that preaching lost its balance, because the Bible does not always reflect the growth-centred message.

The second method of growth-focused education was the use of a variety of small groups. The Korean Protestant Church, including the KPCC, imported many small group programs from the western churches, and devised many programs such as D12, evangelism explosion, discipleship, and the crossway Bible study. The purpose of forming these small groups was to promote church growth through training Christians as evangelists. Through this small group educational method, Christians were evaluated for their maturity. The third method was special gatherings organized by the KPCC. Even though these gatherings might not be classified as an educational program, the church tended to think of them as educational events. Along with the weekly educational programs, the KPCC had various special events such as mountain prayer meetings, retreats for each age level, and revival meetings. Also, many pastors participated in seminars and symposia that introduced strategies based on the example set by mega-church leaders. Furthermore, the revival meeting, where leading speakers emphasized the eschatological theme, was a very popular educational method in the Korean Protestant Church until the late 1990s. These revival meetings were an effective educational medium for delivering a message about the importance of church growth.

Because revival meetings were the largest annual events in each of the

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104 This revival meeting is called 부흥사경회 or 심령부흥회, meaning a special gathering for revival of the personal spirit by depending on the work of the Holy Spirit, and for inspiring people to be dedicated to church growth. Previously a meeting lasted ten to fifteen days with over ten hours of preaching and prayer. Nowadays, it lasts three to four days with three or four gatherings per day. Almost all Korean Protestant churches hold this revival assembly once a year or more. http://holy36.hosting paran.com/technote7/board.php?board=hsmate&category=11&command=body&no=6&. (Accessed April 28, 2014); Youngho Lee, “History of Korean Christian Education” The History of Christian Education. Joon Kwan Un. Ed. (Seoul, Korea: Handeul Press, 1991), 520-522.
individual churches, they provided an opportunity to educate Christians in certain themes emphasized by preachers. The revival meetings were led by charismatic leaders and were an important medium for church growth. Usually each church would hold this type of meeting at least twice a year in order to inspire Christians with evangelical encouragement.\textsuperscript{105}

However, education for the purpose of the growth of the church essentially promotes an individual church-centred and blessing-centred spirituality such as is reflected in the mega-church syndrome, mammonism and churchism. These characteristics of Christian education in the KPCC which are without active social vocation, are viewed critically by the public, and have resulted in radical decline and social criticism. The church needs instead to revive the purpose of Christian education for the benefit of the wider society.

In conclusion, Incheon Yang classifies the spirituality of the Korean Protestant church into four branches. First, there is the spirituality inspired by reformed theology, with its God-centered life focused on the Word of God. This form of spirituality tends to focus on individual salvation. Second is the spirituality of empiricist theology to focus on the mystic experience, which is the Pentecostal spirituality of Korea. Third is the spirituality based on fundamentalist theology that focuses on a pious and temperate Christian life of poverty. Fourth is the practical spirituality originating from liberation theology and its practice. According to Yang, the KPCC possesses characteristics of the first three. However, the times when each character developed were different: fundamentalist spirituality developed during the infancy of the Korean Protestant church in the early 20th century, while Pentecostal spirituality developed during the industrial

\textsuperscript{105} Myung Soo Park, \textit{a Study on the Revival Movement in the Korean Church}, 213-215.
movement. Furthermore, the initial focus on individual salvation of the reformed tradition has always been emphasized. But the problem is that these spiritual characteristics of the KPCC have not developed healthily, and there has been some misunderstanding of the nature of spirituality which will be demonstrated in Chapters 2 and 5. There is a tendency to focus only on individuals and not go beyond this and similarly, there is a tendency to focus on mystical experience with the Holy Spirit, rather than social health. Both of these tendencies have been popular in the KPCC, and thus the KPPC needs to become more balanced in its spirituality, and needs to be reminded of its social vocation. With regard to Christian education, church education in the KPCC contributed to the growth of Christianity. However, it was not a healthy growth, in that the educational method used caused the KPCC to ignore Christianity’s vocation towards society, due to its heavy emphasis on individual success and church growth. These emphases created ignorance about Christian responsibility for society.

In Chapter II, the vocation of the church, based on an understanding of Moltmann’s theological approach to the Trinity and Stackhouse’s view of Jesus’ work for society will be explored. The purpose is to establish a theological basis for a review of Christian church education in the KPCC.

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CHAPTER 2
THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC LIFE

The analysis provided in Chapter 1 suggests it is essential that the KPCC not only review its conservative-focused theological foundation, but that it also reintroduces Christian education based on an understanding of the social responsibility of theology, in order to build a sound relationship with Korean society. In this chapter, I argue that the KPCC and its Christian education should be equipped with an understanding of the public dimension of theology and how it relates to the place where the church is located and where Christians live. There is a demonstrable need for the interpretation and practice of public theology in relation to social issues around the world.

107 It is thus first necessary to explore the meaning of ‘public’ and outline its relevance to theology and its practice. The word ‘public’ in relation to theology was first used by church historian, Martin Marty, in his book *The Public Church*. The term ‘public theology,’ which focuses on the social function of theology and its practice, was not commonly used before the middle of the 20th century. However, the public function of theology and the public vocation of the church and Christians have been widely debated for a long time. Churches around the world are constantly struggling to fulfill their vocations in society. In the 20th and 21st centuries, the function of theology for public benefit has been emphasized, based on specific situations occurring around the world; Martin Marty, “Reinhold Niebuhr: Public Theology and the American Experience,” *The Journal of Religion*, 54/4 (Oct. 1974), 332–359.

108 When explaining the meaning of public theology, scholars tend to focus on theology’s public role and function. Sebastian Kim states that there is “a growing perception of the need for theology to interact with public issues of contemporary society.” Kim explains that “public theology is an engagement of living religious traditions with their public environment—the economic, political and cultural spheres of common life.” The Centre of Public Theology in Canada defines public theology as “systematic reflection on issues relating to public life, carried out in the light of theological conviction and with the aid of the theological disciplines,” and as “a mode of doing theology that is intended to address matters of public importance.” Victor Anderson also defines public theology as “the deliberate use of religious languages and commitments to influence substantive public discourse, including public debates on morality.” These definitions suggest that theology has a function in society, and that it should be interpreted based on the public situation. The realm of public theology is not limited, because theological interpretations should be aimed at all areas of society, and Christian practices should be capable of carrying out this social responsibility; “Two Kinds of Civil Religion,” in *American Civil Religion*, ed. R. E. Richey and, D. G. Jones (NY: Harper & Row, 1974), 139-157; Sebastian Kim, “Editional,” *International Journal of Public Theology* 1/1 (2007), 1; “Public Theology in the Canadian Context” on the homepage of the Centre for the Public Theology in the Faculty of Theology at Huron University College, [http://www.publictheology.org/groups/centreforpublictheology](http://www.publictheology.org/groups/centreforpublictheology) (accessed Sep 4, 2012); John W. de Gruchy, “Public Theology as Christian Witness: Exploring the Genre,”
To further this objective, the chapter examines the theologies of Jürgen Moltmann and Max Stackhouse to see how they might inform the theology of Christian education for public society. These two theologians provide a clear understanding of public theology, and one that is relevant to the KPCC. The KPCC will be able to conduct a review of its educational focus in light of central principles of public theology derived from these thinkers. In so doing, and in adopting public theology as its underlying principle, the church will be able to meet the social challenges posed by 21st century Korea.

There are two reasons why the theological views of Moltmann and Stackhouse can serve to underpin the reform of Christian education in KPCC. First, through his emphasis on eschatology, Moltmann’s understanding of the Trinity and of ecclesiology sheds light on the relation between the Trinitarian God and the church’s social vocation. Moltmann’s theological approach can thus lead the KPCC, and its Christian education wing, not only to recognize the importance of the social responsibility of the church, but also to apply this to the field of education. Second, based on the challenges faced by the KPCC, resulting from its inability to recognize the changed Korean context, Max Stackhouse’s views on Christian responsibility in the era of globalization are also important. They can be used to support the KPCC in its globalized Korean context, in order to create a healthy connection between the vocation of Christians and wider society.

Moltmann, as a European scholar, and Stackhouse, as an American scholar, are both interested in the public function of theology. Their respective understandings serve as reminders to Christians and the church of their social vocation and social responsibility. The church’s interest and

participation in public life, and its responsibility towards society and the global world, thus originates from a theological understanding of the inner relationship of the Trinity and is the responsible vocation of Christians who are created in the image of God.

1. Moltmann’s View of Public Theology

In order to come to grips with Moltmann’s understanding of public theology, the historical context in which he lived and his wider theological views will be examined. Moltmann’s entire theological outlook affects the building of his public theology, with his view of the Trinitarian God functioning as its fountain. His critical reflection about the role of the church and of Christians in German society reinforce the necessity for critical reflection by the KPCC on the challenges it faces in the Korean social context. Further, Moltmann’s theological emphasis on the Trinity as the fountain of love, and his insistence that it is the vocation of the church to be an image bearer of the Trinitarian God provides a fruitful research avenue for the KPCC. It is an emphasis that was shaped by Moltmann’s observation of the darkness and suffering caused by modernity.

Criticisms have been made that because Moltmann is German and because Germany has functioned as an aggressor nation, causing a great deal of suffering and a great many victims in Europe, his theology is not appropriate for Korea. Korea is itself a country victimized by foreign powers, especially Japan. However, in reply to these criticisms, Moltmann’s unfolded theological view, which is based on his own suffering during the war and on the thorough introspection of the majority of the German church about its silence during the war, do provide
concepts that can assist the KPCC in developing a theological stance appropriate for its own social issues and for breaking through its own silence in Korean society.\textsuperscript{109}

\section*{1.1. Historical Context of Moltmann’s Public Theology}

Even though some of the criticisms about the relevance of Moltmann’s theology are valid, it is important to note that his theology unfolded out of a process of deep reflection. There is common ground between Korean suffering and Moltmann’s own agony resulting from his War experiences, and beyond. There are also insights to be gleaned from the way the German church responded to its past in the post war period, insights that can show the KPCC how to fulfil its responsibility in society, how to communicate with society, and how to respond to the questions and demands from the society.\textsuperscript{110}

The German political tragedy led Moltmann to consider the political function of theology in the wider world. His view as a German is a critical reflection based on the perspective of an assailant of World War II. Also, as part of his personal experience as a prisoner of war between 1945 – 48, he experienced the presence of God in his life and began to think deeply about the role of God in


\textsuperscript{110} Moltmann is in fact a well-known theologian in the Korean Protestant progressive church, but his theology is not popular in the conservative church. This is because of Germany’s role as an aggressor nation that caused a great deal of suffering in World War II. Also, his emphasis on the social function of the church based on his theology of Trinity and view of salvation are seen as very progressive. I believe that his experience-based theology as well as his critical reflections about the social, national, and global problems that the church should be concerned with, can help the KPCC recognize its vocation and overcome its challenges. So, Moltmann’s theology, along with the German church’s own critical reflection after World War II, and later, the church’s struggle to assume its social responsibility, provide a theological alternative for the Korean Protestant. Church http://www.christiantoday.co.kr/view.htm?id=272066 (accessed on May 30, 2014); http://sgti.kehc.org/data/person/moltmann/27.pdf (accessed on Feb 1, 2015); http://sgti.kehc.org/data/person/moltmann/22.htm (accessed on Feb 1, 2015).
human suffering. This experience became the foundation for his theological output. Thus, his political interpretation of the tragedy caused by the war became grounded as the theoretical foundations of his public theology. He writes as follows:

In the years of the German Leviathan, the separation between spiritual and worldly power, religion and politics, did in fact lead to resistance in the churches when they were supposed to fall into line. But it was resistance in the interests of the liberty of the churches themselves, not for the sake of the freedom of men and women. Through that separation, religion and conscience were restricted to the church, and life’s other pursued without conscience. The new political theology presupposes the public testimony of faith, and freedom for the political discipleship of Christ, not just discipleship in private life and in the church. . . . This must be critical towards political religion and religious politics, and affirmative towards the specific, practical commitment of Christians to ‘justice, peace and the integrity of creation.’

Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s theological approach inspired Moltmann to reflect critically about the collective guilt of Germans and German church. Moltmann’s experience and study of the public responsibility of the church and Christians thus functions as a pillar of his theology.

Moltmann explains his own understanding of public theology as follows:

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112 Moltmann, *God for a Secular Society: Public Relevance of Theology*, 43-44. Moltmann uses the term public theology from the 1990s onwards. Before he utilized the term of political theology, he was influenced by liberation theology, prompting him to reflect critically on the response of the church to political issues and to make theological interpretations of politics. However, when he uses the term public theology, he gives it a broader meaning, going beyond the political arena to all issues concerning human beings.

113 Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 2. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (4 February 1906 – 9 April 1945) was a German Lutheran pastor, theologian, anti-Nazi dissident, and key founding member of the Confessing Church. His writings on Christianity's role in the secular world have become widely influential. Apart from his theological writings, Bonhoeffer became known for his staunch resistance to the Nazi dictatorship, including vocal opposition to Hitler's euthanasia program and genocidal persecution of the Jews. He was arrested in April, 1943 by the Gestapo, and imprisoned at Tegel prison for one and a half years. Later he was transferred to a Nazi concentration camp. After being allegedly associated with the plot to assassinate Adolf Hitler, he was briefly tried, along with other accused plotters, including former members of the Abwehr (the German Military Intelligence Office), and then executed by hanging on April 9, 1945, as the Nazi regime collapsed, just two weeks before Allied forces liberated the camp, and three weeks before Hitler's suicide. John Malkov, Dbonhoeffer.org. http://www.dbonhoeffer.org/Biography.html (accessed October 20, 2014).
Theology has to be public theology: public, critical and prophetic complaint to God, public, critical and prophetic hope in God. Its public character is constitutive for theology, for the kingdom of God’s sake. Public theology needs institutional liberty over against the church, and a place in the open house of scholarship and the sciences.\textsuperscript{114}

After the Second World War, public theology began to be actively studied as a new area of theology. As a result of the experience of this world tragedy, churches in the third world and the first world needed to reflect on their social vocation and responsibility as both assailants and victims, giving theological insight to both. Some people are still enduring suffering in their spirit, land, or nation, while others have debts to pay to their victims. Nevertheless, all people need to explore and analyze this tragic event theologically. Various theological approaches have been developed to accomplish this task. In consequence, Moltmann argues for a Christian attitude towards political issues around the world:

As long as a Christian does not know what true Christian faith is, he or she cannot relate in a reflective way to political questions. . . . This, of course, is overlooked today when out of an inner uncertainty in faith one plunges into political engagement in order to find a more certain standpoint.\textsuperscript{115}

Moltmann asks “why— with only a few exceptions— did Christians and church leaders remain silent?” After the shock of Auschwitz and the atrocities committed by Germany in the Second World War, Moltmann asks this question in order to obtain a theological answer.\textsuperscript{116} “After Auschwitz the holocaust became theology’s specific, practical context. The long shadows of this historical guilt became our \textit{locus theologicus}. We associated with the name ‘Auschwitz’ not just

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\textsuperscript{116} The holocaust: between 1941 and 1945, Jews were targeted and methodically murdered in the largest genocide of the 20th century. This genocide was part of a broader aggregate of acts of oppression and killings of various ethnic and political groups in Europe by the Nazi.
\end{footnotesize}
the moral and political crisis of our people, but a theological crisis of the Christian faith.”

Moltmann’s political theology looks for answers to explain the silence of German Christians who did not resist governmental power. He finds two false understandings held by German Christians and church leaders. The first misunderstanding is that they thought that politics and religion were not closely connected. This means that faith was a private matter. Moltmann suggests that this privatization of religion led to the secularization of politics in the Christian mind.

The second misunderstanding entertained by German Christians was that they did not correctly interpret the Lutheran doctrine of the Two Kingdoms. “Through this separation, religion and conscience were restricted to the church and society was surrendered to unscrupulous power politics.” Politics exists in the context of Christian theology, so Moltmann insists that theology “must be towards political ideologies and the civil religions of power, affirmative towards the practical commitment of Christians to justice, peace and the integrity of creation.” Moltmann demonstrates that political theology is not just an academic theology, but also requires the expectation and experience of action and protest. Also, political theology is not the same as progressive theology. Political theology seeks to protest against unjust power and rulers and bring about hope and love based on the tradition of the confessional reformed church. This church has always striven to act as a spokesperson for the victims of violence, and to be the public voice of the voiceless. Through the church’s self-examination and an understanding of

the social role of Germany and other European countries after World War II, Moltmann developed his theological interpretations.

1.2. Public Theology beyond the Darkness of Modernity

Moltmann’s argument that social phenomena should be interpreted through a theological lens highlights the need for the KPCC to analyze the character of the society in which it is located. Korean society is characterized by scientific development and multiculturalism, and the KPCC needs to heed Moltmann’s observations and reflect critically on the nation’s own theological character. It is clear that theology should be public, and that it should flash a light for people, especially for victims, minorities, and the broken-hearted. Also, theology should be related to issues in the present world, issues such as justice and fairness in all areas of society. This means that theology should have a close relationship with the social context; it should observe changes in the society, which should be analyzed based on theological reflection; and it should provide a proper response.

Moltmann discovers darkness in modernity behind scientific developments and radical competitive capitalism around the world, and especially in first world countries. This causes him to focus on biblical resources in order to review modernity’s inner shape and provide a theological proposal for the church. Looking beyond capitalized wealth and the advanced social environment, he observes dehumanized social systems and individual-oriented lifestyles. To utilize an understanding of modernity, he provides two key concepts that existed pre-
Enlightenment: the ‘conquest,’ especially the discovery and conquest of America in 1492, and the scientific and technological power exerted over nature by human beings.\textsuperscript{121}

In Moltmann’s view, the term \textit{conquest} reflects the originality of events that occurred during modernity. He focuses on the power of European countries including Germany, and also America. It was a power that led to modernity, but also caused the darkness of modernity. After the conquest of America, the word itself came to symbolize modernity. “The myth of ‘unclaimed property,’ ‘no man’s land’ and ‘the wild’ legalized the robbery, the colonisations and the settlements.”\textsuperscript{122} Simultaneously, European Christianity also conquered the world, and this imperial Christianity forcibly compelled those in other countries to follow the same religion. As another characteristic of modernity, the scientific and technological power exerted over nature by human beings was the foundation of a new world order. It led human beings to conquer the third world and nature easily, and this tragic situation has lasted until today.

Based on this analysis, Moltmann criticizes the conquest-driven nature of modernity. He identifies the contradiction between modernity and sub-modernity as follows:

Only a third of the modern world is what we now call Western civilization—the so-called First World. Two-thirds of it is the modern Third World. Modern times—the ‘new time’—have called forth both modernity and sub-modernity. But because some live in the light and others in darkness, the people in the light do not see the people who are forced to vegetate in darkness. The memories of the perpetrators are always short, while the memories of the victims are long...The downfall of the Third World means the downfall of the First World too; and the destruction of the earth will also mean the extinction of the human race. \textsuperscript{123}

\textsuperscript{121} Moltmann, \textit{God For A Secular Society: Public Relevance of Theology}, 6.

\textsuperscript{122} Moltmann, \textit{God For A Secular Society: Public Relevance of Theology}, 7.

The third world was created by modernity. The African continent was colonized by the first world, and natural resources in South America were exploited for the construction and development of the first world. For the tragedies of millions of victims in Africa and native people in America, theology could not provide an answer. Unendurable guilt for these unimaginable horrors thus rests on the most advanced Christian European nations. Moltmann describes God as: “God—the victim in the victims: that is ‘the crucified God’ who looks at us with the mute eyes of the street children.”¹²⁴ The Bible consistently emphasizes that God is the God of widows, orphans, and strangers. This means that God participates in the sufferings of victims and minorities.

In the radically competitive world of capitalism, scientific and technological powers created the darkness of modernity. In addition, the conquest of scientific and technological advances for the convenience of human beings in the first world has caused the annihilation of more and more plant and animal species. Environmental pollution caused by human beings looking for a more convenient life has indeed destroyed human beings themselves. Moltmann named these phenomena in modernity “the economic end-time and the ecological end-time.”¹²⁵ Moltmann connects this darkness of economic and ecological crises caused by the first world to theology, and calls it the crisis of God in modernity. Coming out of the European context, various movements derived from political theology fired civic movements which spread out around the world from Paris and Berlin to Berkeley, Tokyo, Seoul and Mexico City. These included young people’s rebellions, cultural revolutions, radically democratic and socialist movements, events


that are still going on today, especially in the third world. Political theology developed into a number of other contextualized theologies, such as socialist theology, the theology of peace, ecological theology, feminist theology and the theology of human rights.  

According to Moltmann, theology must be political and seek justice and equality for human beings, because freedom without equality is not in the interest of the common good. Christian hope is absolutely Christological because the hope of Christians is rooted in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Thus the vocation of the church is obvious. Theology must be made public to the world. Moltmann’s theology offers hope for the problems in modern society, and can lead the KPCC to do likewise, as it interprets the present social darkness of Korea theologically, and forms a response to it.

### 1.3. Foundation of Public Theology: Trinitarian Theology

This section looks at why the KPCC should consider adopting Moltmann’s Trinitarian theology. For Moltmann, the inner relationship of the Trinitarian God demonstrates the model of loving relationships for human beings, and his theology of the Trinity is thus the foundation of his understanding of public theology. For its part, in spite of being in the midst of a social situation characterized by suffering and industrial development, the KPCC has focused on individual salvation and individual church growth. The interpretation of the work of Holy Spirit has been based on an individualistic shamanic understanding, rather than on a balanced theology that sees the Trinity as the origin of love towards human beings.  

Thus Moltmann’s view can equip the

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127 The social and historical background of Korea is introduced in Chapter 1.
KPCC with a more balanced theological perspective that will help it in overcoming its current challenges.

