

Christian Spiritual Education: A Holistic Approach

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Abstract

Korean churches and Christians living in the 21st century experience confusion and crisis in the context of globalization with neo-liberalism, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, postmodernism, terrorism, and the emergence of new technology. Korean churches and Christians are concerned with the disintegration of authority and the tradition of postmodernism in the 21st century, the gap between rich and poor under the system of neo-liberalism, new issues of radical development of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and global violence connected with religion, such as ISIS terrorism. Most Christians experience confusion when we look at these situations. Is there hope for us? Is the progress of technology pursued by humans reliable? What is the true

<http://dx.doi.org/10.26590/madang..29.201806.109>

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subjectivity and meaning of human existence in a world where absoluteness and authority are dismantled and diversity is fragmented? In these global situations, what should Christianity and its followers pursue? Which destinations and ways of life should we pursue? Nevertheless, Christians should not be angry or despair when thinking about the world; instead, this should be a sign of hope to understand and change the world for the better through the Word of God and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. Holistic Christian spiritual education does not separate God and the world, man from man, man from society, or man from nature. In this regard, I suggest five dimensions for becoming a better Christian (for a holistic Christian life) in the present.: (1) God the theological dimension; (2) man, the personal dimension; (3) the socio-cultural dimension; (4) the ecological environment; (5) and technology, related to the civilizational dimension. Holistic Christian spiritual education is focused on understanding all life and nature as an individual and is aimed at the life of Shalom, pursuing peace

- **Keywords**

Globalization era, Bible study, Religious education, Holistic Christian spiritual education, Holistic Approach

I. Introduction

Today in Korean society, most people are indifferent to religion, including a disinterest in Christianity. It may seem like a contradiction, as many also show a deep interest in mystical, transcendental, and religious subjects. For example, modern people in Korea are interested in movies with mysterious and religious themes. Heo In-moo's "Love, So Divine (2004)", which was screened in 2004, recorded a cumulative audience of 675,521, followed by Kim Yong-hwa's "Along with the Gods: The Two Worlds (2017)", which had a recorded cumulative audience of 13,854,706 (as of Feb 29, 2018). This phenomenon reflects our present, a so-called spiritual age. In other aspects, scholars or theologians often say 'spiritual but not religious.' Likewise, many people today describe themselves as 'spiritual but not religious' (SBNR) in many instances - for example, on dating sites, many often say that "I am not spiritual because I don't believe in spirits and other supernatural agents."¹ I find this situation to be a phenomenon of the 'Thirst for God' in human nature,² in other words, the spiritual age in our time.

In this regard, I believe Christians need to answer and respond anew to the contemporary concerns of the people and raise questions on the topics of spirituality in the Bible and on our Christian traditions. In addition to this, I would like to discuss the definition of holistic Christian spiritual education that has recently found increased interest. My purposes in this article are fourfold. First, in chapter II, I will discuss

1 Paul Thagard, "Spiritual but Not Religious," *Hot Thought (blog)*, *Psychology Today*, October 28, 2016, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/hot-thought/201610/spiritual-not-religious>.

2 Jeong Joon Kim, *Jungian Psychology and Spirituality Education* (Seoul: Emerging Books, 2008), 23.

the concept of Bible study, Christian education, and Christian spiritual education and its historical flow. In chapter III, I will discuss the significance of the educational concept of 'holism' and 'spirituality' which are related meaning to Christian spiritual education. In chapter IV, I will discuss the core values of Christian spiritual education. Finally, in chapter V, I will conclude my article by summarizing the discussion so far, suggesting a direction for holistic spiritual education, which is applicable in the field of Korean Church education.

II. Bible Study, Christian Education, Christian Spiritual Education

Historically, Christian education has changed its focus (goals) and practical approach according to philosophy, theological perspectives, and the socio-cultural environment. First, I will examine and describe the approaches towards Christian education that were presented by Jack L. Seymour and its contextual meanings. Next, I will examine and describe the focus and approaches of Christian education in the Korean Church and the viewpoint of spiritual education related to the field of Christian education.

1. Overview: Christian Education Approaches in America

Jack L. Seymour (1982) presented five types of modern approaches to Christian education, including Religious Instruction, Faith Community, Spiritual Development, Liberation, and Interpretation. The goals of Seymour's five types of Christian education are as follows.³

3 Jack L. Seymour, "Approaches to Christian Education," ed. Jack L. Seymour & Donald E. Miller, *Contemporary Approaches to Christian Education* (Nashville: Abingdon Press. 1982), 32-33.

