# CHAPTER 5

# THE STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE:
# A PRINCIPLE FOR BUILDING UP THE LOCAL CHURCH THROUGH A NEED-ORIENTED DIACONAL MINISTRY IN KOREA

## 1.    INTRODUCTION

According to the three-phased methodology of Heitink's practical theology employed by this study, a need-oriented diaconal ministry for the local community and the building up of the local church was dealt with in chapters 2 and 3. Statistical data of the realities of congregational development through a need-oriented diaconal ministry in Korea has been studied in the previous chapter.

This part seeks out a principle or strategy for the building up of the local church in Korea through a need-oriented diaconal ministry, deducted from chapters 2, 3 and 4. A diagram of the building up of the local church through a need-oriented diaconal ministry (see figure 5) is suggested to the Korean churches and leaders. It will help the Korean congregations to serve the local community and its people's actual needs with God's love and to be actively helpful to promote the building up of the local church.

## 2.    PRINCIPLES FOR BUILDING UP THE LOCAL CHURCH THROUGH A NEED-ORIENTED DIACONAL MINISTRY IN KOREA

The Korean church is required to become a true church, not to confuse internal growth with external growth, and to improve the image of the church in the society (Park 2008:70). In 1974 the 'Lausanne covenant' in Switzerland concluded: "Proclaiming the word of God and social service are the two obligations of Christians" (Choi 1998:264). One way to solve these difficulties or

problems depends on the diaconal ministry which enacts the preaching of the word of God to fulfil the Lord's calling and promise by serving non-believers. In this way it is possible to help to renew the church to grow internally, and to improve the credibility of the church in the Korean society.

## 2.1 A diagram of a need-oriented diaconal ministry to promote building up of the local church in Korea

It is necessary for the church and its leaders to develop a diagram of a need-oriented diaconal ministry to promote building up the local church in Korea. The diagram of a need-oriented diaconal ministry to build up the local church will help the churches in Korea to employ a sound and effective principle or strategy with which they will help people to settle down as church members and to become mature in faith by serving the diaconal ministry for the local community.

First, even though the diaconal ministry is an important and essential function of the church, it is insufficient to be carried out in Korea (see part 1 in chapter 1; section 3.2 in chapter 2). The report on the future of the Korean church (2005:252-253) shows that the local community is unaware of any social service done by the local church. 84.6% of the respondents answered "I do not know that the local church is doing any community service for my resident area." Non-religious people think that the local church is indolent to serve its community and the people.

Second, church leaders do not develop a diaconal ministry or programme for the local community to do charity services, such as nursing homes, children's home, free lunches for destitute, etc. It means that the local church has to study its community and the people's needs, train human resources and develop a need-oriented diaconal service programmes (Lee 1992:159-165). People in the local community really need useful and cultural diaconal ministries that meet their actual needs (see table 5.14).

Third, if we carry out the sound theological principle of a need-oriented diaconal ministry in the synergy of the functions of the church such as *koinonia* , *leitourgia*, and *kerygma*, a people's movement will effectively take place in the setting of such a need-oriented diaconal gathering (see table 5.20, 5.21). It will

be directly connected to promoting a healthy congregational development (see chart 1.12).

Fourth, we need to know how to develop the diaconal programme or item to meet the community and its people's needs with God' love to lead them toward salvation by God, and to become meaningfully involved in his church (see table 5.22. 5.23).