Moltmann states that: “God comes to us in Jesus as the Brother next to us. We come to face him as the Abba-Father of Jesus, and we live out of our Mother, the Spirit.”\textsuperscript{128} Moltmann understands that the Trinitarian God is historically immanent in this world because God is the Creator, and His image is in human beings. This means that God works for achieving God’s will, and God works through God’s people to fulfill God’s purpose. Based on his understanding of the theology of the Trinity and a parallel understanding of ecclesiology, Moltmann focuses on the social vocation of Christians and church as the image holders of the Trinitarian God, who is the prototype of a social relationship of love, justice, and freedom. In \textit{Crucified God}, Moltmann interprets Jesus Christ on the Cross as the Trinitarian event being worked out between the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, as “the triune God, the God who in himself constitutes the unique and perfect fellowship of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”\textsuperscript{129} Based on this understanding, he combines Trinitarian history with world history, and he emphasizes that the Trinity is related to the history of human beings and works alongside human history.\textsuperscript{130}

In terms of a general understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity, this provides the main resource for understanding the kind of solidarity love that can exist between human beings, because human beings are created in the image of the Trinitarian God. Thus, God’s purpose toward his people is revealed in the solidarity and loving relationship described by the doctrine of the

\textsuperscript{128} Jürgen Moltmann, \textit{Humanity in God} (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1983), 106.


\textsuperscript{130} Bauckham, \textit{The Theology of Jürgen Molmann}, 5-6.
Trinity. The doctrine of the Trinity can be explained as an entirely united relationship of love, and this relationship is expressed in solidarity. This loving and unifying relationship of the doctrine of the Trinity naturally spreads to the relationships of His people, because humanity is created in the image of God. Also, the church, as the gathering of His people, has the responsibility to carry the unifying and loving relationship of the Trinitarian God out into society. Moreover, solidarity in love is not only the Christian or the church’s responsibility to fulfill, but is also a universal purpose for building a harmonized and united world, because God’s creation is to be a universe consolidated, united, and harmonized by love. The Trinity reflects a loving relationship and also a social relationship. The Father does not exist alone, and the Son and the Holy Spirit do not exist alone either. Only through their associated relationship do the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit exist through loving each other in a loving and consolidated way. God is community and relationship. This social relationship of the Trinity provides the motive for Christians to love others socially beyond themselves, since the relationship of the Trinity strongly indicates the social network as the place to love others and also provides the foundation for public theology.  

In many of his books, Moltmann continuously provides theoretical and practical resources for public theology, because he insists that theology must be practical in the ordinary life based on Christian faith. This is supported by Catherine LaCugna when she says that “the doctrine of

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132 *God for A Secular Society: Public Relevance of Theology, God in Creation: Ecological Doctrine in Creation, Hope for the Church: Moltmann in Dialogue with Practical Theology, History and the Triune God: Contributions to Trinitarian Theology, Humanity in God.*
the Trinity is ultimately a practical doctrine with radical consequences for Christian life.” Theology of the Trinity that Moltmann describes has significant social and public implications for addressing the triune God as three divine persons in a community of eternal fellowship of mutual giving and receiving. Also, it functions as a core Christian doctrine that provides essential ethical norms for public life.

According to Moltmann, the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit in the Trinity is not a closed fellowship within the three divine persons, but an open unity:

From eternity the Trinity in the origin is open in love for the world and its history. God’s being in Trinitarian means that he is open in love for the union of his creation with himself. In the mission of the Son and the Spirit God opens himself in seeking love and then in gathering love gathers creation into union with himself. His final unity is then one which includes the whole of his creation in an eschatological, Trinitarian ‘panentheism.’

Father is not a cosmological idea or a religious-political concept, but a Trinitarian term. As the Father, he is the beloved Father ‘Abba,’ of the Son, Jesus Christ:

The Father is therefore defined through himself and through his relations to the Son and to the Spirit. The Son and the Spirit are defined through the Father and their own relations. But this inner Trinitarian ‘monarchy of the Father’ only defines the inner Trinitarian constitution of God, not the world monarchy of a universal Father.

Moltmann says that the first person of the Trinity is “the fatherly Mother” and the “motherly Father” of his begotten Son, transcending gender, who creates the fellowship of men and women beyond privilege or subjection. In the relationship of the Trinity, the Son is called “the only,” “the only begotten son,” and “eternal Son of the Father.” He has all things with the Father, and

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“the Father who generates and brings forth communicates everything to the eternal Son, everything except his fatherhood.”\textsuperscript{136} In the inner-Trinitarian constitution of God, the Spirit proceeds in eternity from the Father. The Spirit is “breathed out,” not begotten. Procession of the Spirit from the Father is a relationship peculiar to the Spirit and the Spirit’s “unique character is therefore defined negatively rather than positively.”\textsuperscript{137}

Even though the traditional order of the Trinity is the Father-the Son-the Spirit, Moltmann perceives the Spirit as the second person of the Trinity, who as one subject of the triune God is glorification and unification. The Spirit glorifies the Son through the Son and the Father, and unifies the Father and the Son. In fact, the role of the Son provides an important theological concept for Moltmann in \textit{The Crucified God} and helps him unfold his theology. His view changes from desiring to study eschatological Christology to looking instead at Trinitarian pneumatology. He states that the relationship between the Son and the Spirit in the Trinity and the relevance of their works is that “the Spirit is the power to suffer in participation in the mission and the love of Jesus Christ, and is in this suffering the passion for what is possible, for what is coming and promised in the future of life, of freedom and of resurrection.”\textsuperscript{138}

Moltmann states that the Trinity is ‘co-active’ in every moment of Trinitarian history, and that the “co-efficacy of the divine Persons in concurrence” is their eternal fellowship. According to Moltmann, this relationship of the Trinity is expressed by the concept of the Trinitarian \textit{perichoresis}, or mutual indwelling. This concept, first used by Gregory Nazianzus, is helpful for

\textsuperscript{136} Moltmann, \textit{Trinity and the Kingdom of God}, 163-165.

\textsuperscript{137} Moltmann, \textit{Trinity and the Kingdom of God}, 169.

understanding personhood beyond individualism. *Perichoresis* as a noun means ‘vortex’ or ‘rotation,’ and as a verb means “a movement from one to another, to reach round and go round, to surround, embrace, encompass.” Moltmann asserts that this term can delineate “not only the link without admixture with ‘the others’ of the same species, but also the link with ‘the other’ of a different species.” In the Latin, *perichoresis* was translated to *circuminessio* to mean “dynamic interpenetration” with *circuminsessio* meaning “an enduring, resting indwelling.” Following this understanding, Moltmann insists that the Trinity is “a non-hierarchical community.”

To enable this loving and equal fellowship, Moltmann says that the three persons in the Trinity equally share everything, including the suffering of humanity. It is a relationship of love and solidarity:

The Spirit is drawn into his Son’s sufferings, and becomes his *companion* in suffering. The path the Son takes in his passion is then at the same time the path taken by the Spirit, whose strength will be proved in Jesus’ weakness. The Spirit is the transcendent side of Jesus’ immanent way of suffering. So the ‘condescendence’ of the Spirit leads to the progressive *kenosis* of the Spirit, together with Jesus.

In Moltmann’s theology of the Trinity, the Trinitarian God is always in communion with our present world. In this relationship, God is affected by the world, and the world is affected by God as well. The Trinity is the original foundation of freedom, justice, and love in the human world. Thus, the theology of the Trinity is a key resource for understanding public theology and can

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help the KPCC recognize the importance of practice-in-education for its identity, and, through adopting a balanced understanding of this theology, move away from its current Holy Spirit centred focus.

1.4. Foundation of Public Theology: The Vocation of the Church

As mentioned above, having focused its energies on church growth, the KPCC has a limited understanding of ecclesiology. Moltmann provides an alternative theological and practical understanding of church which can help the KPCC in its process of reform. Ecclesiology is a further foundation of Moltmann’s understanding of public theology, and this he relates to the vocation of the church. Christianity is defined as the religion of hope; not only eschatological hope, but also hope in the present. Embodying this hope in the place where it is located is the vocation of the church.

The realization of the vocation of the church is also connected to an understanding of the vocation of individual church members as the disciples of Jesus Christ. Moltmann focuses on Christian roles in public life, and is especially interested in helpless victims in need of God’s love. He criticizes the fact that over 95 percent of people belong to the German church, but only 10 to 15 percent of these Christians actively participate in church activities. This decreased loyalty among members results in them not realizing it is the political duty of Christians to serve society as members of that society. This means that many German Christians do not recognize the political and public responsibilities they have, and do not commit to being responsible and mature participants in society. He states that “the Christian community is present for everyone
only when it is first present for the poor, the sick, the sinners.” Moltmann points out that the vocation of the church to perform acts of love in society originates from the loving relationship within the Trinitarian God.

In his theodicy, Moltmann gives “prominence to the question of God’s righteousness in the face of the suffering and evil of the world.” In his view of eschatological theodicy, “innocent and involuntary suffering must not be justified, as it would be if it were explained as contributing to the divine purpose.” This view of God’s interest in the suffering of the world connects to the vocation of the church. The church cannot understand itself alone. It can only truly comprehend its mission and its meaning, its roles and its functions in relation to others. In the movements of the Trinitarian history of God’s dealings with the world, the church finds and discovers itself in all the relationships which constitute its life. It finds itself on the path traced by this history of God’s dealing with the world, and it discovers itself as one element in the movements of the divine sending, gathering together and experience. It is not the church that has a mission of salvation to fulfill to the world; it is the mission of the Son and the Spirit through the Father that includes the church, creating a church as it goes on its way.

Moltmann’s ecclesiology is ‘relational ecclesiology,’ meaning the triune God is related to the world, and the tasks of the Son and the Spirit are worked out together in the church. Moltmann

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depicts God as always being in solidarity with a world that is suffering, because he is the loving Crucified God. “The church can only adequately fulfill its vocation if it becomes a ‘messianic fellowship’ of mature and responsible disciples.” In the eyes of Moltmann, “the ideal is a church of the people, a fellowship of committed disciples called to responsible participation in messianic mission. The messianic fellowship will also be a free society of equals, since the Spirit frees and empowers all Christians for messianic service.”¹⁴⁸ Moltmann states that “the Christian church struggles between a religious faith in the beyond, which leaves this world to its own devices, and a hope for the future, which accepts responsibility for transforming this world.”¹⁴⁹

Moltmann’s eschatology is also useful in highlighting the shortcomings of the current focus of the KPCC and its programs. He stresses the importance of eschatology as a pillar of ecclesiology, since it brings to the fore the hope that can be found through the church. And this is a hope that the KPCC needs to embody. In Moltmann’s ecclesiology, the church is a motivator for hope in the world and in the resurrection of Christ, which is eschatological hope, because the church has an eschatological function. “Eschatological hope creates an exodus church committed to liberating and even revolutionary praxis in society.”¹⁵⁰ In this sense, Christian hope does not mean passive waiting for the second coming of Jesus Christ as the eternal savior, but is active waiting. He states that hope “confronts death as the final, intractable problem, but actually begins from the promise of resurrection given in God’s raising of the crucified Jesus, by no means concerns itself only with death and resurrection. Rather, from its ability to transcend the final


¹⁵⁰ Bauckham, The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann, 121.
enemy of human life, it derives the inspiration and the strength to confront every lesser enemy.”

Moltmann insists that Christian hope provides present and future liberation from the oppression of our souls and bodies in the world, because this hope is universal.

Just as the coming kingdom is universal, so the gospel brings the liberation of men to universal expression. It seeks to liberate the soul and the body, individuals and social conditions, human systems and the systems of nature from the closedness of reserve, from self-righteousness, and from godless and inhuman pressures.

Moltmann’s ecclesiology is connected to a hope that is based on an understanding of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the work of the Trinitarian God in the present world, as made manifest as the vocation of the church. He strongly emphasizes that “a missionary church cannot be apolitical,” and he is very disappointed “with the German Protestant church’s post-war commitment to political neutrality.” He sets his face against contemporary German tendencies to integrate church and society. At their heart, Moltmann’s theologies of the Trinity and church are based on his critical observations of modernity. It is a model that can in turn provide the impetus for the KPCC to critically review its own theological foundations and practices.

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2. Max Stackhouse’s Understanding of Public Theology

The reason for introducing Max Stackhouse’s view of public theology into this thesis is because it provides wisdom that is capable of revealing the darkness of Korean society, and by so doing present a challenge to the KPCC. It is clear that observations about the darkness of the globalized world are the starting point for Stackhouse’s brand of public theology. Issues stemming from globalization are also found in Korean society, and the KPCC needs to respond to these.\(^{155}\) As a theologian in the United States, Stackhouse’s public theology looks at situations in North America, although he is also interested in global issues of politics, economics, and society.\(^{156}\) Stackhouse extends the range of the practice of public theology to events that have occurred in the global world in the 21st century, and argues Christians should be involved in them. In this section, Stackhouse’s understanding of public theology based on his review of the situation in North America and the wider world will be explored.

2.1. Historical Context of Stackhouse’s Public Theology

Stackhouse reviews events and moments in the history of the United States through the historical lens provided by the scholars that influenced him. From this review he gleans insights about


\(^{156}\) Since Christianity arrived in Korea, the Korean Protestant church has been influenced by the western church and its theology, especially by the American Protestant Church. Further, the economic development of Korea has followed the American system, so these two aspects have combined in the Korean church context. Thus, Stackhouse’s concerns and observations about the darkness of the American society and the global context, based on the responsibility of theology and the church, provide wisdom for the KPCC, helping it respond to global concerns.
Christian attitudes to social concerns and human suffering.\textsuperscript{157} Using his predecessors’ theological and historical views, he attempts to build a common sense view that will help people recognize the importance of the public good, public life, public faith and attitudes, and of social ethics. The modern concept of public theology as an important function of Christianity is built upon these historical foundations.\textsuperscript{158} From the middle of the 20th century onwards, Stackhouse focuses on two contradictory expectations of American Christians concerning the role of the United States as a flourishing Christian country. The first expectation was that the United States become a model country for the future of the global world, an expectation based on a positive worldview of democratic-capitalism and Christian belief. The second was the contradictory view that American values and Americanized political and cultural systems are a subject for criticism, not for modeling, because American-oriented values have been criticized both theologically and ethically around the world. According to Stackhouse, the idea that civil religion or public theology is the function of Christianity in modern America has developed out of this historical context, and theologians have accordingly explored ways of demonstrating how religion works in such a cultural and social context.\textsuperscript{159}

\textsuperscript{157} Max Stackhouse, “What is Public Theology” in \textit{How to Practice Public Theology}, ed. NICE (Seoul, South Korea: Book Korea, 2008), 15-16; and Robert Bellah, \textit{Civil Religion in America} (Cambridge, MA: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1967). Stackhouse states that he is influenced by Christian theologians such as Jonathan Edwards, Horace Bushnell, Walter Rauschenbusch, and also Christian politicians such as Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln, and Woodrow Wilson. Also, he refers to the sociological research of American scholars such as Robert Bellah, Alexis de Tocqueville and Emil Durkheim for an understanding of the meaning and role of civic religion. According to Stackhouse, the thought of theologians such as Jonathan Edwards, Walter Rauschenbusch, and Reinhold Niebuhr had an important influence on common life. According to Stackhouse, the thought of theologians such as Jonathan Edwards, Walter Rauschenbusch, and Reinhold Niebuhr had an important influence on common life.

\textsuperscript{158} Max Stackhouse, “What is Public Theology,” 20.

\textsuperscript{159} Stackhouse, “What is Public Theology,” 18-19.
Stackhouse’s understanding of public theology leans towards the global arena. He focuses on the vocation American Christianity has toward the global world. As an American theologian, he recognizes not only the global responsibility of the United States, but also that individual Christians should be interested in global concerns. His view about global interests seems to be that the American government has usually dealt with these matters as the leading country in the world, but that there is also a need for Christian responsibility towards the global sphere, especially from people in the first world.

2.2. Stackhouse’s Understanding Public Theology

Public theology provides a method for dealing with issues that develop in a society, including but not limited to culture, art, science, the economy, and politics. Ronald Thiemann defines public theology by saying that it “is not a specialized discipline or a technical subspecies with a unique method of inquiry; it is faith seeking to understand the relation between Christian convictions and the broader social and cultural context within which the Christian community lives.”

Stackhouse explains the relationship between Christian belief and the term ‘public’:

First, because that which we as Christians believe we have to offer the world for its salvation is not esoteric, privileged, irrational, or inaccessible. It is something that we believe to be both comprehensible and indispensable for all, something that we can reasonably discuss with Hindus and Buddhists, Jews and Muslims, Humanists and Marxists. Second, such a theology will give guidance to the structures and policies of public life. It is ethical in nature. The truth for which we argue must imply a viable element of justice, and its adequacy can be tested on that basis.

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Stackhouse understands that public life is the desire of people, because all human beings are created in the loving image of God. This is a responsibility of Christians, but it is also a responsibility of all people in the world. He understands that even though religious beliefs reside in people’s inner minds, they also appear outwardly in their lives through their mindset, their worldview, and their behaviour in public.

Stackhouse provides three reasons to explain why Christian belief should be public, and these are all relevant in leading the KPCC in a critical review of its own traditional thinking. First, Christian belief is relational. Christians have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ based on faith. Christians have new identities through this new relationship, and the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, based on the works of the Trinitarian God, which affects Christians’ lives. Beings who are created in the image of God are in relation with others because of the loving relationship they have with God, and the relationship between Christians and God is revealed in public life through cultural, political, and economic thought and behavior.

Second, Christian belief is global. Stackhouse insists that the will of God towards His people is that they strive to work for justice in the world, because the love and mercy of God is universal and turns toward all people in all cultural contexts. Because creation by the Trinitarian God and the salvation brought about by Jesus Christ are universal, all believers need to bear witness to these two events. Stackhouse focuses on the vocation of Christian belief, because Christianity is a religion of ‘going,’ not a religion of ‘staying.’ He emphasizes that Christianity seeks to share

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162 Sang Hoon Lee, “Understanding of Stackhouse about Public Theology,” *What is Public Theology?* Ed. NICE (Seoul, South Korea: Book Korea, 2007), 32.

individual happiness and salvation with the world. Christianity seeks to reform individuals and the world and encourages them to show forth the universality of honesty, morality, and justice in the world. Christianity believes that God existed before human history and that he is with those who do not know him as well.\textsuperscript{164}

Third, Christian belief is future-oriented and seeks the New Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{165} What Christians strive to live out in their public lives is an active culture for discussing religious, ideological, and philosophical questions with deep reflection and analysis. Christians need to respect all different contexts and people. To attain this, effective democratic endeavors and participation in politics are necessary. In Stackhouse’s view, public theology is not limited only to the societies of certain countries; it is a global matter that Christians work on together to achieve justice, peace, and fairness in the world, thus embodying the New Jerusalem. Based on a theological interpretation of cultural, political, philosophical, social, and economic phenomena in Christian lives, seeking effective methods for embodying a just human community is also a task for public theology.

2.3. Globalization in Public Theology

Social problems in Korea are largely the result of industrialisation and economic development. Korea has changed from a third world to a first world social system, and thus an understanding of public theology as it relate to globalism is appropriate for the KPCC. One of the contributions of Stackhouse’s public theology is that he extends it from being a local matter to a global task for Christians and the church.

\textsuperscript{164} Sang Hoon Lee, “Understanding of Stackhouse about Public Theology,” 34.

\textsuperscript{165} Stackhouse, “Why Christianity is Good for the Public” in \textit{What is Public Theology}? 35.
Theological interpretations of globalization are uncommon in the KPCC, but it is nevertheless crucial to understand this term and its associated phenomena in order to fully understand the context in which we live. The specific terms, ‘globalization, globalize, and globalizing,’ have been widely used only since the 1960s. According to Malcolm Waters’ definition, globalization means as “a social process in which the constraints of geography on economic, political, social and cultural arrangements recede, in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding and in which people act accordingly.”

Also, Roland Robertson states that globalization is “a concept that refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole . . . both concrete global interdependence and consciousness of the global whole.”

Globalization is the process of compressing the geographical distance of the world through the development of transportation, the availability of information on the internet, and communications technology. Through these scientific developments, the barriers of time and space have collapsed in culture, economy and politics across the global world.

Stackhouse maintains that people’s expectations of the role of theology are shifting in the radically changing era of globalization. They, especially Christians, expect theology and the church to provide the changed lens through which to interpret questions about various phenomena around the world, and they want proper answers from the church to apply in their own lives. Christian views about the world have changed accordingly, compared with previous


eras, and the church needs to continually review changing social and global situations. Using reflection and common sense, Stackhouse tries to interpret cultural, economic, political, and other phenomena in this global world. As a scholar of theological ethics, he interprets public theology as an ethical principle that Christians should understand and live by.

There are several reasons why Stackhouse believes Christians should focus on and be involved in dealing with the effects that the global world produces. Scientific technologies provide the most active economic exchanges around the world. This economic globalization has led to radical global capitalism centered on the power of western capital and has synthesized economic markets around the world. Gigantic companies such as McDonalds, Nike, Coca Cola, IBM and Microsoft are dominating world finance and world markets. Most labourers in third world countries work for the wealthy western capitalists.168

Politically, globalization causes a decline in the power of the individual nation or state, as in the age of the cold war, and instead causes an expansion of international organizations that handle various global issues such as the ecosystem, pollution, trade, military and human rights. In particular, issues of human rights and eco-pollution are no longer just a burden in certain countries, but are common burdens for the global world. However, political globalization is also dominant in some countries.169 Civil wars and suppression of human rights in some countries have become global issues because of national organizations and NGOs.


Stackhouse cites Malcolm Waters’ description of the characteristics of globalization in a consumer culture: “Consumption becomes the main form of self-expression and the chief source of identity. It implies that both material and non-material items, including kinship, affection, art, and intellect become commodified, that is their value is assessed by the context of their exchange, rather than the context of their production or use.”

Consumable trends, the expansion of lifestyles, and globalized media in the world explain the homogenization of the global world, and these phenomena have given rise to global terms such as ‘McDonaldization,’ ‘Cocaclonization,’ ‘Americanization.’ This cultural globalization is closely related to the mechanism of the capital-centred world and the cultural systems of first world countries that have naturally spread out to other countries as industrial cultures with capital. Cultural globalization is also closely related to the expansion of rationalization in industry. The first world recognizes rationalization as the most effective means of development in the global world: rationalization of the techniques for manufacturing goods, of administrative skills for supervising workers, and of marketing methods for selling effectively. Through cultural tools such as the internet, movies, fashion and music, cultural globalization has become representative of life in the 21st century.