First, Religious Instruction intends to transmit the Christian religion (understanding and practice) in a formal educational setting. James M. Lee (1931-2004) is a dominant scholar of the Religious Instruction approach. The proponents of this approach usually emphasize that the teaching/learning transaction consists of the transmission of Christian religious beliefs, practices, feelings, knowledge, and effects to the learner, fitting within the context of the Church's educational programs.⁴ The goal of the Religious Instruction approach is to help teachers transmit the contents of Christian religion to learners efficiently (scientifically). This type of religious education is focused on applying the scientific results of general education from the early twentieth century to the religious education of the Church.

Second, the Faith Community approach seeks to build the congregation into a community where followers can encounter Christianity and learn through the life style of a community of faith. John H. Westerhoff, III is a dominant scholar of the Faith Community approach. In 1976, Westerhoff criticized that a schooling-instructional paradigm has victimized Christian education and imprisoned it in secular pedagogy.⁵ The Faith Community emphasized that Christian education is shaped by the embodiment of Christian faith in the form of the church. In fact, Westerhoff draws heavily on the anthropology and sociology of education.⁶

Third, Spiritual Development aims to enable the individual to grow in faith to a spiritual maturity that will last forever. The Spiritual Development approach focuses on the religious experience and religious

4 Ibid., 16.

5 John H. Westerhoff III., *Will Our Children Have Faith?* (New York: Seabury Press, 1976), 9.

6 Jack L. Seymour, "Approaches to Christian Education," 21.

quest of the individual as being the proper aim of Christian education. One's spiritual life is the purpose and the context for this type of education. Catholic religious educators Gloria Durka and Joanne Marie Smith, and Protestant religious educators James Fowler and Donald Miller are dominant scholars on the Spiritual Development approach. These scholars demonstrate the work of psychologists such as E. Erikson, L. Kohlberg, and J. Piaget.⁷ This approach wrestles with the way an individual's experiences are integrated with the wealth of experience present in the Church's tradition. It is my opinion that the Spiritual Development approach may give more help Christian learners in diverse cultures and the fragmented individual era.

Fourth, the Liberation approach intends to transform the Church and individual towards liberation and humanization in places where Christians are involved throughout the world. In this approach, justice is the primary metaphor used by a Liberation educator. The social context of suffering and exploitation, of dehumanization and oppression, set the agenda for the Church's educational ministry. Liberation educators begin with Biblical promises and the vision of the Kingdom of God. This vision, combined with social analysis, inspires the mission of Church.⁸ Grant Shockley and Brian Wren are dominant scholars on the Liberation approach from the 1970s. Thinking beyond the Liberation approach of the twentieth century contextual situation, this approach should recall the meaning of theology and education in the twenty-first century. In a situation where oppression and suffering are increasing in many neo-liberal economic systems in which capital and technology are connected, the Liberation approach calls for a new in-

7 Ibid., 23-24.

8 Ibid., 25-26.

terpretation and practice of Christian spiritual education in the present.

Last, Interpretation seeks to connect Christian perspectives and practices with contemporary experiences throughout a person's life. Douglas Wingeier and Thomas H. Groome are dominant scholars on the approach of Interpretation. Thomas H. Groome (1980) explains that his approach is "interpretive" because it "guide[s] people in their attempt to discern within which their discernment can be shared."⁹ It recognizes that truth or insight is present both in personal experience and in the Christian story and vision. The individual thus is called to understand the truth, make meaningful connections, and shape a way of living that is faithful to experience and tradition. Emphasis is placed equally on personal experience and on the Christian tradition.¹⁰

Seymour's idea of Christian Education Approaches reflects the flow and actions of modern Christian education approaches and attempts to focus educator activities in this context. These five approaches to modern Christian education reflect the effort to understand the situation (context) and to help Christians live (experience) the teachings of the Bible (text) in the twentieth century. It helps us to outline the theory and practice of American Christian education from the early twentieth century to the latter half.

2. Emerging Christian Spiritual Education in Modern Context

American Scholars interest in spirituality was triggered in the 1960s. John L. Elias claimed that a new wind of spirituality was blowing in

9 Thomas H. Groome, *Christian Religious Education: Sharing Our Story and Vision* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 195.

10 Jack L. Seymour, "Approaches to Christian Education," 29-30.

the 20th century. It was the revival of evangelicalism in the seventeenth century, the renewal movement of the Roman Catholic Church in the eighteenth century, the fourth great awakening movement in the 19th century, and a new awareness of the 20th century spirituality.¹¹ In this historical flow, discussions on spirituality in Christian education scholars in America began in the 1960s, but it was begun earnestly in the 1980s. Sohn, Won Young (2001) said that there are two major approaches to spirituality in the field of Christian education. One is the 'Christian Education for Spirituality' (Religious Education for Spirituality), a way to explore which forms of Christian education are appropriate to develop human spirituality. This form can be found in the approach of 'spiritual training' or 'spiritual education'. The other is 'Spirituality for Christian Education' (Spirituality for Religious Education), which is an approach that utilizes the viewpoint of spirituality to develop the theory and practice of Christian education.¹² So far, the study of spirituality in Christian education has been mainly the form of Christian Education for spirituality, that is called 'spiritual training' or 'spiritual education'