That is why it is necessary to develop a diagram from a sound and effective principle for a need-oriented diaconal ministry that will build up the congregations in Korea. The diagram has the following variety of components:
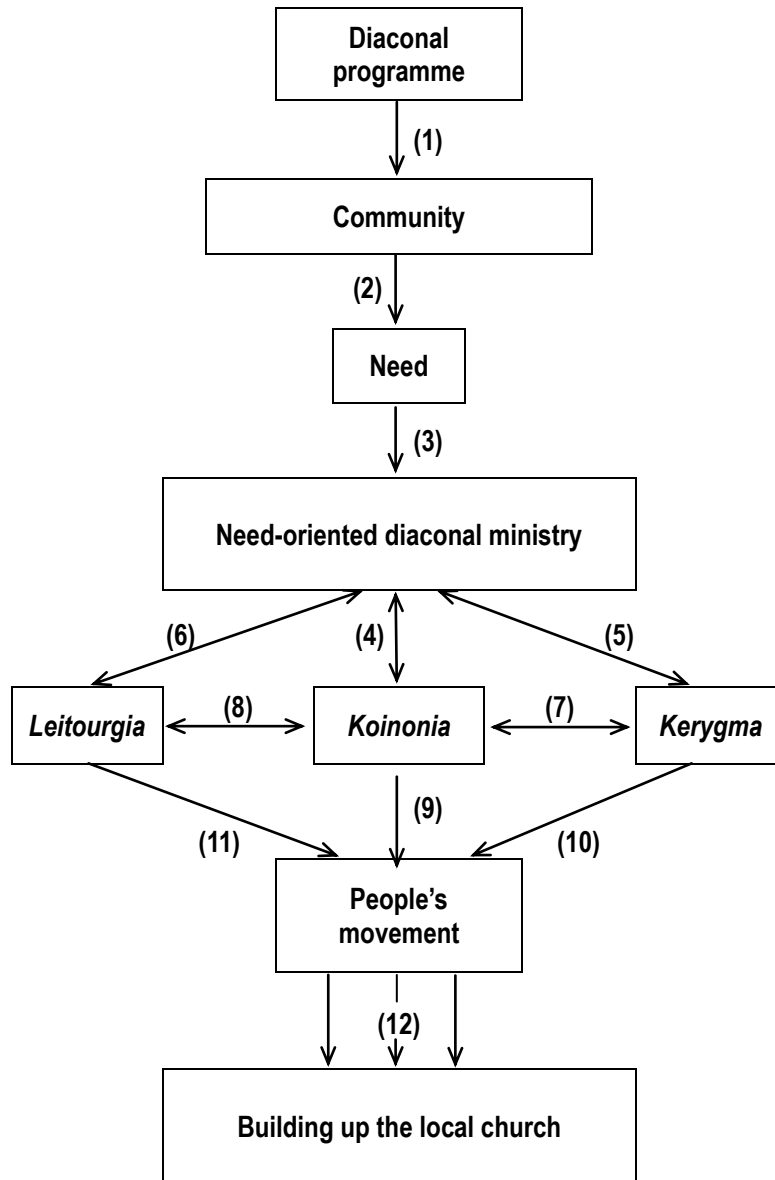
- Defining a diaconal programme: it must be organised by the church, not only for the community and its people by meeting their actual needs with God' love, but also for building up the local church in Korea (see part 5 in chapter 1).
- Community research: the community consists of a variety of people who have things in common. It is better to investigate people in the community who have things in common (see section 5.2 in chapter 2).
- Determining the actual need of the community: this is important as a bridge linking the church and the community. For this, the churches have to ascertain the actual needs or subjects of common interest of the local community (see section 5.3 in chapter 2).
- A need-oriented diaconal ministry: it is to provide a suitable and effective programme to meet people's actual needs (see section 5.4 in chapter 2) with the important functions of the church, such as *koinonia, diakonia, leitourgia*, and *kerygma* (see section 3.2 in chapter 2).
- Developing a need-oriented diaconal ministry effectively: it should be carried out with the synergy of *diakonia*, *koinonia, leitourgia*, and *kerygma*, to effectively comply with the various needs (see section 4.2.1 in chapter 3).
- A people's movement: it assumes the people's mature faith to include the non-Christians' conversion and believers' strengthening in faith. If it is the decision of many individuals taken in unison, it leads to a better

conversion and more mature faith. This mutual desire for conversion and mature faith can take place through a need-oriented diaconal gathering (see section 4.2.2.2 in chapter 3).

● Building up the local church: the faith of Christians matures by attending the diaconal gathering (see table 5.11.3), and non-Christians get a positive opportunity to become meaningfully involved in the Korean churches (see table 5.21, 5.23).

The diagram below suggests the way to promote the building up of the local church in Korea through a need-oriented diaconal ministry.

**Figure 5 A diagram of a need-oriented diaconal ministry for the building up of the local church in Korea**

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                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │    Diaconal     │
                    │    programme    │
                    └─────────────────┘
                             │ (1)
                             ↓
                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │   Community     │
                    └─────────────────┘
                             │ (2)
                             ↓
                        ┌─────────┐
                        │  Need   │
                        └─────────┘
                             │ (3)
                             ↓
              ┌──────────────────────────────┐
              │ Need-oriented diaconal ministry │
              └──────────────────────────────┘
           (6) ↙          (4) ↕          (5) ↘
    ┌────────────┐   ┌────────────┐   ┌────────────┐
    │ Leitourgia │↔  │  Koinonia  │ ↔ │  Kerygma   │
    └────────────┘(8)└────────────┘(7)└────────────┘
           ↘ (11)      (9) ↓        (10) ↙
                    ┌─────────────┐
                    │  People's   │
                    │  movement   │
                    └─────────────┘
                          │ (12)
                          ↓
              ┌──────────────────────────┐
              │ Building up the local church │
              └──────────────────────────┘
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In the upper box is written 'diaconal programme' and '(1)'. In the lower box is written 'building up the local church' and '(12).' It starts with diaconal programme and ends with the building up of the local church.