Even though globalization brings homogenization and universality to the world, it also creates extreme cultural, political, and economic imbalances of power. Neo-imperialism and capitalism have all spread out of the globalizing nations and the imbalance of capital power. The colonial period brought on by capitalism has created global concerns such as the uneven distribution of

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170 Waters, *Globalization*, 140.


wealth, unfairness of trade, destruction of the eco-environment, and issues of human rights. The unique cultural, historical and political characteristics and values of each location, especially third world countries, are also radically disappearing.

Based on an understanding of globalization and its accompanying darkness, Stackhouse argues that theology should provide the church and Christians with a lens through which to interpret the global situation to this present world. His view thus provides the wisdom that will enable the KPCC to deepen the theological principles governing its Christian education, and to widen its curriculum from a focus on individuals to that of a globalized society.

2.4. Globalization and Stewardship

Stackhouse links his insistence on the responsibility of Christians in the context of globalization to his understanding of stewardship.\textsuperscript{173} The concept of stewardship is of particular relevance to the KPCC because it is based on accepting responsibility to promote the common good. This notion of stewardship is based on Stackhouse’s understanding that Christians, being created in the image of the Trinitarian God, have a commission not only over the world, but also to build a just, fair and peaceful world. His approach to stewardship leads Christians not only to widen their recognition of global responsibility, but also to deepen their vocation as part of their commission from God. In Stackhouse’s opinion, the concept of stewardship is important for reviewing social phenomena. Stackhouse states that each individual and group have their own

\textsuperscript{173} The term stewardship is often used in the Old Testament to explain the relationship between the master and servant. This word indicates the responsibility of a servant who has charge of his master’s household. The word is also used with the meaning of ‘treasurer.’ In the New Testament it is used to mean ‘faithful and wise steward or servant.’ The apostle Paul refers to himself figuratively as a steward. Katharine Sakenfeld, ed. \textit{The New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible}, Vol. 5 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2009), 379; and Geoffrey Bromiley, ed. \textit{The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia} (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), 617-618.
vocation given by God. He says that all Christians are created “in the image of God and that each of us has a role to play in fulfilling God’s purpose.” Individuals and groups exist to achieve the fulfillment of God’s will toward the world. This vocation to fulfill the purposes of God is the essential reason that people live in this world. According to Stackhouse, vocation is not only relevant for Christians, but for all people in the world, because all people are created in the image of God, so all people have vocations:

Each one must ask, ‘why do we exist as a community?’ Schools and colleges, courts of law and hospitals, art museums and research institutes, manufacturing corporations and labor unions, churches and legislatures—all have distinctive vocations. They are called to fulfill certain functions of and for humanity, and they must do so with excellence and clarity of purpose, or they are subject to either critique and transformation or destruction.

The traditional Christian view of occupation is that each person has an occupation that has been given to them by God because of God’s goodwill. In this sense, all occupations are valuable, since each person’s occupation is God’s purpose for them. He connects this idea of vocation to the common good, because the purpose of vocation is to contribute to the common good of the world. In his view, the common good is whatever “contributes to the upbuilding of the whole community.”

Based on this understanding, Stackhouse deals with issues that are rapidly arising in the global world. In particular, he thinks that society is influenced by religion in terms of cultural and economic developments, and that religious characteristics and theological emphases in society

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176 John Calvin, *Commentary of 1 Cor. 7:20* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1948).
promote or oppress the direction of economic development. Religion also affects the protection of and emphasis on human rights, and the formation of pluralistically democratic social systems.\footnote{Max Stackhouse and Lawrence Stratton, \textit{Capitalism, Civil Society, Religion, and the Poor: A Bibliographical Essay} (Wilmington, Delaware: Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 2002), 24.} He points out that a strong emphasis on fairness, transparency, and accountability is a precondition for health and balanced economic development, and that the maintenance of a just, peaceful, and fair society is based on moral characteristics.\footnote{Max Stackhouse and Lawrence Stratton, \textit{Capitalism, Civil Society, Religion, and the Poor: A Bibliographical Essay}, 4-8; Max Stackhouse, “The Moral Roots of the Common Life in a Global Era,” \textit{The Expository Times}, 157-161.} In order to understand these social and economic contexts, he focuses on the relationship between religion, thought and culture in social history.

In Stackhouse’s understanding, Christians need to overcome the temptation to keep Christian faith in the church. Instead he states that Christian faith and belief need to go to the public, because the church itself exists in the public arena. Further, because the public arena is also the realm of God’s sovereignty, the church and Christians need to strive to contribute to the public. Stackhouse seeks that Christians should become global Christians in the 21st century. This is based on his understanding of the responsibility of Christians in the present time, his understanding of what the mature Christian is, and what constitutes the evidence of a Christian’s spirituality. Zachau mentions that “the people participate in the gift of God’s power, so it is our duty to make these talents fruitful in our lives-for ourselves and for others, and therefore also for the commonweal….The God-given participation in Godself must prove to be good through active work for the common good in the world.” The global Christian life means not only the
intentional point of the church, but also the fulfillment of the church beyond ‘denominational, generational, and geographical distinctions.’

3. Conclusion

While Moltmann and Stackhouse’s theological foundations and emphases have similarities and differences, they both demonstrate that theology needs to be public, and that the church actively needs to practice its beliefs as its vocation and responsibility.

Moltmann is interested in various issues based on his understanding of the darkness of modernity, and he approaches public theology through political methods because of his experiences in his own country, a country that inflicted terrible suffering upon the world. From within this context, Moltmann focuses on Trinitarian theology and ecclesiology as the foundation of his public theology. In his view, misunderstandings about these areas of theology lie behind much worldly tragedy, and in the 21st century, the church needs to understand these theologies properly, in order to move beyond the darkness of modernity.

In relation to its education, the KPCC needs to remember Moltmann’s emphasis that the mission of the church is “to transform the world in anticipation of its promised eschatological transformation by God. From this sense of theological task it is not merely to interpret but to change the world, to keep society on the move towards the coming kingdom.”

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180 It is obvious that modernity also brought great scientific achievement, but Moltmann and Stackhouse observed the reverse of the advantages of modernity.

should not remain within the personal realm for its educational goal and purpose, but should move toward the broader realm through an understanding of the vocation of the church. Also, the KPCC needs to practice its beliefs in society through an understanding of the loving nature of the Trinity. The KPCC is a social agent, and an image bearer of the social relationships that exist in the Trinity, and it thus needs to listen to the social voice, recognize its social responsibility, and practice this task in the present world. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the church to propose a model of Christian education that stems from a review of the approaches of these two theologians. These theological perspectives should become the foundation of Christian education, and education should produce its theology for practice.

Stackhouse concentrates more on phenomena arising during the period of globalization, especially the creation of economically imbalanced systems. He approaches public theology broadly, saying that a Christian community is not a secret group or a privileged class, and that Christian doctrine is not made up of irrational or untouchable theories. In this sense, the KPCC needs to share the Christian story with others through its education, including humanists and those with different ideologies, because Christian community exists alongside other communities in the public arena of Korean society, and all people are under the sovereignty of God. Furthermore, the KPCC should recognize that theology thus functions with a public role, and Christians need to embody this more positively, by actively participating in social movements and legislation. This is the responsibility not only of Christians, but of all human beings, since all are created in the image of God. It has also become increasingly obvious that there is a growing

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need for Korean Christians and Korean theology to reflect critically on globalization and its impact on Korean society and global world.¹⁸³

Two criticisms can be made of the theologians that are the focus of this chapter. First, though both make observations about the darkness of modernity in order to argue for the necessity of public theology, it is not easy to find reflections about their own nations in their writings. Germany and the United States have caused suffering through their political and economic invasions of third world countries in modern times. This minimal mention of their own countries’ violence can be criticized. Second, while both theologians provide insightful theological principles that the KPCC can utilize, not only for building healthy communication with the society, but also for fulfilling its social responsibility, these theological proposals are largely theoretical, and lack detailed methods for practice. Furthermore, the contexts of Germany, the United States, and Korea are different. Thus the KPCC is required to interpret these two scholars’ views into the Korean context, necessitating a struggle before it will be possible to find a way to create practical educational methods built upon these theological foundations.

The next task is to explore the educational approach: how does this emphasis on public theology apply to church education in the KPCC? In the following chapter, the views on Christian education of John Dewey, George Albert Coe, and Thomas Groome in North America in the 19th and 20th centuries will be studied, in order to find ways to wrestle this issue from theology into practice.

CHAPTER 3

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC SOCIETY IN THE 20TH CENTURY

Based on the theological foundations suggested in Chapter 2, the KPCC needs to research the historical effects of its Christian education on its relationship with society. As part of this process, the KPCC can consider how North American educators have dealt with social change and social issues from a Christian perspective. This is especially relevant because Korean social systems and Korean Protestant theology have both been influenced greatly by movements in North America. Thus researching the educational struggles of American scholars will prove useful for the KPCC in obtaining wisdom for the renewal of its educational systems.

Therefore, this chapter explores the approach to Christian education for society that was practiced in the 20th century North America. The focus is on three educators—John Dewey, George Albert Coe, and Thomas Groome. The chapter looks in particular at how these theorists tackled two educational issues: the responsibility of the church and Christian education for public society, and the goals of education. Dewey, Coe, and Groome all considered that the purpose of Christian education was to benefit society. Their approach to promoting dialogue, healthy relationships, and cooperation between the faith community and the society as the theme of Christian education, which is in turn based on an understanding of the democracy of God and God’s reign as the embodiment of the Kingdom of God, will remind the KPCC of the theological

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184 John Dewey is known as a philosopher and educationalist. Even though he seemed to provide an educational theory for public education and thus influenced the sphere of public education, his educational theory is in fact strongly based on his religious understanding, experiences, and thought. He was particularly interested in the theological meaning of the Kingdom of God, and his educational theory is closely related to its embodiment in the educational sphere and in the present world. For this reason, it is necessary to study Dewey’s educational theory in order to explore the relation between Christian education and society and ultimately to re-establish the goal of Christian education in the KPCC.
foundation of its educational practice, and encourage it to rethink the goal of education in relation to its social relationships.

Christian education aimed at a better society has long been a preoccupation of the church, especially since the 18th century. The Sunday School movement in the 18th century is one example of a work conducted by the church for people in society. While the Sunday School movement is presumed to have started around the 16th century, in fact it had its practical beginnings in 18th-century England. The Sunday School firstly served children of migrants and of poor families to equip them to become good citizens of society. This movement represented the church recognizing its responsibility for society, and was part of the process of building a healthy relationship between church and society.¹⁸⁵

First is educational theory from the 20th century and under review is John Dewey’s understanding of the relation between education and society; an understanding based on his view of democracy as the embodiment of the Kingdom of God. Second is George Albert Coe’s view that the goal of education is the transformation of society. Third is Thomas Groome’s observation about the dialogue between the faith community and the wider society, as both seek to share their stories and visions as part of an educational process.

1. John Dewey: Education for Democracy

As an educator and a progressive philosopher in pragmatism, John Dewey (1859-1952) insisted that democracy is the fundamental purpose of education. While he apparently used a political approach to demonstrate the goal of education, his understanding of democracy, which goes beyond the political meaning of the word, has nevertheless influenced not only the educational environment in schools, but also Christian education in the church. This is because his perspective provided insight that helped the church to re-establish the purpose of its Christian education. In a review of his childhood, Dewey indicated that his own congregational experience was that of the ideal communal family and church life. This experience became one of the sources of his desire for authentic communal living and was a desire he developed through his philosophy. He thought of democracy as the embodiment of the Kingdom of God, based on his yearning for an ideal communal life with others, and theological reflections about his early religious experiences of family and church.

Dewey’s educational theory is related to the social composition of American society. American society, in his time, was in a situation of accelerated industrial development. The nation was focused on economic advances, but concerns for society also appeared as a result of the darkness of the accompanying social development, especially after the national suffering caused by the Great Depression in the 1930s. In particular, the wealthy American society produced radical

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186 As Coe understands it, Dewey was aware of the serious social situation in North America in the middle of the 20th century. An ethical emphasis was needed to balance the dehumanization caused by industrial and capital development. There were strong voices from the public about direct participation in governmental action to build fairness and equal rights. These phenomena were led by pragmatism and progressively scientific development. Coe, A Social Theory of Religious Education (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1917), 25-30.

industrialism based on capitalism, resulting in a loss of people’s humanity after 1950. In this section I explore Dewey’s understanding of democracy, based on his theological and educational views.

1.1. Religious Understanding of Democracy

Dewey’s understanding of democracy was based on his religious understanding of the relation between the individual, God, and the universe. He also believed democratic life was related to ethical life. In his book Psychology, he explained that religious faith makes people change their lifestyles, and that the moral behaviors of people are the reflection of their religious faith. Because the goal of religion, and especially of Christianity, is to make a mystical connection between the individual self and God as the self of the universe, religious vitality is developed and practiced in communal life through this integrated process. When Dewey published The Ethics of Democracy, he groped for a harmony between the gospel of Christianity and life in a democratic society, in order to build his own theory of democracy. His thoughts on democracy consist of reflections about God’s incarnation, the revelation of truth, and the Kingdom of God.

Democracy . . . appears as the means by which the revelation of truth is carried on. It is in democracy . . . that the incarnation of God in man becomes a living, present thing, having

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188 Sook Jong Lee, “A Study of The Viewpoint of Faith and Democratic Ideas of John Dewey,” paper presented at the annual meeting of KSCEIT, Seoul, South Korea, May 20, 2000, 72-73; and Bruce Kulick, Churchmen and Philosophers: From Jonathan Edwards to John Dewey (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1985). Dewey’s educational theory was re-evaluated after the 1950s. American society struggled to overcome the economic difficulties of the 1930s-1940s, and met an economic boom and industrial development from the 1950s. The darkness of social development with its accompanying dehumanized labor environment and reduced human dignity was extreme in the 1950s. Thus Dewey’s educational theory, especially his democratic approach to education, was revived by educators.

189 John Dewey, Psychology (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1887); and Steven Rockefeller, John Dewey: Religious Faith and Democratic Humanism, 76.

its ordinary and natural sense. This truth is brought down to life; its segregation removed; it is made a common truth enacted in all departments of action, not in one isolated sphere called religious.\(^{191}\)

The theology of the incarnation is the key to Dewey’s thoughts on democracy. The incarnation of God is the revelation of truth in all actions, and is not limited only to church life. In Dewey’s understanding, Jesus as the incarnated God is a reconciler between human beings and God, and Christ should thus be a subject not only in the church, but also in the universe. Individuals pursue the common good through their union with Jesus Christ, and are freed from sinfulness to pursue their union with the universal God. The religious relationship between God and individuals is realized in social life, and the religious and social life of an individual is not separated.\(^{192}\) This communal life and relationship between the incarnated God and people is for Dewey the prototype of democracy.

According to Dewey, the purpose of theology is to create a world with advanced technology and economy, through the ideal freedom of the human being and the perfection of morality. This is the vocation of the church and the function of theology. Dewey thought of this perfect world as the Kingdom of God. All human beings that are in relationship with God generate new ideals for building a new community in the present world as they work to reveal the Kingdom of God.\(^{193}\) Dewey recognized that the morality and equality of human beings in the Kingdom of God should be higher than that of the present world. He sought to establish the embodiment of the Kingdom of God through the work of human hands. However, Dewey’s view about the ability to build a


\(^{192}\) Dewey, “Christianity and Democracy,” 35.

democratic community as the realized Kingdom of God seems optimistic, because his view does not fully account for “men’s inclination to injustice.” He stated that, “democracy is a way of personal life controlled not merely by faith in human nature in general but by faith in the capacity of human beings for intelligent judgment and action if proper conditions are furnished.” 194 This quote shows that Dewey focused on the function of intelligence in religious faith and for building the democratic community.

Dewey’s education for democratic society was seen as radically progressive in North America in the middle of the 1900s. He seemed to be seeking to build a communist society, for his image of democratic society was similar to the image of communism. However, he had penetrated the limitations of industrialism, which was based on capitalism and individualism in the United States, and he was also against the dehumanization caused by the development of society through science, economy, culture, and art. While these elements contributed to the development of society, they nevertheless produced barriers between people, and created social gaps between members. In this sense, education for democratic society reflected his desire to build society as the embodiment of the Kingdom of God as a place of perfect peace, fairness, and justice.

1.2. Education for Democratic Society

For Dewey, the ultimate goal of education is found in its relation with the democratic society. Individuals are educated first in the schools, but they are educated in society for a longer time. Furthermore, education is influenced by the social situation. The social environment is thus important as it is the place where people learn and practice democracy. By the same token, it is

194 Dewey, “Christianity and Democracy,” 243-244.
democratic society that is capable of providing a proper educational environment for learners.

In “My Pedagogic Creed: 1897,” Dewey demonstrated that education should consider two important components: individuals and the society. In his view, the individual is a social individual, and the society is made up of the unity of individuals. In education, psychological elements and the activities of the mind of the individual are pivotal, and these are based on the social situation. In this sense, the school has a social character, and students should experience and learn the authentic model of democratic living in the school environment. Participatory community with people’s communal experiences is more actively democratic than politically democratic, and the school should provide democracy as an actual lifestyle rather than democracy as an institution, because those who experience democratic education are then able to embody democracy in society.

In his book, *Democracy and Education*, Dewey stated there were two elements necessary to sustain democracy in society. The first element signifies “not only more numerous and more varied points of shared common interest, but greater reliance upon the recognition of mutual interests as a factor in social control.” The second element is “not only freer interaction between social groups (once isolated so far as intention could keep up a separation) but change in social habit—its continuous readjustment through meeting the new situations produced by varied intercourse. And these two traits are precisely what characterize the democratically constituted

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society.”197 The society that perfectly includes these two elements is a good society. Further, “[a] democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living.”198 This society is not based on political democracy, but is based on democracy as the lifestyle of people in the ordinary world.

For building this society, Dewey explained that the role of education is to provide equal opportunities to all people to participate communally in various activities and experiences, because the unequal opportunities in education create divided social classes with some people in society becoming masters, and others becoming slaves.199 Practically speaking, Dewey worked to help the helpless and poor in order to encourage them, and he thought that a further educational duty was helping the rich to understand the poor, and share life together. That all people should achieve the wisdom to live together was an important educational matter for him.200 In this sense, the meaning of democracy in society can be summarized as the communal participation and experience of all people regardless of social class. The meaning of a democratic society is that the barriers that divide people because of differences in education, economy, and experience can fall, allowing all people to participate in valuable activities for the society, and to experience valuable enjoyment for themselves.


Dewey’s thoughts about democracy are an ideal of ethics based on the individual’s yearning as an image bearer of God, and are not concerned simply with a form of government. “The idea of democracy, the ideas of liberty, equality, and fraternity, represent a society in which the distinction between the spiritual and the secular has ceased as in the Christian theory of the Kingdom of God, the church and the state, the divine and the human organization of society are one.” In Dewey’s view, education is the process that connects religious belief and relationship with God in order to build a democratic community.

2. George Albert Coe: Christian Education for the Democracy of God

As one of the pioneers constructing Christian religious education theory, George Albert Coe (1862-1951) sought to integrate the advanced scientific method with his educational theory. Coe turned the purpose of Christian education from nurturing individual Christians in the faith community to Christians living as healthy citizens in the society, and as image bearers of God. Furthermore, Coe lived during the same period as John Dewey, and Dewey’s educational theory was one of his resources.

2.1. New Approach to Christian Education

Coe’s understanding of Christian education in the church was closely related to the social context of his time. Christian church education had traditionally focused on promoting a personal conversion and devotion to church activities. However, Coe sought to respond to the challenges

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of modernity by paying attention to a new function of Christian education—a social transformation that went beyond its traditional purpose.\(^{203}\)

In Coe’s time, science had developed fast, and the lifestyles of people were also becoming more convenient. People were more in touch with scientific development in their ordinary lives than before, and social scientific studies were advancing along with the development of the society. The late 19th century to the early 20th century was a time of rapid development in the humanities and social sciences. The evolutionary theory of Charles Darwin and its derivative social Darwinism, the philosophy of humanism and pragmatism, industrial development, the progressive theology and the neo-orthodox theology of Karl Barth, were all developed during this time. Thus Christian educators were required to interpret a new context and to design new educational approaches.\(^{204}\) Even though the development of society in the early 20th century made people’s lives more convenient, it also created a challenge for the church to re-establish its perspective on Christian education.

Based on this changed social context, Coe argued that Christian education faced three challenges. The first challenge was concern about the epistemological question advanced science posed for the very existence of Christianity. The development of science provoked rational and scientific questions about the truth of religion. Thus, Christian education needed to respond to scientific

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\(^{203}\) George Albert Coe used the terms ‘religious education’ and ‘Christian education.’ This was because he tried to focus all church education that was known as Christian education towards school education with religious purpose. However, I will use the term, ‘Christian education’ in this chapter, because this chapter deals with the arena of the Christian community, and not school education. Even though Coe’s educational thought included two educational settings, his educational approaches began from his concern regarding the changing social setting.

questions about truth. The second challenge was the ethical challenge caused by political conflict over democracy, urbanization, and the industrial focus in society, because these developments caused dehumanization of the society. In the 20th century, various radical moral and social issues appeared, presenting social concerns that were different from previous times. The church needed to deal with these concerns using Christian messages. The third challenge was the development of the public school educational system. As a result of this development, Christian education, especially that of the church, became increasingly restricted to the religious institute of the church. Thus Christian education needed to establish a relationship with the broader society.

Based on these three challenges, Coe asked the following question in order to find an appropriate answer: “What consequences for religious education follow from the now widely accepted social interpretation of the Christian message?” In order to interpret the Christian message in society, the church needs to observe the social situation. Christian education in the church then needs to provide appropriate direction so that Christians might apply the Christian message in their lives. Coe thought that Christian education traditionally emphasized individualistic themes such as salvation from personal sins, personal justification and personal experience with God. He thought, however, that Christian education needed to approach not only individual issues in the church, but also social issues. Christian education needed to build a peaceful social order based on an understanding of the work of Jesus Christ in society and the vocation of the church.

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sought to deal with these social challenges in Christian education. To achieve this aim, he constructed a Christian educational theory that set out the structure, methodology, contents, and purpose of religious education in his book, *A Social Theory of Religious Education*. He stated that Christian education should be interpreted based on the social context and should be applied to social transformation.\(^{208}\)

2.2. Understanding of Education and Society

Based on his understanding of the changed social-scientific context of the 20th century, Coe believed that the relation between Christian education and society would be re-established as the practical sphere of education, because society was altering rapidly, with more new issues than before. He thought that Christian participation in society would be extended further than before, and that Christian education needed to expand its scale. To attain this increased participation, Coe studied closely the relation between individuals and society, because individuals are subjects of the society, and the society and individuals have mutual effects on each other. Christian education thus needs to consistently observe the relation between individuals and social situations, and their connectivity in the society.