He also described four types of the spirituality study to Christian education in America since the 1980s. First, it is a type of study that ask a question, what is spirituality, in a point of educational theology view. Thomas H. Groome and Frank Rogers are dominant scholars of this type of study.¹³ Thomas H. Groome presented how students and

11 John L. Elias, "The Return of Spirituality: Contrasting Interpretation," *Religious Education* 86.3 (1991), 455.

12 Sohn, Won Young, "Spiritual Approach to Christian Education," *Journal of Christian Education in Korea* 7 (2001), 204.

13 Thomas H. Groome, *Educating for Life: Spiritual Vision for Every Teacher and Parent* (Allen, TX: ThomasMore, 1998); Frank Rogers, Jr., "Dance with Grace: Toward a Spirit-Centered

children should be educated to the teacher and parents of Christian education on the basis of Catholic theology and spirituality.¹⁴ On the other hand, F. Rogers F. Rogers presented Christian spiritual education centered on the Holy Spirit on the basis of post-Barthian theology. He defines spirituality as "human desire for totality, mystery, and inter-connectivity," and explains that Christian spirituality is a life led by the Holy Spirit.¹⁵

Second, it is a study type of developmental psychology perspective on spiritual development. The leading scholars are James W. Fowler, Sharon Parks, and Iris V. Cully.¹⁶ They are interested in Christian spiritual maturity and try to help them spiritual growth and maturity by applying developmental psychology. Especially, J. W. Fowler advocates the theory of structuralist developmental psychology that the structure of faith develops with the development of human cognitive structure. He presented seven stages of faith development theory as a process of human faith growth and maturity based on developmental psychology theories such as E. H. Erikson, L. Kohlberg, and J. Piaget.¹⁷

Third, it is a traditional Christian spirituality approach to spiritual education. This approach criticizes the fact that past discussions on

Education," *Religious Education* 89.3 (1994), 377-395.

14 Thomas H. Groome, *Educating for Life: Spiritual Vision for Every Teacher and Parent* (Allen, TX: ThomasMore, 1998); idem, "Spirituality as Purpose and Process of Catechesis," *The Echo Within: Emerging Issues in Religious Education*, ed. Catherine Dooley and Mary Collins (Allen, TX: ThomasMore, 1997), 161-176.

15 Frank Rogers, Jr., "Dance with Grace," 377-395.

16 James W. Fowler, *Stage of Faith* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981); Sharon Parks, *The Critical Years: The Young Adult Search for a Faith to Live* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986); Iris V. Cully, *Education for Spiritual Growth* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984).

17 James W. Fowler, *Stage of Faith*, 119-211.

spirituality are based on a developmental psychology, and explores how to reconstruct religious traditions, including Christian traditions, in a modern sense. Especially, Maria Harris & Gabriel Moran argues that development should not be reduced to merely psychological concepts, emphasizing the need to restore the meaning of spiritual development inherent in religious traditions.¹⁸

Finally, the approach to the system and method of Christian education for spiritual education. It is a type of study that suggests which educational system and method are most appropriate for the development of spirituality. The leading scholars are Richard Foster, Padraic O'Hare.¹⁹ Especially, R. Foster presented a model of faith community as the most effective system for spiritual education(discipline). He argues that personal, communal activities in the faith community and social participation activities in the world are effective for spiritual development. He also suggested an effective method to develop spirituality is traditional methods of spiritual training: Lectio Divina, meditation, centering prayer, contemplation, and participation of rituals in faith community.²⁰

Since the 1980s, the inquiry into the spirituality of Christian education scholars in America is a theological response to the challenge of secularization. It is due to the development of technological science,

18 Maria Harris & Gabriel Moran, "Educating Person," *Mapping Christian Education: Approaches to Congregational Learning*, ed. Jack L. Seymour (Nashville: The Abingdon Press, 1997); idem, *Reshaping Religious Education: Conversations on Contemporary Practice* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), chapter 7.

19 Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978); Padraic O' Hare, *The Way of Faithfulness: Contemplation & Formation in the Church* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1993).

20 Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*.

the wide spread of postmodernism, and the increased interest of Americans in oriental religion, which led to the stagnation and crisis of Christian faith. Next chapter III. 2 Spirituality, I will discuss more the reason why American society have increased interest of spirituality in the late twentieth century.

