

Deviating from the Path

in the Lord's Recovery

Witness Lee: Final message

This is a lesson for us all. The co-workers in different places need to learn; all responsible brothers in all localities need to learn. The eyes of the brothers and sisters all need to be opened. Too many things we need to learn. We have acted wrongly in the past, including me, I have to admit. I have had very painful repentance before the Lord. I am very sorry! I am sorry for the Body of Christ - not only for the brothers and sisters among us, but also for the ones in the denominations. You have to bring this message back and read it over and over again in mutual fellowship. Then you will see we were wrong before... To understand and analyze this needs a fair bit of effort. Again I say, a few of you must come together through pray-reading, studying, reciting, and prophesying. We must learn from our past mistakes to receive people according to God's Son...undeviating... not deviating a bit from the path..." (Chinese New Year Conference, Anaheim, Feb 1997)

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Prologue

The following are excerpts from the writings of former leading brothers concerning a time of turmoil in the Lord's recovery that consummated in division and their quarantines.

1990

"Moreover, many things have been spoken in recent elders' meetings by Brother Witness Lee and his co-workers that totally misrepresent the facts and contain many untruths. Motives and intentions are imputed to us that we never imagined, not to say practiced. We are being called despicable names and are being displayed in the worst light. But we do not desire to stoop to the level of name-calling, pejorative epithets, or blatant vindication. We would like to speak the facts sincerely before God in Christ. May the Lord judge us in every attitude and action...

We certainly never imagined that we would pass through the experiences and conflict that we have in recent years. We loved the Lord's recovery and gave everything for it for over a quarter of a century. It was this love and investment of our lives that compelled us to respond and speak out. We had seen something that was exceedingly precious, and it was in jeopardy. Moreover, we were concerned that the Lord's testimony would be brought into shame and disgrace and suffer great damage." - John Ingalls, *Speaking the Truth in Love*

1988

"The next afternoon I joined Godfred and Al at Brother Lee's home. Godfred spoke strongly, asking Brother Lee first if he had spoken anything against us recently. He replied that he had not. Then Godfred reasoned with him: How is it that you speak against autonomy, considering that a problem, but you will not deal with the problems that we brought to your attention. Godfred spoke earnestly and impressively. He said, "the center of the church should be Christ, but He has been replaced by you and your ministry." Brother Lee was touched by what Godfred said, and perhaps considering that what he had just alleged afforded some light for clearing up the problem, he said, "I like to hear that." I recall the scene vividly, and his words still echo in my ears. It seemed that this time Brother Lee appreciated the frank fellowship and was trying to warm up to us. But we could not seem to make any real progress. Brother Lee remarked that everything that had happened in Europe which had caused so great a problem between the churches and the Living Stream Ministry was just a misunderstanding. After the meeting Godfred told us that he wanted to leave the eldership and was fully disgusted with the whole situation."

- John Ingalls, *Speaking the Truth in Love*

1987

"A few months ago, after Bob Ellis returned from the training in Taipei, he gave this admonition to the elders at a meeting of elders from the South: Turn everything over to the office and the ministry; Philip and Brother Lee have big plans for this area; it is imperative for us to give our coordination to Philip and the office, and they need evidences that we will do anything they want; we have to coordinate with Philip, and if Philip beats us to the ground, we have to learn to get up and come back to him, for he has seen Benson and Ray beaten to the ground and they have gotten up and come back". - Bill Mallon, Atlanta, resignation from the work letter to Witness Lee

"...Benson and Ray, as well as others, promoted Philip Lee, proclaiming everywhere that Philip is Witness Lee's closest co-worker, that Brother Lee has no one with as much wisdom, energy, and insight as Philip Lee, that Philip is Witness Lee's choice regardless of his anger and abuse of the saints, that everyone must

submit and contact Philip Lee and/or the office--such audacious promotions are obviously symptoms of a disease". – Bill Mallon, resignation letter to Brother Lee.

1987

I came away from our talks with one deep impression: Philip Lee was becoming increasingly involved in spiritual things concerning the Lord's work, the churches, the elders, and the co-workers. He was totally unqualified both in position and character to touch spiritual matters related to the work of the Lord and the churches. I became alarmed and began to fear for the Lord's testimony. - John Ingalls' talks with Bill Mallon, *Speaking the Truth In Love*

1989

Dear brother Witness Lee,

It has come to our attention recently through several witnesses that gross immorality and some other sins mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5:11 have been committed by your son Philip Lee (who is identified as your Ministry Office) on more than one occasion over a long period of time. This deeply disturbs us. It grieves us even more that you and some of your close co-workers were aware of the situation and yet not only tolerated it but covered it up. What is worse is that, while this was happening, you and your co-workers were promoting and exalting him to the extent that he was able to intervene in the churches' affairs in recent years. The peak of this promotion was evident at your elders' training in Taipei in June 1987. Some of your co-workers were not only themselves under the influence and control of Philip Lee, but were also openly bringing elders and young people of many local churches to come under the same influence and control in your name and for your sake. The five brothers whom you and your Office sent to Europe in your place in May 1986 were trying to do the same here. Our young people who went to your training in Taipei have also testified of the same.

Before God, before the brothers and sisters in the local churches, before the Christian public, and for the sake of the Lord's testimony, we are compelled by our conscience to fully disassociate ourselves from such sins and behaviour in your work.

– John So and elders of nine churches in Europe

1989

On Tuesday, March 14, 1989, Godfred, Al, and I had fellowship and prayer during the morning and then lunch together. It was a memorable time, a decisive time. I expressed strongly to the brothers my feeling concerning the futility and dishonesty of playing the role of elder in Anaheim any longer. It was hypocritical to go on in that status feeling as we did with strong conviction that we were in a system. Moreover, we were totally incapable of changing the course of the church or of practicing a generality with the saints where all were free to follow their own conscience. These considerations dictated that we should resign. - John Ingalls, *Speaking the Truth In Love*

Introduction

In the book, *The Vision of the Age*, Witness Lee says,

Today we can be in one accord because we have only one vision and one view. We are all in this up-to-date, all-inheriting vision. We have only one viewpoint. We speak the same thing with one heart, one mouth, one voice, and one tone, serving the Lord together. The result is a power that will become our strong morale and our impact. This is our strength. Once the Lord's recovery possesses this power, there will be the glory of increase and multiplication (p. 54).

In the summer of 2005, churches in the Northwest region of the United States came together and discussed their situation. There has not been the "glory of increase and multiplication" in these churches and there has been no spirit of migration, although these churches have endeavored to be of "one heart, one mouth, one voice, and one tone, serving the Lord together" for nearly twenty years since this *Vision of the Age* message was released. Most of the other churches around the country have had a similar outcome. Rather than possessing "this power" that becomes "our strong morale and our impact" for the Lord's move, there has been little morale, without much impact, and only a paltry increase, at best, while losing many other people in the meantime. In other words, there has not been the blessing that we have desired, and expected, in the local churches. Conscientious ones have to ask, "What is the reason for this?"

May the truthful story of a turmoil that occurred among the local churches in the late eighties, and often referred to as "the rebellion", speak to all of our hearts concerning how we have handled the affairs of God and represented men, (the so-called "rebellious ones") and, correspondingly, what effect this has had on our morale in the churches, and on the limited blessing received among us. And, there are more factors than this to consider.

About the Author

I have been on the phone list of five local churches beginning January 1971. Although I was "banned from the meetings" 30 years later in 2001, my heart is still with the churches and with those responsible for taking action against me; and I still consider myself a member of the local churches and speak accordingly. Being separated from the saints was not my choice. That was the choice of the leadership. My choice was to address the truth.

I had written a little "book" called *In the Wake of the New Way* and sent a copy to Dan Towle of the Living Stream Ministry. The next thing I knew I was being disciplined in my locality for this writing which dealt with the actual factors that led to division in the churches and the departure of many church members from the fellowship. Dan had passed word on to an elder to separate me from the saints. I was then told that I was not to partake of the Lord's table; speak in the meetings; to pray out loud in the meetings; or talk to new ones or college age young people. My complete shock about this was only equaled by my amazement at the behavior of these church elders toward me. My earnest desire for fellowship with them and for building a bridge of communication with them toward former members was not to be realized. (written between 2005-2007)

January 28, 2001

Dear Dan,

I have written a little book for the sake of fellowship, mainly with leading ones, concerning our past sixteen-year history of the new way. I think this period of time in the Lord's recovery warrants our careful study of both the benefits and the costs to the church in what was such a highly controversial move among us in those beginning years.

I wanted to come to you because I feel it is safe to do so. If I am inaccurate or unfair in some way, perhaps you are the most qualified one to catch me that I could either make an adjustment or terminate the proposed fellowship.

I hope we can have a good, thorough, and upright fellowship over this booklet called *In the Wake of the New Way*,...I would welcome your phone call or e-mail message at ... I don't intend for this booklet to be widespread...

I wrote sincerely, but I was also naïve, thinking that after receiving the ministry for thirty years I might have something to offer by way of fellowship that would help to build that bridge of communication to former members. The brothers didn't care for my tenure in the church, or for contacting former members, especially any leading ones. These brothers felt that they were under "attack" by me. I was later excluded from all meetings.

My isolation resulted in me having more time on my hands, so I followed my burden to learn about a significant part of our church history that explains the brothers' behavior toward me. The mentality of the elders to exclude me so easily is not something new to the Lord's recovery. It has a history.

It is said, what you don't know can't hurt you. Among us, *what* we don't know *has* hurt us, and it *continues* to hurt us. With knowledge comes light, just like dealing with a disease in your own body. Once you come to terms with the fact that you have a specific problem in your body, you can then deal with it. It is the same if we have sin in our lives, or sin in the church. Once the sin is detected, it can be dealt with. Our problem is, we don't know about the sin that festers in the Body of Christ among the local churches, so we have had no way to deal with it. If the elders are open to obtain knowledge of our sin, then they will realize that what the saints don't know does hurt them and limits the blessing we receive in the churches. There should be showers of blessing in the churches Minoru Chen once said. There should also be the forsaking of sin. If we rise up to judge our sin we will receive more than showers of blessing. We may have a revival.

Receiving People According to the Son of God

Part 1

In the last message of his ministry, Witness Lee looked back over his life and considered the mistakes that had been made in the recovery and he implored the saints to learn from them. He also said he was sorry "toward the Body of Christ" specifically for his own mistakes and exhorted the saints to stay on the right path regarding receiving the believers according to the Son of God.

Witness Lee: This is a lesson for us all. The co-workers in different places need to learn; all responsible brothers in all localities need to learn. The eyes of the brothers and sisters all need to be opened. Too many things we need to learn. We have acted wrongly in the past, including me, I have to admit. I have had very painful repentance before the Lord. I am very sorry! I am sorry for the Body of Christ - not only for the brothers and sisters among us, but also for the ones in the denominations. You have to bring this message back and read it over and over again in mutual fellowship. Then you will see we were wrong before... To understand and analyze this needs a fair bit of effort. Again I say, a few of you must come together through pray-reading, studying, reciting, and prophesying. We must learn from our past mistakes to receive people

according to God's Son...undeviating... not deviating a bit from the path..."
(Chinese New Year Conference, Anaheim, Feb 1997)

It is significant that brother Witness Lee would bring attention to his mistakes at the end of his life. Although he did not specify what those mistakes were, we know that they were serious and that they affected the Body of Christ. John Nelson Darby, toward the end of his life, offered an even briefer acknowledgement of mistakes he made that affected the oneness of the Body among the assemblies that were under his ministry around the world. As history has recorded Darby's errors that led to division among the Brethren in the nineteenth century, the mistakes of Witness Lee have also been objectively recorded. Both these men realized they did not always "receive people according to the Son of God", but did indeed "deviate from the path". Their obscure admissions open a window for our learning.

Deviating from the Path will report to seeking brothers and sisters actual local church history that they may learn from it and teach others accordingly.

Perhaps, as Brethren adherents were able to do in the years and decades following Darby's departure, local church members will also be able to view Witness Lee objectively and gain proper understanding of the mistakes he made.

Brother Lee's admission came in a message to elders and co-workers during the 1997 Chinese New Year's conference in Taipei on reigning in life by imitating the apostle to bring the local churches into the fellowship of the Body of Christ. If current leaders among the local churches could imitate John Darby and Witness Lee in humbling themselves just a little to admit to mistakes made in our leadership throughout the years in the recovery, humility and softness of heart might result and issue in their reigning in life "to bring the local churches" into a much more intimate and meaningful fellowship in the Body of Christ.

A Response to Brother Lee's Word

A Chinese brother shared,

Those who know Mandarin Chinese could feel the pain in Brother Lee's heart and be touched by his genuine repentance [in his last message]. In addition to making a public repentance, Brother Lee made a solemn charge to his co-workers, the responsible brothers and the saints of local churches to learn from our past mistakes in the matter of receiving all believers in Christian denominations according to God and have no condemnation toward them. He charged us to study diligently and fellowship with one another about his last message in the light of his words of repentance.

To my surprise, after Brother Lee made such a heartfelt repentance and solemn charge, there was very little mention of Brother Lee's repentance in the messages of the "seven annual feasts." There has also been virtually no reference at all to Brother Lee's charge to learn from our past mistakes. It seems that the "blended co-workers" did not get the message in Brother Lee's repentance. It seems that none of them dared to say that Brother Lee could have made any mistake; nor dared to remind us that we should study and analyze our teachings regarding receiving believers by comparing them with God's Words. Nobody dares to suggest that, if there is anything in Brother Lee's teachings that might have led to those mistakes, we should adjust it...One day, I suggested to a brother that we should learn from Brother Lee's repentance and his mistakes. He immediately said that Brother Lee did not make any mistake, rather Brother Lee repented because the churches and the saints made mistakes. He condemned me for suggesting that Brother Lee ever repented for his mistakes. I was amazed by what I heard. (2006)

Brother Lee's Word Not Clear

Actually, Brother Lee was not clear or specific with the brothers. He said, "You must bring this message back, read it once, read it twice, and come together to fellowship with one another. Then you will see that we in the past were wrong!" What does this mean?

He didn't say how "we in the past were wrong" or why he was sorry "toward the Body of Christ, the denominations, or the brothers and sisters among us". He left the interpretation of his few words on the subject open to investigation and fellowship. What he may have been specific about in his private repentance before the Lord, he was general about in his public acknowledgment of mistakes made in the recovery.

One thing he *was* clear and specific about was that he in the past was wrong, admitting that "in the past we have all made mistakes, including myself."

His private repentance before the Lord at the end of his life would naturally include repenting for his own mistakes. Even though it had been rare for Brother Lee to admit to his own mistakes, he did so on this occasion. He had also done so previously during the Ephesians life-study training, saying,

Although I have always intended to do the right thing, I have nevertheless made many mistakes, even some big mistakes. I certainly hate these mistakes, but I can testify that they have afforded God the opportunity to show forth His wisdom. Therefore, I can thank the Lord for all my mistakes. (Eph. Life Study p. 273)

Also at the onset of the new way, he shared that only the Lord Jesus was mistake-free and that "all of us" have made mistakes.

My point is this—do not think that any leader could not make a mistake. Only the Lord Jesus, the unique Leader, never made any mistake. It is absolutely impossible for Him to be mistaken. However, all of us, including Peter, have made many mistakes. (*One Accord for the Lord's Move, E. T., Book 7, p. 113*)

As to the brother contradicting Brother Lee's own word about his mistakes, a number of brothers have this mindset and speak in the same way, against the facts. A lead elder in the Northwest said in 2002 in response to my written concern over mistakes that Brother Lee had made, "*Brother Lee never made any mistakes; he would never do what others would do*". He proceeded to make no attempt to study and to learn the facts that run contrary to his acclamation of Brother Lee.

The Eulogy

The delusion that Brother Lee never made mistakes is graphically portrayed in his 1997 eulogy, which was constructed by brothers who were closely associated with him and who never espoused Brother Lee's own words that he "made mistakes, even big mistakes" (Eph LS, p273)). According to his eulogy presented in writing at his memorial, we would never understand that brother Witness Lee was anything other than a perfect God-man.

Witness Lee's God-Man Living in and for the Body of Christ.