In Coe’s understanding, the purpose of the relation between individuals and the society as a theme of Christian education is to build a healthy society. Ethics is thus an important theme in Christian education, especially when it comes to making a healthy society. Because the level of

\(^{208}\) George Albert Coe and John Dewey lived in the same transitional period of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, so their philosophical foundation of education and their understanding of democracy have some similarities, based on philosophy, social science, and a Christian-focused theological view of education. Progressivism in liberal theology and pragmatic philosophy gave Coe the impetus not only to think deeply about the existence of God and God’s immanence in present history, but also to utilize the scientific method in order to re-approach educational methodology and curricula.
ethics in the society determines the level of social health in that society, ethics should be one of the main themes in education.\textsuperscript{209} Coe thus recognized that social issues and changed social phenomena in society are important themes in Christian education, because Christians have faced these issues and need to interpret them through their Christian beliefs.

Coe highlighted four considerations relating to education for society. First, educators need to understand the social structures and various issues that have arisen in society, because “society is not merely one educator among many; it is the prime educator within all educational enterprises.”\textsuperscript{210} Second, the understanding of learners in education is essential in approaching his social educational theory. The mind of a child, or “the prophet of soul,” is developed by experience in education.\textsuperscript{211} Christian education is not just delivery of Christian doctrine and catechism, but the process of promoting the expansion of people’s abilities to contribute to the development of society. One of the purposes of education is to nurture the learner, especially a child, as a creative agent who will build a just society.\textsuperscript{212} Third, the social experience of learners is pivotal and must be included in the curriculum. One of the jobs of education is to support learners while they experience social realities and events, so education needs to have these matters included in the curriculum:

Social character and efficiency are to be achieved through social experience; social experience is to be had primarily through the performance of social functions, but it may be extended through imagination in the use of well-selected and well-graded subject-

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Coe, \textit{A Social Theory of Religious Education}, 14.}
\footnote{Coe, \textit{A Social Theory of Religious Education}, 27.}
\footnote{George A. Coe, \textit{What is Christian Education?} (New York: Scribner, 1929), 103-108.}
\end{footnotes}
matter that represents the social experience of the race; school experience is most effective educationally when the pupil experiences the least break between it and the life of the larger society.\textsuperscript{213}

Fourth, teachers are important in this education. Teachers need to lead learners into a well-rounded relationship with society through the curriculum, because learners can be developed through social experiences. Also, teachers lead learners to form good relationships with others in the society through “the divine-human democracy,” which means loving others and loving God.\textsuperscript{214} For Coe, teachers are not only the family and the church, but also the school instructors, and the society itself.\textsuperscript{215} As teachers, parents have the responsibility to take care of their children and equip them to understand their God-given vocation. Also, the family is the place to experience and practice democracy. As a teacher, the church helps learners meet God through worship and education in the church and recognize their social vocation toward others. As a teacher, the school provides the opportunity to practice democracy, and the responsibility of instructors as teachers is to encourage learners to experience the socialization process through the curriculum, based on the relationships between learners, learner and teacher, and learner and school. Finally, the society needs to provide freedom and justice as the basic right of human beings to promote democracy through the socialization process.\textsuperscript{216}

\textsuperscript{213} Coe, \textit{A Social Theory of Religious Education}, 24.


2.3. Educational Goal: Democracy of God

Coe captured a new progressive pedagogy and social interpretation of Christianity in order to develop an educational goal.\textsuperscript{217} He expressed this well in his famous book, \textit{A Social Theory of Religious Education}:

All the plans and methods of Christian education have now to be reorganized with reference to these social relations and experiences. A new measure is provided for the material that goes into the curriculum of instruction. Organizations that undertake to educate, whether the family or the church, meet a different test from that which has been traditional. Theological and ecclesiastical types take on new meaning, and they encounter demands that they have not always foreseen. The educational relations between state and church, likewise, have a different look when we approach them from the standpoint of a thoroughly socialized religion.\textsuperscript{218}

Coe analyzed the goal of education in the church at that time. He utilized advanced scientific tools to analyze the traditional themes of education in the church. Also, he inquired about the suitability of advanced scientific tools applied in the place of education in order to enact the changed goal of education. For Coe, the church should recognize the changed social environment, and modify its focus and goal accordingly.

The goal of education is for society, using the term ‘Democracy of God’ instead of Kingdom of God, “not because I desire to substitute a new social principle for that which Jesus taught, but because the idea of democracy is essential to full appreciation of his teaching.”\textsuperscript{219} For Coe, the

\textsuperscript{217} Albert Coe used the term ‘religious education’ in his writings, but because his wording included the Christian story, and because he seemed to use this term to distinguish it from the traditional meaning of Christian education, this term became associated more with the public concept of Christian education. Coe insisted that religious education is not a part of general education, but is general education. It is not public education. Public education is separate from general education. General education is originality in education. Albert Coe, “Religious Education as A Part of General Education,” \textit{Proceedings of the First Convention} (Chicago, IL: REA, 1903), 36. http://old.religiouseducation.net/journal/historical/Coe.pdf (accessed December 14, 2012); and Talbot School of Theology, http://www2.talbot.edu/ce20/educators/view.cfm?n=george_coe (accessed December 17, 2012).

\textsuperscript{218} Coe, \textit{A Social Theory of Religious Education}, vii-viii.

\textsuperscript{219} Coe, \textit{A Social Theory of Religious Education}, 54.
term ‘democracy of God’ indicates a practical reality of the Kingdom of God, embodied in the world. Coe interpreted the relationship between God and human beings based on an understanding of God as transcendent yet also immanent in human history. Coe preferred the metaphor “democracy” over that of “kingdom” because he saw the ethical teachings of Jesus not as abstractions, but as something that could be realized in very practical and specific ways within the social experience of persons. The education experience seeks not only to address social reform, but serves at the same time to create living examples that can be replicated by the larger society. In terms of this understanding, Coe thought that even though human beings are fallen, they can grow through relationship with God, and this unified loving relationship will lead them to form loving relationships with others in the society. This process of developing relationships is also expressed in education between teachers and students, and between learning and knowing as the process of socialization.\textsuperscript{220} Thus the reconciled relationship between the human being and God leads people to the potential and possibility of constructing God’s Kingdom in the places where human beings live.

Coe understood the term ‘democracy’ from the perspective of Christian education. In his view, education by the church should nurture Christians to recognize their social vocation and practice this in order to embody the democracy of God in the present world. In his view, God is immanent in this world, and God continuously works in human lives to achieve His purpose. God works for human beings and the world through His democratic method. Thus, education in the church should recognize this work of God and should perform God’s will as democracy through education. In addition, the democracy of God goes beyond the political meaning of the word

\textsuperscript{220} Coe, \textit{What is Christian Education?}, 94; and \textit{A Social Theory of Religious Education}, 34-35.
democracy. The democracy of God includes democratization in all areas of human life, not only the political, but also economic, cultural, and personal. Education in the church should thus seek the democracy of God as the purpose of Christian education. Coe calls this the ‘Democracy of God.’ Coe’s understanding of the relationship between society and education is revealed in Allen Moore’s statement:

The function of religious education is to create the kinds of social groupings that can expand into a new democratic order. The goal is to manifest the kind of cooperative living that would model what society could become. Even as society shapes the person, the educational experience moves always toward what Coe called ‘the democracy of God.’

Coe’s understanding of the democracy of God is a model of education that he proposed as the goal of education in the church toward the present world.

In sum, Coe promoted active participation in social transformation through Christian religious education in America in the early 20th century. The democracy of God as the goal of Christian education for society does not remain a notion, it is an action. This understanding is based on his view of spirituality, since the law of love is understood as spirituality. “Love to God and love to fellow-men-this is the universally attainable in religious experience.” He explained further that “the verb translated ‘love’ does not mean ‘be fond of,’ does not designate primarily a state of feeling, but a state of will, and attitude of mind.” He gave in support the example of St.

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Francis of Assisi, a person who loved people through his communion with God. He emphasized that Christians should witness based on the biblical teaching to ‘love God and love others,’ and should go beyond seeking individual blessing.\textsuperscript{225}

3. Thomas Groome: Shared Praxis for Public Society

Thomas Groome saw society as the place where Christian education shares its vision and story. While George Albert Coe and John Dewey expressed their educational visions using socio-scientific and political images and emphases, Groome concentrated on the tension between the faith community and public society. He emphasized interpretation and application of the biblical story in light of the real lives of Christians in society through critical reflection based on hermeneutical and philosophical foundations. Groome developed the idea of ‘shared praxis,’ in which he tried to expand the Christian story and vision to include the story and vision of society through the dialogue between the two. The reign of God was a particularly central understanding in the unfolding of his educational theory and in achieving the goal of Christian religious education.

3.1. Dialogue between the Christian Story and Stories of the Society

Observing the lack of communication between the faith community, namely the church, and public society, Groome promoted a better relationship through a socializing process that revolved around a dialogue between the two.\textsuperscript{226} Even though he recognized the necessity and importance

\textsuperscript{225}Coeb, The spiritual life, 209, 214.
of the socialization process, and the social purpose in Christian education as reflected in the perspectives of Coe and Dewey, he found disadvantages in socialization-centered Christian education. Groome identified the limitation of the socialization model in the faith community as follows:

The intentional activity of education is understood as no more than another agency of socialization and called only to socialize more effectively. In fact, Christian religious education that settles for being no more than an agency of socialization will be counterproductive to its true purpose. This is so because neither the dialectical relationship which arises inevitably between a Christian community and its surrounding social/cultural environment, nor the inevitable dialectic that exists between the community of faith and its individual members, are sufficient of themselves, in either quantity or quality, to promote maturity of Christian faith lived with human freedom in response to the Kingdom of God.\footnote{Groome, \textit{Christian Religious Education}, 122.}

In pointing out the limitations of the socializing process in Christian education, first Groome held that the Christian community must reflect the broader society, and it must also be reflected by that society. Through this communication process, a dialectical relationship between Christian community and public society leads to advancement. Second, the visible church should be continuously reformed through the dialectical tension and relationship between the faith community and its members and also with the society. However, he said that Christian education centered on the model of socialization has a hard time filling traditional roles such as \textit{Kerygma}, \textit{Koinonia}, and \textit{Diakonia}. This means that well-balanced dialogue is necessary to produce better fruits in the dialogue process. Thirdly, Groome insisted that the socializing process cannot provide enough resources to help people into spiritual growth, because while this process may lead people to a highly qualified morality, this moral maturity does not qualify them for the Kingdom of God. This means that social activity or the social responsibility of Christians does
not guarantee spiritual growth.\textsuperscript{228}

Groome emphasized that the Story and Vision of the Christian tradition must be shared with public society, because the Christian Story and Vision are not limited to the faith community as materials of education. In the existential tension between the faith community and public society, their dialogue can produce a healthy maturity. In this dialogue, people reflect critically on their own historical work and on socio-cultural phenomena based on their views of Vision and vision, and story and Story, by sharing and reflecting on their stories in a process of dialectical hermeneutics.\textsuperscript{229} Through this process, the lives of people are practically grounded in the reign of God as the creative place where they can participate in dialogical education.

3.2. The Reign of God as the Goal of Christian Religious Education

Groome used the term ‘reign of God’ instead of ‘Kingdom of God’ and ‘democracy of God’ that Coe and Dewey used.\textsuperscript{230} Groome argued that the term Kingdom of God emphasizes God’s sovereignty being worked out in this world with the cooperation of God’s people. However, the theological term, ‘the reign of God,’ provides the hermeneutical principle which educators need to teach in the Christian tradition. In fact, the theological concept of ‘the Kingdom of God’ has revealed its limitation in the changing world, and this term has been modified to incorporate the

\textsuperscript{228} Groome, \textit{Christian Religious Education}, 124-125.

\textsuperscript{229} Thomas Groome, “A Shared Praxis Model for Bible Study,” \textit{Review and Expositor}, 107 (Spring 2010), 177-178.

theological meaning of ‘the reign of God.’ This revised term shows that the work of God is more active and inclusive.

The reign of God is the key to Groome’s educational theory. Groome emphasized the relationship between God and the human being, and stressed that this relationship connects to the relationship between the human being and the world. He stated that “first, by using reign of God it seems possible to retrieve the symbol as inclusive and active rather than as an exclusive and static place. Second, rather than interpreting it to represent an arbitrary ‘will’ of God that is imperialistically imposed in all, regardless of human cooperation, reign of God must be interpreted within its scriptural meaning of God’s covenantal relationship with humankind.”

Based on this understanding, Groome provides ten definitions to explain the term reign of God. It is worth reproducing some of these in full:

First, reign of God is a symbol of God’s sovereignty over all creation and history, heaven and earth, now and always. It reflects the faith that God is the only God who is reign in people’s live. Second, reign of God evokes both God’s intentions for and God’s activity in history; it symbolizes God’s intentions of peace and justice, love and freedom, wholeness and fullness of life, and for the well-being of creation (shalom), and it symbolizes that God is active in partnership with human agency to effect these universal intentions. […] Seven… His disciples are to do God’s will on earth as it is done in heaven by following Jesus’ way of life and living in right relationship with God, others, selves, and all creation. As in the Hebrew Scriptures, the reign of God in Jesus is a symbol of both hope and command, promise and responsibility. Eight, the reign of God has profound meaning for us, personally an interpersonally. Personally it is realized in authentic love and care for the self; it is marked by inner peace, realization of one’s dignity and worth, recognition and development of one’s gifts, by a sense of hope and joy in life, a satisfying of what one needs, physically, socially, and aesthetically for wholeness of life. Interpersonally, the reign of God calls

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231 Groome, Sharing Faith, 14-15.


233 Groome, Sharing Faith, 15.
people to a lifelong conversion of deepening relationship with God and of turning toward their neighbor with all that love requires (justice, peace, respect).

Nine, in the social/political realm, the reign of God means that Christians and their faith communities should publicly reflect its realization in their lives and ecclesial structures and participate as a “public church” in society that helps effect its eminently social values of life for all.\(^\text{234}\)

Based on these definitions, Groome stated that Christian education is intended to nurture Christians to recognize their responsibility to live in relationship with God, self, others, and with God’s created world, in order to bring peace, justice, love and freedom to this world. Furthermore, Christians should participate in society as the public church.

### 3.3. Educational Method: Shared Christian Practice

In Groome’s theory, educational method is for creating a healthy dialogue between the Christian story and stories in the society, and also between the Christian vision and visions in the society. This method promotes a just, fair, and peaceful society based on his theological understanding of the reign of God. He names his educational process as ‘shared Christian praxis’.

Groome stated that the educational process is based on an understanding of ‘faith as believing,’ ‘faith as trusting, and ‘faith as doing.’\(^\text{235}\) He emphasized that Christian faith should be practiced in the relationship between individuals, and between individuals and the society. This dialogue between the faith community and society should promote, through education, the responsibility to build justice. Justice has three aspects for Groome: first there is commutative justice which “demands honesty and fairness in all exchanges between individuals or private groups”; then

\(^{234}\) Groome, *Sharing Faith*, 16-17.

there is distributive justice that “requires society to insure that its social goods—culture, economic wealth, and political power—are fairly distributed”; and finally, there is social justice that “pertains to the responsibility of society to create structures that protect the dignity of all and allow each member to participate according to needs, talents, and choices.” Based on this three-fold understanding of justice, Groome revealed the theological foundation of Christian education as “the reign of God, for lived Christian faith, and for the wholeness of human freedom.”

Groome provided an educational method for bringing about the goals of justice, freedom and the reign of God, and this method he called “shared Christian praxis.” The shared praxis model accomplishes its purposes through hermeneutical interpretation, critical reflection, and creative dialogue, based on an understanding of God’s reign in a multicultural and plural world. The method is based on Groome’s understanding of the term ‘praxis,’ which he derives from Aristotle. Following Aristotle, Groome suggests praxis has three functions: the active, the reflective, and the creative. The active aspect of praxis includes “all the corporeal, mental, and volitional activities by which we intentionally realize ourselves as agent-subjects in place and time. It is the present action.” Shared Christian praxis is based on an epistemological approach with rational, emotional, and experiential reflection through critical thought and creative dialogue.


Shared Christian praxis is thus presented as a means of overcoming the conflict between a model that employs the biblical text and related homiletics as the foundation of education on the one hand, and one that focuses on the real lives of people on the other. Shared Christian praxis involves both elements. It starts with the various lived experiences of the students or participants, then moves into a reflection or interpretation of, what has been seen, heard and felt. This reflection is based on a biblical hermeneutic. The fruit of this critical reflection is then change in the behavior and lifestyle of the learner. Groome defined this as: “a participative and dialogical pedagogy in which people reflect critically on their own historical agency in time and place and on their socio-cultural reality, have access together to Christian Story and Vision, and personally appropriate it in community with the creative intent of renewed praxis in Christian faith toward God’s reign for all creation.”

Groome proposed that dialogue is the main tool behind shared Christian praxis, in that it connects the biblical stories/Christian traditions and our own living stories. Far better than the cramming delivery of Christian stories imposed by instructors, dialogue leads participants to absorb the stories and helps them relate them to their own stories, so the two can communicate continually. In shared Christian praxis, two kinds of dialogue exist. One dialogical method is the dialogue with self, because this is essential for deeply critical and creative reflection. Then there is dialogue with other participants which is essential for exploring the relationship between our own stories and the Christian stories, in order to move towards becoming sound individuals and communities. Groome insisted that dialogue is also pivotal for encouraging a community

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spirit between the instructor and students as participants. Dialogue with the self and with others in sharing Christian stories and our own stories in the present praxis is very important, and dialogue is also essential for sharing Vision and vision, because Christian Vision is the process that all participants personally struggle with. Through this educational approach, Groome tries to connect the Christian stories and the social stories of the present.

In conclusion, Groome interprets the relation between the faith community and society based on his emphasis on the reign of God. The reign of God is at the center of his educational theory. He embraces not only the traditional goal of Christian education, (enhancing personal relationship with God), but also promotes actual practice through a dialogue between the biblical stories and the present-day stories in the society.

4. Conclusion

In this chapter, I explored three representative educators who have dealt with education for public society. As an educator and philosopher, John Dewey unfolded his educational theory based on the social context. He saw the purpose of education as that of embodying the Kingdom of God in the present world. Democracy as the goal of education means the reconciliation of this present world with justice, peace, and fairness. Christians have the responsibility to attain this goal, and this is also the goal of Christian education. After accepting Dewey’s understanding, Coe sought to emphasize that the faith community and the society have a unified educational goal. Coe’s educational theory allows Christian education in the church to take the lead in the transformation of society. Coe understood the democracy of God as the goal and the vocation of

Christians and the church. Thomas Groome, with his emphasis on Christian education for the reign of God, focuses on the mutual dialogue between the Christian story and our stories in the present world.

From public educator Dewey, who had a deep understanding of Christian thought, from religious educator Coe, who tried to find the purpose of religious education in society, and from Groome, who recognized the importance of a dialogue between the Christian story and society’s stories, the KPCC can receive wisdom for dealing with educational issues that arise between church and society. By studying these thinkers, KPCC is reminded of the appropriate theological foundation for ensuring the practice of Christian education aims at the embodiment of the Kingdom of God, the society where God reigns.

Along with these three educational approaches, I turn to an exploration of Parker Palmer’s educational theory in Chapters 4 and 5. As an educator who focuses on democracy as the political-theological metaphor for the Kingdom of God, Palmer understands deeply the public dimension of Christian education. For Palmer, the educational embodiment of the Kingdom of God is found in the tension between church and society. Here Groome’s contribution is helpful, functioning as a bridge between Palmer and Dewey and Coe. This is because Groome understands well the tension between faith community and society in the present age, and proposes an educational theory that results in a dialogue between them.

In the North America the 20th century, Parker Palmer’s education theory is closely related to the spirit of these two educators in following the theme of building a healthy society based on an
understanding of democracy as embodying the Kingdom of God. He also agrees with Groome’s idea that educational praxis is located between church and society. In addition, he focuses on the relationship between education and spirituality in order to establish his educational goal. Through his understanding of eastern religions, his grounding in the Christian tradition, and his reflection on the darkness of modernity, with its basis in capitalism and radical individualism, the KPCC—which is similarly situated in terms of its religious tradition and social context—is provided with a new approach to Christian education that will enable it to form a healthy relationship with society as part of its public dimension and thereby overcome its current crises.
CHAPTER 4
PARKER PALMER’S EDUCATION THEORY FOR PUBLIC SOCIETY

The aim of this chapter is to introduce Parker Palmer’s educational theory as an alternative approach to education in the KPCC. Palmer seeks to build an educational process for equipping Christians with a balanced spirituality in order that they might practice in society the love that originates from the image of God. Palmer understands that Christian education aims not only at nurturing Christians into disciples of Jesus Christ, but also at serving the society. In line with public theology, he considers the purpose of education as being for the society.

There are two reasons why Palmer’s educational theory is needed for Christian education in the KPCC. First, his educational approach was formed by integrating his own religious and academic background with Catholic, Quaker, and Asian religious traditions. His educational approach can thus show the KPCC how to build up a Christian educational stance in a pluralized religious setting. Second, his educational theory is based on deeply critical reflection about the American social context. He goes beyond the private purpose of education, and looks towards the problems of racial inequality, capitalized social pursuits by the political powers, and the increasing numbers broken by the social system.\textsuperscript{242} Even though the American context is not the same as the Korean context, Korean society faces similar crises caused by globalized and capitalized social systems.

\textsuperscript{242} Especially in Chapter 5, 7, and 8 in Healing the Heart of Democracy.
For this reason, Palmer’s educational theory can provide wisdom to the KPCC in understanding the nature of education and how to practice it in the public square of 21st century Korean society. His education theory thus offers a new model for the KPCC, aimed at building a healthy relationship with society and re-establishing its purpose in society. This model that Palmer proposes stems from love. Love resides in the deepest location of the heart of the human being, a being created in the image of God. Palmer understands that the purpose of education is thus to practice love for others in the society.