3. Flows of the Christian Education Model in a Korean Context

In the context of the Korean Church and the fields of Christian education, the main paths of Christian education history begin from a variety of sources, such as Bible study to spiritual Christian education. I believe that Christian educational development and its history shows three routes: Bible study, Christian education, and spiritual Christian education.

To begin, the first type of Christian education in the Korean Church is Bible study. This classical, and the archetypal style of Christian education in Korea is based on the Bible study form found in early Korean Protestant Church history. The beginnings of this path started when Korean Protestant churches experienced the arrivals of American Methodist missionary H. G. Appenzeller (1858-1902) and Presbyterian missionary H. G. Underwood (1859-1916) who came to Incheon on April 5, 1885. Other Protestant missionaries who entered Korea deployed missionary work, through medical (hospital) and education (school) projects, in accordance with authority policy. Christian education within the Korean Church started from this missionary work and developed over five periods - the first period (Formation period): 1884-1922, the second period (Growth period): 1922-1938, the third period (Stagnation period): 1938-1960, the fourth period (Maintenance period): 1960 - current.²¹

Christian education in Korea has been developing into Christian schools (Mission schools), adult Bible study classes, and Sunday school since the time of the Formation period (1922-1938). Historically, Christian education in Korean churches was conducted through three different types of Christian education.²² In the early days of missionary work in the Korean Church, Christian education was developed into Christian schools (Mission schools), adult Bible study, Sunday school. However, there were various types of Christian education in the early days of Korean Christian education, and educators taught the Bible as a means to living a right and just Christian life.

The second type of Christian education in the Korean Church is the Christian Education approach. This approach emphasizes the Bible as the living word of God and the Church as the locus of interaction between God and man. The Christian Education model in the context of Korean Christian education emerged in the middle of the twentieth century. Historically, as with Christian education in America, progressive religious education movements were conducted by scholars such as George A. Coe and Harrison S. Elliot on the basis of liberal theology in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.²³ The educational approach of this progressive religious education movement was called 'Religious Education' (RE). Religious educational goals were reflected in the motto "Salvation by Education." This religious education was a different expression of the interaction between liberal Christianity and modern culture.²⁴ The religious education movement in America was

21 Yongwon Kang, "History of Christian Education in Korean Protestant Church," *History of Christian Education* (Seoul: Kidok Hankyo, 2008), 311.

22 Ibid., 312-314.

23 Junkwan Eun, *A Theology of Education* (Seoul: Dongyeon Press, 2013), 266-267.

24 Daniel D. Williams, *A Handbook of Christian Theology* (New York: Living Age Books, 1960),

accepted into the Korean Church and Christian education between 1945 and 1960s. Although this religious education movement contributed to the search for a new direction of the field of Church education in Korea, it revealed the limit of categorical methodology and child-centered education.

Between the 1960s and 1980s, as in the historical flow of American Christian education, the Christian education movement came to the Korean Church and Christian educational field just as the Christian Education (CE) movement based on the neo-orthodoxy theology developed as a criticism of the religious education movement. During this time (1940-1960s), representative scholars of Christian education included R. Niebuhr, Lewis Sherrill, D. C. Wyckoff, James Smart, R. C. Miller, Reuel Howe, etc. These scholars emphasized 'the Words of God,' 'Gospel,' 'Church,' 'experiment of salvation,' 'encounter,' and 'discipleship' in Christian education.²⁵ As in America, Christian education based on neo-orthodoxy theology grew into a golden era within the Korean Church and field of Christian education and corresponded to its revival. If the religious education movement emphasized human experience and growth rather than God's word, then, on the contrary, the Christian education movement emphasized the Word of God (Bible), the Church, and faith, which provided a basis for a balanced academic approach.

Lastly, the Spiritual Christian Education model emerged into the Korean Church and field of Christian education in modern times(1990-present). Why did the interest in spirituality (education) arise in the Korean church and Christian education field in the late 20th century?

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25 Junkwan Eun, *A Theology of Education*, 324-326.

Kim, Jeong Joon analyzed the reasons in three ways:²⁶ The first is the rediscovery of spirituality as a new alternative, as the growth of Korean churches fades, which is the view that the essence of church growth is not quantitative growth but qualitative growth. The second reason is that Korean church and most Christian leader recognized the importance of the wholistic spiritual life that must be consistent not only on the spiritual level but also on the level of life.²⁷ Finally, new attempts to utilize traditional spiritual resources for the restoration of church growth. These are new attempts to apply spiritual resources such as *Lectio Divina*, meditation, contemplation, and centering prayer to pastoral care, counseling, and education. However, the increased interest in spirituality reflects the public's new understanding of human life and the search for life due to rapid social change from new technology, the wide spread of postmodernism, and human alienation and life crisis under the new capitalist economic system in Korean situation.