There can be no greater assessment of Brother Lee's work in the Lord's recovery than to say that he was fully what he taught the saints to be. With Brother Lee there was no distinction between his person and his message. He was a man who lived God out in all his actions, who moved and had his being among the brothers and sisters in the churches, and who labored absolutely for the building up of the church as the Body of Christ. What he lived out and worked out was the very essence of the message he consistently delivered to the saints.

With this disingenuous assessment of Brother Lee we could never “learn”. We would think that “he was *fully* what he taught the saints to be”, that “there was *no distinction* between his person and his message”, that “he lived God out in *all* his actions”, and so forth. This is neither realistic nor truthful, but it has been the image of Witness Lee that our brothers in the leadership wish to convey. It would be more accurate to say as he himself said in 1994, (while experiencing shame and asking for forgiveness), that since coming to the USA in 1962 the “bigger part” of the time spent has been “in my natural life”, the “smaller part in resurrection”, which is why he had a “deep and sorrowful repentance before the Lord” and said publicly that he was sorry “toward the Body of Christ”, “the brothers and sisters among us”, and “the denominations”.

But he has left it for those who want “to learn” from past mistakes, both his and others’, to uncover not only the mistakes he mysteriously refers to, but also what he himself may or may not have realized about deviating from the path and not receiving people according to the Son of God.

In the following section, *Mistakes to Contemplate*, we will consider mistakes of brother Witness Lee and those of some others also, whether or not these are the mistakes Brother Lee was referring to, and whether or not every point has to do specifically with receiving people according to the Son of God. This fellowship should serve mainly to help us understand that our leadership has made mistakes that have seriously impacted the churches and the saints. If this important truth is not acknowledged, there is no way to *learn* from the mistakes that have been made.

Let us come to understand who Brother Lee was. He was *not* a perfect man, and he made very costly mistakes. His mistakes and ours should be studied in the light of the truth for a rude but righteous awakening for our learning, according to his own exhortation.

Mistakes to Contemplate

1. Was the “hiring” of Max Rapoport a mistake? Is there any other brother, besides Brother Lee, who thought Max was an appropriate choice in the seventies to be Brother Lee’s right hand man? It was easy to recognize that according to certain indications of his character and personality and a lack of spiritual growth that Max was not the right person to be in such a high position, traversing the globe in the name of an established minister of God. Because their relationship was so close, “like a father and son”, Max was allowed into localities to do things as an emissary for Brother Lee, who did encourage Max to visit the churches to “mess up” the elders and their “religious behavior”. Max went beyond doing that, however, and wreaked havoc in the churches, offending and displacing elders, encouraging the natural life, mocking the work of the cross, and insulting the ministry of Witness Lee. Max was not a brother who manifested having much of a vertical relationship with the Lord, though he was certainly a brother in Christ. He was a horizontal brother who was trying to “normalize” the saints and their overly spiritual behavior in the churches, but he did so in a natural way, not through death and resurrection, and came across more as an entertainer than a minister of God and His word.

CRYSTALLIZATION: Brother Witness Lee, alone, made the poor and unwise choice of placing so much trust and confidence in brother Max. This was a grave mistake that proved very costly, opening the gates for mass confusion in the churches, the loss of scores of precious saints in the recovery, the dampening of spirits everywhere, and division. Blame should not be placed on Max alone for this. He was adopted as an emissary to the churches by Witness Lee, though Max was far from being the right person to be placed in such a position at that time.

NOTE: However, he was the right person to deal with Philip Lee and Brother Lee knew this, per 1978 moral misconduct crisis with Philip at LSM, in which Max met with Brother Lee, recommending that he send his son back to Taiwan. But Brother Lee had plans for Philip, and “blood became thicker than water”, even though Max sought reconciliation, via his wife. On two occasions she approached Brother Lee and told him that Max wanted to reconcile the problems between he and Brother Lee. His reply to her was that “God is sovereign”. Max was gone and Brother Lee wanted to keep it that way. This opened the way for the next era, the tandem leadership of Witness Lee and son, and a dramatic change of focus in the recovery to a man and a ministry, a development which was already well on its way since 1974.

2. Was the hiring of Philip Lee a mistake? It was surely a mistake of monumental proportion and consequence. At one time, before Living Stream Ministry came into being, the Stream Publishers represented Witness Lee and met his publishing and distribution needs to carry out his ministry in the churches. Its reputation was that of a godly little business entity to serve a specific purpose in the recovery whose said function was truly limited to that of producing and distributing books and tapes. Then things began to change, along with its name change to Living Stream Ministry. This godly little business entity had changed in purpose, function, and personnel as it began to grow. In Philip Lee’s era he was in full control of the office, crossing moral boundaries with sisters and spiritual boundaries with elders and co-workers around the world, in the name of Witness Lee and for Brother Lee’s purposes. (See appendix 2)

CRYSTALLIZATION: Witness Lee’s hiring of his own non-spiritual son and his reluctance to fire him amid growing confirmed reports of his moral violations and his interferences in the churches was both bizarre and inexplicable. It also had an impure element related to nepotism. The mistake of hiring Philip was far greater than the mistake of “hiring” Max. With the hiring of Philip Lee, Witness Lee brought immorality into the office, chaos into the church in Anaheim, corruption into the churches, and major division into the recovery.

Observation

Although these two selections of men to top positions brought devastation to the recovery, no one places blame on Brother Lee. Yet, the responsibility is his. Philip was unspiritual and fleshly, who many thought was not even regenerated. Max, in his behavior those days, was a natural man and soulish. In principle, what they were doing was according to Brother Lee’s plan for them to accomplish. He knew they were rough, tough, strong *unreligious* personalities who were men of action. In an interview with Max (2001) he said that Brother Lee was very much bothered by the religious behavior of many of the elders in the recovery and charged him to go out to mess them up. This is what Max did, but he admits he took advantage of his freedom and made serious mistakes. With Philip Lee, Brother Lee wanted to establish ministry bases in every region with LSM workers in place who would work easily with him and with Philip as good soldiers in the new move. Philip Lee was able to accomplish things in this regard, but without conscience as to how he accomplished them. LSM bases and personnel became established, but so did LSM’s reputation of bypassing fellowship with elders and violating principles of oneness in the Body. Such reports were given to Brother Lee but he ignored them, refusing to listen to them or to read about them. He would also controvert the issue, condemning the reporters. He wouldn’t listen to the legitimate concerns of the saints about LSM. Thus, in Max and Philip, he had men who were *unencumbered* by the yoke of religion and also without the yoke of conscience, as they both set out to accomplish their works of the flesh in the name of Witness Lee. Who put these kinds of persons in position to wreak their havoc in the churches? It was Witness Lee.

3. Was Daystar a mistake? How great a mistake this was! In Brother Lee's own words it was not only a mistake, it was a cancer to the Body. He didn't speak this publicly, though many knew that Daystar was indeed a cancer. He spoke it to at least two brothers individually in private fellowship. In a visit to Brother Lee at Brother Lee's request following a training, Bill Mallon received Brother Lee's unexpected admission about Daystar, his luxury motor home business that had failed in 1974. Millions of the saints' dollars had been invested in the business, according to Daystar accountant, Terry Risenhoover, who had the job of informing the saints one by one of their loss. (Don Rutledge was the other brother.)

One such saint who lost money was Warren Terry who, when he asked how much he was going to lose, the answer was "you're going to lose it all." A sister from San Diego, Angelica Fazio, reports *"when the venture went down the tubes, saints, even the elderly who had invested their retirement and the young who had invested money that had been earmarked for college, were begged to write off their loss. Some marriages were pressed because one spouse had been more reluctant to 'invest', and when the money was lost, wasn't as eager to 'forgive' the debt. Many of those saints were not well off. There was a tremendous amount of suffering generated through that venture."*

The Daystar business included the employment of two of Brother Lee's sons, one of them as its president, Timothy Lee. To promote the business, Brother Lee *"used elders' meetings to recruit leaders to sell the idea to the saints and gain their investment dollars. The saints were called together in groups after meetings (in Southern California) and were assured that investing in Daystar would be a godly investment to help fund the building of meeting halls and so forth for the Lord's recovery. They were told that the Lord would therefore certainly guard and even multiply their investment. Saints who had money in savings for retirement or college were inspired by the promotions to use that money for Daystar. When the business soon failed, some of the saints lost a considerable amount of money. As a result some were disheartened and left the recovery, or suffered spiritual damage."* (quote is from a brother's testimony)

Testimony of Tax Accountant for Casualties from Daystar

Terry Risenhoover writes about "the tragedy of Daystar and the terrible impact it had upon the Lord's recovery". He shared,

"It is impossible for you to properly deal with the current problems with LSM without understanding the underlying root of bitterness that Daystar created, it was a cancer, and rather than being treated and healed, it was allowed to spread and grow.

"Most of us at Elden in those days would testify to the richness of the church life that we experienced, and all of us were fully consecrated to the Lord's recovery. As a tax accountant I got to explain to many Brothers and Sisters the impact of their loss of investment in Daystar. Brother Lee and many leading ones faced potential criminal and civil penalties for violating state and federal securities laws and were in desperate need of re-paying those who had lost their life savings and were threatening to contact authorities because they believed there had been lies and misrepresentations.

"The birth of LSM came out of this unrighteous situation with Daystar and the charging for trainings was commenced to provide funds to repay Daystar investors."

Indeed, as a way to pay off Daystar debt, fees (called "donations") for trainings on the books of the Bible were implemented. The elders around Brother Lee in Anaheim objected to his charging a fee for trainings on the word of God, but Brother Lee considered his financial objectives and did not follow the fellowship of the elders.

To further alleviate Daystar debt Brother Lee asked Max Rapoport, the secretary for Daystar, to suggest to the elders of churches to ask the saints to consider their investment in Daystar as a donation and not seek to be reimbursed. The elders followed the suggestion and many saints were stumbled at this and left the churches. (Max later deeply regretted that he encouraged this). Those who posed a threat of going to legal authorities over state and federal laws that were violated in the Daystar business were paid.

Testimony of Treasurer - Don Hardy email

"It started with DayStar. WL gave the appearance that "everything was o.k.", that what he wanted to do was "ALL" for the "Lord"; but, underneath (this is a fact, and past history), there were the children to care for, especially Timothy. I had heard that in the FarEast, WL had tried to do this "business venture thing" at least 2-3 other times. (My mother-in-law did some "research" with missionaries from the Far East, and found out). I BLAME the dear dear Chinese saints in Elden, who were from the FE, because they KNEW better (they knew brother!!), and they not only "not touched it", they kept QUIET with any of us saints from America about those business ventures, and let us ALL go ahead and "walk down the primrose path!!" I believe I told you about the Elders' Mtng later (about 8-10 mos?) after Daystar (WL had already moved to Orange Co., and we had already built the mtng hall, so I may have my timing off): It was a LARGE Mtng (bros. had flown in), and WL was sitting up-front in "the captain's chair". John Smith of San Diego, asked him something like this: "WHAT happened with Daystar, WL? Soooo many saints are still suffering. Somehow we have to pay them\$\$ back" WL's answer: something like this (I'll "never" forget): "They have lost their virginity". Dick Taylor was very perplexed, and asked: "Why, WL, what on earth do you mean?!!" "Well bros. when the saints first came into Elden Hall, in the "early days" they were all somewhat pure virgins, WHOLLY for the LORD, seeking the Lord, wanting only the Lord. But over Daystar, so many LOST their virginity, they lost their first love. (They got mixed). Dick (or someone else) said, HOW did that happen WL? WL said, they were (all) SEDUCED, they lost their virginity!" And there were MANY brothers there, but NOT one asked, "WHO did the seducing, WL?" I did not ask publicly, but I asked (and was answered) within me! "Why, the "little precious man" sitting right in front of us, IS THE MAN who seduced us all!!"

When Witness Lee was at Elden, right at the height of Daystar, I was a "board-member" with JohnI & Bill M. In fact I did most of the banking. And WL would SWITCH accounts & \$\$ so much from one bank to another, that I alerted Samuel Chang: "S, do you know what \$\$Laundering is? I'm afraid WL is laundering \$\$, without knowing it!" (I believe though, he did know!!). SC told WL. I resigned from the Board, and SC told me I was "in trouble" with WL, that I had gotten on his "bad side" or something like that....that I had better shape up! (Ha!)"

CRYSTALLIZATION: Daystar was a cancer in the Body that has never been treated. It brought distrust, disillusionment, and discouragement into the recovery, as many saints never recovered from the ordeal, with some of them leaving the churches. Morale plummeted and the spirit of migration that had prevailed in 1970-73 disappeared. (See appendix 15, Daystar Enterprise)

4. Were the first lawsuits a mistake? In the mid to late seventies legal action was taken against *The Mindbenders* and *God-Men*, two books that were laden with defamatory material against the local churches and Witness Lee. Whether or not the lawsuits were intrinsically right or wrong to engage in, five years of litigation drained money, energy, and time from the saints and the churches; and being on the heels of Daystar, the ordeal contributed further to the churches' decline. Moreover, the use of the *saints'* monies was

again brought into question. What began as an LSM issue that was to be kept separate from the churches, ultimately became a church burden, something that Brother Lee had announced to elders in the beginning would not and should not happen. Churches were encouraged to make pledges and then were reminded to carry them out. Such actions took place on Sunday night after the Lord's Table meetings in some localities.

Furthermore, LSM and the local churches "won" the two cases but gained a negative reputation in the Christian community for taking fellow believers to court and also for their strategy of draining at least one of their opponents of funds to the point of bankruptcy, which they were able to do because of endless funding resources from the saints and the churches. Their reputation has followed them to this day.

Concerning major legal action, there is a high price to pay, even if the action is "justified".

5. Were Brother Lee's handlings of other financial matters and church matters mistakes? We have already discussed Daystar and the handling of saints' investments, and we have talked about the first lawsuits and the procuring of saints' monies for funding them. Besides Daystar he raised up other businesses in the U. S. and previously in the Far East.

In the late fifties Witness Lee had created a major problem to the church in Taipei through business failures involving investments from the saints and his oldest son, Timothy, and he lost a lot of money. This brought a financial crisis to the church in Taipei. All the donations from the church members were used to pay the debt incurred, and still a large amount of money was owed. Due to the desperate situation, Brother Lee coerced the elders to sell a piece of land belonging to the church in order to pay the debt. Because of that action many co-workers and church members were especially unhappy with him and the debacle. That piece of land had been bought by the church to build a training center and a new meeting place. (Larry Chi)

The businesses that Brother Lee became involved in was in part to benefit his oldest son, Timothy, but the businesses failed and the saints lost money from their investments. None of Brother Lee's business matters have been publicly accounted for that brought damage to the churches of God and to the saints.

There were other matters in places such as the Philippines, Malaysia, and Hong Kong that disappointed the saints and elders and led to crises and division.

In other matters in the Far East, toward the end of the 1950s co-workers in Hong Kong, the Philippines, Singapore, and Malaysia had serious differences with Brother Lee because of the absolute authority he exercised, which was hard for them to take. Everything was dictated by him, and he would not take any input from others. In addition, some of the affluent church members were very unhappy about his handling of the financial matters. This was due to the fact that a lot of the money had been contributed by them, and Brother Lee handled the finances according to his own view. The co-workers did not feel they could trust him anymore and because of the differences they had with him they split up. The Philippines was very important to Brother Lee and several well-to-do church members supported the church there financially over the years. Manila, however, decided to sever relationships with Brother Lee totally in 1960.

6. Was the full-time training a mistake? It has been outwardly successful and very helpful to the churches. But has the FTT become another center, something Watchman Nee warned elders and co-workers about? The FTT was a center and promoted a center – a special leader and his ministry. The FTT also produced trained ones to go back to their localities to promote the center, a man and his ministry. In the quote below, Watchman Nee addresses the matter of the extra sphere of a training center.

Whenever a special leader, or a specific doctrine, or some experience, or creed,

or organization, becomes a center for drawing together the believers of different places, then because the center of such a church federation is other than Christ, it follows that its sphere will be other than local. And, whenever the divinely-appointed sphere of locality is displaced by a sphere of human invention, there the divine approval cannot rest. The believers within such a sphere may truly love the Lord, but they have another center apart from Him, and it is only natural that the second center becomes the controlling one. It is contrary to human nature to stress what we have in common with others; we always stress what is ours in particular. Christ is the common center of all the churches, but any company of believers that has a leader, a doctrine, an experience, a creed, or an organization as their center of fellowship, will find that that center becomes the center, and it is that center by which they determine who belongs to them and who does not. The center always determines the sphere, and the second center creates a sphere which divides those who attach themselves to it from those who do not.