This chapter has two parts. First, the religious and academic foundation of Palmer’s educational theory will be studied in light of his religious background, a background that includes influences from Quakerism, Thomas Merton, and the Protestant Christian tradition. His own life and religious experiences provided the motivation for his educational theory. Second, Palmer’s educational theory itself will be introduced, serving as a frame for the vocation of education in society. This exploration includes an understanding of education: its nature and its goal.

1. Life and the Foundation of Palmer’s Educational Theory

Parker Palmer dreamed of an ideal communal life, a dream that stemmed from his own religious experiences in childhood. His family life and the Christian life in his congregation gave him a heightened interest in questions about what real community was. Furthermore, his religious-academic studies and experiences with the Quakers, along with Thomas Merton’s teaching and practice, were also influential in building his own educational theory.
1.1. Palmer’s Life in School Days

Parker J. Palmer was born in 1939 in a white middle class family in rural Chicago, Illinois. He introduces himself as “white, middle-class, and male—not exactly a leading candidate for a communal life. People like me are raised to live autonomously, not interdependently. I had been trained to compete and win, and I had developed a taste for the prizes. But something in me yearned to experience communion, not competition.”243 He goes on to describe himself as “a person who eventually became a Quaker, a would-be pacifist, a writer, and an activist.”244 From his own description, he had a normal childhood, and was religiously dedicated to the life of the congregation.

There are two matters in particular that he remembers as affecting the building of his educational theory. The first was the influence of his father, Max J. Palmer. Parker Palmer does not mention his mother often. His mother was a typical American middle-class mother of that time, but he often remarks that his father was a potter for over fifty years, and that he raised his children to pursue “a large and deeper grace” than that of simply fulfilling their own wishes.245 Palmer recalls that he was not highly intellectual as a boy, and that he did not achieve high scores in exams during his school days. His father did not push him, however, so long as he was “doing [his] best.” His father believed in him, and became for Palmer a model of compassion and generosity. This was a small event between Parker Palmer and his father, but he mentions it as the most influential memory from his experiences with his father. When he writes of his father,


245 Palmer, Let Your Life Speak, 102.
he often uses the analogy of potters and clay.\textsuperscript{246}

The relationship between the father and son inspired Parker Palmer to review his vocation as a teacher. While he was visiting a professor at Berea College, his father passed away. During the sorrowful experience of his father’s death, Palmer was also experiencing hardship as a teacher. This was because he encountered cultural differences between northern and southern America: different atmospheres that distanced him from his students. He remembers this hardship as the feeling of having failed in his vocation as a teacher. Palmer says that “it left me with a pearl of great price: deepened empathy for teachers whose daily work is as much about climbing mountains as it is about teaching and learning.”\textsuperscript{247} He confesses that as a result he considered deeply the real meaning of ‘teaching’ and ‘teacher.’\textsuperscript{248} As a result of this suffering, he advised teachers as follows: “If you are a teacher who never had bad days, or who has them but does not care, this book is not for you. This book is for teachers who have good days and bad, and whose bad days bring the suffering that comes only from something one love.”\textsuperscript{249}

The second major influence on Palmer’s educational thinking came from his struggle to find his identity as a Christian in his youthful period. Palmer was raised in a typical middle-class family, and such a family environment usually guaranteed a stable life in American society at the time. Based on an objective epistemology, Palmer firmly believed that the nature of stable middle class


\textsuperscript{247} Parker Palmer, \textit{The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher’s Life} (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007), xii.

\textsuperscript{248} Palmer, \textit{Let Your Life Speak}, 102.

\textsuperscript{249} Palmer, \textit{The Courage to Teach}, 1-2.
life was one of the main factors contributing to a distorted image of the self.250 In his school
days, Palmer continually struggled to find his identity as a Christian, and tried to connect his
vocation and identity to the community. He found his true vocation was based on his
understanding of integrity and the influence integrity has in shaping vocation. Furthermore, he
says that during his university years he yearned greatly for freedom. He also spent much time
actively participating in various clubs in the 1960s.251 This was his first social participation
outside of congregational activities. Out of these club experiences, Palmer reflected deeply about
the nature of human community, and also came to recognize various kinds of characters or types
of people. He states that he “was learning about the inner life and hoping to bring its powers to
bear on a variety of social ills.” As a result of these concerns, he longed for a real sense of
community. “Some of those circles went round and round, taking us nowhere useful in the world.
Some were thinly disguised exercises in narcissism and self-congratulatory piety. And some were
simply unsafe for human habitation: people in them were manipulated and sometimes violated
by the group.”252 His activities in these circles led him to the view that a real community is a
place where members do not attack other’s spirits. Palmer also connects the desire for a
communal life to his relationship with his wife. He conversed with her about this in the early
1970s. In The Paradoxes of Community, he states that, “we had talked about community for
years. How to create some ‘sense of community’ where we lived? Whether to join an existing
community—and which one? . . . The need for community came from our feelings of isolation


251 Parker Palmer, A Hidden Wholeness: the Journey toward an Undivided Life (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 23. Palmer did not mention names of circles he joined, but I expressed only one name of the circle, T-groups.

Throughout his life, he has always been interested in the healthy communal life.

1.2. Academic Journey and Career of Palmer

Palmer’s academic journey and career were also influential in building the foundation of his educational theory, especially his post-secondary schooling and his positions in the institutes. Palmer was the first person to go to college in his family. During his time at university, Palmer was deeply involved in exploring the nature of communal life and the integrity of the human being. At Carlton College, Minnesota, he was drawn to the paradox between the inner and outer shapes of the human being, and this connected to his conception of identity and integrity. He states:

I still recall, thirty-five years later, the moment I discovered C. Wright Mill’s idea of the ‘sociological imagination.’ I was not merely taken with it—I was possessed by it. The essence of his idea is simple, but it was radical to me: we cannot see what is ‘out there’ merely by looking around. Everything depends on the lenses through which we view the world. By putting on new lenses, we can see things that would otherwise remain invisible. Mills taught me how to view the world through the lenses of social theory, and when I took my first look . . . I saw the invisible structures and secret signals that shape our social lives that have a power over us that I thought resided only in face-to-face relationships. I was astonished at this new vision of life in which people walked about, not freely, as I had imagined, but controlled by strings attached to their minds and hearts by invisible puppeteers.

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*The Sociological Imagination* by Mills impacted on Palmer’s view of the relation between vocation and personal integrity, and it also led him to observe this relationship in the community. Through this lens, Palmer was also able to penetrate the paradox in his own self and in those human beings who were different from him. “Mills’ distinction between the on-stage show and backstage reality mirrored a great divide in my inner life. Outwardly, I had learned how to make my performance seem relatively smooth and accomplished, but inwardly, I felt anxious and fumbling and inept.”

Palmer’s Christian family tradition, and his dedicated religious attitude, led him to Union Theological Seminary and a recognition of his vocation as an ordained minister. He soon left the school, however, due to inner conflicts that arose when his vocation did not fit with his identity. After this he studied sociology. He received a PhD from the University of California and worked as a professor. He believed that a teaching position coincided with his vocation and his identity. However, he suffered in this position and confessed, “that experience lasted for nearly two years. It made me desperate, angry, and despondent.” He states the reason for this experience was that “my problem could also be put conversely. If I was failing to put my life where my mouth was, I was also failing to let my words emerge from the truth of my life.”

During his teaching career, Palmer continuously tried to find his own identity through listening to his own voice. The deep psychological burden of this led to mental illness and he also

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experienced depression which tempted him to commit suicide. Through these hardships, Parker learned that the depression was a “friend” that taught him to think deeply about life, identity and vocation. Depression visited him again later on, teaching him to listen carefully to his natural voice, his real self:260

My therapist offered an image that helped me eventually reclaim my life. “You seem to look upon depression as the hand of an enemy trying to crush you,” he said. “Do you think you could see it instead as the hand of a friend, pressing you down to ground on which it is safe to stand?” Amid the assaults I was suffering, the suggestion that depression was my friend seemed impossibly romantic, even insulting. But something in me knew that down, down to the ground, was the direction of wholeness, thus allowing that image to begin its slow work of healing in me.261

After experiencing this inner illness, Palmer left the school and became a community organizer in Washington DC. Because he yearned to participate in a real community, this position matched his vocation, but it took time for him to recognize that he also desired to teach again. Two years later, he joined the faculty at the University of Georgetown, where he studied the relationship between real community and education.262 He was, however, again burned out in this position five years later.

Joining the Pendle Hill Community in 1972 added great momentum to Palmer’s life. Not only did it heal his suffering heart, but he also experienced communal life through the teachings of Merton, especially his teaching on paradox and the hidden wholeness. Palmer found the spiritual meaning of wholeness through a communal life based on silence and solitude and through


encounters with Merton. Palmer finally came to think that wholeness exists in extreme ends, and that the heart is the origin of all behaviors. Through his communal experience, he realized that teaching is the mirror that shows the teacher’s heart and spirit to the students. Also, he believed that if teachers are trained to look into their own hearts, they will grow, because they will realize the voices of their own inner heart and souls. “Teaching holds a mirror to the soul. If I am willing to look in that mirror and not run from what I see, I have a chance to gain self-knowledge and knowing the self is as crucial to good teaching as knowing my students and my subject.” Living at Pendle Hill led Palmer into a deep spiritual journey of finding his identity and integrity, and realizing his function in real community. Through spiritual training with Thomas Merton and others, his thought and teaching as an educator and spiritual director were firmly formed in the Pendle Hill community.

In summary, Palmer’s personal life and Parker’s academic career functioned as the foundation in building his understanding of the nature of education and its relevance to his desire for communal life that ultimately developed into his education theory.

1.3. The Religious Foundation: Quakerism and Merton

Palmer’s desire to experience authentic communal life burst through from the confrontation with Thomas Merton at Pendle Hill, which was a place to learn, experience, and share the Quaker way

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265 Intrator, *Living the Questions*, xxxvii-xxxix.
of life.\textsuperscript{266} Experiencing community life, learning from both Merton and the Quakers, and practicing their teachings at Pendle Hill, influenced Palmer to dig deeply into the meaning of communal life and its practice in education. Furthermore, Pendle Hill was the place where Palmer integrated his view of education with his religious and academic thinking.\textsuperscript{267}

1.3.1. Spirituality in Quakerism: The Inner Light and Pacifism

Palmer’s educational theory and his understanding of spirituality were influenced by the beliefs and practices of the Quakers.\textsuperscript{268} Palmer’s encounter with Quakerism began at the Quaker community of Pendle Hill. Quakerism has distinctive beliefs and practices that affirm that all human beings naturally have \textit{the inner light} of truth that leads people to universal truth. In this belief system, all humans are equal before God, and all humans should embrace pacifism in order to oppose war and violence.\textsuperscript{269}

Realizing the inner light, the authority of the Bible, and seeking to practice pacifism, are key

\textsuperscript{266} Pendle Hill, “Pendle Hill Stories,” \url{http://www.pendlehill.org/learn/pendle-hill-stories/#.U_TzexEg_IU} (assessed August 20, 2014).


\textsuperscript{268} Sam M. Intrator, \textit{Living the Questions}, xxxvii-xxxix. Quakerism emphasizes the enlightenment of the inner person and practicing faith through seeking the inner light of truth rather than through doctrine, tradition, and rites. George Fox, as the founder of Quakerism, criticized the indolent Christian life and political churchism of traditional churches. He emphasized the reconciliation of the Kingdom of God and His righteousness through the power of Jesus Christ with personal spiritual experiences. Yong Gyu Park, \textit{History of Modern Church} (Seoul, South Korea: The Press of Chongshin University, 1995), 70-74. Quakers emphasize a personal, direct experience with Christ, acquired through both direct experience and through reading the Bible. Historically, Quakers were known for their use of thee as an ordinary pronoun, their refusal to participate in war, plain dress, refusal to swear oaths, and teetotalism, and also for anti-slavery, prison reform and social justice projects. Wikipedia, “Quakers, Nov 5, 2012”; \url{http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quakers} (accessed Oct 13, 2014).

\textsuperscript{269} Sung Soo Kim, “Seok Heon Ham and Quaker in the History of Korean Christianity,” \textit{Korean Christianity and History}, 23 (Seoul: South Korea); and Howard Brinton, \textit{Quaker 300 Years: Ham Seok Heon Literature} 26 (Seoul, South Korea: Hangilsa, 2009), 151, 203-4.
beliefs of Quakers. First of all, Quakers believe that the spiritual journey is essential in finding the inner light. Because all people already have the inner light—though they may not realize it—people can discover it through spiritual journeying, and meet God in a mysteriously personal and spiritual experience.\(^{270}\) In Quaker belief, the process of heeding the inner light and its practice is called the spiritual journey. Silent contemplation is a method for realizing the inner light through meditation on the Bible, because the Bible leads people to the right way during their spiritual journey toward the inner light. Second, the authority of the Bible is absolute in Quaker belief. Quakers believe that the Bible is the true word of God, and that revelation from God is not limited. The word of God educates people to realize God’s will towards this world, and the Holy Spirit directly speaks the will of God to his people in order that they might find their vocation. Third, the work of Jesus Christ is the model for a Quaker’s life of seeking pacifism and its practice. Because the origin of life and truth is Jesus Christ, Quaker beliefs emphasize practicality. In Quakerism, faith is anti-oath, anti-war, anti-slavery, pro gender equality, and pro environmental improvement for prisons and psychiatric hospitals. The goal is to build a peaceful and just community.\(^{271}\)

The beliefs and spiritual lives of Quakers obviously impacted on Palmer in the unfolding of his own educational theory, and he integrated his experience with Quakerism in building his understanding of spirituality. First is Palmer’s understanding of the inner light. In his books, *To Know as We Are Known* and *Let Your Life Speak*, the quest for the inner light, an important spiritual practice in Quakerism, is also called the search for the ‘inner voice’ and the ‘teacher

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\(^{271}\) Brinton, *Quaker 300 Years*, 15-16.
within." In Palmer’s view, the spiritual journey towards heeding the inner light can be transferred to listening to the inner voice of the self in the heart, in order to find one’s identity as a human being, and one’s vocation. In his understanding, the final purpose of the inner light is the practice of reflection which leads to the building of an authentic community. Based on his understanding of the inner light and its relevance to building community, Palmer provides a model showing how they effectively work together. The example he gives is the Clearness Committee in the Quaker tradition. In this committee, as ‘the model of being together,’ members try sincerely to listen to the voices that are revealed by their own inner light, try to share each other’s voices, and try to practice their enlightenment to develop a communal voice, identity, and vocation. Flowing on from such continuous communal conversations, Quakers keep peace, live together, and build an authentic community.

Training in silent contemplation is acknowledged as a key method in Palmer’s educational approach. Palmer often refers to the usefulness of training in silence in education. He states that silence is a useful educational activity, because it bears the true speech of the inner self and finally leads people to experience that sense of desire that the inner light produces. Palmer also mentions the importance of the practice of pacifism in Quaker belief, especially in Healing the Heart of Democracy: The Courage to Create a Politics Worthy of the Human Spirit. In this book,

273 Palmer, To Know As We Are Known, 82.
275 Park, History of Modern Church, 77-78.
276 Palmer, To Know As We Are Known, 79-83.
Palmer states that the heart is the central place for building a real community, because the heart is the starting place for practice. However, while Quakerism emphasizes passionate and active social practices for peace, fairness, and justice, especially for the weak, poor, and helpless in the community, Palmer strongly emphasizes the importance of practical participation in social transformation. Also, there is no clear evidence that Palmer has participated in actions for building pacifism in community.

1.3.2. Thomas Merton: From the Self to the Community

The life and teaching of Thomas Merton were also part of the foundation of Parker Palmer’s educational theory. At Pendle Hill, Palmer encountered Thomas Merton’s teaching, especially his understanding of self-cultivation towards the truth, and his emphasis on a practical life for a peaceful world. Merton gave Palmer a new insight with which to reflect on the relation between identity and integrity as revealed in the inner self, and the way to find the truth that the inner self reveals. In fact, the time at Pendle Hill was when Palmer integrated thinking from Quakerism and from Merton, and where he also realized their relevance to his own understanding of

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278 Palmer remembers Thomas Merton as follows: “Merton, the monk who spent most of the fifties sitting and praying in a cloister in rural Kentucky. Late in that decade he began to write of a great racial conflict that would shatter American life, a prophecy that one prominent urban activist attacked for its patent arrogance: ‘How dare this escapist monk tell those of us who labor for justice in the cities that our work will fail?’ Several years later that critic publicly apologized to Merton, acknowledging that the monk’s contemplative eye saw into racism more deeply than the eye of the activist. Despite the fact that Merton never marched in a demonstration or participated in formal politics, his contemplation had an impact on the history of our century.” Parker Palmer, *The Active Life: Wisdom for Work, Creative, and Caring* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1983), 18; and Parker Palmer, “Action and Insight: An Interview with Parker Palmer,” *The Christian Century* (March 1995), 327.
Protestant Christianity and Eastern religions, especially Taoism.\textsuperscript{279}

Merton emphasized the spiritual journey was essential in finding the inner voice in the self, and that discovering this voice was the first step towards its fulfillment as a vocation.\textsuperscript{280} In his books, Palmer introduces examples of teachings and stories from the monastery. Throughout Christian history, community life, such as can be found in monasteries, has resisted the chaos and deformation caused by the secularity of the world, with its disunion and demolition caused by rapacity and selfishness. In community life, with its spiritual training and practices, people seek to recover the image of love in the individual self as the image of God. Here they practice love, both within the community and in the outside world. Palmer explored deeply this process in the monastic tradition, and he also tried to integrate this spiritual journey with the educational process. This attempt is revealed in his understanding of the nature of education.\textsuperscript{281} Here Palmer observes love as being the nature of education, and education as the process of finding love within the self and of individuals learning to practice love in their lives.\textsuperscript{282}

Cultivating the self is important, because it is the first step in education and the spiritual journey. In order to cultivate the self, Merton understands that individual human beings seek God continuously, since human beings can meet God through deep relationships with other people. In his autobiographical book, \textit{The Seven Story Mountain}, Merton used the metaphorical phrase, ‘to

\textsuperscript{279} Even though Merton had left faith in his adolescence, his religious background functioned to persuade him to return to the spiritual journey. His father was a Catholic Christian and his mother was a Quaker.

\textsuperscript{280} The Quaker tradition uses the term of the inner light. Carrying the same meaning, Merton uses the inner voice, while Palmer uses the inner voice or light in the self and in the heart.

\textsuperscript{281} The nature of education in Palmer’s educational theory will be dealt with in part 2 of this chapter.

\textsuperscript{282} Palmer, \textit{To Know As We Are Known}, 17-19, and \textit{Let Your Life Speak}, 17-18.
begin the mountain’ to express the spiritual journey as the essence of spiritual development. In order to meet God, individuals need to experience extreme solitude, which opens the door of the closed self. Silence, solitude, and listening to the inner voice in prayer and contemplation lead to a realization of the vocation of the self and the real meaning of community. Thus, the real meaning of the spiritual journey and the final destination of Merton’s spirituality are naturally connected to the practice of love, justice, and peace in the community. In Merton’s teaching, education originated from love. In addition, Palmer refers to this spiritual journey as finding ‘the hidden wholeness’ mentioned by Merton. He explains the hidden wholeness as meaning humans beings should seek to live undivided lives—“lives that are congruent with our inner truth—in a world filled with the forces of fragmentation.” He says that, “the spiritual traditions offer hope that is hard to find elsewhere, for all of them are ultimately concerned with getting us reconnected. These traditions build on the great truth that beneath the broken surface of our lives remains.” Ultimately the spiritual journey is the process of discovering the hidden wholeness in the individual heart, and it leads people to feel a sense of that community originating from the communal loving relationship of the Trinitarian God.

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283 Thomas Merton, The Seven Story Mountain (New York: New American Library, 1948). As a psychological educator in faith development, James Fowler reviews the life of Thomas Merton through this book, and evaluates him as a person who met God in his spiritual journey and lived based on his faith and spirituality.


285 Palmer introduces some educational and spiritual thoughts derived from Merton. He also mentions other traditions and teachings of teachers in the monastery. These are found especially in Chapter 2, To Know As We Are Known.

286 Palmer, To Know As We Are Known, 1993, x.
2. Palmer’s Educational Theory and Its Goal

Palmer’s educational theory penetrates problems of Christian education in the KPCC to do with silence concerning its social function. He suggests that the purpose of education comes from listening to the voices from within the hearts of individuals who are made in the image of God, and then actively practicing what is heard in society. Palmer’s view of education stems from his observations about the darkness of a modern school system that seeks only personal achievement. By contrast, he focuses on building a healthy community, and argues education should be the means of achieving this purpose.\(^{287}\)

2.1. Palmer’s Understanding of Education

The KPCC has centered on knowledge-focused, individual morality-focused, and church growth-focused education, but Palmer points out what the true purpose of Christian education should be.\(^{288}\) Parker Palmer is a Christian educator: even though he works in the field of public school education, as a Christian he works for the whole society in order to build Christian community through educational practice. Furthermore, the Christian message permeates all his theoretical writings, not only those specifically relating to Christian education in the church and the public school system.

First of all, in Palmer’s understanding, education is a process which he calls the journey, and it is a religious journey. For Palmer, the journey starts with listening to the inner voice of the self. The self as the place where the image of God dwells desires love of communal life in society. Thus

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\(^{287}\) In Palmer’s early writing, he used the term ‘community’ metaphysically, referring to the image of the perfect community, but his focus on this term also indicates public society.

\(^{288}\) Characters of Christian education in the KPCC is mentioned in chapter one.
the purpose of education is to practice love in the place where students live. Palmer describes the function of education as follows: “Education portrays the self as knower, the world as known, and mediates the relation of the two, giving the knowing self-supremacy over the known world.”

Second, exploring the relation between education and spirituality is essential in Palmer’s understanding. This relation that will be covered in more depth in the following chapter, but in brief, Palmer offers two meanings of spirituality. The first is from Christian understanding: i.e. through traditional methods such as prayer, meditation, Bible study, and worship, students can recognize the will of God. Obeying and practicing the will of God is closely related to the purpose of education as building a healthy society. The second meaning of spirituality is that the educational process is a spiritual journey that goes from finding the identity and vocation in the heart to manifesting these in the present society. In Palmer’s understanding, the human self, created in the image of God, must desire loving community, which is in turn the embodiment of the Kingdom of God. As a result, education is filled with spirituality.