The other side, the increasing interest in Christian spiritual education by pastors and Christian educators in the Korean Protestant Church due to public rejection of existing institutional Christianity, alongside existing Bible Study and Christian education, have not had a great influence on the lives of modern people, especially young people. It is

26 Jeong Joon Kim, *Jungian Psychology and Spirituality Education*, 20.

27 In recent studies of Christian spiritual education, conventional concepts on between spirit and body, soul and material, cognition and emotion, clergy and layman, holiness and everyday life are not separated or divided, but emphasize interconnected in wholeness. Hee Chun Kang, *Critical Reflection on Christian Education* (Seoul: Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2003), 203-205; Eun Ha Cho, *Holistic Spirituality and Christian Education* (Seoul: Handl Press, 2004), 102-104; Won Young Sohn, *Spirituality and Education* (Seoul: Handl Press, 2004), 13-15.

due to this reflection and realization that existing Christian education methods and Bible study can do no more. Today, Christian spiritual education means a new educational approach to overcoming the limitations of existing Bible study, religious education, and Christian education in order to aid in the development of a desirable Christian life. I will explain this concept further in the details that follow.

III. Issues on 'Holistic' and 'Spirituality' and 'Christian Spiritual Education'

What do terms like 'holistic' and 'spirituality' mean in regard to Christian spiritual education? And what are the characteristics of Christian spiritual education? I will discuss the three terms 'holistic', 'spirituality', and 'Christian spiritual education' below.

1. The meaning of the word 'holistic'

The word 'holistic' (통전성, 統全性) is a term that has emerged in translating 'wholeness' or 'integrity' used in the English-speaking world and brought into Korean.²⁸ In general, these two words, wholeness and integrity, are mixed together. The word 'holistic' is originally from the Greek *holos*, meaning wholeness, and was borrowed by the English language. The Greek word *holos* includes the connotation of wholeness/entire, completion, health, healing, and holiness.²⁹ The

28 Kyoo Min Lee, *Holistic Christian Education for the Postmodern Era* (Seoul: Publishing House the Presbyterian Church of Korea, 2016), 12.

29 "ὅλος," *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Essay Christian Literature*, ed. Walter Bauer (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1958).

Greek ὅλος (holos) is associated with three meanings in English.

English borrowed the Greek word *holos*, which eventually became the English word ‘whole’; the noun form ‘wholeness’ was formed after the addition of the suffix. *Holos* is also related to the words ‘holy’, and ‘holistic’. In the *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English* (1979), the four representative usages of the term ‘whole’ are explained, ① not injured or damaged; unbroken (adj.), ② entire, complete, ③ not less or fewer than, ④ (old use, biblical) in good health, well etc.³⁰

The Greek *holos* also became the English word ‘holy’. The word ‘holy’ contained meanings of religious holiness in relation to the glory of the Christian God or to other gods. It encompassed following three meanings: ① associated with God or with religion, ② devoted to religion, ③ formidable person; mischievous.³¹ Generally, Christians relate to the more religious feeling of the holy devotional life to God the Almighty.

Finally, the Greek ὅλος (*holos*) transformed from the terms of ‘whole’ and ‘holy’ into related terms like ‘holistic’ or ‘holism,’ as in the Holism Movement. *The English Dictionary Collins* (2018) explains the adjective ‘holistic’ as follows: ① based on the principles of holism, ② of or relating to a doctrine of holism; of or relating to the medical consideration of the complete person, physically and psychologically, in the treatment of a disease, ③ of or relating to holism; of, concerned with, or dealing with wholes or integrated systems rather than with their parts.³²

30 “Whole,” A. S. Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English* (London: Oxford University Press, 1979).

31 “holy,” *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English*.

In this regard, John Carmody (1983) mentioned the term ‘holistic’ as it related to the study of Christian spirituality. He explained that the term holistic emphasizes the centrality of God’s love and the interconnectedness of the different dimensions of the ordinary believer’s life. It touches all the major domains of human existence (nature, society, the self, and God), taking such concerns as ecology, economics, health, and prayer as candidates for Jesus’s twofold commandment of love.³³ I agreed with Carmody’s view of holistic spirituality with Jesus Christ in our Christian life.

2. Reasons of increasing Interest in Spirituality

These days, mentioning of the word ‘spirituality’ is trend du jour, regardless of the actually connection to religion. Why is there presently great interest in spirituality? Michael Downey (2001) theorizes that there four reasons for this trend as below.

First, the use of ‘spirituality’ is related to historical human cruelties, such as the Jewish Holocaust and the Nazis, or the atomic bombing of the people of Hiroshima in Japan by the United States, during the Second World War. These cruelties led man to lose trust in God and in the Christian tradition. If God should reign over this world, then these historical cruelties should never have occurred. In other words, many people began to believe that the world was no longer ruled by God, and life felt uncertain and absurd.³⁴ Today, for many, the only important thing is the present situation. The way of thinking, the under-

32 “holistic,” *English Dictionary Collins*, <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/holistic>, accessed at February 3, 2018.