Anything that becomes a center to unite believers of different places will create a sphere which includes all believers who attach themselves to that center and excludes those who do not. This dividing line will destroy the God-appointed boundary of locality, and consequently destroy the very nature of the churches of God (*The Normal Christian Church Life*, p. 184).

7. Was the new way a mistake? The new way began in October 1984 and included going from big meetings, with one man speaking, to small group meetings for teaching and learning the truths of the Bible, gospel preaching, and shepherding, and for prophesying in the larger gatherings. There is no problem with the concept of such a new way in the churches. However, during the implementation of the new way, an aggressive campaign led by Benson Phillips and Ray Graver to promote Witness Lee, his ministry, and the office (Philip Lee) was a mistake. The inordinate promotions within localities that the campaigning spawned were a mistake. Inspiring the formation of the mindset of one central leadership was a mistake. Denying that a central leadership was formed was a mistake. Allowing LSM to become mobilized and run roughshod over people and places was a mistake. Allowing LSM to bypass fellowship with the elders while carrying out their agenda on local church grounds was a mistake. LSM causing dissension, turmoil, and division in the recovery during the new way was a mistake. Brother Lee ignoring reports of the damage and displacing blame onto others was a mistake. Encouraging churches and elders to line up with the immoral, non-spiritual son of Witness Lee *as the office* was a mistake. Allowing a little book publishing arm of the church to grow far past its bounds and become a factor of oneness, and division, was a mistake. Brother Lee's attitude that no one could fellowship with him was a mistake. The work being mixed with the church was a mistake. All these are huge mistakes to contemplate.

Any "way" is a mistake that adds a new center for the saints other than Christ. Benson Phillips and Ray Graver strongly promoted Brother Lee and his ministry wherever they went and constructed the letter of agreement for all the elders to sign in 1986. That letter's essence was for the elders to drop their reins in all the churches and hand them over to Brother Lee. He would lead the churches. He and his ministry were now a center.

8. Was the building of the Anaheim meeting hall rife with unrighteous matters and serious mistakes? The following is from a paper written by a seriously concerned brother on the subject: "In the early 1970's land was secured for the building of the Anaheim meeting hall. Saints gave money liberally for the project and morale was high. Workers came from localities near and far. Both skilled and unskilled labor was given freely on weekends and after regular work days. Some even left their employment to be full-time for the construction which went on seven days a week, many workers staying late into the night until the early mornings.

It began to be noticed that an attitude was present in the decision-making that "we are above the law". Questionings arose when the fire code and other code regulations were

being violated, and when securing necessary permits were neglected, which were all being excused and reasoned away. Only after repeated visits by inspectors and their threats of penalties were the steps taken to repair the defects they had pointed out.

All decisions during the building were made by only one person, Witness Lee. The prevalent teaching and encouragement was to suppress all opinions because opinions were of the flesh, and those expressing opinions were labeled as fleshly or negative. Skilled workmen had real concerns about cost and labor over some of Witness Lee's indiscreet moves, yet they were not to express their opinion. Work was done and then re-done with a different twist, according to the whims of Brother Lee, which the brothers would not have cost-justified. Of course, the money was not Brother Lee's, nor was the time given to the work, his time.

The greatest indiscretion and injustice manifested itself upon the completion of the structure. The entire building was deeded over to Stream Publishing, a business entity, later to be renamed Living Stream Ministry. The original intention of the building was for the church. But only after a period of time was a smaller fraction of the property given to the "church side". LSM even used the church premises for a book room, even though the LSM business was located right next door with many and varied books on display and available there. Even after the building was supposedly completed, tearing down and constant renovations continued year after year. There seemed to be no end to the demand for free labor to make constant changes of rooms and walls. Walls that had been torn down, inspectors demanded to be reinstated to their original position after it was learned that the changes violated the building code. All this extra, hard labor had to be freely done by "volunteers". Meetings of the church were often interrupted by the noise of hammers and sawing of wood during these "renovations". The work was carried on during the church meetings because the manager of the business, Philip Lee, who was thought by many to be an unsaved person, supervised this work and seldom attended any church meetings. The small area granted to the "church meeting side" was encroached upon over and over to add to the "business" side until there were not enough rooms for the children's meetings. Some classes had to be held in the homes and apartments of the teachers or in the public park if the apartments or homes weren't large enough. Storage rooms for unsold stacks of literature were given priority over the rooms for the children."

The Living Stream Ministry did go on to become a multi-million dollar business that many fear and some attest made Witness Lee and the Lee family very wealthy. What Daystar and other failed businesses did not accomplish, LSM did in bringing monetary riches to the Lee family, according to brothers who were closely associated with LSM.

Part 2

The Blurring of the Work and the Church

In the new way, beginning in October 1984, many changes took place in the Lord's recovery among the local churches. Although many of those changes were outward and according to Scripture, one was related to a change in nature to the recovery itself. An elder in the Northwest expressed the essence of that change, declaring in a meeting, "If you are not here for Brother Lee and his ministry, you might as well not be here." The ministry was promoted to such an extent that it became the primary factor of oneness in the churches.

One Ministry, One Minister, and One Way

In February 1986, co-workers and elders from around the world in the Lord's recovery became super-charged following an urgent training in Anaheim that helped set in motion a "new move" by Witness Lee and Living Stream Ministry. This training was one of a series of trainings to galvanize a new mindset in local church elders for their "one accord" in the churches and their practice of a new way in the church life to build up the Body of Christ. Of utmost importance in the new way was the leadership. It was made clear that there was only one qualified leader in the recovery and that oneness with him and his ministry was essential for the churches to be led in the way of God's New Testament economy. To assure this, elders were to take a much lower profile in their localities, especially if they had the propensity to minister the word in large gatherings and give conferences. There was to be one ministry, one minister, and one way. The following letter of agreement, therefore, was proposed by Benson Phillips and Ray Graver and signed by co-workers and elders alike and presented to brother Witness Lee.

Dear Brother Lee,

After hearing your fellowship in this elders' training, we all agree to have a new start in the Lord's recovery. For this, we all agree to be in one accord and to carry out this new move of the Lord solely through prayer, the Spirit, and the Word. We further agree to practice the recovery one in: teaching, practice, thinking, speaking, essence, appearance, and expression. We repudiate all differences among the churches, and all indifference toward the ministry office, and the other churches. We agree that the church in our place be identical with all the local churches throughout the earth.

We also agree to follow your leading as the one who has brought us God's New Testament economy and has led us into its practice. We agree that this leading is indispensable to our oneness and acknowledge the one trumpet in the Lord's ministry and the one wise master builder among us.

We further agree to practice the church life in our locality absolutely in a new way: to build the church in, through, and based upon home meetings; to lead every member to get used to functioning without any idea to depend on any giant speakers; to teach all the saints to know the basic truths in an educational way that they may teach others for the spreading of the truth; to build up the saints in the growth in life that they may minister life to others, shepherd each other, and take care of the backsliding ones; to lead all the saints to preach the gospel in every possible way; to avoid leadership as much as possible; and to have home gatherings for nurturing the saints in life; and big meetings for educating the saints in truths.

We agree that all the preceding points are the clear and definite teaching of the Bible according to God's New Testament economy...."

Gideon and his Three Hundred Men

The example of this special oneness with Witness Lee is best demonstrated by the oneness Gideon had with his 300 men.

When Gideon was called to take the army to fight the battle for Jehovah, the Lord told him that he had too many. Eventually, the Lord chose three hundred men and told Gideon to send the others home. This does not mean that whoever went back home was no longer an Israelite. He was still an Israelite, but he had nothing to do with the fighting army. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, Witness Lee)

Gideon only needed three hundred men and the rest could go home. This was the spirit of "the Lord's new move". There was to be "no uncertain sounding of the trumpet" for the army to follow with Brother Lee as its unique leader. He had the burden to train this army to get into the truths of God's New Testament and propagate them throughout the earth.

While addressing the elders during an elders training, he said,

You may say that you follow Brother Lee, that you are one with this ministry. That sounds very good, but I am a little concerned that you may not know what it means to be one with this ministry. You may want to take me as your commander-in-chief and follow me, but I do not want to have many followers who know nothing about God's New Testament economy. We are not doing anything but carrying out God's New Testament economy. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*)

Special Oneness

Three hundred men had a special oneness with Gideon. This special oneness was essentially different from the common oneness of the nation of Israel. In the same way, Witness Lee called for an army of followers, pointing out that “those who followed Gideon to fight against the Philistines defeated them and rescued the entire nation of Israel”. He spoke the following clear and important word about this special oneness.

Whether or not a certain church takes the ministry does not decide whether that church is a genuine local church. The title of this message does not say “no uncertain sounding of the trumpet in the Lord's recovery” but “in the Lord's ministry.” I am not talking about something in the Lord's recovery, but I am talking about the ministry.... The ministry is altogether filled up with a fighting spirit. I do not control any church. All the saints who have left the denominations, the divisive sects, and stand on the proper ground are a local church in their locality. They can express their opinions, but they may have nothing to do with this ministry. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, pp. 81-82)

The Work and the Church Mixed

In the new way, however, the work and the church became mixed, or blurred. The one trumpet in the Lord's *ministry* became the one trumpet in the Lord's *recovery*. The *special oneness* became THE ONENESS in the recovery. This surely changed the nature of the recovery and became the underpinning for a new **center** of focus in all the churches – THE MINISTRY. That focus led to division and the loss of hundreds of saints in the 1980s.

A Word of Generality Not Heeded

When the work and the church were being mixed during the late eighties turmoil, much damage occurred in the recovery. This prompted Brother Lee to give the following word of generality to all the elders and co-workers at a pivotal time in local church history. His word has not been heeded. He shared,

As long as you do not do anything against our New Testament constitution, no one will bother you. Among us in the Lord's recovery, there is nothing worth worrying about because basically we do not have any heresy or any kind of organizational control. Everyone in every church has the full freedom to go on. I hope that we would be so faithful and loyal to the Lord's recovery. We should mean business with the Lord that the Lord's recovery will be prevailing and even flourishing on this earth for the Lord's purpose.

Concerning practices among us, such as head covering, baptism, or preaching the gospel, we should let these things be as they are among the saints. If some of the sisters want to wear a head covering, let them do it. If others do not, give

them the liberty. We should have this attitude with all the practices in the church life that are outside our common faith. If some feel that they are burdened to visit people for the gospel, let them do it. Those saints who are burdened to visit people for the gospel should not insist on this practice. We should try to avoid different kinds of terms, slogans, and sayings, and try to do our best to keep the oneness in the Lord's recovery. We must avoid anything that damages the freedom of the saints or the oneness of the Body of Christ.

It is altogether wise and profitable that we do not expect all the churches to be the same. This is impossible. Even twelve brothers within a local church cannot be the same in everything. If a local church has a burden to visit people in their homes, they should carry out this commission. They do not need to say that others do not preach the gospel in this way. If others feel they do not need to preach the gospel by visiting people in their homes, that is not your business. Do not talk about who is for this and who is for that. We should not talk in this way. We should not label ourselves or label others. If we want to practice a certain thing, we can do it. If others do not want to practice it, they have the liberty not to practice it. We should not question who is for a certain thing and who is not for a certain thing. This does not help you or anyone else. We all must endeavor to keep the oneness of the Spirit so that the Body of Christ can build up itself in love" (Eph. 4:3, 16). (*Elders' Training, Book 9: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, pp. 61-63)

A much different path was taken, however, as oneness in the Body was not restored and the Body was not built up in love. Sins of divisive activity and moral misconduct at LSM were covered up and oneness with a man and a ministry became necessary to be in accord with one another in "the local churches".

Three brothers who stood against the divisive ways and immoral behavior at LSM were censured publicly and quarantined. This section briefly covers the misrepresentation in the churches of John Ingalls, Bill Mallon, and John So.

Part 3

Managing the Affairs of God

The one quality for understanding the truth of the late eighties division is honesty, not the reading of official publication, and blind following of the same in the name of one accord. Let us consider the "management of the affairs of God" by Dan Towle in *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion (FPR)*. All quotes by John Ingalls in this writing are from his book, *Speaking the Truth In Love*, 1990.

A false accusation of John Ingalls and the other two elders on the English-speaking side in Anaheim was that they were not open to have a council resolution for the problems existing in the recovery.

Proposal for a Council – Anaheim elders

Witness Lee shares, "One night in July 1988, John Ingalls, Al Knoch, and Godfred Otuteye came to see me. After we all sat down, Al said that there is division in the recovery, and that it is too bad that both sides are hating each other. Then he proposed that I write an invitation inviting the leading co-workers and elders to come together, first to pray, then to study the situation according to the Bible, and then to fellowship. Godfred agreed with Al's proposal...we came to the conclusion that I write the invitation and that they three should sign the invitation, and they agreed. We also decided on the names of those who should be invited. At this juncture, John Ingalls told us that he was tired and

that he should go back home for a rest. He said that we brothers could arrange a time for the proposed meeting... ” (p. 66, *FPR*)

The Council Resolution - Dan Towle

In *FPR* Dan Towle speaks about the principle of the council way, saying, “If we have genuine concerns or problems, there is a way to handle them in the Lord’s recovery. If we have an honest heart and a real desire to keep the oneness, there is a way to take care of any problem. The conference of the leading ones in Acts 15 was to solve the problem related to the matter of circumcision. There were real concerns over this matter. The brothers took the right way. They brought it out openly in front of all the leading ones, all the co-workers and elders, to have fellowship about it. They found the mind of the Lord, and they came to a conclusion. This is the right way. We are here for the recovery of the truth. We are not hiding anything. We are willing to do everything openly. This way of a council of leading ones to resolve disaccord was first taught by Brother Lee in 1986. In 1988 he agreed to hold such a council to resolve the current dissension. The leading ones then in Anaheim first agreed, then delayed such a meeting indefinitely” (p. 102, *FPR*).

Misrepresentations of John Ingalls

Dan Towle misrepresentation – “*The brothers leading the present rebellion cannot take this way. They will not take this way because that is not their intention. This exposes their sleight*” (p. 102, *FPR*).

Actually, it *was* the intention of John, Al, and Godfred to take this way of council fellowship and look to the Lord in oneness with their fellow elders and co-workers for resolution of the problems. It was even their idea to do so as W. Lee just shared above. But after considering the real circumstances with Brother Lee and his leadership in those days, they felt that he would “dominate them” and “whitewash the issues”. Therefore, the elders thought that having such a council would not be profitable. All the brothers, including Dan Towle, were fully aware of Brother Lee’s unyielding attitude and overwhelming dominance of the leaders following his proclamation of being the unique leader and even the commander-in-chief among them in “the Lord’s new move”. (See Appendix 1, *Brother Lee Not Open to Fellowship*)

About the Council Proposal – John Ingalls

John Ingalls shares, “During the following days I considered the [council] matter at length and after much thought felt deeply that it would not be profitable for the truth’s sake, and that however misunderstood we may be we should not proceed. We had already met with Brother Lee a good number of times [twelve at that point ___*ED*], opening to him and expressing our concerns to him, and made very little progress. Moreover, we feared, from past experience, that if we had such a meeting Brother Lee would dominate it, overwhelm us, and eventually whitewash the issues.

“Frankly speaking, my trust in Brother Lee, which had once been so high was greatly reduced; he had lost much of his credibility with me. A little while afterwards, when speaking on the phone with one of the elders in Long Beach [Dick Taylor___*ED*], I told him of the proposal and our decision. He agreed with me that it would not be profitable. But his concurrence did not influence me; I was already convinced.”

Dan Towle misrepresentation – “*They said they had ‘concerns’ but they would not meet publicly to take care of these ‘concerns’. Instead they took the way of conferences and secret meetings*” (p. 103, *FPR*).

Dan's incrimination of his brothers in Christ is insupportable. They actually "took the way" of fellowship, including many times of fellowship with Brother Lee, as John Ingalls indicates in his last meeting with him.

After that meeting we again felt that it was absolutely useless to have any more times of fellowship. And so it was. That was the last time we sat down with Brother Lee for face to face communication. It was the sixteenth time that I had met with him either individually or with other brothers, since December 12, 1987, nine months prior to that time, to discuss the present situation and open our hearts regarding our concerns. We had spent many hours and long sessions together concerning these matters.