Third, the role of a teacher is important in Palmer’s understanding of education, because the teacher functions not only as one who imparts knowledge, but also as one who shows his/her life as a model for students. For Palmer, good teaching is not a technique, nor is it the delivery of knowledge, but it comes from the identity and integrity in the heart of the teacher. Thus the teacher should realize his or her identity and integrity through listening to the voice of the inner

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289 Palmer, To Know As We Are Known, 21.

teacher. Palmer calls this ‘the self-knowledge’ of the teacher. Palmer emphasizes that teachers need to equip themselves in three important paths: the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual. These are interwoven in the teacher’s self:

By intellectual I mean the way we think about teaching and learning the form and content of our concepts of how people know and learn, of the nature of our students and our subjects. By emotional I mean the way we and our students feel as we teach and learn feelings that can either enlarge or diminish the exchange between us. By spiritual I mean the diverse ways we answer the heart’s longing to be connected with the largeness of life—a longing that animates love and work, especially the work called teaching.

Teachers should teach what they learn, what they feel, and what they live. Palmer defines teaching as follows: “To teach is to create a space in which obedience to truth is practiced.”

According to Palmer, the nature of teaching is spiritual, and he obtained this notion from the spiritual journey of the religious tradition. Palmer provides an example from his own experience to explain the relation between the identity of the teacher and religious vocation:

My vocation is the spiritual life, the quest for God, which relies on the eye of the heart. my avocation is education, the quest for knowledge, which relies on the eye of the mind. I have seen life through both these eyes as long as I can remember—but the two images have not always coincided. Sometimes I have struggled with the spiritual crisis brought on by the educated mind: how can the heart be true when my senses and reason reduce reality so self-confidently to their own narrow terms?

Because teachers are those who go on a spiritual journey to realize their identity and integrity as teachers, they should be equipped with spiritual training. Palmer explains this as follows:

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292 Palmer, “The Heart of a Teacher,” 2. The study about the spirituality will deal with more in chapter 5.

293 Palmer, To Know As We Are Known, 69.

294 Palmer, To Know As We Are Known, xi-xii.
The original and authentic meaning of the word ‘professor’ is ‘one who professes a faith.’ The true professor is not one who controls facts and theories and techniques. The true professor is one who affirms a transcendent center of truth, a center that lies beyond our contriving, that enters history through the lives of those who profess it and brings us into community with each other and the world. If professors are to create a space in which obedience to truth is practiced, we must become ‘professor’ again.

In this way Palmer demonstrates that silence, solitude, and prayer are useful in a teacher’s spiritual life in order to improve their ability to teach. Through this process of the spiritual life and self-knowledge, teachers are able to bring students into community with themselves and with each other. This is not to achieve warm feelings, but “to do difficult things that teaching and learning require.” Palmer warns that the image of teaching is defaced by individualistic and competitive images in the educational place. He states that teaching should instead lead students into the image of teaching as the community.

Fourth, the relationship between teachers and students is important in Palmer’s understanding of education. Teachers and students are companions who need to go on a spiritual journey to find their own identities. In education, teachers or students work alone because each person, whether it be the teacher or the student, needs to experience the spiritual journey alone in order to find his/her own vocation. But they also cooperate together to practice the goal of education in the classroom community and in the broader community. As the apostle Paul said, this relation should be like “the Spirit’s relation to us. If we want to teach that way, we must understand the

295 Palmer, To Know As We Are Known, 113; The Promise of Paradox: A Celebration of Contradictions in the Christian Life (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993), 117-118.

296 Palmer, To Know As We Are Known, 117, 121, 124; and Myung-Bok Yoo, “An Examination of Educational Thoughts of Parker Palmer,” 100.

297 Palmer, To Know As We Are Known, xvii.

298 Palmer, To Know As We Are Known, xvi.
Spirit’s own ways of teaching.\textsuperscript{299} The Spirit’s relation between teachers and students is expressed in three ways: in freedom, in love, and in truth. In freedom, the word of truth is spoken, and students are “free to choose whether to hear it or not.” Teaching in the Spirit relation does not push students to accept words from teachers; it leads to their free response. In love, “God’s love persists, beckoning us out of dark places into the light. So it must be with teacher and learner.” Concerning the relation of truth, Palmer echoes the apostle Paul again in saying this relation depends on “the student and on his or her readiness to understand truth.” To be ready, “God strips falsehood from us no matter how naked it may leave us, because it is better to live naked in truth than clothed in fantasy.” In order to dwell in truth, it is essential that the Holy Spirit, who works in the heart of the teacher, should be working in the heart of learner as well. Learners thus also need to go on their own spiritual journeys with prayer.\textsuperscript{300} Through paths of freedom, love, and truth, the classroom as the community becomes the place where teachers and learners share the same purpose for education, and the competitive atmosphere is removed. Finally, Palmer argues that the relationship between teacher and learner should embody the search to understand, follow, and practice the mind of Christ as our truth.\textsuperscript{301}

2.2. The Nature of Education: Love

Love is usually understood as something that is metaphysical, and it is not easy to express the meaning of the word as it relates to action. However, Palmer points out the meaning of love as a behavior originates from the nature of the Trinity, and should become the main resource for education. Christian educators in the KPCC thus need to listen to Palmer’s voice about love

\textsuperscript{299} Palmer, \textit{the Promise of Paradox}, 131.

\textsuperscript{300} Palmer, \textit{the Promise of Paradox}, 131-134.

\textsuperscript{301} Palmer, \textit{the Promise of Paradox}, 135.
being the foundation of education. According to Parker, love is the basis of all educational processes, from teaching, to knowing, to learning and love originates from the Trinitarian God. Palmer explains the relationship as follows:

Transcendence is a breaking-in, a breathing of the Spirit of love into the heart of our existence, a literal in-spiration that allows us to regard ourselves and our world with more trust and hope than ever before. To experience transcendence means to be removed—not from self and world, but, from that hall of mirrors in which the two endlessly reflect and determine one another.  

The self essentially has love in the deepest place in the heart, so the self desires loving relationship with other selves. The self can thus perform and create loving community only through relationship with others. This view is based on Palmer’s understanding that the human being is created in the image of God.

Palmer explains that the dialogue between the self and the inner voice in the self is instrumental in realizing love in the self and for practicing love. Because the inner voice continuously speaks its desire to the self, the self needs to listen to this voice in order to realize its own identity through a dialogue. Palmer states that:

This process of dialogue, where each person speaks in fidelity to inner truth rather than conformity to outward demands, is a process of checking and criticizing and clarifying our communal relationships. It is a quest for truth as troth. As the dialogue goes on, a larger truth is revealed, a truth that is not only within us but between us. It is the truth that we are not autonomous agents, each with a private world, but are in community with each other. Community begins to emerge as we seek our inward nature. But it can grow only as we realize that our created nature calls us into obedient relationship with each other and all that we know; it can grow only as our inward response finds outward manifestation in relationships of dialogue and troth.  

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302 Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known*, 13.

303 Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known*, 90-91.
The spiritual journey in Palmer is the process of finding the truth, and the truth is discovered through love. Palmer illustrates the relationship between ‘knowing’ and truth in love from his understanding that “the Hebrew Bible uses the word ‘know’ to indicate the conjugal relation of husband and wife, the same word it uses for our knowledge of God and of the created world. The most common New Testament word for ‘know’ is also used for lovemaking.” This demonstrates absolutely that ‘knowing’ in education is life, and that the truth is in love. Love makes it possible for people to work together and to dialogue in relationship.

Palmer criticizes education for achieving only personal purposes and ignoring love. For Palmer, the purpose of gaining knowledge is not simply to possess information. He puts it thus:

> The goal of a knowledge arising from love is the reunification and reconstruction of broken selves and worlds. A knowledge born of compassion aims not at exploiting and manipulating creation but at reconciling the world to itself. The mind motivated by compassion reaches out to know as the heart reaches out to love. Here, the act of knowing is an act of love, the act of entering and embracing the reality of the other, of allowing the other to enter and embrace our own. In such knowing we know and are known as members of one community, and our knowing becomes a way of reweaving that community’s bonds.\(^305\)

In Palmer’s understanding, love creates action, which leads to openness and hospitality. Openness and hospitality are the concrete means for practicing love in the society, and are important concepts that will be explored in more depth in the following chapter.

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304 Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known*, 58.

305 Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known*, 8.
2.3. The Goal of Education for the Society

In Palmer’s theory, after realizing love in the self as part of the educational process, contributing to a healthy community then becomes the goal of education. For Palmer, a healthy community becomes the embodiment of the Kingdom of God. Palmer uses the term ‘democracy’, to indicate this embodied reality, a term which for him means a just, fair and peaceful community achieved through acts of love performed by individuals.\(^\text{306}\)

There are two aspects to Palmer’s understanding of ‘community.’ First, in his theory of education, he uses the term ‘community’ instead of the localized term ‘society.’ Palmer’s initial desire for a loving community stems from the congregation of his childhood. Ultimately, the scale of the community expands to include the broader society.\(^\text{307}\) The community is the key in Palmer’s theory of education, because education heads towards realizing the authentic meaning of community, and building authentic community is the goal of education.\(^\text{308}\)

\(^\text{306}\) The meaning of democracy that Palmer uses will be studied further in Chapter 5.

\(^\text{307}\) Debates about the boundary of the community have been endless in the field of Christian education, because this boundary determines where Christian education must place its focus. Since the 19th century, Christian education has concentrated on the faith community, because faith development in this community has been the purpose of Christian education. However, research on Christian education in the 20th century is now based on the advanced scientific social environment and a changed social system. In the field of Christian education, family and national communities in the Old Testament were identified as faith communities and as unified communities. The church has been considered the faith community since the time of the New Testament. The faith community has been the main place where Christian education is practiced and where the Word of God is transmitted to the next generation. Sherrill states that the church as the Christian community is the place where people face God, respond to God, and interact between people. Based on an understanding of the biblical and practical interpretation of the sovereignty of God, the tension in the dualistic view between the visibly present world and the faith community embodying the Kingdom of God has always existed in the field of Christian education. Even though Christian education has focused on not only nurturing toward mature Christianity the children of God in the faith community, but also on Christian life in this present world, it also has been concerned with the Christian vocation and how to practice God’s will in the present world, since this should be the core theme of Christian education. Walter Elwell, ed., *Baker Theological Dictionary of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 109 and Lewis Sherrill, *The Gift of Power* (New York: Macmillan, 1939), 44.

\(^\text{308}\) Palmer often uses the word ‘authentic’ to explain the self, community, and democracy. This refers to the prototype of these words and is a metaphysical image. When he uses the term ‘authentic democracy,’ this means the embodiment of the Kingdom of God.
Second, the scope of the community also includes the classroom and other places of where education is conducted. Palmer emphasizes, however, that even in the classroom the goal of education should head towards the broader community. Palmer encourages students in the classroom to have a higher purpose: “We need a way of thinking about community in higher education that relates it to the central mission of the academy—the generation and transmission of knowledge.”

Practically speaking, Palmer states that “students would learn more true lessons about the nature of life on all levels if we were to shape our schools around images of reality that are less individualistic and competitive, and more cooperative and communal.” For Palmer, the aim of education is to produce an authentic image of the community, and to find where truth is hidden in the community. Also, the true work of the mind in achieving intellectual knowledge is “to reconnect us with that which would otherwise be out of reach, to reweave the great community of our lives.” Palmer criticizes education that focuses on knowledge for private purposes:

> A spirituality of ends wants to dictate the desirable outcomes of education in the life of the student. It uses the spiritual tradition as a template against which the ideas, beliefs, and behaviors of the student are to be measured. The goal is to shape the student to the template by the time his or her formal education concludes.

According to Palmer, the mind should be used “to recall and recreate the community in which we

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309 Parker Palmer, “Community, Conflict, and Ways of Knowing Ways to Deepen Our Educational Agenda” *Change* 26, no. 3 (May 1994), 1.

310 Parker Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known*, xiv, xv.

311 Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known*, xii.

312 Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known*, xvi.

313 Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known*, xi.
were created, to know the world in the same spirit in which we are known.”

Palmer says the self should be developed in a healthy way so as to recognize the importance of a sense of community. The healthy self “finds an identity that allows it to feel at home in its own skin and in the company of others, even ‘alien’ others. The healthy self stands on its own feet and understands the many ways in which it depends on and must contribute to the community.”

The community provides the place for the self to develop properly, and the self and the community grow together towards a healthy self and a healthy community.

In conclusion, Palmer provides a new approach to the goal of education, which is understood as building the community. As an educational motivator, Palmer observes the darkness of modern school education and the private purpose for individual success. Thus Palmer encourages students and teachers to review their identities as students and teachers in order to realize the authentic goal of education for community.

In terms of Palmer’s view, the KPCC should focus on the hearts of individuals rather than simply on knowledge as the starting point for education, because the heart is created in the image of the love of the Trinitarian God. Love is the nature of education, and the heart originally desires loving relationships with other human beings. Furthermore, the KPCC should listen carefully to Palmer’s suggestion that Christian education needs to widen its purpose from its traditional goals in the faith community to the broader community, because God works for all people in the universe. In particular, the KPCC needs to learn the meaning of democracy as the public dimension of education, something that Palmer emphasizes in his newest book, *Healing the Heart of Democracy*, 66-67.

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314 Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known*, 16.

Heart of Democracy. Because democracy in all social areas is still an important issue for Korean society, the KPCC needs to understand democracy is the embodiment of the Kingdom of God in order to build a democratic society as its educational dimension and responsibility. Furthermore there is need for wisdom and discernment in finding ways to implement Palmer’s educational practice in a harmonized and balanced way in the pluralized Korean social context.
CHAPTER 5

PALMER’S SPIRITUALITY IN EDUCATION FOR THE PUBLIC

There are two meaningful contributions to Christian education in the KPCC arising from Palmer’s understanding of spirituality. First, his understanding of spirituality, which is different from the KPCC, can lead to spirituality as an educational matter—an educational practice obtained as part of a spiritual journey. Thus his understanding can lead the KPCC to a deeper understanding of the relationship between education and spirituality. Second, he proposes spirituality in education as the foundation for his public theology. Not only is it the theoretical foundation, but is also a practical principle with a public dimension. This goes well beyond the understanding of the KPCC that spirituality is a personal matter. His view of spirituality in education thus provides the KPCC not only with a new perspective on the Holy Spirit, but also practical ways of infusing this perspective into an educational goal.

While the previous chapter established the foundations of Palmer’s theory of education, this chapter goes deeper and explores more explicitly spirituality and its practice as found in his writings. Knowledge of Palmer’s view of spirituality is essential for a fuller understanding of his thought about education. Firstly, as already noted, spirituality has an educational nature: the entire educational process can be seen as a spiritual journey. Secondly, Palmer views spirituality not only as something that leads to changes within an individual’s personality, but also as an active practice in real life. The spiritual journey starts with listening to the inner voice of the self. This inner voice desires love, because human beings are created in the image of God. The journey then heads from within the self towards the external practice of love between human
beings in society. Thirdly, the destination of this spiritual practice is the practice of democracy in society, with the term democracy having a meaning that transcends the political; it is instead an expression for the embodiment of the Kingdom of God in society.

1. Understanding Palmer’s Spirituality

Going beyond learning and self-improvement, Palmer connects the intellectual aspects of education to spirituality, in order to understand the nature of the human being. As mentioned in the previous chapter, as a journey in education, spirituality begins with an exploration of the identity of the self that comes through listening to the inner voice in order to realize individual vocation.316

1.1. Palmer’s Spirituality as the Educational Process

In Palmer’s understanding, spirituality is classified into four concepts. First, spirituality has its traditional meaning of a journey towards religious maturity and its practices. This traditional understanding comes from his academic background and his practical experience with Protestant, Quaker, and Catholic spiritualities.317 While it is difficult to measure the scale of spiritual maturity, Palmer does provide the ideal model: Jesus. Learners should follow Jesus’ life and

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317 Palmer bases his books on various religious experiences, such as the Protestant tradition, Quakerism, Catholicism and Taoist teaching. The Active Life: A Spirituality of Work, Creativity, and Caring; A Hidden Wholeness: the Journey toward an Undivided Life, Welcoming the Soul and Weaving Community in a Wounded World.
ways in order to practice the love of God.\textsuperscript{318} In his writings, Palmer not only insists on a certain spiritual practice, but he looks at religious pluralism in order to understand the various contexts where human beings live. He does not focus on spiritual pluralism, however, but rather identifies the core concepts and practices that various spiritualities attend to. As the key concept of spirituality, Palmer identifies the Holy Spirit and its work in the relationship with the human being. Prayer, meditation with the Bible, and silent contemplation, are all essential for learners in developing a mature relation with the Holy Spirit. These methods lead learners from the fear of scarcity into abundance as the foundation of the spiritual life.\textsuperscript{319}

Second, in Palmer’s understanding, education is the journey whereby the self is cultivated beyond the purposes of acquiring individual knowledge. It is the journey towards realizing the identity and integrity of the teacher and through which learners realize their vocation. This vocation desires love in the true self of the human being as the image of God, and it heads toward building the practice of love in communal life. Thus Palmer calls the educational process a spiritual process. It is a process in which the learner is dependent on the Holy Spirit, because the spiritual journey is the relation between learner and the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{320} The Holy Spirit is the true teacher who walks with learners toward the educational goal, because true education is connected to love.


\textsuperscript{319} Palmer, \textit{The Promise of Paradox}, 114-115.

\textsuperscript{320} Palmer, \textit{The Promise of Paradox}, 134-135.
and is something that is practiced in the lives of individuals in society. This is not for the benefit of the individual, but is for the benefit of the community and social health. In Palmer’s view, the purpose of developing the mind through education is to realize our nature as beings in community, to overcome division and alienation within the community in our own lives, and to recognize the solidarity that can exist in human community. The healthy mind becomes the foundation of the healthy heart, and the healthy heart is able to see the reality of the original human desire for communal life. Palmer argues that this healthy heart is developed through healthy relationships:

The relationships of the self require not only sensory evidence of the other; not only logical linkages of cause and effect; they also require inner understanding of the other, which comes from empathy; a sense of the other’s value, which comes from love; a feel for its origins and ends, which comes from faith; and a respect for its integrity and selfhood, which comes from respecting our own.321

In these relationships, the self must promote truth, and truth, for Palmer, is based on the Christian understanding that “truth is neither ‘out there’ nor ‘in here,’ but both. Truth is between us, in relationship, to be found in the dialogue of ‘knowers’ and ‘knowns’ who are understood as independent but accountable selves.”322 Palmer recognizes the universal truth of spirituality: it explores the self in order to go out beyond the self. Palmer says that the spiritual life engages most deeply through life-giving action, not by abandoning the world and he emphasizes the potential for active life in the community.323

321 Palmer, To Know As We Are Known, 53.

322 Palmer, To Know As We Are Known, 57-58.

323 Palmer gives the term ‘community’ two meanings. The first one is the metaphysical image of the human gathering that human beings should build. The second one is public society. Even though he focuses on the first meaning, he concentrates also on public society in the world. Palmer, The Active Life: A Spirituality of Work, Creativity, and Caring; and Palmer, A Hidden Wholeness, 95-96. Palmer uses various Taoist poems and stories to illustrate.
Fourth, the nature of spirituality is ‘wholesight.’ Palmer points out that modern education focuses only on the development of the eyes of the mind, namely knowledge, but ignores the importance of the eyes of the heart. Palmer talks about this as a lack of ‘wholesight.’ Wholesight explains the nature of spirituality and it also forms the basis of the spiritual journey. The mind and heart should be balanced, and both need to develop together on the spiritual journey. Palmer proposes that spirituality must be self-reflective in order that a person might realize their own identity and vocation. It is self-cultivating in order to approach the essence of education, and it is self-giving in order to do the things that spirituality teaches. He says that, “authentic spirituality wants to open us to truth. Such spirituality does not dictate where we must go, but trusts that any path walked with integrity will take us to a place of knowledge. Such spirituality encourages us to welcome diversity and conflict, to tolerate ambiguity, and to embrace paradox.”

1.2. Spiritual Place for Practice

In Palmer’s understanding, spirituality as the education process has a place of practice. Spirituality moves towards practicing love in society. Spirituality does not remain in the heart of the individual human being, but moves continuously toward its goal: the goal of practicing what individuals discover to be their vocation, after realizing their own identity and integrity. He suggests it is the spirit of openness and hospitality that is the practical way of expressing this love. Loving others in society also unfolds the practice of ‘democracy’ in the present world. Here Palmer’s understanding of democracy is not limited to its political meaning, but is the Kingdom of God embodied in the society. Spirituality as the educational process thus aims at building just,

324 Parker Palmer, To Know As We Are Known, 15.

325 Parker Palmer, To Know As We Are Known, xi.
peaceful, and fair societies. This relation between education and spirituality is also reflected in
the words of Thomas Merton, who said that, “the purpose of education is to show a person how
to define himself authentically and spontaneously in relation to his world—not to impose a
prefabricated definition of the world, still less an arbitrary definition of the individual
himself.” Palmer understands Merton to mean that education should energetically explore how
the self relates authentically and freely to the world. This is the process of the development of the
self toward the community. Palmer states that “when [education] does not center on
transcendence, it fails to create authentic and spontaneous relations between the self and the
world.”

In Palmer’s educational theory the place of spiritual practice is the community. The meaning of
community is as important in Palmer’s spirituality as the education process, for it determines
how and where spirituality is practiced. First of all, community in Palmer’s theory originates
from the Christian understanding of community and he takes the model of authentic communal
life from the Bible: “All whose faith had drawn them together held everything in common: they
would sell their property and possessions and make a general distribution as the need of each
required” (Acts 2:44-45). Palmer makes a connection between people’s desire for a communal
life and God’s covenant with humanity. This means that people’s desire for authentic
community originates from being made in the image of God, and that authentic community was
God’s intention in making the covenant. Second, Palmer points to the relation between education

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327 Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known*, 12.
and the community, because community needs to be the place where education is practiced. Palmer explains this relationship:

Education is a notable example. Historically, education and community were inseparable. The content of education reflected the community consensus, and at the same time helped the community evolve and perpetuate itself. Today education has become a training ground for competition, rooted in the assumption that community is gone and we must learn to stand on our own two feet. In fact, more than a training ground, education itself has become a competitive arena where winners and losers are determined even before the contest is scheduled to begin.\(^{329}\)

Palmer realizes that education and community reflect and help each other, and they can both be developed. He also recognizes the darkness of the modern educational system that has lost its original cooperation. He criticizes the urbanized American social system for its individualistic focus that works on behalf of capitalistic society. It is this that causes this darkness in the relationship between education and the community. Third, Palmer expresses the idea that the society is the real image of community with the biblical meaning. He says that the biblical meaning of community where Jesus Christ is incarnated to live and to work is the local realm, namely the society.\(^{330}\) Even though the community bears the theological image of the Kingdom of God, Palmer grounds this image in society. Thus, the community indicates the society where both Christians and non-Christians live and where spirituality practices in order to attain its goal.