The first question is "why are the diaconal ministries ineffective, especially as far as congregational development in Korea is concerned?" This leads us to the 'diaconal programme.' The diaconal programme is defined in section 2.1.1

with its origin in the theological tradition, church history and sociological background.

Arrow 1, 'community.' To research the community is discussed in section 2.1.2, especially the modern local community that has been improved in quality. Church leaders have to study the community in which they operate.

Arrow 2 indicates that the actual need of the community (see section 2.1.3) as indicated by research, because the present diaconal ministries in Korea are not satisfactory. The question is why the diaconal ministries do not promote the building up of the local church in Korea. Sometimes the local church is rendering humble service, but the community does not know about it.

Arrow 3 points to 'need-oriented diaconal ministry.' It indicates that the diaconal ministry can be effective to promote the building up of the local church in Korea (see section 3.2.3 in chapter 4). Building up a 'need-oriented diaconal ministry' (see section 2.1.4) explains how effectively to organise the structure of diaconal programmes for building up the local church with God's love through serving the community.

Arrows 4, 5, 6 indicate *koinonia, kerygma*, and *leitourgia* respectively. It is very important to balance the synergy between them for congregational development (see section 2.1.5). Even if there is a diaconal ministry, it will be more effective when there is a synergy between *koinonia, kerygma*, and *leitourgia* in building up a healthy church.

Since *koinonia* has a core role in a need-oriented diaconal ministry, arrows 7 and 8 indicate the order of focus, *koinonia ↔ kerygma ↔ leitourgia*. It is recommended to meet effectively the community and its people's need through a diaconal ministry (*diakonia*) with intimacy (*koinonia* ) and to decide the method and frequency of preaching the gospel (*kerygma*) and worshipping God (*leitourgia*) according to the number of believers and non-believers in the group (see table 5.7, 5.25).

Arrows 9, 10, and 11 point to 'people's movement.' At this stage believers and non-believers experience growth in their faith (see section 2.1.6). Christian members and teachers have an important role to influence the non-Christians as well as fellow-Christians.

Arrow 12 indicates 'building up the local church' (see section 2.1.7) that helps Christians and non-Christians to experience the benefit of the diaconal ministry. It leads non-Christians to faith, Christians to maturity in faith, and to vital, healthy, and balanced congregations. A need-oriented diaconal ministry will actively help to build up the local church in South Korea.

Each component of the diagram will be explained in succession.

## 2.1.1 Defining a diaconal programme

This stage starts from 'praxis.' It defines the diaconal ministry as the starting point of "building up the local church to serve the need of the community." Turre (1992:112) says "Proclaiming the gospel while doing diaconal service is to be the essence of missionary service." A need-oriented diaconal programme should be based on sound theology for congregational development and effective diaconal ministry.

Church leaders have to rethink why and how to serve the local community. A good theology understands that the diaconal ministry is an essential function of the church for the community. Threatened by the gradual decline of the church they have to recover the important role of the diaconal ministry (see section 3.2 in chapter 2). Then they will have to investigate 'how' to serve the community. The local community influences the forms of diaconal ministry. Thus church leaders have to develop need-oriented diaconal programmes that will suit the forms of the local community. This is the way to build up the local church, to lead non-Christians to the salvation by God and to become meaningfully involved in the churches, and to help Christians to do the work of Jesus Christ.

## 2.1.2 Community research

This stage is to find the bridge between the church and the community through 'community research.' It is focused on the investigation of the community and its people to understand their need:

- The range of the local community has to be determined: it is best within 20 minutes by car.
- Research on the actual condition: population, sex distinction, age structure, fields of work, cultural and educational facilities, etc.
- List the important things they have in common.

The church has to consider the environment of the community to serve it effectively. It strongly requires the church and its leaders to find the kind of a need-oriented diaconal ministry suitable for their modern local community (see section 5.4 in chapter 2).

### 2.1.3 Determining the actual need of the community

A variety of needs of the community's members who have things in common have to be discovered from them. It utilises the theory of the homogeneity of McGavran. Church leaders have to choose the form of a need-oriented diaconal ministry according to the processes below:

- Drawing up a questionnaire based on their community research (see table 5.14).
- Comparing personal resources, like a budget plan, the church's mood, etc. for the support needed from the church for the valid needs.
- Selecting an actual need that the church is able effectively to serve the community with.

The church and its leaders have to choose the effective form of a need-oriented diaconal programme according to the need of the community (see section 5.4 in chapter 2).

### 2.1.4 Building up a need-oriented diaconal ministry

In order effectively to build up a need-oriented diaconal ministry, there are the following prerequisites:

- When meeting people's need through the diaconal programme, the quality of the programme in the church should be better than that of the private or public institutions in the local community (see table 5.11.1).