33 John Carmody, *Holistic Spirituality* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983), 1.

34 Michael Downey, *Understanding Christian Spirituality*, trans. Sung Kun An (Seoul: Eunsung Pub., 2001), 32-33.

standing, and the relationship to God has changed, and divine authority has vanished.

Second, the deep realization of the evil of human beings' in the twentieth century seen from Holocaust concentration camps and Hiroshima caused a shift in spirituality. We understood and developed the idea that the pride of humans in the fields of science and technology resulted in mankind's technology acting without God, and thus, God did not care for mankind's suffering and responded with His silence. It means only God is incompetent in this technological world.

Third, in addition to concentration camps and the bombing of Hiroshima in the twentieth century, Americans learned new insights from the country's involvement in the Vietnam War (1955-1975). Moreover, most Americans living in the 1960's also witnessed the assassination of John F. Kennedy, the Civil Rights movement, the Watergate hearings, etc. Through this series of historical events, Americans have experienced the misuse and betrayal of political powers and authorities. It has created a legitimate motivation to doubt all authority. As a result, all kinds of authorities have been criticized, and religious authority in particular has been condemned for the level of obedience religion requires.³⁵ Through these historical events, people have become unable to exercise external authoritative control that gives meaning, purpose, and value, and have instead become more self-reliant.

Finally, in the era of the internet, electronic media communication has renewed the understanding of spirituality in our time. Through Einstein's quantum physics theory of relativity and the development of other quantum theories, we have changed the way in which we describe our existence and relation to the world.³⁶ Thus, people have

35 Ibid., 33-34.

come to seek new ways of understanding, naming, and living with the divine and spiritual. In this context, it can be understood that modern people's increasing interest in spirituality demonstrates a new tendency to adapt towards the new world environment and away from the traditional thinking and life style of Christian religion. In other words, individuals who are marginalized and fragmented from the benefits of technology and capital in an increasingly uncertain situation in all respects, attempt to understand their meaning, value, and direction of living through their own religious, spiritual, and mystical efforts.

3. Christian Spiritual Education

To begin, I will define the concept of Christian spiritual education. In the educational field of Korean churches, the term Christian education has been mixed with Bible study, church education, faith education, and religious education. In general, Bible study means that teaching and learning process on the contents of the Bible. Church education means Bible or doctrine education that is held on Sundays at the church. Religious education means education of diversity that conveys all religious phenomena and their religious contents without prejudice. Christian education is a broad concept that encompasses educational activities in all areas of the world, which are based on Christian faith.³⁷ In this context, Christian spiritual education means a wide range of Christian education activities that help Christians form the right faith and live a practical life based on the teachings of the

36 Ibid., 35.

37 Junkwan Eun, *A Theory of Christian Education Context* (Seoul: Christian Press of Korea, 1988), 119-120.

Bible and the tradition of faith.

When taking a modern perspective, an important feature of the quest for Christian spiritual education has four characteristics.³⁸ First, the concept of spirituality implies its meaning with the word “holistic.” Second, we Christian spiritual educators explore our world based on human experience. Third, we consider human socio-cultural situations. Fourth, we approach education in an interdisciplinary way.³⁹ Thus, Christian spiritual education can take a new approach to Christian education in order to overcome the harmful effects of instrumental reason based on modern philosophy and science that began in the eighteenth century and rebuild a fragmented humanity in an integrated or holistic way.⁴⁰ Above all, Christian spiritual education focuses on Christians learning and living in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, this new focus helps Christian followers to exist as their true selves, living between knowledge and existence.⁴¹ The purpose of Christian spiritual education is to help Christian learners to live a mutual and healthy life by realizing the personal connections of their created existence throughout the world. In this context, ‘Holistic Christian Spiritual Education’ means educational activities for Christians living a life that embodies integrity and peace (shalom) based on the teachings of the Bible, recognizing that

38 Jeong Joon Kim, “A Study on Research Methodology in Christian Spiritual Education,” *Journal of Christian Education in Korea* 27 (2011), 185.

39 Jeong Joon Kim, “A Study on Research Methodology in Christian Spiritual Education,” 177; Jang Heum Ok, “A Study on the Wholistic Christian Education Model,” *A Journal of Christian Education in Korea* 32 (2012), 61-64.

40 Jang Heum Ok, “A Study of Teaching Methods for Holistic Spiritual Education,” *A Journal of Christian Education in Korea* 36 (2013), 343-344.