Throughout *Fermentation* no one mentioned that John Ingalls met numerous times with Brother Lee to fellowship about the current issues. He also met with other members of the Body to address his concerns. Many brothers were initially included in this fellowship.

Brothers Looking to the Lord in Dark Days

The confusing situation that all the brothers faced in the tandem leadership era of Witness Lee and his son, Philip, invoked the coming together of brothers to seek the Lord. Dan Towle was one of them. Dick Taylor was another. John Little was another. In many places around the recovery, there was considerable consternation and brothers came together to seek the Lord. There is nothing I have read or heard from the condemned brothers that indicated they met for any other reason than to seek the Lord and the truth about the current situation. To condemn their so-called secret meetings without addressing the abhorrent situation with Philip Lee and the LSM is a travesty. Philip Lee's activities of divisiveness and immorality are ignored in the recording of our history, while those who wanted to address these matters got labeled as dissenters, and worse. They are the condemned ones in our history books, not Philip. (See appendix 2)

John Ingalls shares, "Brother Lee mentioned then that Bill Mallon, John So, and myself all used the same term – central control. He deduced that we must have consulted or 'conspired' together. The fact was that we all had the same realization because of separate similar experiences without any consultation and certainly without any 'conspiring' with each other. John So began to be concerned in 1986, Bill Mallon in the spring of 1987, and myself in the fall of 1987. Eventually, as we had done for years, we had telephone contact with each other, and our heart's burden came out".

John Ingalls describes the spirit of desperate seeking among the brothers.

At this point we felt that it would be useful for the brothers we had contacted to come together to fellowship and pray in preparation for going to see Brother Lee, so that we would be clear concerning the issues we would present to him. Moreover, we believed it would be best not to create any stir among the saints or other elders by doing this openly; so we sought some place where we could all meet privately. This was by no means a conspiracy, as we are being charged. At no time did we ever meet with the purpose of plotting to overthrow Brother Lee and his ministry. That is utterly ridiculous. We never had such a thought – the Lord can testify for us. A private meeting or a secret meeting does not constitute a conspiracy. A conspiracy takes form from the content of the meeting. Is it a conspiracy to pray and fellowship together in preparation for visiting Brother Lee and opening our hearts in frank fellowship? Of course not. We were very concerned for the saints and sought for an extended period to cover the grave matters from them lest they be distraught and we suffer worse consequences.

One of the brothers I sought to contact and confer with was Ray Graver, an elder in the church in Irving, Texas, and the manager of the LSM branch office there. I called him in Texas and proposed that I come to see him in Irving. It was thought, however, for us to meet in Irving would attract too much attention; so we settled

on meeting midway in El Paso, Texas. This decision is being censured now as a plan for a secret meeting, as if that in itself is evil and a conspiracy. But I fail to see anything wrong with this. It was with a pure motive and desire and certainly was not a plot to draw him into a conspiracy to overthrow anyone's ministry. Ray was quite willing to do this until Benson Phillips, another co-worker and elder in Irving, Texas, who was then in Taiwan, advised him against it. Had Benson been in Irving, I would have sought to speak with him also. I enjoyed a very good and close relationship with both Ray and Benson for many years.

John Ingalls took the matter of fellowship very seriously, which is why he sought out fellowship with Brother Lee and other brothers on many occasions. He also took seriously Brother Lee's admonition that the brothers should not follow him if he, Brother Lee, left the way of God's recovery. John Ingalls shares,

Brother Lee has told the brothers who were serving with him a number of times, including myself, that if he ever left the way of God's recovery, we should not follow him; rather we should go forward according to the truth to follow the Lord. We believe that in some degree this very thing has occurred, and we are taking Brother Lee's own word to go on in the truth. May the Lord grant us mercy and grace to be faithful.

To give people the impression that John Ingalls did not go through proper means of fellowship and that he was "not willing to do things openly" is not correct; he was quite open with all the brothers. During the late eighties turmoil, John Ingalls was the most sensitized and burdened brother, being in the same locality as both Witness Lee and Philip Lee where strong concerns about them were growing daily among the saints. If he wanted to bring less attention to his called meetings with other leaders, it was according to his sensitivity. Brother Lee and Philip Lee gave the brothers plenty of reason to be concerned, which compelled them to meet no matter what it looked like to a brother like Dan Towle. If they didn't include some brothers in their fellowship at times, their objective was still the same, to define the problems in the recovery and to bring their concerns into fellowship with Brother Lee.

It was said that "they" would not be satisfied till "they" brought down Brother Lee and his ministry. Realistically, what did this mean? 1) It meant that if Brother Lee and his ministry were too highly exalted; 2) if he and his ministry had become the center of the church through promotions and assertions; 3) if LSM manager Philip Lee was being touted as the ministry office that all were to be one with in spite of his moral misconduct and divisive activities; 4) if the churches were being centralized under one leadership and a ministry office with world headquarters in Anaheim, then Brother Lee and his ministry should be brought down and examined, and his ministry/leadership adjusted. This is what Al Knoch meant about bringing down Brother Lee. There was a need in the Body to confront him, which several tried to do to no avail, and for him to become open to the fellowship that he had been rejecting as the commander-in-chief in the new way.

Dan Towle misrepresentation – *"If there is a problem, we can fellowship openly. But if you have to have secret meetings with certain ones, that shows there is some sleight"* (p. 103, *FPR*).

The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion is not an accurate report of a rebellion among God's people as those that were recorded in the Old Testament. Many important facts and details are missing in *FPR* that, if provided, would show that the sleight was not on the part of former leading ones. If we truly are "here for the recovery of the truth" and "are not hiding anything", as Dan Towle suggests, let us consider his own sleight, and that of others, in leaving out essential information in *Fermentation* for determining the truth of the cause of the late eighties turmoil.

Dealing with Immorality in the LSM Office

Dan Towle misrepresentation – *“If there is a problem, we can fellowship openly. But if you have to have secret meetings with certain ones, that shows there is some sleight. On the other hand, individual matters involving personal failures or sin are local matters that should be properly kept within a locality and should be handled by the elders in that locality. The ones involved in the present rebellion did not take this way. Instead, what should have been made public was kept private, and what should have been kept private was made public (p. 103, FPR). Dan Towle refers to the moral misconduct of Philip Lee that John Ingalls made “public” with certain brothers.*

The problem with Dan’s assertion that Philip Lee’s misconduct was a local matter is that Philip’s sins occurred in the office of Living Stream Ministry, and Philip Lee, who was personified as The Office, affected churches, elders, saints, and trainees everywhere. This is why John Ingalls contacted brothers outside Anaheim, who were, in fact, familiar with Philip’s previous case of moral misconduct. John also realized that these brothers were aware of the difficulty in gaining Witness Lee’s cooperation to discipline Philip. Therefore, this time John *“believed it to be reasonable and advisable for a few prominent co-workers who were aware of the history of the case and who were respected by Brother Lee to approach him and inform him of the matter...I telephoned several brothers, co-workers whom I respected and trusted and with whom I had served for many years. They were aware of the incidents ten years previously. I informed them in a general way of the current situation and proposed to them that we go together to Brother Lee in an effort to impress him with the gravity of the case and to clear it up.”* - A few brothers did indeed go to Brother Lee, but no action was taken.

The elders did not want to take any action without Brother Lee first taking action as Philip’s employer. Then, they would consider taking action. Philip was an employee at LSM, not an active brother in the church life. He was rarely seen at a meeting and many had the impression of him that he was not even regenerated. His work sessions at LSM in fact often took place during meetings and noise from the workers downstairs at LSM could often be heard in the meetings. Philip was an LSM person, almost entirely.

The elders did meet with Brother Lee several times as they opened to one another over the problem regarding Philip, yet nothing was done till much later when Brother Lee’s hand was forced to deal with him due to pressure from the church, the elders, and by ones around the recovery hearing of the problem with Philip.

Paul Kerr, a promising younger brother in Anaheim during the turmoil, wrote: *“In the real business world, where I operate, Philip Lee would have been fired, legally charged by the abused plaintiff, forced to settle for millions of dollars and he and the LSM would have been reported to the California labor board”.*

Declaring the Standing of the Church in Anaheim

Brother Dan Towle continues his misrepresentation of John Ingalls and his “misunderstanding” of what was actually happening in the church in Anaheim that ultimately issued in the elders’ presentation of sixteen points concerning truth and practice for the church in Anaheim.

Dan Towle misrepresentation – *“Eventually, [the Anaheim elders] even stood up in a meeting in Anaheim to declare a different standing of the church.” (p. 103, FPR).*

It will help to know the background of the elders’ experience that led to their declaration, given in detail in John Ingalls’ book, *Speaking the Truth in Love*. The elders didn’t declare a different standing, but clarified the standing that they had from the beginning in

Los Angeles before moving to Anaheim. John Ingalls and Godfred Otuteye offered the fellowship to the church, covering the sixteen points.

Benson Phillips, a prominent leading one in the recovery, was not critical of the sixteen points fellowship in a conversation John had with Benson: “the matter of the sixteen points spoken on August 28th was brought up, and we explained [to Benson] that they were addressed to the local need and were intended for that. He remarked that he did not think they had any need of covering those same needs in Irving, at least not now.” It wasn’t something Benson condemned and neither did Minoru Chen, who was an elder in Anaheim and aware of the confusion that existed in the locality. John Ingalls shares,

Toward the conclusion of the session as we were starting to pray, Minoru [Chen] arose and made a couple of statements. He said that he agreed in principle with all the points that we had made, but he stated that he wanted to reserve himself regarding some matters and concerning some of the points, particularly those made by Godfred. He stated that he would not say in a definite way that he agreed or disagreed. He also referred to Godfred’s apology for participating in certain promotions, which, he said, took place mainly in 1986. (He was alluding to the promotion of the LSM office and Philip Lee.) He said that he wanted to amen what Godfred had shared and declared that there was an excessive amount of this promotion, thereby bringing the saints into confusion and despondency, and the church into suffering. He also wanted to ask the forgiveness of the whole church for his part in this very matter.

Dan Towle went on to say that “Neither in the New Testament nor in the history of the Lord’s recovery with us has there been a case where one church stood up to make a declaration of its standing. There is not such a thing in the New Testament. If you do that, spontaneously you bring in division. Your standing is one way. Eventually, another church can say that they have another standing. Soon, we are in denominations. Everyone has his standing, and no one agrees with another’s standing. To declare the standing of a local church is something in the sleight of men.” (*FPR*, p. 103)

The sixteen points fellowship was a word of generality to the church in Anaheim and the brothers’ endeavor to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace with all the saints. Ken Unger was trying to maintain the church in Huntington Beach in the same way. For a comparatively long time he was trying to hold two sides together; then he received a letter asking him to step aside from the eldership. The letter came from his fellow elders in HB who wanted to line up squarely with Witness Lee and the new way. It also came through discussions the two other elders had with Brother Lee, who wanted Ken to “get off the fence”. Ken had gone to Brother Lee twenty times for fellowship, desiring that none of the sheep be lost in his locality.

Standing on the ground of oneness, both John Ingalls and Ken Unger were elders desiring to resist the strong tide of LSM usurpation in their respective localities. Ken ended up stepping aside from the eldership and became just a brother in the church, but when he found that he was being shunned by the saints, he began to stay away from the meetings, and simply never felt comfortable or at peace to return. He joined his wife in this regard. The church in Huntington Beach had lined up with its universal leader, and became a full-fledged “ministry church”.

John Ingalls also ended up stepping aside from the eldership after pressure was applied to him to do so. An activist group within the church in Anaheim effectively undermined the elders in their locality in a quest to line up the church in Anaheim with a universal leader. (See p. 83)

Dan Towle did not like the brothers' word of generality to the church in Anaheim. However, taking an objective view of the chaotic condition of the church should invoke respect for the elders and their decision to make the standing of the church clear to the saints. This, at least, was their honorable endeavor to accomplish.

The Source of Turbulence in the Recovery

It also helps to read about the experiences of John So and Bill Mallon in their localities to understand the source of turbulence that had come into the recovery that affected many localities. New elements had come into the churches, and normal concepts of leadership were changing, as were the convictions of many saints about what the church ground was becoming. What was experienced in the following examples should help us understand the atmosphere and spirit in the recovery that clouded the situation in Anaheim and in many local churches. Representatives of Living Stream Ministry were creating the uncertain atmosphere by their usurpation of elders and their obtrusive spirit in the churches, showing little regard for the church ground or for the elders who were standing on the ground of oneness in their locality.

Brother Lee's lack of attention to local needs while LSM carried out its aggressive movement in various localities helped create disarray in the recovery (Appendix 3), prompting many elders to take action and care for the pressing needs in their own locality. In Anaheim, to repeat, there was a need to make the standing of the church clear to the saints, which the elders attempted to do in their sixteen points fellowship. Although Dan Towle asserted that they "took a different stand", the only different stand they took was in *not* lining up with the "office" and its sinful and divisive manager; nor with the inordinate promotions of a man and a ministry that produced division in Anaheim and in many places throughout the recovery. For this they should be commended, not condemned.

Misrepresentations of John So

The following is some of the fellowship John So had with saints in Manila, March 1990, following the publication of *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*. In his full talk (Appendix 8), John So covers 1) his experience with the five brothers from LSM who came to Germany expressly to gain Europe's cooperation with LSM; 2) his ordeal with control issues with Philip Lee and LSM that greatly impacted John So and Stuttgart; 3) his refutations of the claims made against him in *Fermentation*; 4) the England upheaval induced by LSM; 5) the ostracizing of the Stuttgart young people by Philip Lee; 6) his letter to Brother Lee discussing all the basic problems in Europe 7) Brother Lee's ignoring of requests for him to address desperate needs in Europe that were brought to his attention; 8) his letter of disassociation with Witness Lee and LSM due to moral issues involving its manager and LSM interferences in the European churches.

John So Fellowship in Manila

Firstly, in his talk, John So expressed surprise in being charged by Brother Lee that he was a leader of an international conspiracy ring. He had no consciousness of this being the case, but did offer many examples of the existence of a conspiracy against him.

Brother Lee claimed that "rebellion and conspiracy started to ferment in Stuttgart in 1986", and it is at this point that John begins his fellowship in the special meeting held for him in Manila.

Five Brothers Come to Stuttgart

Using his own term, the fermentation actually started at Stuttgart in 1986 by the coming of five brothers sent by Witness Lee and sent by his office, Philip

Lee. Ironically, things didn't start with us. At that time we thought their intention was to give a conference, even the "one accord" conference that Witness Lee had just given in the elders' meeting in Anaheim. So we welcomed them. But to our surprise, these five brothers themselves proclaimed that their burden was not for the conference, but that their burden was for the afternoon fellowship they would have with the leading brothers from Europe concerning the leading of the ministry office that the churches in Europe would become one with the office of Living Stream Ministry. In those afternoons the brothers' burden was very strong to propagate and to promote the ministry office, and at that time, really, none of the leading brothers had any idea what the office was. At one point, somebody was very ignorantly and innocently asking, "Well, what is the office, anyway?" And everybody laughed. Of course, we found out that the office is really Brother Lee's son, Philip Lee. It might be public knowledge for everybody perhaps, except for the brothers in Europe. Now, this was the motive of these brothers' coming. This is not my judgment—this was their proclamation. They said it themselves.

John So's Understanding of the Office

At that time my understanding of the business office of Witness Lee was exactly what Witness Lee publicly proclaimed it to be - an office to take care of producing tapes, printing books, and distributing the books and tapes to serve all the churches. I fully agreed with Witness Lee that if the LSM is only operating on the business side to print books and to distribute tapes, then we brothers should accept this, and cooperate with them. We were really one with the office at that time. In a proper way, we were one with the Living Stream Ministry, according to my understanding of the function of the office.