1.3. Openness and Hospitality as Educational Strategy

Spirituality in Palmer’s view is found not only in the heart, but is also seeks to actively engage in the society with others who might have different views. Palmer does not insist on behavioral

\(^{329}\) Palmer, *A Place Called Community*, location 95.

\(^{330}\) Palmer, *A Place Called Community*, location 57.
practice or aggressive demagogy. He, however, focuses on a changed attitude of mind, behavior, and practice within an ordinary life as it widens out into the community through the cultivated heart. In particular, Palmer emphasizes the need for a warm attitude and an open mindset toward strangers, an emphasis that is based on biblical foundations. Openness and hospitality is the model for the spiritual practice of building a healthy society.

1.3.1. Openness

Openness is firstly to open the door of the heart to others, in spite of any fear of conflict or diversity that might exist. Openness is to treat strangers with love, because the healthy self desires love in human relations. As a first step towards openness, Palmer expands the scope of spirituality from the personal region to the public sphere. According to Palmer, openness is not naturally practiced with others, but it needs to be embraced with a fearless heart amidst differences and conflicts, including political conflicts, because these are obstacles to openness in modern society. Palmer recognizes this modern situation where individuals seek only personal benefit, so he encourages people to realize, accept, and embrace openness in the public arena. Palmer says that “I neither imagine nor yearn for a conflict-free public realm, a fantasy that is tantamount to yearning for a death-free life. Only in a totalitarian society is conflict ‘banished.’ Conflict does not disappear, of course, but is merely driven underground, replaced with a public illusion of unity that must be enforced by violence.”³³¹ There are conflicts anywhere people live, and the courage to overcome these is essential in building healthy communal lives.

One reason why it is important to cultivate or educate the heart is that the heart is the starting

³³¹ Palmer, Healing the Heart of Democracy, 61.
point on the journey towards the ultimate goal of spirituality. Openness connects to hospitality. Palmer says that, “becoming people who offer hospitality to strangers requires us to open our hearts and again to the tension created by our fear of ‘the other.’” Only from such a heart can hospitality flow—toward the stranger and toward all that we find alien and unsettling.”

Openness in the heart is determined by the condition of the self, and the self needs room to be healthy. Palmer states it thus:

The healthy self finds an identity that allows it to feel at home in its own skin and in the company of others, even "alien" others. The healthy self stands on its own two feet and understands the many ways in which it depends on and must contribute to the community. Such a self does not happen by accident. It takes shape only when a society is rich with opportunities for citizens to reflect on and direct the dynamics of their hearts.

This is why Palmer emphasizes the cultivation of the heart, and says the heart should be trained to open up. The strongest enemy of openness is a heart that is hurt and closed towards others and towards conflict. Instead, the heart needs to be trained to embrace conflict. Palmer explains this as follows:

In public or private life, we "arm" ourselves because we want to be invulnerable to heartbreak. Faced with what we perceive as a threat to our emotions, our egos, our values, or our ultimate beliefs, we shut down in hopes of defending ourselves against whatever might breach our defenses. New life arises when we understand that opening ourselves to conflict can expand our capacity to learn, grow, and feel more at home in ourselves and in our world. The odds that conflict will make us larger and more confident instead of smaller and more fearful increase with our willingness to let everyday experience exercise and open our hearts.

Openness means the acceptance of others to the table; not only strangers but also those who have different views, and are of different racial backgrounds and purposes. This acceptance is one of

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332 Palmer, Healing the Heart of Democracy, 149.


334 Palmer, Healing the Heart of Democracy, 61.
the steps towards the healthy communal life that the heart of the human being desires.

1.3.2. Hospitality

Hospitality is the key to practicing openness. Where openness is practiced, hospitality results. In Palmer’s view, hospitality is based on compassion, and this is a common religious principle. Palmer describes it thus:

The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical, and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the center of our world and put another there, and to honor the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect.335

Palmer’s view of hospitality as the practice of spirituality is based on biblical principles within the Christian tradition, as exemplified in Bible narratives from Genesis and the gospel of Luke. Palmer points to the motive of hospitality in the story in Genesis 18, where Abraham and Sarah treated three strangers with generosity and kindness. The strangers were the messengers of God, and Abraham and Sarah gave their best hospitality with unconditional love. In Luke, two disciples who were going to Emmaus met a stranger. They did not realize who he was, but they walked and talked together and finally they invited the stranger to the table and ate together. Even though they did not know who he was, they treated him with their best hospitality (Luke 24:13-32). Palmer interprets these two stories as demonstrating the practice of hospitality, saying that, “the moral of both stories is clear: when a believer fails to offer hospitality to the stranger, the spiritual journey comes to a sudden halt.”336 Hospitality is the way to practice love, and it is a


336 Palmer, Healing the Heart of Democracy, 148,149.
stage in the spiritual journey as it heads towards its goal.

Palmer acknowledges people are afraid of sharing hospitality with strangers. People often wrongly think that offering hospitality to strangers is wasteful. He says, however, that “hospitality brings gifts to the host as well as to the guest; the gift of information that we would otherwise lack and the gift of feeling more at home in a world full of strangers.”

According to Palmer, openness and hospitality help people to learn from each other and allow them to grow up together to realize the common good. He says that:

> In the company of strangers, we can learn that we are all in this together despite our many differences: that some of our differences are enriching and those that are vexing are negotiable: that it is possible to do business amicably with one another even in the face of conflicting interests. In the company of strangers, we can speak our minds aloud and listen as others speak theirs: in dialogue we may discover a common good in the midst of our diversity: and we have a chance to raise our voices to a level of audibility that none of us could achieve alone. “We the people” can become a vital reality rather than a philosophical abstraction.

Palmer believes that when people overcome their fear of difference and conflicts, and seek training in mature spirituality, love and peace are given to both provider and receiver together. Openness and hospitality are based in love and through educational experience the role and power of love as the fountain of openness and hospitality is revealed.

> It is easy enough to see that all through our lives we are faced with the task of reconciling opposites which, in logical thoughts, cannot be reconciled. The typical problems of life are insoluble on the level of being on which we normally find ourselves. How can one reconcile the demands of freedom and discipline in education? Countless others and teachers, in fact, do it, but no one can write down a solution. They do it by bringing into the situation a force that belongs to a higher level where opposites are transcended—the

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337 Palmer, *Healing the Heart of Democracy*, 149.

power of love.\textsuperscript{339}

Palmer says that love is essentially a Christian teaching, and comes from the work of Jesus Christ in his incarnation.

In Christian tradition, the broken-open heart is virtually indistinguishable from the image of the cross. It was on the cross that God's heart was broken for the sake of humankind, broken open into a love that Christ's followers are called to emulate. Even as a physical form, the cross—with arms that stretch left and right and up and down—symbolizes the tension, the "excruciating" tension that can open the heart to love.\textsuperscript{340}

In sum, openness and hospitality are keys to Palmer’s spiritual practice. For Palmer, mature spirituality is not located solely in the heart, but rather pours out from the heart, and is actively practiced in the public arena. In society, this spirituality heads towards democracy as its vocation. It is clear that the understanding of spirituality in Palmer’s education theory is far from that of the KPCC. Spirituality is involved not only in the personal realm as in the KPCC, but is understood as being the educational process itself. This means that spirituality heads towards practice for others in the public square, and has a public dimension.

### 2. Spiritual Practice for Authentic Democracy

In Palmer’s view, spirituality equips the heart with hospitality and openness, and then it widens and deepens its reach from the heart of the individual to the public square. The goal is to build ‘authentic democracy.’\textsuperscript{341} And building the authentically democratic society through the


\textsuperscript{340} Palmer, \textit{Healing the Heart of Democracy}, 149.

\textsuperscript{341} Palmer often uses the adjective, ‘authentic’ in relation to the terms community and democracy. This qualifier denotes the embodiment of the Kingdom of God, distinguishing it from the common understanding of democracy in the present world that is often expressed as capitalism. When Palmer use the word ‘democracy,’ he actually means ‘authentic democracy.’
cultivation of hearts is nothing less than the embodiment of the Kingdom of God in the world.

2.1. Spiritual Practice towards Democracy

The efforts of Christians to contribute to the societies where they live are often based on their understanding of Christian vocation. Social reformers tend to concentrate on those found in the marginalized places of the society; people such as women, children and victims of injustice. However, Palmer does not only focus on the abovementioned groups, he also seeks to transform the society as a whole, based on his understanding of the Kingdom of God. Of course Palmer realizes the Kingdom of God will only be perfectly realized in heaven after Jesus’ second coming, but he nevertheless understands the incarnation of Jesus as embodied also in the present world. Thus Palmer’s spirituality heads towards democracy as its practice.

First, democracy begins in the heart, because Palmer thinks that the heart is the place where God’s image is found, and that this image originates in the loving relationship that exists within the Trinity. According to Palmer, modern education based on individualism and capitalism produces ‘the broken-hearted,’ and the goal of education is to heal them and create loving communal relationships. Modern education also produces solitude in the hearts of individuals,

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343 The ‘broken-hearted’ means those who are victims of the darkness of modern education with its radically competitive school system, and education as the tool for achieving personal goals. The broken-hearted also means those who are helpless, powerless, and marginalized in the society.
and it makes for private life, not public life. Palmer defines the heart not only as the seat of emotion, but also as the core of the self. This derives from the Latin word, ‘cor’:

As the center place where all of our ways of knowing converge—intellectual, emotional, sensory, intuitive, imaginative, experiential, relational, and bodily, among others. The heart is where we integrate what we know in our minds with what we know in our bones, the place where our knowledge can become more fully human. ‘Cor’ is also the Latin root from which we get the word courage. When all that we understand of self and world comes together in the center place called the heart, we are more likely to find the courage to act humanely on what we know.  

Recognition of the importance of the heart, and the necessity of training the heart, are pivotal in Palmer’s educational theory. The sound heart is developed from the self, family, and neighbor outwards to include the community. The heart should thus be developed, healed, and educated in order to realize its vocation in the democratic public world. In a general sense, the heart seems like a personal area, far removed from politics. Those who struggle to develop their hearts seem not to be worried about the crises of democracy, because the heart and politics appear disconnected. However, it is precisely this division that exists between the inner mind and the outer context that is the strongest obstacle to democracy. In this sense, the heart is the most fundamental area that scholars of public theology fail to concentrate on, but in fact, Palmer argues, it is the heart that provides the essential principles for public theology.

In Palmer’s view, the heart is the womb of democracy. The heart desires democratic society and builds it through active participation in society. The heart is the place that needs to be

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equipped and cultivated in order to overcome conflicts in a diverse society. Terry Tempest Williams says that:

The heart is the place where we embrace democracy’s complex and challenging questions. . . . The human heart is the first home of democracy. It is where we embrace our questions. Can we be equitable? Can we be generous? Can we listen with our whole beings, not just our minds, and offer our attention rather than our opinions? And do we have enough resolve in our hearts to act courageously, relentlessly, without giving up—ever-trusting our fellow citizens to join with us in our determined pursuit of a living democracy?\textsuperscript{346}

For Palmer, the word ‘heart’ refers “to an integral way of knowing.”\textsuperscript{347} The heart is the place where the human learns, experiences, and practices democracy. Palmer draws on the thought of Thomas Merton:

We need safe spaces, silent and solitary spaces, where we can get the news from within. But when it comes to forming the habits of the heart that make a democracy work, solitude has its limits. We also need safe spaces for small gatherings of the “company of strangers,” spaces where citizens can come together to explore the challenge of living heartfelt lives in the neighborhood, in the workplace, and in the larger world.\textsuperscript{348}

The heart is also a place to summon up courage to act. Rainer Maria Rilke notes that “this is at bottom the only courage that is demanded of us: to have courage for the most strange. The most singular and the most inexplicable that we may encounter.”\textsuperscript{349} The heart is invisible, but the influence of “what flows from it is visible everywhere.”\textsuperscript{350} The heart is the place to recognize who the self is and who others are in social relationships. The heart is the place where human beings come up with creative questions to ask themselves. Campbell points out that everyone

\textsuperscript{346} Williams, “Engagement.”

\textsuperscript{347} Palmer, \textit{Healing the Heart of Democracy}, 54-55.

\textsuperscript{348} Palmer, \textit{Healing the Heart of Democracy}, 158.


\textsuperscript{350} Palmer, \textit{Healing the Heart of Democracy}, 152.
needs “a place where you can simply experience and bring forth what you are and what you might be.”

The reason that Palmer focuses on the heart is that it is the place of ‘heartbreak.’ Heartbreak is born in the heart through its own training for democracy, and this is the ignition point for developing democracy. Life causes heartbreak, which leads to the desire for democracy. Palmer explains:

As our personal and political lives unfold, the world within us and the world around us continually conflict, collaborate, and give shape to each other. Everything human can be found in the heart as both cause and effect of what happens in the external world. And nothing that happens in the human heart has more power, for better or for worse, than heartbreak. Heartbreak is the most honest word I know for that pain.

Palmer teaches us to practice heartbreak in everyday life. In fact, as our hearts experience the darkness of modernity, many people experience heartbreak. We need to embrace heartbreak and widen it into our community, society, nation, and world. Heartbreak makes for healthy people, because the healthy self “is simultaneously independent and interdependent.” Palmer says that, “when a democratic society is working as it should—calling people to individual freedom and collective responsibility—it helps shape the kind of self that perpetuates democracy.”

Heartbreak becomes political, because the experience of heartbreak leads us to heed the unjust, unfair, and violent incidents in society. Palmer focuses on victims of political oppression, and also people who suffer from the exploitation of gigantic global companies. Palmer insists that we should counter this oppression communally and politically. In the words of President Lincoln,


352 Palmer, Healing the Heart of Democracy, 57.

353 Palmer, Healing the Heart of Democracy, 66.
“our bond of affection,” or political cooperation between citizens, is essential. The purpose of embracing heartbreak is that “we must restore the wholeness of our civic community or watch democracy wither.” Palmer warns the governmental powers that if we cannot or will not open our hearts to one another, powers that diminish democracy will rush into the void created by the collapse of “We the People.”

Palmer highlights the deteriorated end results of education, which differ from the original purpose of education, because modern education is used for the fulfillment of individuals’ private dreams and as a tool for a successful life. Palmer believes that education should be a process that moves from self-interested goals towards the community, and that it should be nurtured to bear out the common good in the community.

Second, Palmer’s goal in education and its spirituality is building the democratic society. As the embodiment of the Kingdom of God, democratic society is the place where the broken-hearted can be healed by practicing love based on openness and hospitality. It is the place where justice, peace, and fairness between human beings is embodied in the practicing love of those who realize the vocation that pours out from the heart. In his recent book, *Healing the Heart of Democracy: The Courage to Create a Politics Worthy of the Human Spirit*, Palmer suggests that the heart is like the mother’s womb, in that it conceives the seed of democracy, nurtures and bears democracy, and thus the process of bearing fruit in the heart is that of education. Palmer depicts what democracy is, how people really want to live, and what they should do for the

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community. His argument is that people have to listen to their own voice and desire for communal life in public society, and thus the healing of the heart is the starting point for real democracy. Palmer mentions ‘the broken-hearted,’ who have become that way due to the powers that divide communal life and loving relationships in the modern world, and says that healing the broken-hearted is the starting point of democracy, and that this healing is the duty of education. The entire educational process should thus be toward healing the broken-hearted with love.

Palmer explains the relationship between the heart and democracy as follows. The well-cultivated heart cannot create an atmosphere of democracy all on its own, but needs to co-operate with others. He states that, “when a democratic society is working as it should—calling people to individual freedom and collective responsibility—it helps shape the kind of self that perpetuates democracy, a self that is simultaneously independent and interdependent.” In Palmer’s view, conflicts, diversities, and strangers co-exist and co-operate together in democratic society. He puts it thus:

The kind of self that democracy needs is no stranger to inner emptiness or fear. . . . The healthy self finds an identity that allows it to feel at home in its own skin and in the company of others, even ‘alien’ others. The healthy self stands on its own two feet and understands the many ways in which it depends on and must contribute to the community.

Democracy is built from the gathering of healthy selves, and healthy selves operate authentically in democratic society by their cooperation. Living a public life alongside strangers and

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356 Palmer, Healing the Heart of Democracy. 65.
357 Palmer, Healing the Heart of Democracy, 66.
embracing diversity are keys to achieving democracy. In the public realm, the broken-hearted learn that all are in this together, despite people’s differences. In this sense, Palmer calls the democratic society “life in the company of strangers.”

Palmer emphasizes the importance of the public life lived by healthy selves. Even though public life cannot guarantee the building of an authentic democracy, it is impossible to build democracy without a healthy public life. Cultivating the heart to desire public life with different people is the key purpose of education, and the healthy self is the foundation of democracy. The healthy self leads people to take steps towards democracy. Consensus is the first stage in creating a democratic society. Palmer states that there are a variety of conflicts in the world, and that the process of removing the fear caused by these conflicts is necessary in order to overcome them. Conflicts, he says, are natural in a pluralistic-democratic society:

Consensus is the practical process by which we practice obedience and truth. Consensus is not a democracy of opinion in which a majority vote equals truth. Instead, it is a process of inquiry in which the truth that emerges through listening and responding to each other and the subject at hand is more likely to transcend collective opinion than fall prey to it. With consensus, individual truth is both affirmed and corrected by the communal truth in which we live and learn. With consensus, the learning process itself becomes a model of the obedience required for us to live faithfully with each other and our common world. Students who learn in this way are learning more than facts. They are learning a way of relating obediently to each other and to their world; they are practicing a communal epistemology that will form them in a communal ethic.

According to Palmer, the democratic social system is not automated. It “must be inhabited by citizens and citizen leaders who know how to hold conflict inwardly in a manner that converts it into creativity, allowing it to pull them open to new ideas, new courses of action, and each other.

359 Palmer, *Healing the Heart of Democracy*, 89.


361 Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known*, 97.
That kind of tension-holding is the work of the well-tempered heart.” In order to have a peaceful and fair public life, the heart must be healed and trained.

In conclusion, democratic society starts in the heart. Heartbreak is the root of democracy, and democratic society is built through the bonds of heartbreak and active participation in social reformation. Democracy is an idealistic community with passionate participation and responsibility shared among all individuals to ensure the equality of human dignity. Palmer uses the term democracy to signify the embodiment of the Kingdom of God. And because Palmer uses the theological meaning of ‘the heart’ as the place where God’s loving image exists, democracy and public theology appear to share a theological and biblical foundation.

2.2. Palmer’s Spiritual Practice and Its Practical Relevance to Public Theology

Palmer’s educational theory and its spirituality connect to the character of ‘public theology’ and its practice. The term ‘public’ is the common word that Palmer and the advocates of public theology use. As a new theological term, ‘public theology’ was not commonly used before the middle of the 20th century. When this term, ‘public theology, was first used in the Christian field, it was intended to emphasize the public function of theology, the public role of the church, and the public responsibility of Christians living in their societies. Even though Palmer did not use this theological term in his writings, his goal of education for building democratic society and the theological purpose of public theology head towards the same end. This connection provides key

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insight for the KPCC, as it comes to review its current challenges and re-establish the theory of Christian education. The discipline of public theology, described in Chapter 2, thus provides the theological foundation for a review of the vocation of Christians in society, while Palmer’s theory delivers insight for Christian education in the KPCC.

In his early writings, Palmer considers public life in society as an important goal of education and Christian vocation. He states that “in public we remember that the world consists of more than self and family and friends. We belong to a human community.” Concerning the political term ‘democracy’ in his latest publication, he does not use it with its common political meaning, but rather uses it to signify the ideal embodiment of the Kingdom of God, just as John Dewey and George Albert Coe did. Palmer takes the heart of the human being as the starting point for his educational theory, then expands it out to public life in the society. As stated previously, Palmer’s educational theory is built on the premise that the human being is created in the loving image of God, so the heart of the human being originally yearns for authentic communal life. Democracy is not the perfect word to express the Kingdom of God, according to Palmer. However, the term democracy might be the best word to depict the meaning of the Kingdom of God as embodied in the world that human beings naturally desires. So, Palmer uses ‘authentic’ democracy to distinguish it from the common understanding of the word democracy. This image of the embodiment of the Kingdom of God in society is the fundamental basis of public theology. In Palmer’s theory, the process of education is dialogue with the self in order to listen to the

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364 Palmer states that, “the word ‘public’ means all of the people in a society, without distinction or qualification . . . a person in public life whose career involves accountability to the people as a whole, who carries a public trust.” Parker Palmer, The Company of Strangers, 35.

inner voice for the purpose of building the healthy community. Discovering and reconciling loving relationships between individuals is also the goal of public theology.\textsuperscript{366}

In the American context, the darkness of society with its radical individualism and capitalist social system interferes with communal life, according to Palmer. The concern about American society is that “we suffer from a fragmentation of community that leaves us isolated from one another. We suffer, ironically, from our indifference to those among us who suffer. And we suffer as well from a hopeless sense that our personal and collective destinies are no longer in our hands.”\textsuperscript{367} According to Palmer, many people strive to uphold the common good and obey general laws, but such general American life is ‘citizenship lite,’ and is not enough to keep the democratic system in America thriving. In order to build an authentic democratic community where people desire to establish themselves, citizens must take heavy responsibility for building and sharing this burden together.