41 Jeong Joon Kim, *Jungian Psychology and Spirituality Education*, 394.

man and all creatures are connected in the world created by God.

IV. Core Values of Christian Spiritual Education

In summing up the discussion so far, I would like to explain the core values of the approach of Christian spiritual education. I suggest the important values of Christian spiritual education in order to help Christian learners to live a desirable Christian life today.

1. Contemporary Christian Spiritual Education: A Holistic Approach

Modern people living in Korean society in the twenty-first century exist in a very complicated world. These days, the historical situation of the Korean Church finds itself in the postmodernism-era beyond modernism, in a political and economic neo-liberalism era, in the Fourth Industrial Revolution.⁴² If I were to properly describe the society of modern people, I would likely describe it as a postmodern. Postmodernism in the twentieth century is an idea and literary way of thinking intended to overcome traditional authority, morality, methodology, and a social system which was based on the thought that there were problems and limitations contained in eighteenth century philosophies. Thus, postmodernism intends to construct civil society based on the idea of freedom and equality.⁴³ In other words, postmodernism is a new approach and attempt to overcome contradictions and limitations based on existing modern worldviews and

42 Klaus Schwab, *The Fourth Industrial Revolution*, trans. Kyoung Jin Song (Seoul: MegaStudy, 2016), 25.

43 Kyoo Min Lee, *Holistic Christian Education for the Postmodern Era*, 40.

values.

However, the postmodern thoughts and ways of life of modern people show confrontation to existing tradition, authority, values and order. For the Christian Church and its followers who still focus on the authority of the Bible, on the traditions of thinking and living within the Church, and on its heritage of faith may not successfully connect to postmodern man. Moreover, the phenomenon of interruption or the hating of one another may appear. However, Christians are also forming positive relationships with modern people outside of the Church in the postmodern era. Churches and Christian followers have a mission to teach others the truth of God and the Bible, and to guide them to salvation. In this context, the approach of Bible education in the Korean Church and Christian education in the twenty-first century should improve the experience, meaning, and value of reading of the Bible by avoiding the conventional ways of transmitting Bible contents. Today, Christian life must be an authentic life, not an ideological one. Christianity must be a path towards helping people to live their truest lives and to reach an enlightenment that goes beyond the acquiring of the doctrine or knowledge of the Bible. It is most important to emphasize only the doctrines of the Bible that help one to reach a life of service rather than a life of division.

2. Biblical Holistic Life

Parker J. Palmer (1993) said that we need to open our eyes to see the whole world. Today we realize that we have lived in a world, where relationships of all people are broken and divided; We have lost our ability to see the whole world. As Palmer mentioned, many of us live one-eyed lives. But today more and more of us are opening the other

eye, the eye of the heart, looking for realities to which the mind's eye is blind. One eye alone is not enough. We need to use our "whole sight," a vision of the world in which mind and heart unite "as [our] two eyes make one in sight." Our seeing shapes our being. Only if we see the whole can we and our world be complete.⁴⁴

Today, the world is tired of neo-liberal economic systems, and rapid technological development, and many people in the world find themselves equally weary. Within neo-liberal economic systems and the era of rapid developing technology, the authority of religion and the tradition of faith are weakened because they bring greater division to between the rich and poor living under the neo-capitalist economic system related to technology.⁴⁵ The rapid development of technology further deepens the gap between capital and information between the rich and the poor.⁴⁶ Life in the world is pushed towards greater and greater extremes. There are more and more people who are dominant in power and more who are dominated, those who have a lot of capital and those who do not, and more people who feel desperation rather than hope in their lives. Is this divided and fragmented world a place of hope for God's will? God, whom Christians believe in and serve, is the hope of salvation. The Church of God must be a life-saving ship. The teachings and learnings of the Bible must be a sign of hope and awareness for the unity of life for the wretched and despairing generations throughout this world.

Christian spiritual education in the Trinity of God is an educational

44 Parker J. Palmer, *To Know as We are Known* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1993), xxiii.

45 Jerry Kaplan, *Humans Need Not Apply*, trans. Dong Sook Shin (Seoul: Hans Media, 2016), 223-224.

46 Hans-Peter Martin & Harald Schumann, *Die Globalisierungsfalle*, trans. Su Dol Kang (Seoul: Young Lim Cardinal Inc., 1997), 26-28.

theory that helps all things to be saved, including man, according to God's good plan, as well as for the purpose of unity between knowing and living. The following Biblical passages contain the goals of Christian spiritual education under the perspective of the holistic: ① Personal: "May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Thess. 5:23). ② All men: "This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (I Timothy 2:3, 4) ③ The whole creation: "We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies." (Rome 8:22, 23) ④ God of us all: "one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all." (Eph. 4:6) ⑤ All things: "And he who sat upon the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." God also proclaimed, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." (Rev. 21:5) These Biblical truths and teachings have an important focus not only on the recitation, but also on the transmission of content, and the realization of the "whole" (holy) life.