Promotion of Philip Lee as "the Office"

Well, the question is this: I was accused here in *Fermentation* of pretending to be one with them, the LSM, but that really I was against them. Tonight let me say a word. I don't want to vindicate, but I just like to share at least the way we look at it. Everything has two sides. I'm sorry to say, it is not that I am pretending. It is because the LSM office really has a double standard. There is a public declaration that the office is only for the business side to print books, to duplicate tapes, and to send them out to serve the churches. But to my realization, there is another aspect expected of us. During the visit of these five brothers to Stuttgart, two of them stayed with me in my home, and these brothers began to fellowship with me concerning the office, that it is really brother Philip Lee and that brother Philip Lee is the closest and most intimate co-worker of Witness Lee, and that I need to get into the fellowship with him, and that our brother, Witness Lee, needs his son. And after almost every meeting in Stuttgart, they made a long-distance call to the office to report everything that is happening. To the office! The report went to the office, to Philip Lee. I was, in short, expected to do the same. I told the brothers in a very good way—we were not fighting—I said, "brothers, I'm sorry, I just cannot do that. You have the grace to do it, that's fine, but I just cannot do that." This is what I realized later was the cause of many problems that we in Stuttgart began to experience with the LSM. A report had gone back to Philip Lee that I refused to do what the brothers were doing. Looking back, I see that this is what caused a serious problem with him and then brought us trouble in Stuttgart.

In my view, however, what they were doing in reporting everything to the office had nothing to do with Witness Lee's public declaration of the proper function of the office. I didn't feel there was a need for me to report to the office what we were doing. But these brothers who came to Stuttgart were telling me that Witness Lee's son is his closest and most intimate co-worker. I have to say I had never heard such a thing before. But these two brothers

who stayed with me assured me that this was true though Brother Lee doesn't say this publicly. Anyway, a report went back to Anaheim, and somebody wasn't happy with me. I was happy with everybody, but somebody was not happy with me.

Stuttgart Printers Cut Off By "The Office"

Listen to this, dear saints. When I encouraged the brothers to follow the office and to cooperate with the office one hundred percent, I meant it. And we did. The office, however, began to behave in a strange way. They wanted us to stop printing books and send all of the camera-ready pages to Irving. There they would print the books and send their finished work back to us, which according to our feeling, was not logical. The Germans are very logical people, you know, and this was not logical because we have the whole facilities right there in Stuttgart, right next to it.

It's just like in the kitchen: You knead the dough. Afterwards, you pull out the dough and the oven is right there to bake the bread. But we were only able to knead the dough, we just couldn't bake the bread! We had to send the dough, the kneaded dough, somewhere. To South Africa, I don't know where, to America, and then they will bake the bread and send it to us. For a German mind, this is a little bit illogical. You know the Germans, right? They are very systematic; they are very logical. We did it, though, believe it or not, we did it. In fact, at that time, some brothers were slightly irritated. I told them, I said, "Brothers, listen. All the books bear Witness Lee's name, he is the author. It does not matter where the books are printed." You may not believe that we sent within a year and five months over 4100 camera-ready pages to be printed, and we did not receive a response. We did not get at that time one page printed, nothing...nothing...!"

John So and the brothers then wrote to Philip on March 2, 1987, outlining their plans to get designated life-studies translated and printed. Although they made good progress on the translations, LSM was far behind in the printing. In the letter they asked Philip for a time of fellowship at the upcoming training, but received no reply from him. At the training they tried to get an appointment with him, but they did not succeed. They left that training without a time of fellowship and coordination with Philip Lee.

John So then shares,

It is not right, therefore, to say that on one hand I declare that I am for the ministry office, but on the other hand, I don't cooperate with it. I want to let you know that something more was expected of us at LSM that we could not cooperate with and someone was not happy with us about that.

So here I would say is the proof of our cooperation with the office--this letter and our sending of 4,100 pages of camera-ready copies. We kept our mouths shut, not complaining, waiting for the books to come. Nothing came. Nothing came. Okay. Witness Lee then questions my character on page 38 of the book, *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*. He quoted my negative statement in the disassociation letter that "All the brothers in Europe could testify of the strong promotion of your office when the brothers came to Stuttgart in the spring of '86, trying to bring all the churches in Europe under the leading of your Office". Of course, I said this in retrospect, looking back after realizing the double standard of the office. He compared this statement to what I had said one year earlier: "we all can surely testify that neither you nor your office has ever controlled us in the past in any way." That was then. Things had surely changed.

John So was just beginning his troubles with LSM and Philip Lee at this juncture. He eventually was driven to a point of complete frustration and disillusionment with them and with Witness Lee, and later suffered the defamations in *Fermentation*. In a phone conversation with John, 2005, he did not want to defend himself, but exclaimed, recalling the startling claims of the book, that none of what the book said about him was accurate, referring to the points that were made to accuse him. He wanted no part of addressing matters of the past and did “not want to fight”, but after considering in a thoughtful pause the value of addressing the unrighteous matters, he said that if the brothers want to repent, they can give him a call. His full talk in Manila given in appendix 8 reveals more of the hidden history of LSM and the demise of John So and many of the European brothers and churches.

Witness Lee’s Disingenuous Reporting Concerning John So

In his book, *Fermentation*, Witness Lee refers to John So only in the most negative light, never allowing that his former co-worker had legitimate concerns. On page 68, for instance, Brother Lee says, “he spoke past midnight, relating to the brothers the rumors and lies he had heard” [as if they were rumors and lies]. In Brother Lee’s handling of John So’s solemn letter of disassociation, he does not deny the serious charges made against him, Philip Lee, and his co-workers. He essentially condemns John for telling the truth and for the truth spilling out to others:

Less than three weeks after the August 28 meeting, on September 17 [1988], John So and some leading ones of nine churches in Europe wrote a letter to me, accusing me and my close co-workers of covering up and tolerating sins, and thus declaring their disassociation from my ministry. In an attempt to further discredit me, he read over the telephone to a riotous brother in Anaheim their aforementioned private letter of disassociation. In a Lord’s Day morning church meeting on October 9, 1988, this brother read that letter to the public. Later the tape of that meeting was sent to many churches. Numerous letters of protest against the riotous meeting in Anaheim were sent to the elders of the church in Anaheim as a result of this irresponsible distribution of the tape of this meeting. Thus the private letter sent to me was made widely open in order to defame me.

I am sorry to say that Brother Lee was more concerned about being “discredited” and “defamed” than he was about being truthful. The letter, which was not “private” but written “before the brothers and sisters in the local churches and before the Christian public”, was not written with a base intention to “discredit” or “defame” Brother Lee; rather, it was written to tell the truth and disassociate from the “sins and behaviour” in Brother Lee’s work. There had been no response by Brother Lee to the serious concerns that John and the brothers in Europe had, thus John So and the brothers with him finally decided that they should send Brother Lee the letter of disassociation.

Brother Lee made reference to the “irresponsible distribution” of tapes of the “riotous meeting”, yet took no responsibility himself to tell the saints the facts related to the sin, corruption, and divisive activity stemming from his office. Naturally, then, this word got out in other ways, creating a chaotic atmosphere.

Brother Lee disrespectfully refers to a “riotous brother” in Anaheim and denounced him, not disclosing the source of the brother’s grief and the incendiary elements embodied in LSM that provoked many church members to become “riotous dissenters” in Anaheim. Instead of addressing the immoral conduct of his son at LSM and his son’s major role in causing division in the recovery, Brother Lee hid these

matters from the saints in his report on “the rebellion” and chose instead to publicly censure brothers like John So, a brother who let it be known that he would not “participate in the unfruitful works of darkness”; but rather “reprove them.”

Concerning Bill Mallon

In the book, *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*, Brother Lee refers to Bill Mallon’s letter (p. 20) to him, isolating the strongest words Bill used in describing his experience in the Southeast, clearly taking the words completely out of context. Witness Lee says, “He wrote another letter to me on December 16, enumerating his complaints. [This was actually Bill’s third letter of similar content within six months. He had already enumerated his legitimate complaints to Brother Lee in those letters and in phone conversations, but to no avail, so he writes again, with much more detail than in his first two letters.] Brother Lee uses the following three statements by Bill to make charges against him.

1st charge: there has been the political abuse of the oneness and of the fellowship so as to centralize a power base in order to control others. This is what we call an hierarchy; **2nd charge:** the mustard herb grows into an hierarchical tree, with highhanded tactics exercised by the branches to control; that **3rd charge:** there is the insidious pressures of a menacing hierarchy in all of its ramifications, coming in to subdue, control, and take over.

On page 57 of *FPR* Brother Lee stated, “All these are groundless, unprovable, perverted, and slanderous accusations...Bill’s letter did not express his concerns in the proper way of fellowship. Rather, it conveyed many items that were based either on rumors, gossip, or misunderstandings, with a tone of accusation”.

Following is the full paragraph in Bill’s letter related to Brother Lee’s **first charge** above:

I appreciate the word that I should forget the circumstances and stand with the basic. This is a good word. But the circumstantial things were mentioned so as to point out to you the symptoms of a very serious root. I wrote the letter to give out signals that are symptomatic of a very fundamental problem, and the way I see it, it is using the power of politics, which is to impose the will of one upon the will of another so as to either overtly or covertly coerce him. **There has been the political abuse of the oneness and of the fellowship so as to centralize a power base in order to control others. This is what we call an hierarchy.** Hence, it is not a matter of circumstances, personalities, trials, or feelings of discouragement, for these are but symptoms. For example, Benson and Ray, as well as others, promoted Philip Lee, proclaiming everywhere that Philip is Witness Lee’s closest co-worker, that Brother Lee has no one with as much wisdom, energy, and insight as Philip Lee, that Philip is Witness Lee’s choice regardless of his anger and abuse of the saints, that everyone must submit and contact Philip Lee and/or the office--such audacious promotions are obviously symptoms of a disease.

The paragraph in Bill’s letter containing Brother Lee’s **second** charge:

I know that this is a big recovery, and I feel very happy that we are trying to return to the scriptural way, and God forbid that I should try to hinder what has been gained already. For me to take the attitude and action that I have taken, however, indicates that I am desperately concerned, lest **something so very good as the mustard herb grows into an hierarchical tree, with high-handed tactics exercised by the branches to control.** I am desperately concerned lest the subtle enemy sneaks some leavening corruption into the fine flour. We must be warned of certain danger-signs and beware of our vulnerability for being baited into a snare.

Bill twice said, "I am desperately concerned".

The following are paragraphs in Bill's letter related to Brother Lee's **third** charge:

Brother Lee, although I have written this letter, it does not take away one iota from the deepest appreciation I have for the concern and care both you and Sister Lee have shown for me, my health, and my family over the 24 years that I have been in the recovery. Yes, I do remember how we have worked together -- first, shoulder to shoulder for 10 years in Los Angeles, and then from a distance in New York, Atlanta, and Miami for 14 years--and how we have fought many battles together for the Lord and His recovery. Yes, we can testify that we never had any personal trouble between us for these 24 years. Notwithstanding, and I know we both mutually agree, the problem both you and I should face together is beyond the personal and beyond personalities. The very first step in having love, care, and concern for others is to 1-i-s-t-e-n! I earnestly hope you will not take this letter and misapply it to mean that a problem exists between us. A thousand times "no"! But the situation as defined in this letter demonstrates a much deeper and broader problem. Both of my letters reveal **the insidious pressures of a menacing hierarchy in all of its ramifications, coming in to subdue, control, and take over** the very recovery of the Testimony of Jesus for which we have labored and fought, and in the process, trampling under foot the essential intrinsic flow of mutual fellowship among the believers.

Comparatively speaking, it is easy for me to bear my daughter's illness and financial burdens, but I no longer can stomach the evil of playing politics by using and abusing oneness with the ministry and with the office. This absolutely has nothing to do with flesh and blood, but with the spiritual dark forces behind the scene who are working in deception.

Now I wish to conclude this long letter. You will never know of the intensity of my consternation. I have suffered a great dilemma over this matter of speaking with you about the affairs surrounding the office. You probably do not realize how much of a promotional campaign that went on for the office, which would correspond to a political campaign. What compounded the problem and prevented me from coming to you is that Philip, being your very own son, was positioned into a very prominent place of the work. A message you gave in Anaheim, on April 18, 1983, entitled PRACTICAL TALKS TO THE ELDERS # 6 --- "Avoiding Family Entanglements": Here you testified that Watchman Nee never brought his relatives into the church leadership or into the work. I can now see the wisdom of this, because in your case, I say this kindly, to have Philip established into such a prominent place of the work has frustrated and hindered transparent fellowship between you and the workers as well as between you and the churches. In my case I agonized long as to what to do. Finally, I decided to withdraw from the work, thus giving me the basis for writing a letter to you indicating some signals, hoping you could see that these signals are symptomatic of a more fundamental root, as I have attempted to explain above.

You may ask, Why did I not do anything before now? First, for three years I stood against my concerns because they seemed to be founded without supporting evidences. There were a number of insinuations and innuendoes, but I felt to wait until these were more manifested. Second, the principle is that it always takes time. Time is the best means to manifest things. Even today, I expect I know only the tip of the iceberg, which means that much more is submerged beneath the surface. And finally, the third reason, Because of your son, Philip, who was so conspicuously involved, I was in an agonizing dilemma. To me, it meant that if I touched your son, I would touch you. Please understand that I do not interpret this situation as being related to personalities or circumstances, but the enemy's attack to corrupt and destroy the recovery of the Testimony of Jesus, which we love and treasure so much.

Since Philip was now so intricately involved with the work, I eventually worked through my dilemma and decided to resign from the work. By divorcing myself from the work, I then had the ground and the liberty to be open, transparent, and honest with you. Finally, I believe that a kind of blind loyalty has been promoted, which issues into a propensity to obstruct truthfulness and single-hearted faithfulness.

One has to wonder why Brother Lee would not be open to the truth of the situation in the Southeast. Could Bill's expression of his concerns be more real or done with any greater love and concern? Why reject a co-worker and elder and his true report, which others in the Southeast at that time could confirm?

What Brother Lee did not quote or seem to care for in referring to Bill's letter was Bill's concern for **"the Testimony of Jesus for which we have labored and fought"**, the LSM brothers' **"trampling under foot the essential, intrinsic flow of mutual fellowship among the brothers"**, Bill's declaration, **"Let me strongly declare that the brothers in the South are committed to do anything and everything in their power to cooperate with any burden you, Brother Lee, may have"**. Nor did he answer Bill's query, **"Is it too much for me to make this honest assumption: Is the one accord which the office promotes the one accord of fellowship, or is it the one accord of lining up with the office?"**

Bill could not explain to Brother Lee the true condition of the work in the Southeast without Brother Lee defending those working in "one accord" with him. Using the same Morning Revival book referred to earlier (*The Uniqueness of the Lord's Recovery* 3), Brother Lee quotes Watchman Nee, who said, "When a co-worker is in a certain place, he has to cooperate with the local church in that place". In Bill Mallon's experience, the opposite was expected. This led to confusion and disaccord, as the churches in Europe also experienced at the hands of LSM.

Instead of humbly receiving Bill's report, Brother Lee condemned Bill in front of all the elders and co-workers gathered for meetings to expose the "dissenters" and "rebellious ones". During this time of corporate berating of Bill Mallon, it is noteworthy that the voices of Benson Phillips and Ray Graver were strangely quiet. Others took the floor and spoke against Bill, but not Benson and Ray, who should have been "authorities" on the subject. Certainly, they had no ground to say anything to condemn Bill, and he had been violated enough by them already.

In a recent word from Bill (2005), at 74 years old, he shared about his intention:

I would like to make one point clear. I had never left the recovery, and had never intended to do so. But in 1990, after receiving notice of the "excommunication", after receiving the "Fermentation" book, and after the brothers in Miami served me notice of no longer supporting me and my housing, I was forced to leave. We went to Fort Lauderdale for refuge, because Barbara, fortunately, had an Aunt who lived there. My intention was to remain until the storm blew over, and then in a period of calm try to have further fellowship. But this could not occur. Everywhere throughout the country, I was not welcome. Of course, thick clouds of confusion covered the whole situation in the churches.

The Truth has been Recorded

Bill's experience in the church paralleled John So's in Europe and John Ingalls' in Southern California, as these brothers also got nowhere in fellowship with Brother Lee about their desperate concerns. All three brothers were subsequently condemned in *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* by Witness Lee and their former fellow co-workers

in a one-sided account of what had occurred in the previous four years; and, they were “quarantined” in the recovery with no accounts given of their sufferings with Witness Lee and his Living Stream representatives. Their reaction to the interferences, manipulations, and usurpations of LSM became known as “the rebellion”. They themselves became known as “the rebellious ones” and “ring leaders of a conspiracy”. The truthfulness of the “rebellion”, however, cannot be found in official LSM publications on local church history, for it is not in the interests of LSM or according to their agenda to print the truth. Yet, it has been adequately and faithfully recorded by others. Praise the Lord for this!