Alexis de Tocqueville points out the social ills caused by individualism:

\begin{quote}
A calm and considered feeling which disposes each citizen to isolate himself from the mass of his fellows and withdraw into the circle of family and friends; with this little society formed to his taste, he gladly leaves the greater society to look after itself. . . . The greater our tendency toward individualism, the weaker our communal fabric.\textsuperscript{368}
\end{quote}

Palmer’s efforts to make a practical contribution to public society are revealed in his definition of public theology, i.e., that there is “a growing perception of the need for theology to interact

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{366} Palmer, \textit{A Hidden Wholeness}, 118.
\textsuperscript{367} Palmer, \textit{Healing the Heart of Democracy}, 19.
\end{footnotes}
with public issues of contemporary society”369 through “systematic reflection on issues relating to public life, carried out in the light of theological conviction and with the aid of the theological disciplines.”370 Also, public theology is “a mode of doing theology that is intended to address matters of public importance.”371 Palmer synthesizes a variety of theological foundations in order to create a focus on public life. According to Max Stackhouse, Christians should actively practice what they believe and learn from the Bible in the society. God is not only Lord over Christians, but is also the Creator of the entire universe, and so Christians should not limit their beliefs to private affairs. Christians are God’s stewards and are required to live in the public arena and seek God’s will there by employing ethical practices.372 Public theology provides the practical principle Palmer’s theory of Christian education needs in order to develop its process and its practice. This is the process of attaining spiritual maturity and nurturing Christians to take responsibility for the global world, teaching them to look beyond themselves as individuals and their own local interests.373

In conclusion, using Palmer’s view of spirituality in education, the KPCC should consider the public theological foundation that the church needs for its work in society, because the image of God in the human being yearns to build authentic loving community in the present world. This is


370 “Public Theology in the Canadian Context” on the homepage of the Centre for the Public Theology in the Faculty of Theology at Huron University College, http://www.publictheology.org/groups/centreforpublictheology (assessed on Sep 4, 2012).


373 Palmer says that other-interest comes as the result of a healthy public life, and includes everything from ‘the noblest self-sacrifice to the cruellest self-service.’ Palmer, The Company of Strangers, 37.
absolutely related to the challenge facing the KPCC and its education in terms of its vocation. The KPCC should understand that spirituality has the public vocation to pursue a healthy community as the embodiment of the Kingdom of God in the present world. The KPCC needs to look beyond a dehumanized society that ignores the importance of loving relationships, and listen to Palmer’s voice in order to materialize ways of building a peaceful, just, and fair society. The goal of Christian education in the KPCC is thus the goal of creating healthy relationships within Korean society.

There are two aspects to Palmer’s understanding of spirituality that the KPCC needs to critically reflect upon. First, his educational view of spirituality is far different from the traditional understanding of the KPCC, because the KPCC has tended to understand spirituality as the personal experience of the Holy Spirit, and the shamanic experience is also deeply embedded in the prevailing understanding of spirituality. Palmer, however, explains spirituality is not only personal, but is also for others, and it should not remain a religious matter, but should be at the heart of education. The KPCC thus needs the wisdom to apply Palmer’s view of spirituality into the field of Christian education. Second, his view of spirituality in education is from the Christian tradition, but is also based on his varied religious background described in Chapter 4. Because Korean society is intertwined in religious pluralism, Christian education in the KPCC needs not only to adhere to the Protestant Christian tradition, but also to harmonize with other religious traditions in the Korean context.
CHAPTER 6

MOVING TOWARDS CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR SOCIETY IN THE KPCC

This chapter explores Parker Palmer’s contribution to Christian education in the KPCC and proposes four ways of dealing with the challenges the KPCC currently faces. These challenges were outlined in Chapter 1, and currently relate to the relevance of the KPCC’s Christian education and associated program. Palmer’s educational theory is helpful then, not only when it comes to reflecting critically on the theological and educational relationship between Christian education in the KPCC and the wider society, but also for suggesting desirable alternatives to Christian education in the KPCC.

This chapter also touches on the spiritual heritage of Korean society and the Korean church, as reflected in past contributions to social development, and to building a peaceful, just, fair and democratic community. This is an emphasis and a heritage that the KPCC has lost, and it is one that it needs to recover. With the help of Palmer’s theory of education, the KPCC will be able to return to more effective Christian education for society.

1. Parker Palmer’s Contribution to Christian Education in the KPCC

First of all, it is clear that Palmer’s educational theory can contribute to Christian education in the KPCC, by prompting the Church to reflect critically on its relationship with Korean society in terms of its education, spirituality and practice. Second, Palmer’s educational theory provides
alternative paths to Christian education in the KPCC, reminding the Church of its social vocation and the need to reform its educational emphasis, and to re-establish its goal.

1.1. Emphasis on Relationship with Society in Christian Education in the KPCC

First, Palmer emphasizes that there should be a healthy relation between Christian education and society. In his view, society is the place where Christians actually live and where Christian education is put into practice. Palmer emphasizes that Christian educators should listen carefully to voices in the society, and observe the changed social context in which the Church finds itself. Christian education should then reflect a dialogue with the social situation that Christians are involved in.

Palmer’s emphasis on a healthy relationship between Christian education and the society is the key to proposals that the KPCC needs to reflect critically on its past relationship with society and in so doing deal with the challenges that were outlined in Chapter 1. The KPCC has entertained two misunderstandings about society, and these have caused the present-day unhealthy relationship with the wider society. First, the KPCC has traditionally considered the church solely as the place to nurture Christian faith. This emphasis is based on the conservative theology of the KPCC, which has focused on individual salvation and church growth. Second, this conservative theology has produced a dualistic view, in terms of which society is considered the enemy of Christianity, with the church becoming overly alert to the dangers of secularity in the society. These two characteristics of the KPCC have caused the unhealthy relationship between its Christian education and the society. Because Christian education lacks a sense of the

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importance of this social relationship, it is one aspect of the KPCC that has caused the Church to lose its social vocation.\(^{375}\)

Palmer’s education theory provides the theoretical foundation from which the KPCC can re-focus its Christian education with society as its dialogue partner. His theory leads also to the view that Christian education in the KPCC should not only nurture mature Christians for the church itself, but should also produce Christians who will contribute to building a peaceful, just, and fair society that is the embodiment of the Kingdom of God. In this sense, Christian education in the KPCC should foster an emphasis on practice. That is, not only should the KPCC’s education realize the importance of society as Christian vocation and Christian responsibility, but there should also be actual practice and active participation in social activities that contribute to the development of the whole society.

1.2. Emphasis on the Heart as the Educational Fountain for Democracy

Palmer’s focus on the heart as the educational fountain for democracy can lead the KPCC to turn its Christian education from being knowledge-focused and church-growth focused to becoming instead education for the practice of democracy through cultivation of the heart. Palmer’s educational theory emphasizes that education should help learners review, reflect upon, and cultivate their hearts to be healthy. A healthy heart is essential in becoming a healthy human being, and is also the starting point for the practice of democracy.

\(^{375}\)The current challenges in the KPCC are not just related to Christian education, but involve various areas in the KPCC such as preaching, church-politics, and other ministries. This part will focus on the matter of Christian education, however.
The reason why Parker’s emphasis on the heart in education is important is that the KPCC has ignored the importance of the heart with two resulting misunderstandings. First, the conservative theological view in the KPCC has tended to create the opinion that the heart is naturally sinful. Thus Christian education in the KPCC has had more of an external emphasis, by promoting education based on individual morality rather than on internal growth and the emphasis of the social behaviors. Second, this ignorance has led to education that emphasizes external results such as knowledge, growth, and present wealth. However, Palmer’s emphasis on the heart sheds light on Christian education in the KPCC, by reminding the Church that the human being is an image bearer of the image of God. Palmer understands the heart is the place where the loving nature of the human being, created by the image of God’s love, resides. It is also the place where the human being originally desires loving relationship with the other, originating from a relationship with the Triune God.376

In particular, Palmer begins to explore the purpose and function of education by listening to the inner minds and hearts of individuals, because it is the healthy heart that builds the healthy society. The society embodying the love of the Trinitarian God is a democratic society in Palmer’s view, because the heart is the first place where democracy sprouts, and the place where people practice democracy. Through application of his educational theory, Christian educators in the KPCC will know where education begins and what its fountain is. The KPCC should not only emphasize the importance of the heart in education, but should also wrestle to embody this educational insight in society.

376 The general definition of the heart is introduced on page 141.
1.3. Emphasis on Spirituality for the Society

Palmer’s view of spirituality allows the KPCC to change its understanding of spirituality and of the place of spirituality in Christian education. In Palmer’s educational theory, spirituality moves toward the practice of building a peaceful, just, and fair society, and this greatly impacts on the KPCC, and its need to reflect critically on its current individual-focused spirituality and spiritual education.

The role of spirituality in Palmer’s education theory raises questions about what spirituality is and where spirituality heads to. The KPCC has tended to think about spirituality as an inner ability, and as something involved exclusively with the individual realm. Furthermore, in the KPCC, spirituality is utilized as the medium through which to seek blessings in the present world, and this is a reflection of shamanic influence in the Korean context. However, Palmer’s view of spirituality guides the KPCC to re-establish the purpose of spirituality and spiritual practice as going beyond individuals and heading instead toward the society. Christian educators in the KPCC need to learn that spirituality does not remain in the hearts of individuals, but is practiced in the public sphere for the benefit of society. Palmer’s understanding of spirituality indicates not only the educational process as it heads towards its goal, but also the active participation in society that is necessary for achieving this goal.

In addition, Palmer’s understanding of spirituality offers a relevant insight to the KPCC to keep its distinctive spiritual traditions, and to be balanced in relation to the Korean traditional religious spiritualities. Both now and historically, various religious traditions have co-existed in the Korean context. Palmer draws out the spiritual similarities between the various religious
traditions that he has experienced. For example, the Protestant, Quaker, Catholic, and Taoist spiritualities all focus on love between individuals, and love between the human being and nature. His spirituality demonstrates how to harmonize with other spiritualities, and how to cooperate with other spiritualities to achieve the goal of education. Such a view of spirituality is very important for Christian education in the KPCC as the church reconsiders its religious context, precisely because Christianity in Korea has always co-existed within a pluralistic religious background.

1.4. Emphasis on the Goal of Christian Education in the KPCC

Palmer’s educational theory prompts educators in the KPCC to re-think the goal of Christian education in the Korean social context. The goal of education in Palmer’s view is not simply growth in individual knowledge, as has been the case in the KPCC’s Christian education. Palmer’s education theory takes two paths in order to reach its goal. The first is finding one’s own vocation through realizing one’s own identity and integrity. The second path is that of practicing one’s vocation in the public sphere in order to promote the public good in society. Palmer indicates these two paths lead to the goal of education. Eventually the goal of Christian education is reached in public society, namely the creation of a democratic society as the embodiment of the Kingdom of God. Palmer’s proposal is essential to Christian education in the KPCC, in order that the church might re-set its goal beyond its past and current goals, goals that have caused the challenges now faced by the KPCC. Furthermore, adopting Palmer’s goal for education will allow the KPCC to respond to questions from the society.
The goal of Christian education in the KPCC has traditionally been three-fold. As mentioned in Chapter 1, these three elements are education focused on knowledge, education focused on individual morality, and education focused on church growth. These educational foci can be classified as having two main characteristics. The first is that they are knowledge-focused, individual morality-focused, and church growth-focused church education. Christian education in the KPCC has focused on individual growth, and not on growth for others; it has focused on only individual church growth, but not on growth for the broader community where the church is located. However, Palmer’s education theory leads Christian educators in the KPCC to focus on listening to the voice of God in order to desire loving relationships with others, and also on the Kingdom of God in the present world, rather than in the church only. Thus, Palmer’s educational theory provides Christian education in the KPCC with the impetus to re-establish its goal, not only in terms of the relationship with the society, but also in terms of recovering its original vocation toward the society.

In conclusion, I mention four contributions of Palmer’s education theory. These are not only Palmer’s core educational characteristics, but they also demonstrate why Palmer’s education theory is necessary for reforming Christian education in the KPCC. In applying these four contributions, I suggest that the purpose of the curriculum should be realigned toward realizing the public vocation of Christians and the church, and that Palmer’s actual educational processes should be implemented. The purpose in doing this would be 1) in order to understand the nature of the society in which the learners live, 2) to share the identity and vocation of that society, 3) to interpret social phenomena and situations in terms of the Christian message, and 4) to practice participation in social activities.
1.5. Limitations of Palmer’s Educational Theory

There are limitations that should be considered when applying Palmer’s education theory to Christian education in the KPCC. First, there is a contextual limitation concerning Palmer’s theory and its application in the Korean context. Palmer’s educational theory originated in a western context, specifically the American context. His motive for unfolding his educational thought came from experiences in his own life in American society, and also from research into American history which formed the foundation of his education theory. This means that his education theory was formed through interaction with American society. The foundation of his educational theory is thus limited to the American context, and the educational foundations of the KPCC and Palmer are also different. Between these two contexts, the historical, cultural, religious, and social backgrounds, and present day concerns are different. Thus Christian education in the KPCC should make its own interpretation of the Korean social situation, and have its own lens for interacting with Korean society based on its own tradition. In this sense, any methods used in applying Palmer’s educational theory to KPCC and Korean society need to be modified in order to find the appropriate educational methods. Palmer’s educational theory can nevertheless still function as a bridge to the Korean context.

Second, there is a limitation concerning where Palmer’s education theory is practiced. Palmer works in the field of school education, but he is a Christian educator, and his educational foundation is in the Christian tradition. The limitation here is that his educational theory does not focus on Christian education in the church, does not consider issues surrounding the congregational environment. Also, the role of a teacher, and the relationship between a teacher and a learner are different in church education from school education. Also, Christian education
in the KPCC is mostly for people in the church and thus educators in the KPCC should interpret Palmer’s education theory as it applies to the church environment.

Third, there is a further limitation to Palmer’s education theory in that he does not consider the global context, instead he limits himself to his own immediate context. Even though he deals with some issues, such as racism, the consumerism caused by the capitalized economic system, and efforts for maintaining peace, these are considered matters for American society. Thus even though Palmer’s educational theory bears a similarity to public theology in terms of its theoretical foundations and its goal of practice, it nevertheless remains focused on American society. Public theology, by contrast, focuses not only on social and national issues, but also on global concerns and issues. As emphasized by Stackhouse, public theology deals with global issues that Christians and the church need to take care of. In this sense, Palmer’s education theory is limited in focusing only on his local context. He thus lacks the broader implications of public theology, and his approach accordingly seems narrower.

2. Moving Towards Christian Education for Society in the KPCC

Palmer’s contribution contains insights that focus on social health and emphasize the building of a peaceful society. These insights are rooted in Korean traditional culture also, and include the pursuit of peaceful community that comes from the Korean religious tradition, the warm mindset of the Korean tradition, and political and educational efforts for building a peaceful society evident in modern Korean history. These are insights that need to be renewed to help the KPCC overcome its educational challenges. Because the KPCC has lost its public vocation toward the
society and is now isolated from the society, it needs to draw on the wisdom that Korean society already possesses. Palmer leads Christian education in the KPCC to re-connect to this wisdom.

First, traditional Korean religions have long functioned as agents of social development and have long strived to build a healthy society based on an understanding of their public vocation. Confucian teaching emphasizes Ren (仁), Yi(義) and Li(禮), with Ren(仁) meaning benevolence, goodness, respect and love for others.\(^{377}\) Li(禮) has the sense of an inner attitude toward others, while Yi(義) means righteousness and justice. As the core teaching of Confucianism, all three words focus on the practice of building just, peaceful, and fair relationships between individuals in the present society, and go beyond our current individual-centered modern society.\(^{378}\) In addition, Taoist teaching focuses on living in harmony, with self-emptiness and non-action essential in the journey toward finding the universal truth as the embodiment of peace and justice in the present world.\(^{379}\) Focusing on building a harmonized world through the individual’s self-emptying is similar to Palmer’s educational theory. The purpose of cultivating the self is not only to become a healthy human being, but also to create the foundation for a peaceful society. In addition, in Taoist teaching, self-emptying heads towards not only a harmonized universe, but also towards building a healthy community. In sum, even though these religious traditions in the

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Korean culture are not based on the Christian tradition, Palmer’s education theory functions as a bridge between Christian education in the KPCC and the religious wisdom in the Korean tradition, connecting both through a Christian lens, so that they might be translated into Christian concepts in the KPCC.

Second, there has long been a tradition of openness and hospitality in the Korean culture. The Korean religious tradition mentioned in the previous section has the virtue of treating others, especially strangers, with openness and hospitality. One of the representative emotional characters of the Korean language is Jung (情), a word that is not easy to define.\textsuperscript{380} Basically, Jung is the emotion related to the relationship with others. It is rarely caused by negative relationships, and is mostly based on a warm heart and loving actions on the other’s behalf and onward their happiness. This concept is directly connected to openness and hospitality to others, and is based on sacrifice for others.\textsuperscript{381}

As a representative emotional character, Jung encourages people to promote a healthy social atmosphere and loving relationships. However, Koreans are losing this tradition due to increasing radical individualism in the capitalized society, and the KPCC has also ignored this practice due to its individual-focused ministry. As a warm Korean tradition, Jung can function as the connecting point between the indigenous tradition and the emphasis on openness and

\textsuperscript{380} Jean-Marie Custave Le Clezio as the winner of the Nobel Prize of Literature in 2008 mentioned that the concept of Jung is very unique, and is not easy to define with one word. It includes the life and culture of Koreans and their spiritual emotion and attitude. Also, it is not possible to translate into other foreign languages. Korean Spirit, http://www.ikoreanspirit.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=36499 (accessed on Dec, 14, 2014).

hospitality found in Palmer’s education theory. Thus Christian education in the KPCC should recover the practice of openness and hospitality with Jung as the spiritual practice.

Third, the first western missionaries worked for the transformation of society based on their understanding of the public function of the church, and Christian education in the KPCC needs to recover this function. Even though the first western missionaries caused the formation of conservative theology and its practice in the Korean Protestant Church, their educational works nevertheless led to social transformation in Korea.

The missionaries tried to provide educational opportunities for the public. Before the arrival of the missionaries, Korean society did not allow women or those who were not in the upper class to study publically, but missionaries extended the educational opportunities to include all levels of society. To achieve this, missionaries established not only a great number of public schools, but also created educational opportunities in the churches. Their educational efforts contributed to the social transformation of Korean society. In addition, their Christian education sought to awaken people to awareness of the national crisis and the importance of national independence. Education inspired Koreans to realize the values of democratic freedom and human rights.

Many Protestant Christians began to actively participate in movements for the independence of Korea from Japan. At this time there arose among some Koreans a notable movement to secure the independence and modernization of Korea. However, the KPCC, rather than keeping its educational focus on society in the way the early Korean church did, seems to have lost this...

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382 In Heo Kim, *The Spirit and Practice of the Korean Education* (Seoul, South Korea: Moonumsa, 2002), 32-34.

focus. Thus, Christian education in the KPCC needs to regain its focus on society by connecting to the goal of education as set out in Palmer’s theory.

Fourth, some Korean Protestant churches have already provided insights for Christian education in the KPCC, suggesting that the church remember its goal in relation to society. These also emphasized the function of theology in light of socially chaotic situations, and pointed the church towards helping people in society, the oppressed in particular. One of movements for social transformation by churches is called Minjung theology, springing from a time in which Korean churches were wrestling with an extremely chaotic social situation, especially in the 1970s and 1980s when they struggled against the dictatorial power. Churches tried to provide not only theological reflection based on critical interpretation, but also to actively transform the society. However, the KPCC has tended to ignore these social struggles, and has not wrestled with the nation’s social problems. The KPCC should observe the spirit of these churches’ struggles, which demonstrate how the church has in the past responded to a sorrowful, unrighteous, and unjust social situation, and has remembered its social responsibility toward the society.384

In sum, Korean society has wisdom in its religious, educational, and political situations that can provide insight for Christian education in the KPCC. Even though the KPCC has not realized the value of these struggles in building a healthy relationship with society for the sake of social well-being, Christian education in the KPCC can now re-focus on this strand of wisdom in order to re-

establish its goal in the society, and through the light shed by public theology and Palmer, re-discover its traditional roots which were focused on society.

3. Conclusion

First, as part of re-realizing its goal for education, Parker Palmer’s theory reminds the KPCC of the public vocation of Christian education. In addition, his understanding of spirituality as the basis of the education process allows the KPCC to modify the meaning of spirituality and its practice in education. Palmer’s educational theory penetrates the nature of Christian education in the KPCC, points to its weaknesses and challenges the church to recover its responsibility toward the society.

Second, Palmer’s education theory leads Christian educators in the KPCC to re-connect with that wisdom found in Korean traditional religions that sought to build a peaceful society based on the public function of religion. It also leads them also to re-connect with the historical political practice of the Korean Protestant church in building a democratic society. Palmer’s educational theory will thus help the KPCC use its Christian education to remember the Church’s responsibility toward the society, to re-set its focus on wrestling with social issues, and recover its healthy communication with the society. It is a theory that provides the KPCC with the tools to meet the challenge it faces in the 21st century.

In addition, Christian education in the KPCC should embrace the public function of theology, by realizing its vocation, not only in terms of the local society, but also in relation to global concerns and issues. This means that Christian education in the KPCC should re-set its educational focus not only within the KPCC, but also globally, by broadening its approach and
practice. Christian education in the KPCC needs to consider the theological foundations that Moltmann and Stackhouse proposed in Chapter 2. Moltmann’s insights lead the KPCC to consider the theological basis of its Christian education as forming the vocation of the Church, and also to recognize that love is the nature that originates from the Trinitarian God (something also mentioned by Palmer in relation to education.). Stackhouse’s proposals about the response of the church to globalization also provide Christian educators in the KPCC with a goal, because his theological interpretation of globalization is required in order to understand Korean society in its globalized context. These two theologians can thus help Christian education in the KPCC re-establish its educational goals with the help of a fresh understanding of social vocation and context.

Korean society changed rapidly from a feudal social system to a democratically-advanced scientific country at the same time as the Korean Protestant church grew. The social environment of Korea will continue to change quickly, but no one can foresee the precise direction it will take—whether towards peaceful, fair, and just ways or not. Thus the responsibility of the KPCC concerning the public dimension of its Christian education is to interpret the social context, dialogue with it, and provide the appropriate responses. In addition, wrestling with the relation between educational research and practice, and more specifically, with how Palmer’s educational theory can work in conjunction with Korea’s own traditions for the benefit of public society, will be my next task in this field of study. As my further duty, I will try to research and propose an educational model for Christian education in the KPCC that can be used to facilitate a healthy relationship between education in the congregational context and the broader societ
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