3. Forming a Christian whole Life: Five Dimensions

The Korean Church has long emphasized the spirituality-oriented tradition of faith and the various forms of spirituality training for achieving it. In spite of many benefits, the problem of spirituality training in the Korean Church has several problems.⁴⁷ First, spirituality training has been practiced under a dichotomic perspective that em-

47 Hee Chun Kang, *Critical Reflection on Christian Education*, 203-204.

phasizes the afterlife rather than the excess body, the soul, and the temporal. Second, the Korean Church has emphasized the moral dimension to limit spirituality to prayer and meditation. Third, in the teachings of the Bible, one is directed to the form of teacher-led education and one-sided content delivery. As a way to overcome the problems of spiritual education in Korea, I would like to propose five aims of holistic spiritual education.

The first aim is God, the theological dimension. In holistic Christian spiritual education, the purpose of the theological dimension is to acknowledge and confess that God has the initiative in education. Holistic Christian spiritual education is the pre-eminence of grace, where God comes to mankind and mankind responds. Above all, it is a very important educational premise to believe that God has the initiative of holistic Christian spiritual education.

The second aim is man, the personal dimension. Holistic Christian education is concerned with the development of human spirituality, even at the individual level. Individual spiritual development includes the growth, maturity, and personality development of faith in relationships with God.⁴⁸ In this respect, holistic Christian spiritual education considers individual experiences in spiritual life.

The third aim is the socio-cultural dimension. Holistic Christian education is concerned with the desirable relationship between man in social contexts. The formation of human spirituality is not limited to the lone individual but is deeply related to the socio-cultural context of the learner. Furthermore, we must practice social justice based on the teachings of the Bible in order to change a distorted social structure.⁴⁹ Christian educators should recognize that Christian spiritual

48 Jeong Joon Kim, *Jungian Psychology and Spirituality Education*, 110-111.

life is influenced by socio-cultural changes in history.

The fourth aim is the ecological environment dimension. The ecological dimension of holistic Christian education focuses on the relationship with natural spaces inhabited by humans.⁵⁰ In the natural environment, the world that God has created is a place where people and all living things exist together. As a place of life, God imposed responsibility on man to properly manage the natural environment. Nature is no longer the object of human exploitation, but a co-existing friend of humanity. Holistic Christian spiritual education is also deeply concerned with the ecological environment.

Finally, the fifth aim is related to the civilizational dimension. Civilizational dimension of holistic Christian education focuses on the relationship between man and new technology. We live in an age of rapid development of technology (computer hardware, software, and communications). Today, changes in technology advance a new era that enriches humanity.⁵¹ At the same time, technology causes many unexpected problems with politics, economy, society, environment, education, religion, and so on. It requires deep theological reflection on what kind of relationship technology and humans should have in the world. Holistic Christian spiritual education should be concerned with new problems brought about by advanced technology and try to find alternatives.

The five dimensions of holistic Christian spiritual education mentioned above provide the necessary guidance to form and live a just

49 Jang Heum Ok, "A Study on the Wholistic Christian Education Model," 63.

50 John Carmody, *Holistic Spirituality*, 16; Jang Heum Ok, "A Study on the Wholistic Christian Education Model," 63.

51 Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee, *The Second Machine Age*, trans. Han Eum Lee (Seoul: ChungRim Publishing Co., 2014), 15-18.

Christian life in the postmodern age of the fourth industrial revolution in the face of various problems arising from the context of globalization.

V. Conclusion

The Korean Church and Christians living in the postmodern era of the twenty-first century experience confusion and crisis in the context of globalization, as neo-liberalism, the fourth industrial revolution, terrorism, and the emergence of new technology create hardship. Korean churches and Christians are concerned with the disintegration of authority and tradition of postmodernism in the twenty-first century, the gap between rich and poor under the system of neo-liberalism, new issues of radical development of the fourth industrial revolution, and global violence connected with religion (such as ISIS terrorism). Most Christians experience confusion when looking at these situations. Is there hope for us? What destinations and ways of life should we pursue?

Christians should not be confused or despair about the new situation of the world, but should view this new situation as a sign of hope to understand and change the world through the Word of God and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. Holistic Christian spiritual education does not separate God and the world, man and man, man and society, or man and nature. With faith in Jesus Christ, holistic Christian spiritual education is focused on understanding all life and nature at an individual level and aims at the life of Shalom, pursuing peace.

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Received 2018. 4. 4.

Revised 2018. 6. 10.

Accepted 2018. 6. 15.