LSM Agenda Causing Division

While these three quarantined brothers experienced a lack of response from Brother Lee to their local needs, LSM objectives were fully tended to and broadening onto local grounds. This was certainly the case in the Southeast and in Europe; it was also graphically portrayed in Rosemead (Appendix 12). The LSM went about crashing into their localities, and either *effectively* or *intentionally* displaced elders, and fueled the disaccord Dan Towle refers to in *Fermentation* (p. 102, *FPR*).

The LSM’s occupying agenda inspired John So to speak out and explain by analogy the occupation of the church ground by Witness Lee and his ministry. John likened the forceful movement of the LSM into various localities to the Japanese invasion of the Philippines in WWII (p. 73, *FPR*). The concern of LSM was not for the local ground and the keeping of the oneness with the elders and the churches, as they moved into localities to set up shop (See Francis in Rosemead, Appendix 13). Their concern was for their “big plans”.

Their interference in the Southeast caused Bill Mallon to remove himself from the work and to ask Brother Lee the question many wanted to know: Was the “one accord” that was being promoted by the office the one accord of *fellowship* or the one accord of lining up with the office?

Upon hearing reports and the questions about LSM’s divisive activity, Brother Lee ignored the reports and the questions and defended LSM workers. (Appendices 1, 3) He behaved this way until he was forced to deal with the damage and loss in the churches in a pivotal elders’ conference where he smoothed things over (Appendix 4). He later condemned in his *Fermentation* book all the *reporters* of Living Stream’s divisive activity, urging church leaders “not to make an issue” of anything. By so doing, the church leaders have kept their kind of “one accord”. They have also kept to this day the shroud about them, created during those days of turmoil in the local churches.

Conclusion

The official version of events and concerns of 1985-1989 was given by the leaders in the recovery and presented to the churches in 1990 in *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*. Yet, that record is not the truthful story of “rebellion” in the local churches, and thus it misleads the saints. Our leadership should deal with that book and their sin, and ours, of bearing false witness against the former leading ones.

LSM’s divisive activities in the churches and the sins of its manager, Philip Lee, in the office of Living Stream should be made public; enough so, that the saints can understand that the turmoil was not caused by the “rebellious ones”, rather its source was the Living Stream publishing entity, overstepping its bounds morally in the office, and spiritually in the churches. Judgment of the sins of immorality, divisive activity, and bearing false witness evaded Brother Lee and his publishing arm run by him and the said offenders.

The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion

Accusations Reasonably Addressed

www.Lordsrecovery.us/UncoveringFermentation.pdf

Appendix 1

Brother Lee Not Open to Opinion or Fellowship from the Brothers

One Accord for the Lord's New Move
Elders Training, Book 7

In the beginning of the era of the new way, Brother Lee made it clear who was the leader among the churches in the recovery. There was to be "*no uncertain sounding of the trumpet*" for an army of followers to follow him as its unique leader.

He gave the following analogy: "The citizens of the United States may say many things to criticize the government and the commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces. But when you get into the army and become a soldier, you lose the right to say anything."

He continued, "you may be a member of a local church and yet have nothing to do with the ministry to fight the battle for the Lord's interest on the earth. All of you are the elders, the co-workers, and the apprentice elders, the leading ones, in the recovery. I am speaking to you all as the soldiers in the recovery, not to the citizens. I am speaking to the soldiers of the army. Are you going to remain in the army? You have to realize what the army is and what the army would do. The army has no capacity to take your opinion..." (pp. 80-81, ET 7)

1. Atlanta Elders Conference

John Ingalls relates an elders' meeting in which Brother Lee told the brothers how he felt about them and their ability to fellowship with him. He essentially informed them that they were not *qualified* to raise questions with him or to criticize anything he did.

John Ingalls

In September Brother Lee had a conference in Atlanta with two elders' meetings, one on Friday, September 16th, (1988) and the other on the Lord's Day, September 18th. The second meeting was exceptional with brothers from all over the country attending. I would like to briefly describe it, noting a few significant things that were said, (I myself was not present but I received reports from a number of brothers concerning it.)

Brother Lee strongly vindicated the way he had taken against all criticisms. He drew a line; any who would not take this way, he said, are "dropouts", and the Lord will have no mercy. Addressing the brothers, he said that none of them understood what he was doing. None knew what he was doing in Taipei; hence there was no one that he could fellowship with. When I went to Taipei, he said, "I did not fellowship with one person concerning what I was going to do." He continued: "None of you is perfected. Who can say that he is perfected? So you are not qualified to criticize what I am doing. I didn't include you in my fellowship –

how can I? So let there be no more talk about anything I do. You criticize my young trainers in Taipei, telling me their mistakes, but I was doing everything; what they did was to carry out my burden.

Don Rutledge, an elder in Dallas before moving to North Carolina, told me, "That meeting was the most devastating and discouraging experience of all my time in the church." What particularly bothered him was Brother Lee's attitude toward the brothers. The atmosphere, he said, was heavy, oppressive, and abusive. (Reports came to my ears from a number of brothers who attended that meeting; all indicated something similar.) Brother Lee had wanted to have a time of fellowship with Don immediately following the session, but Don was so troubled and depressed that he told Brother Lee he had to go home. As he walked out the door, Titus Chu came up and said to Don, "I'm afraid this will make our situation worse. I hope not".

2. Elders From Raleigh Visit Brother Lee

Brother Lee was not interested in the fellowship offered to him from brothers in the church in Raleigh, who came to him seeking his fellowship over the desperate concerns in their locality.

John Ingalls

In the summer of 1988 Tom Cesar of the church in Raleigh came to Anaheim to discuss with Brother Lee the points of a seventy-one-page compendium entitled *Concerns with our Practice Regarding Truth and Life*, which had been mailed to him earlier. The brothers in Raleigh had labored for many hours over this work in the expectation that Brother Lee would read it, be apprised of their concerns, realize the gravity of the situation, and hopefully make some major changes in the course we were taking. Under each point they had put together zeroxed copies of pages with quotes from Watchman Nee and Brother Lee's earlier printed ministry together with quotes from his recent ministry to prove that there had been significant changes contradicting Brother Lee's own teaching. While Tom was in Anaheim that summer I saw him, and learning that he had presented Brother Lee with this writing I commented, "I doubt that Brother Lee will read it. He doesn't like to read things of that nature that raise questions concerning his work or ministry."

The Raleigh brothers...agreed to come to Anaheim the week after the training to meet with Brother Lee. He said he would answer their questions. They arrived on Saturday, January 7, and met with Brother Lee that night. They met also on the Lord's Day morning, afternoon, and evening, and again on Monday morning – a total of approximately ten hours. The first evening Brother Lee did most of the speaking, giving them a history of the "conspiracy and rebellion." However, the brothers were able to say a few things. Tom pointed out how the church life was going down, and they were looking for answers. He said they had no problem with the matters of the new way, but how it was carried out was a problem. They were not concerned for right and wrong, but for God's righteousness. They read some verses to him and quoted from the *Normal Christian Church Life* by W. Nee, but Brother Lee did not want to hear it. He said that he knew what Watchman Nee meant in that book, and what Watchman Nee meant then does not apply to today's situation. He said, moreover, that there is no basic problem among us, but only a storm in Germany and Anaheim. John So, he said, exercises a strong control over Stuttgart, and just like Bill Freeman (a former elder of the church in Seattle) he is trying to set up another ministry. One of the Raleigh brothers then asked how you can identify another ministry. Brother Lee replied that it is very difficult. The brothers said that Brother Lee was very defensive at times and was like a ball bouncing from one matter to another. Tom Cesar asked, "Why can't brothers come together to discuss their concerns without being considered to be conspiring?" But Brother Lee, they said, had no ear to hear them. It was as if they were talking to the wall. He didn't want to clear up their points; he hadn't even read the outline they had presented to him the previous summer. He would not

answer their questions directly. They were impressed that he never asked how the saints in the church in Raleigh were doing, as if he was not concerned for them. The brothers were very disappointed (p. 140).

3. LSM Sister's Report

As a sister working in the office of the Living Stream Ministry, a former elder's wife had day-to-day exposure to the interferences that were being encountered by dear saints - elders, co-workers, and churches - in places around the recovery both far and near. She had been troubled to the extent of writing to Brother Lee an eleven-page letter expressing her concerns of the ill-treatment of the saints in different places at the hands of the LSM. She and her husband, an elder in Southern California, went to Brother Lee to read him the letter, and as she began to read Brother Lee cut her off soon after she started, and he took over and dominated the time, sharing his own burden about "the Lord's move." She was very discouraged, but Brother Lee granted her another visit to him with her husband at her husband's request, and again as she began to read, Brother Lee stopped her, before she could get through half a page. He then dominated the remainder of the time with his own burden concerning "the Lord's move" on the earth, not showing interest in her fellowship.

Brother Lee could not listen to what the husband considered a mild part of the letter compared to the more serious matters the letter addressed. His wife, thoroughly despondent over her experience, never tried again and never recovered from her experience and disillusionment with the church and the recovery. She has never met again with any group of believers.

She and her husband had experienced the same attitude in Brother Lee that was encountered by John So, Bill Mallon, John Ingalls, the Raleigh brothers, and many more. Brother Lee was not interested in the interferences - they were to him just "misunderstandings" of the "help" the LSM was trying to render.

4. Churches in Southern CA (see appendix 3, fourth point)

In the late eighties, during "the Lord's new move", the elders pondered many things in their hearts and were not short of desire and need to open up and talk about what was on their heart for their localities and for the recovery. In a surprising elders' meeting in 1988 when they did open up to one another and share in an honest way about what they felt, Brother Lee was unable to truly hear them or understand the problems they faced in their localities, as morale in locality after locality declined. A description of that elders' meeting follows:

John Ingalls –

Dick Taylor, an elder in Long Beach, started [the sharing] with a lively, full-of-enjoyment kind of testimony, such as Dick is well-known for, thanking the Lord for the door-knocking and the Gospel preaching in Long Beach, but ending with an honest word about the depression and the discouragement among some of the saints. This was unusual for Dick but he was telling it like it was. Other brothers followed who also spoke very honestly about dissensions concerning the new way and discouragement among the saints in their localities, for which they were very concerned. In some places divisions had arisen over the new way. John Smith, an elder in San Diego, ended the time of sharing with an honest account of his concerns for the saints in his church, mentioning how he feared that with the overemphasis on methods, numbers, and increase, the saints would become activity-centered instead of Christ-centered.

What was extraordinary was the elders speaking up in such an honest and forthright way, knowing that such reports were not what Brother Lee liked or wanted to hear. We were not accustomed to doing this due partly to a sense of

intimidation. To my knowledge this was the first time that had been done. This was encouraging. But Brother Lee was visibly bothered, and later reacted strongly to the brothers' speaking, saying of one brother's sharing (John Smith's) that it was like pouring iced water on him.

As a result of Brother Lee's not being open to the brothers and their fellowship, the Lord had no way to care for the churches in a practical way through Witness Lee to maintain the oneness of the Body.

As the Raleigh brothers said, "they had no problem with the matters of the new way, but how it was carried out was a problem. They were not concerned for right and wrong, but for God's righteousness." This word could have been echoed by many brothers at that time, who found that "fellowship" with Brother Lee was a one-sided matter of complying with him and his wishes, regardless of the circumstances and objections in their spirit.

Appendix 2

Philip Lee in the Late Eighties

Samuel Chang, early on, warned of a weakness in Brother Lee concerning his sons.

***Don Hardy email (2002):** When I first got acquainted with "the Lord's Recovery" in L.A. in early 1963, Samuel Chang, John Ingalls and Jim Reetzke (with Ted Wen and others), wanted the Church in Los Angeles. To make a long story short, Brother Lee moved there. I came in before Bill Mallon or James Barber. WL and John Ingalls were very burdened to make a hymnal. Anyway, during that time we worked hard; and we would take "tea breaks": Samuel C. took me for a walk one day. He loved me—we ended up working 17 years together, leg tied to leg, and God very richly blessed us with at least 3 churches coming into being. SC was very burdened and started groaning deep within, praying. Then he said: "Don, I want to share something with you for prayer, and you must keep it to yourself. Brother Lee loves the Lord, and is all-out for God and His recovery. But Don, he has a weakness, a big hole in his side, which we have to keep covered much in prayer. You see, his children (7 of them) suffered very much in China, and they are always after him; and he has a burden to help them as much as he can. But WL is very poor right now. So he has tried to help Timothy in business, but....." Then SC did a strange thing, he slapped his mouth with his hand, and told me, "Oh, I should keep quiet. Forgive me brother Don, just pray. Let's go back to the hymnal." Well Steve, I NEVER forgot that conversation...*

Reports to Eldership About LSM Manager

John Ingalls describes his experience of reports coming to him about the LSM manager:

John Ingalls

Upon returning from Atlanta on Sept. 22, 1987, I made an appointment for dinner with Godfred on September 25, Friday evening. We sat together in the restaurant, and after some general conversation, I said to him in a serious tone, "Godfred, I would like to ask you a question. Would you please tell me who Philip Lee is? It seems that he is being promoted and is going altogether too far in his involvement in the spiritual side of the work, greatly overstepping his position as a business manager. Have you noticed this? I myself could never agree with this."

It seemed that my question took him by surprise. We had never discussed these matters before. He hesitated a few moments. Then, in a very grave tone, he

replied, "John, the situation is very serious." If he was surprised by my question, I was somewhat taken aback by his answer. Godfred continued, "I have seen and heard many things in the Living Stream Office in recent months. I cannot go into detail, but I can tell you there is much that is very serious and very wrong." Then I began to be more alarmed and concerned. Godfred fully agreed that Philip Lee's involvement in the work was way out of line, but he indicated that there were more serious things than that.

Two days later, on Sept. 27, the Lord's Day, as we met in the Elders' Room before the morning meeting on Ball Road, Godfred had a few moments alone with me, and he said, "John, it is very timely that you opened up to me the other night [about Philip]. Let me tell you that the whole situation is sick and corrupt. I have seen and heard too much." Then I knew that we were really in trouble, though he did not mention any details or any names.

A Shocking Development

September 1987

John Ingalls –

On the following Tuesday, Sept. 29th, Godfred left for a business trip to Europe. On the next day, Wednesday, Sept. 30th, I received a telephone call from a sister who had a prominent position in the Living Stream Ministry Office, asking if she could see me that night. I consented. That evening she sat in my living room and with tears opened her heart to me. She had served sacrificially and faithfully for many years in the LSM office, and now she said she could not tolerate anymore the gross misconduct that was being perpetrated upon some and especially upon her. I had been acquainted with this sister for many years and knew her to be faithful, upright, and trustworthy; therefore, I took her word very seriously. I was amazed that she could put up with such conduct for so long. She stated that she tolerated it only for the sake of Brother Lee and his ministry. She said that she had no other recourse but to resign. I confirmed her intention.

That conversation utterly shocked me. I deeply felt that something must be done to acquaint Brother Lee with the situation and to let him know that we would not tolerate it. I obtained Godfred's telephone number in Europe and called him as soon as the difference in time zones permitted, telling him the things that had come to my ears. Godfred listened and said that he already knew it. I was amazed. That night I considered what could be done. That we had to go to Brother Lee I was certain.

Another Shocking Development

December 19, 1987

...In the morning of December 19, just before Ken [Unger] and I were to leave for Texas that afternoon, the sister from the LSM office who had spoken to me on September 30th called and asked to speak to Godfred and me. We met with her and were utterly amazed at what we heard. She began to relate to us in detail some of the things she suffered while in the service of the LSM office. She wanted us to realize how grave the problem was. We were revulsed to the depths of our being, and when the conversation ended and we parted, we were so full of abhorrent feelings that we were literally in a daze.

Godfred drove me to the airport to meet Ken. We were in a state of shock and utter disgust. All this had taken place in what we called the Lord's recovery! We felt that Benson Phillips and Ray Graver, who were deeply involved in the LSM operation, must surely know something of these matters. Therefore, we resolved to confer with them about this when we got to Irving.