- Intimacy (*koinonia)* plays an essential role in the diaconal gathering. To have a long class period twice a week is more effective than to have a short one only once a week for the warm intimacy of the groups (see table 5.11.2).

- Experiencing Christianity's *kerygma* and church worship (*leitourgia*) is positive for both non-Christians and Christians (see table 5.20, 5.22), especially beneficial to their children (see table 5.8, 5.11.3).

- The influence of teachers or staff on members is important in all aspects of the diaconal gathering (see table 5.15, 5.21, 5.23).

- The recommended period for group attendance of the diaconal gathering for education to be effective is an exposure of between three and six months (see table 5.4).

## 2.1.5 Developing the synergy between *diakonia*, *koinonia, leitourgia* and *kerygma*

Based on the variety of the *diaconal* ministries (see section 3.2 in chapter 2), the process of building up the local church is carried out with the important functions of the church such as *diakonia*, *kerygma*, *koinonia,* and *leitourgia*.

The effectiveness of need-oriented diaconal ministries depends on how to organise the ministries with the aim of salvation for the whole person (*kerygma*) through the maturity of the *koinonia I* consciousness of the congregation to serve God (*leitourgia*). While meeting people's actual needs in the diaconal gathering, the intimacy (*koinonia)* should be the crux, because it creates a family mood among members. To foster a family atmosphere is important for the course to be effective (see table 5.3).

In a need-oriented diaconal ministry it is necessary to decide the order of the ministries of *diakonia*, *kerygma*, *koinonia,* and *leitourgia*. To meet effectively people's actual needs through a diaconal ministry with intimacy (*koinoina*) is very important. The method and frequency of preaching the gospel (*kerygma*)

and worshipping God (*leitourgia*) depends on the number of believers and non-believers in the group (see table 5.7, 5.25).

The *kerygmatic* role of the teachers or staff for the experiencing of Christianity and worship (*leitourgia*) is important for the effectiveness and influence on members in this gathering (see table 5.21, 5.23). Dedicated service staff or teachers are performing a spiritual service through diaconal services which are meaningful, healthful and influential (Schober 1992:245-248).

It is very important not only to prepare a need-oriented diaconal programme to meet the people's actual needs, but also to select and train personnel effectively.

## 2.1.6 A people's movement

The concept of a people's movement in this study is broader than that of McGavran. It includes both the non-Christians' conversion and the Christians' maturity in faith, whereas McGavran's theory focuses on the non-Christians' conversion. The number of Christians in the diaconal gathering should be more than the number of non-Christians (see table 5.7).

Need-oriented diaconal gatherings should cater for non-Christians to mingle naturally with Christians. It may lead non-Christians to accept the Christian faith of the members or teachers through mutual religious responses during the gatherings. The Christian members may also be influenced by Christian group members or teachers to mature in faith. Through need-oriented diaconal ministries both non-Christians and Christians may mature in faith. Conversions of non-believers and maturing the faith of believers can take place in the context of the diaconal gatherings.

## 2.1.7 Building up the local church

This stage suggests a 'new praxis.' It causes 'the healthy building up of the local church in Korea' as the outcome of the relationship between praxis and theory.

'Building up the local church through a need-oriented diaconal ministry' is promoted, developed, and formed by those who mature in faith, including non-

believers and believers in the context of a need-oriented diaconal gathering (see table 5.20, 5.22, chart 1.12).

## 3. CONCLUSION OF THIS STUDY

This thesis dealt with the building up of the local church through a need-oriented diaconal ministry in South Korea.

The Korean churches have the important calling to proclaim the gospel effectively. It needs to recover its spiritual essence or nature, and to have a need-oriented diaconal ministry that meets people's physical, mental and spiritual needs in the fast-changing varying society. Therefore, the local church has to be renewed and to study the actual needs of society through social-scientific methods.

A need-oriented diaconal ministry aims to renew the essence of the church with God's love and service, to improve the image of the church and to serve the local community and its people by preaching the gospel during services in the synergy of *diakonia*, *koinonia, kerygma*, and *leitourgia*. The agents of the church that serve the local community should be balanced. They should be helped to be able to preach the word of God and guide the way of life where they serve.

The Korean churches can grow by recovering their nature, which includes an effective diaconal ministry for the salvation of and service to the community. The Korean churches have to take an interest in the ideology of a need-oriented diaconal ministry in order to guide social life towards to the principles of God's kingdom. They are to lead non-Christians in the community to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ as their saviour, and to help them to be meaningfully involved in church life and to improve the faith life of Christians.

Through this process the local church may become a living organism that leads church members to vitality, and equips them to fulfil the variety of works available in the body of Christ.