John Ingalls -

The grievous conduct reported by the sister from the LSM office had a precedent that we were well aware of. Ten years previously there had been reports of similar incidents in the LSM office confirmed by several eye-witnesses. This compounded the serious nature of the case. I felt that it was more than a local matter, since the LSM was part of the work of Brother Lee, and the ministry of the office effected churches everywhere. Therefore, I believed it to be reasonable and advisable for a few prominent co-workers who were aware of the history of the case and who were respected by Brother Lee to approach him and inform him of the matter. (Actually, the principle of a group of brothers conferring with Brother Lee about a serious problem, a crisis, in the local churches had already been practiced on March 30, 1978, when a group of brothers – four from Texas, one from Los Angeles, and Gene Gruhler and I from Anaheim – went to see him in his home.) The next day I called Godfred again in Europe and presented my thoughts to him. He agreed.

During the next few days I telephoned several brothers, co-workers whom I respected and trusted and with whom I had served for many years. They were aware of the incidents ten years previously. I informed them in a general way of the current situation and proposed to them that we go together to Brother Lee in an effort to impress him with the gravity of the case and to clear it up. It was the first week of October 1987. We felt we should pray more and consider further what to do, since at that time Brother Lee was out of the country, in Taiwan. (p.140)

Benson Phillips Had Knowledge

John Ingalls –

On Saturday afternoon, December 19th Ken Unger and I flew to Irving. I did not relate to him what the sister from the LSM office had just told us. On Monday, December 21st, we made an appointment to see Benson Phillips and Ray Graver in the morning. Having been intimate co-workers with them for many years, and knowing that they were aware of many things, we mentioned the concerns that we had presented to Brother Lee on December 12th, excluding the matter of the misconduct in the LSM office. We wanted especially to let them know how strongly we felt regarding the colossal mistake they had made in promoting and exalting the office and Philip Lee, starting in 1981. They said that they did not feel they had erred much. This really surprised and disappointed us. We tried to impress them how serious this matter was. They invited us out for dinner, and we decided to meet again in the afternoon to continue our fellowship. Upon coming together we attempted amid protests to mention the matter of the misconduct in the LSM office. They steadfastly refused to hear about it, but we proceeded to speak. Ray Graver then quickly rose and exited the room. Benson (in whose home we were meeting) also rose to register his displeasure. We felt that they had knowledge relevant to the matter and wanted to confer with them about it. Benson admitted that the same sister from the LSM office (mentioned previously) had come to him in Taipei to disclose a related event, but he strongly protested our bringing this matter before them. They argued that this affair was exclusively under the jurisdiction of the church in Anaheim, and they had no business being involved. We felt, as we mentioned earlier, that it was more than local, and that since they were leaders in the LSM operation, they could be consulted. Some time later, however, I apologized to Benson and Ray for this, feeling that if they chose not to hear, we should not have forced the issue.

Philip Finally Discharged

After much pressing from the Anaheim elders and saints in the Anaheim area, Brother Lee finally fired Philip in June 1988. Perhaps this was helped by the prospect set forth about that time for a council of brothers to come together from the U.S. and Europe to “deal with the issues”, (which didn’t take place). John Ingalls shares, “This was now the twelfth session that I had with Brother Lee since December 12, 1987, either individually or with others. It was about this time that Brother Lee notified us that he had discharged Philip Lee from the management of the Living Stream Office, stating that it was a very hard step for him to take”.

Three months before his discharge additional news came to Brother Lee about the immoral activity of his son, and still he took no action.

A Very Threatening Incident December 1987 - March 1988

John Ingalls –

In late December a brother in the church in Anaheim who had been severely damaged through the misconduct in the LSM office was so traumatized psychologically that he sought revenge and took definite steps to execute a very grave act. (Thank God it never happened.) This came to the ears of one of the elders in Anaheim, who without any delay met with him to calm and divert him. Some time later two of us met with him. The dear brother was greatly disturbed emotionally, with good cause humanly speaking. But, he was very open to us, and the Lord was merciful to him. Actually, he had already halted in his course – the Lord would not let him proceed – but his feelings were still very raw, and he desperately needed help. We loved him and did our best to comfort him. This incident illustrates the gravity of the situation.

In March 1988 this affair also came to the ears of Dan Towle, who was an elder in Fullerton, and who with great alarm took upon himself to call Brother Lee and divulge all the details to him. He did not know that the brothers in Anaheim were already caring for the brother, since he did not take pains to call them. Brother Lee told him to contact us. So he called, telling us what he had done and asking for fellowship. We got together – Dan, Godfred, and I. Of course, Dan was relieved to hear that the problem was resolved.

Interview with John Ingalls

December 2001

Concerning reports of misconduct in the LSM office, John Ingalls did not reveal what he heard directly from the sisters involved, but in the gravest tone said that “they were violated.” He also explained why he and the elders didn’t deal with the problem: The LSM was a business operation that was run by Brother Lee, not by the elders. What took place in that area of the building was “out of our jurisdiction.”

Also, John indicated that to touch Philip was to touch Brother Lee. He said that in the late seventies when similar reports occurred about Philip and a sister, Gene Gruhler asked Brother Lee, “What are we going to do about Philip?” Brother Lee strongly indicated that he would deal with Philip himself, and that the elders should keep their hands off. It would have been problematic for the elders to act ahead of Brother Lee in the current situation.

John said that whenever Brother Lee was that strong about a matter, they “knew they couldn’t touch it”. As a result, the situation continued with Philip and the sister working together for some time, until the sister and her family were eventually sent to Texas.

Furthermore, by all accounts, Philip Lee was rarely at a church meeting and was not in the church life; he was strictly involved as the manager of Living Stream, which included his extra involvement with elders, co-workers, churches, and trainings around the world. He had become both feared and honored by elders throughout the recovery due to his integral role as his father’s “most important co-worker” and his identification as the “ministry office”. He had minimal church member identification. There were many, in fact, who were convinced that he was not even a saved, regenerated person. At any rate, his misconduct was not related to the church directly, but to the Living Stream, his place of employment. His employer-father was responsible for him and his misconduct and also for his dismissal and discipline. John Ingalls knew that fellowship concerning Philip was a Living Stream matter that Benson, Ray, and others could help with in order to acquire the mind of the Lord and achieve the most effectual results. It is an unfair condemnation to say that dealing with a person like Philip Lee was a local matter when this very “special” individual was heavily involved universally in the churches and was highly and intimately prized by his father, the strongest figure and leader in the local churches. Addressing the problem with Philip was a special matter, requiring not only a number of brothers, but those who had understanding of his history. His belligerent temperament was also a contributing factor in the elders’ decision to seek help to deal with him

The elders did bring the matter of Philip’s misconduct to Brother Lee in December of 1987 and Brother Lee was saddened and sought ongoing fellowship with the brothers as to what should be done. As in the late seventies, however, he did not fire Philip, so the tense situation in the church in Anaheim worsened. As a result of Philip remaining in the office, trouble kept brewing in the hearts of many of the saints due to this leavening situation. Word of his immoral activity was spreading and saints reacted with anger, revulsion, and an inability to understand why the situation was being tolerated by Brother Lee, and also by the elders. Eventually, the overflow of outrage and disgust about Philip Lee erupted in the church meetings.

Brother Lee coined the term “riotous dissenters” for the unbecoming conduct that some of the upset and disgusted saints displayed in those meetings. The elders did eventually excommunicate Philip in the church, after Brother Lee reluctantly fired him as manager of LSM, and after much pressure was applied on them to do so. Their action was later reversed in 1993, by new elders, who said the action was wrong.

Philip Lee was reinstated as a member although he never made things right publicly. Moreover, many individuals, including former leading ones and violated sisters, never heard from him to make things right with them. Furthermore, no word was ever given concerning his major role in causing the division.

This is the reinstatement letter that was read at a church meeting in Anaheim:

Philip Lee Restored to Fellowship

The Church In Anaheim

Meeting at: 1855 W- Ball Road, Anaheim, CA 92804
Telephone: (714) 991-4350

August 22, 1993

The elders would like to make a statement regarding brother Philip Lee.

As many of the saints know, three former elders of the church in Anaheim took public action toward Philip Lee on November 6, 1988.

The present elders would like you to know that we do not believe that the public declaration of those three brothers concerning Philip Lee was justified or proper. We feel very sorry that their action has caused suffering to Philip Lee's family.

Further, it is the unanimous decision of the elders that all discipline of the church toward Philip Lee be lifted, and it is our desire that he be fully restored to the fellowship of the church.

The elders of the church in Anaheim

Signatories: Carl Althaus Francis Ball Eugene Gruhler Moses Kuo
Eric Lee Albert Lin Jr Ed Marks Daniel Sun

Apologetic Word from New Anaheim Elders

This following word from the elders to Philip accompanied the announcement of his reinstatement that the elders sent to him. Their word to him was apologetic and subservient in tone, reminiscent of former days, when Philip expected elders to virtually cow-tow to him, or else pay the consequences, in some cases cutting off whole localities from LSM material and, in varying degrees, from the fellowship in the churches. Elders had to show deep remorse in order to return to Philip's good graces. Twice in one paragraph in their word to Philip the elders indicated that they were "wrong and improper", and they "deeply regretted". The letter-writing help and encouragement came from Philip Lee's father, who engineered the reinstatement of his son. This was done at a time when Philip had not repented for his actions. His offenses were to individuals, to the churches, and to the whole recovery, yet he was not heard from publicly or privately among the brothers, and it is quite possible he did not repent toward any sisters.

September 24, 1993

Dear Brother Philip,

We, the elders of the church in Anaheim, want to ask you to forgive us for the letter which was sent to you on August 22, 1993 without signatures. All the elders are in full agreement that it was wrong and improper to send you such an unsigned letter. We deeply regret the suffering which this has caused you. Now we want to correct our wrong and improper action by signing this letter, which includes the body of the letter we wrote on August 22, 1993 as follows:

"We would like to let you know of a decision the elders made and announced today at both the Chinese and English speaking meetings of the church in Anaheim. The announcement which we read is as follows...[see prior page__Ed]

We would like to assure you [Philip__Ed] that it is our sincere desire that your fellowship with the church would be fully restored so that we may go on together for the Lord's purpose in the church."

Sincerely yours,

The elders of the church in Anaheim

It's the brothers who had to repent - for not signing their letter sent previously. And it is they who had to "regret" the suffering they caused Philip. In their politically motivated action, brothers like Ed Marks and Francis Ball bowed to Philip Lee and in

doing so bowed also to Witness Lee. The action and servile attitude of the elders greatly offended those who were well aware of Philip's destructive and unrepentant behavior in Anaheim and in the recovery.

Eyewitness Accounts of Philip Lee

Warren Peterson witness: Brother Warren Peterson was an eyewitness to the moral misconduct of Philip Lee and a sister at Living Stream in the late seventies that all the elders came to know about, as did Brother Lee. Philip denied the matter vehemently when an elder confronted him, but the sister confessed with many tears when elders came to her. At least one current elder in Anaheim knows this and former elders in Anaheim also know this, along with other saints, and they know the following account, as well, of what happened:

Warren said in an interview with me (2001) that he was working at the Anaheim meeting hall one night when brothers were putting a lot of time in on the Living Stream part of the building to get certain things done. He had been there all day and it was getting close to 10:00 P.M. when Brother Lee and Philip Lee approached him and Nolis Miller to ask if they could work longer. Neither brother wanted to stay but Warren did stay and was painting in a room adjoining the office where Philip (married) and a sister (married) were working. They obviously did not realize he was there, only 50 or 60 feet away, when they began to engage in mutually compromising immoral physical contact. Warren was dumbfounded as this went on for about ten to fifteen minutes. He finished what he was doing and went home, not knowing what to do about what he saw. The next day, a Saturday morning, he was determined to report the incident to an elder and did so. He reported the matter to Francis Ball who acknowledged that this was serious and informed Warren that he would bring it up with the elders that morning. Francis did that and then immediately got back to Warren, who was in the hall working with the maintenance bothers. The elders wanted to see him. He went to them, sat down, and opened to them about what he saw. They, of course, felt this was a very serious matter, one of them (Max Rapoport) stating, "we will get this cleared up, Warren. We can't have this going on down there in the Living Stream; this will corrupt the church life."

Max then went to Brother Lee, and upon hearing the report Brother Lee bowed his head and called on the Lord and said, "What shall we do?" Max said they had to do something and suggested that Philip leave Anaheim and go back to Taipei. Brother Lee did not agree with this idea. From that point, his word to the elders was that he would take care of his son. When the question was asked how he could take care of his son when he, Brother Lee, was at home sleeping while his son was still working late with a sister, the answer was the same; he would take care of his son. Although leading brothers and Brother Lee knew about the situation, no action was taken and the sister continued working with Philip at the Living Stream office.

Max Rapoport, wanting to get to the bottom of the story, took Philip to lunch and confronted him on the matter. Philip denied everything, nearly causing a fight in what was described as a terrible scene in the restaurant. The elders then went to the sister to confront her on the matter and she immediately confessed that the story was true and broke down in tears. She was very sorry and expressed her remorse and repentance to the elders. It was the sister, eventually, not Philip, who was sent out of Anaheim, along with her husband and family, moving away to Texas.

Philip was allowed to continue in his position as manager at LSM for ten years when reports of his immoral behavior again came forth and the pattern of non-discipline was repeated.

Don Hardy witness: "Philip asked me if I would record all of the Recovery New Testament onto tape, for sale by Stream. That was the most precious time of my whole Christian life, reading God's Word out loud on tape. Philip liked it so much (and they did sell a lot), he told the Stream staff, "Brother Don Hardy is one of us. He has "free" opening here in the Stream" Most saints were "barred" from going through Stream (I believe because Philip got caught); but I had "freedom". One day I came down from recording, and I was truly in the heavenlies; but when I walked thru the Stream Office, I felt really dirtied. This perplexed me. I could not understand why. I told Beverly Goyer, leading sister of Stream, as I had my hand on Philip's office door (it was closed): "I am going in to ask Philip a question". Bev said: "No Don, don't go in there, Philip does not want to be disturbed!" But by then I had the door open. When I opened, a "sister" was on top of Philip, and he had his hand up you know where: She jumped back like I had "shot" her, and P. was very angry: "What do you want?" I found out more than a year later (after I was "illegally" "ousted" from Rosemead), from the next "leading sister" of the Stream (Bev. was relieved from "duty"...demanded by her husband, who was "madder than h...l!"). Anyway, this sister told me to my face that since the day I caught Philip, he told her and others in the Stream: "I am going to get Don Hardy. He is through and out". This is why WL called me into his home, and apologized to me, and tried to "restore" me. This same sister (who told me about Philip), was coming back from that big training in Taiwan, with Philip on the plane, and he tried to get her on the plane, and she screamed bloody murder, and demanded he go back and sit down. I know: she told me; and when she told her husband, he was madder than hell; and literally wanted a gun, to shoot Philip. Benson Phillips knows more than most (as does Francis Ball, to say nothing of Ron Kangas): Benson "caught" Philip drunk several times in Taiwan (and this Philip Lee, was the one who "took over" the training, when WL was not present?) The sister I mentioned above, can witness to you that she had to clean up Philip's room several times in Taipei, the porno literature, and whiskey bottles, etc. Benson knows. Have you seen the "elders" letter of "apology" to Philip Lee, asking [Philip] to forgive, and "restoring" him to "full-fellowship" and "deep" respect? I about puked when I read that! Again this proves Rom.1, to me: some of the "elders" who signed this letter, know P.L. sinned, but they, with their wills, signed a lie. Wow brother, what darkness!

Brother Lee's Comment About Philip

During a troubling time, Brother Lee lacked normal human responses to the church and to many individuals, as the spiritual father of us all. However, he was quite attendant to his own family, to his own reputation, and to the protection and welfare of his own son, Philip Lee. His comment to Francis Ball and John Ingalls showed the state of unreality that he was in regarding his son and the poor choice he had made in making Philip the manager of LSM.

John Ingalls

The following week Brother Lee notified me of the annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the Living Stream Ministry. I had been a board member and the secretary of the corporation since its inception in 1968, and I still occupied these positions. The meeting was to take place at his home, Friday morning, July 15th. Present at the meeting were Brother Lee, Sister Lee, Philip Lee, Francis Ball, and myself, the five board members. Brother Lee as the president called the meeting to order and announced that the main purpose of the meeting was to elect officers for the coming year. He then nominated the following persons for election as officers: Witness Lee, president; Francis Ball, secretary; and Benson Phillips, treasurer. Brother Lee wanted to terminate my function and replace me as secretary, and I could understand that. With my present standing I was unsuited

for the post, and I myself had been considering what I should do about my involvement with the LSM and when. He asked for a vote by the raising of hands, and we voted unanimously in favor of his nominations. The resolution was then made that the above mentioned brothers fill those positions for the coming year.

After the board meeting was adjourned, Sister Lee and Philip Lee left the room, and Brother Lee continued to talk at length with Francis Ball and myself about the current situation. I just listened, saying very little. He said how much he and Philip Lee and their families had suffered through all the talk about them. He then stated, "Philip, of course, is not perfect; nobody is perfect!" It shocked me that he would make such an inappropriate statement as that after all that had been said and done.

Appendix 3

For two years *before* the new way began in the churches, Brother Lee did not attend meetings of the church in Anaheim. He was "disappointed with the church". He spoke of going to another locality to build up that church, not Anaheim, as a model for others to follow. He considered Seattle and other places. Yet, he was in the church in Anaheim and not attending meetings. During that time away, at any rate, he considered a new way for the churches to take. He was nearly eighty years old and concerned for his ministry and the future.

In October of 1984 a new way was taken, with strong emphasis on his ministry and on himself as the unique leader in the recovery. It is that strong emphasis that became such a problem and cause for consideration that the church ground had changed, as serious local needs were ignored, while LSM prospered in gaining their objectives in localities.

The entity called Living Stream Ministry still looms large today. It surely is not limited to what Brother Lee stated were its limitations in Elders' Training Book 9. He said it *was* "a little business office to serve my ministry for two things: to publish the messages in book form and to distribute these messages in both video and audio tapes. That is all the ministry office should do and nothing else." He continued with a misleading word: "I did not have much time to check on everything related to the office in the past, but the ministry office has always had this specific function and no other function" (p. 61, ET Book 9). He had both the time and the knowledge of what his "little office" was doing in different localities and regions, because of contacts he had with such brothers as Bill Mallon and John So in the Southeast and in Europe, but he chose to ignore their pleas for his help in the midst of serious problems they were having with LSM. He also had the opportunity to *understand* more about what was happening in other localities had he been willing to listen. LSM was on the move into various localities according to plan.

Examples of Ignoring Local Needs

1. Ignoring LSM Sister's Report (see appendix 1, third point)

As a sister working in the office of the Living Stream Ministry, a former elder's wife wrote an eleven-page letter to Brother Lee expressing her concerns of the ill-treatment of the saints in different places at the hands of the LSM. She and her husband, in fact, went to Brother Lee to read him the letter, and as she began to read Brother Lee cut her off soon after she started, and he took over and dominated the time, sharing his own burden about "the Lord's move." The same thing took place in a subsequent visit when Brother Lee stopped her before she could get through half a page. He, then, dominated the remainder of the time with his own burden concerning the progress of "the Lord's move" on the

earth, not showing interest in her fellowship. The sister had become quite disillusioned about the church and now about Brother Lee, and withdrew herself from the church and LSM permanently.

It was not that Brother Lee didn't know what his representatives were doing in many places. He either knew or chose not to know. He knew that the function of his "little office" had grown enormously and that LSM was way beyond its bounds in their activities and disturbances in the churches in order to satisfy their objectives, and his. LSM had become far more than a publisher and distributor of books and tapes.

2. Ignoring the needs of Churches in Europe

Attempts at fellowship with Brother Lee failed in Europe as Brother Lee ignored letters and word from the brothers there, while advising them "not to make an issue" of the chaos caused by LSM in the churches in England and Germany. Bill Kirkham wrote a letter to Brother Lee and told John So, "I'm enclosing a copy of the letter which I have just sent to Brother Lee. These matters have been troubling me so much that I felt I had no alternative but to write to our brother. I hope that Brother Lee may have time to write to help clear up this situation. I strongly pray that nothing will come between the churches in Europe to cause damage to the Lord's testimony. Your brother in Christ, Bill Kirkham".

Bill Kirkham wrote five pages to Brother Lee, sharing about 1) the trouble caused by the brother who was set up as the head of the LSM operation in England. 2) the lies spread against John So, against the church in Stuttgart, and about the German publishers. 3) the fact that "In all the years of the Lord's recovery in Europe, we have never had any shadow of division between here and Germany, but now we are hearing things that will cause such a division."

In Brother Lee's response to such a grave letter, he said, "it would be wise and profitable not to make an issue of anything", then mentioned the good news that a little branch office was to be set up in London, for the distribution of both the video and audio tapes in the UK.

As John So shares, "What would you think if you received such a letter? In the meantime, the whole church in Blackpool was destroyed to the ground. Destroyed to the ground! [reference to trouble that had been caused by LSM]. One sister wept continuously for eight to nine months. Nothing was done to rectify any situation and meanwhile they were still boasting about continuing at that time for the furtherance of the Lord's move. And am I rebelling? Conspiring? Are we rebelling in Stuttgart? Only the Lord knows who is really conspiring."

3. Ignoring the issues raised by the churches in the Southeast

Bill Mallon articulated the concerns in the Southeast in a letter to Brother Lee a month before he sent his 8-page letter to Brother Lee. Those concerns were:

- 1) The discrediting attitudes by those returning from Taipei, undermining my ability to serve, in spite of my demonstrating a positive turn for the new way of practice for all the churches to follow
- 2) The fabrications and rumors about my exercising control, holding on to a territory
- 3) While I never insisted or resisted fellowship, fellowship was nevertheless circumvented from me about crucial matters in the Southeast, the area where I served for 12 years
- 4) The false allegations that the migrations from Atlanta to Nashville, Knoxville, Greensboro, and Charlotte were instigated independently without fellowship with Witness Lee and other churches
- 5) The insistence of [Philip Lee's] will upon others through intimidation
- 6) the

promotion of blind accountability to the Taipei training and the office without due consideration for the Lord, the truth, and the saints in the local churches.

An initial letter was also written by Bill in June of the same year, 1987, and he had fellowship with Brother Lee by phone during this 6-month period of time, in which he wrote three letters to Brother Lee, the third one being written in December. Since Brother Lee did not show interest in the Southeast problems, and took no action, Bill wrote this third letter, of eight pages. The following are quotes from Bill Mallon from that letter to Brother Lee concerning the problems the churches in the Southeast encountered with LSM (p. 20):

"I can understand why you [Brother Lee] urged me several times to "forget," but this letter should indicate that the problem is not trivial, but seriously reaching to an acute condition and a critical stage."

"The tendency is to procrastinate, hoping the problem will go away; or, to ignore it, pretending it does not exist. But this is not responsible action."

"As someone said, 'If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem.' In order to confront the problem and accept my responsibility, I wrote you a letter, and I cannot now forget about it and leave it alone until it is resolved. If our body is sick, we do not forget about it, but seek a diagnosis and a treatment."

"I appreciate the word that I should forget the circumstances and stand with the basic. This is a good word. But the circumstantial things were mentioned so as to point out to you the symptoms of a very serious root. I wrote the letter to give out signals that are symptomatic of a very fundamental problem."

Bill's fellowship of concern about the Southeast churches was not only ignored by Brother Lee; it was unjustifiably condemned by him in his book, *Fermentation*.

4. Ignoring problems experienced by the churches in Southern California

When the elders in Southern California came together and opened to one another about the real situation in their churches, Brother Lee showed little interest that serious problems were taking a toll on the members and on the elders. He did show much concern though for the progress of LSM and fully expected elders to submit to objectives, without showing regard for their feeling.

John Ingalls –

On the evening of Monday, December 14, 1987, Brother Lee called a meeting of the elders of Southern California. There was a fair number there representing most of the churches in the area. After prayer, Brother Lee opened the fellowship by giving a long word concerning the new way and its great success in Taiwan. Then he asked for fellowship from the brothers, desiring especially to know how successful the new way had been in their locality.

Dick Taylor, an elder in Long Beach, started with a lively, full-of enjoyment kind of testimony, such as Dick is well-known for, thanking the Lord for the door-knocking and the Gospel preaching in Long Beach, but ending with an honest word about the depression and the discouragement among some of the saints. This was unusual for Dick but he was telling it like it was. Other brothers followed who also spoke very honestly about dissensions concerning the new way and discouragement among the saints in their localities, for which they were very concerned. In some places divisions had arisen over the new way. John Smith, an elder in San Diego, ended the time of sharing with an honest account of his concerns for the saints in his church, mentioning how he feared that with the

overemphasis on methods, numbers, and increase the saints would become activity-centered instead of Christ-centered.

What was extraordinary was the elders speaking up in such an honest and forthright way, knowing that such reports were not what Brother Lee liked or wanted to hear. We were not accustomed to doing this due partly to a sense of intimidation. To my knowledge this was the first time that had been done. This was encouraging. But Brother Lee was visibly bothered, and later reacted strongly to the brothers' speaking, saying of one brother's sharing (John Smith's) that it was like pouring iced water on him.

We were not the only ones who went to Brother Lee with our concerns during these days. We heard that Dan Towle, individually, and Frank Scavo together with Dick Taylor also went to see Brother Lee to express to him their concerns about the present situation. (p. 103)

Witness Lee commented on the same meeting:

Before I went to Irving in December 1987, I had an elders' meeting with the leading ones in Southern California. During that meeting, John Smith stood up to say that numbers do not represent anything, and he went on to mention things such as statistics, budgets, work, and activity. By that time Rosemead had already rebelled, and this kind of speaking was a repetition of what was spoken there as accusations. By listening to all the sharing in that elders' meeting in Orange County, I realized that the whole situation had been poisoned by John Ingalls." (p. 59, *FPR*).

This was Brother Lee's reaction to brothers who shared from their heart about serious problems in their localities. He gave the impression that his own objectives were more important than listening to the Body and to the concerns of responsible elders for their localities. These speakings by Dick Taylor, John Smith, and others were from their own experience and had not been influenced by John Ingalls.

Contrary to official assertions, John Ingalls had both legitimate and genuine concerns that he presented to other brothers for fellowship. If the concerns did not exist in the recovery, there would have been no need for John to make special contact with the brothers. What was interpreted as a "poisoning" was simply the elders responding to concerns for the saints, as morale began to sink and divisions began to develop. John Ingalls was not responsible for this. Throughout the recovery, brothers shared many of the same concerns. John Ingalls was faithful to address those concerns. Let the responsibility for the troubles in Rosemead, San Diego, and so forth lie with its source in Anaheim and in Irving, with the tandem leadership and LSM.

Appendix 4

In the following crucial fellowship with the elders, Witness Lee had the opportunity to repent and bring brothers together in Christ and take care of the oneness that was damaged by LSM in the recovery. Bill Mallon was already stumbled by LSM in the Southeast, and John So was well on his way down in Europe. But Brother Lee chose not to admit in a clear way to any wrong-doing on the part of LSM. As the head of LSM he should have taken responsibility for their divisive activities among the churches and for the sins of the manager in the office. Instead, he covered these sins, as if they didn't exist. In such a pivotal elders' meeting, that could have recovered the oneness through his repentance, Brother Lee did not humble himself and instead went on to speak of the "rumors and lies" spread by others. This sealed up the sin that festers in the Body to this day.

Pivotal Elders' Training Fellowship

During the Summer Training in Anaheim in July 1988

John Ingalls

In his second message of the elders' meetings, Brother Lee spoke concerning our going on. After all our sessions and hours of fellowship with Brother Lee, we had hoped that he would take steps to clear up a number of things publicly. This was surely an excellent opportunity, a perfect forum, and an appropriate time. He did give a few principles for our going on which would be helpful if practiced. He did say, "It is altogether wise and profitable that we do not expect all the churches to be the same," and, "Do not talk about who is for this or who is for that...We should not label ourselves or label others." We were thankful to hear these comments and urgings. But we were deeply disappointed that he did not go much further. What he should have cleared up he covered up, e.g., problems regarding the LSM office and the FTTT training in Taipei. We hoped he would have repented for some things that had caused many problems, not just for allowing saints from the U.S. to attend the training in Taiwan. We surely would have respected him had he done this, and the situation could have been altogether different than it turned out.

At the close of Brother Lee's second message, Dick Taylor (of Long Beach) and Frank Scavo (of Irvine) asked questions which Brother Lee attempted to answer. Dick's question was quite appropriate and fit our situation. It was as follows: "Many times you reach a point in your experience where you have genuine concerns. How can you fellowship about these concerns without being considered as negative and thereby causing another problem? This is a concern to me and this is related to the freedom of seeking the Lord and the truth." In Brother Lee's response he said that if you have a genuine concern for anyone in regard to the Lord's recovery you should go to him alone without talking to anyone else. Any "pre-talk", he said, opens the door for the devil to come in. Now this may be true in many cases, but in our history of contacting Brother Lee over our concerns we felt we could not and should not do that. Since the issues were so momentous we needed fellowship for a clearer understanding and preparation for visiting him. In fact, Brother Lee and brothers around him have also had a lot of consultation among themselves regarding concerns for other brothers before going to them. I know because I myself participated in such discussions.

Brother Lee's attitude while speaking was gentle and persuasive; he was seeking in this way to reconcile all the brothers and to set a course that would calm any fears or anxieties and eliminate any problems. Many were very happy with his fellowship; I was not at all happy or at peace.

During these elders' meetings I sat next to an elder who had spoken with me a few times previously and was very sympathetic with our concerns, having much the same concerns himself. We agreed to meet together for some fellowship that evening over dinner. This we did, and as we ate we conversed about Brother Lee's messages that day and their impact on the situation in general. The brother felt happy and said to me, "John, I think this is the best we can expect from Brother Lee. Be thankful." I tried to be; I tried to take his view. But in the depths of my being there was a nagging disappointment. Nothing had been dealt with. No wrongs had been righted. The root was not touched. The question loomed before us, What shall we do now? I knew I had to be true to my conscience and the truth I had seen.

Appendix 5

The New Mentality of Oneness

Even though Brother Lee encouraged the elders in Elders' Training book nine to keep the oneness of the Spirit with all the churches and saints, the spirit and mentality that had been forged into them through intense trainings and fellowship predominated them. That is, their exercise to be in "one accord" with Witness Lee, his ministry, and the ministry office superseded their endeavor to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace with all the members on the ground of oneness.

The Ministry Office

The relationship between the ministry office and the churches became heightened in 1981 when Benson Phillips and Ray Graver began a virtual campaign to promote Witness Lee, his ministry, and Philip Lee as the ministry office. Benson and Ray felt that the saints were indebted to Brother Lee for the ministry and needed to fulfill their "account" to him by becoming quite supportive of the ministry in various ways. They pointed to Scripture to show that the early saints had an account to take care of with the apostle Paul.

The "Pledge"

In February 1986 at an elders' training, over 400 brothers made an agreement to be in one accord with Witness Lee, his ministry, and the ministry office, saying,

Dear Brother Lee,

After hearing your fellowship in this elders' training, we all agree to have a new start in the Lord's recovery. For this, we all agree to be in one accord and to carry out this new move of the Lord solely through prayer, the Spirit, and the Word. We further agree to practice the recovery one in: teaching, practice, thinking, speaking, essence, appearance, and expression. We repudiate all differences among the churches, and all indifference toward the ministry office, and the other churches. We agree that the church in our place be identical with all the local churches throughout the earth.

We also agree to follow your leading as the one who has brought us God's New Testament economy and has led us into its practice. We agree that this leading is indispensable to our oneness and acknowledge the one trumpet in the Lord's ministry and the one wise master builder among us.

We further agree to practice the church life in our locality absolutely in a new way: to build the church in, through, and based upon home meetings; to lead every member to get used to functioning without any idea to depend on any giant speakers; to teach all the saints to know the basic truths in an educational way that they may teach others for the spreading of the truth; to build up the saints in the growth in life that they may minister life to others, shepherd each other, and take care of the backsliding ones; to lead all the saints to preach the gospel in every possible way; to avoid leadership as much as possible; and to have home gatherings for nurturing the saints in life; and big meetings for educating the saints in truths.

We agree that all the preceding points are the clear and definite teaching of the Bible according to God's New Testament economy. Finally, we agree that the success of this new move is our responsibility and will rise up to labor and endeavor with our whole being, looking to the Lord for His mercy and grace that we would be faithful to the end.

Your brothers for the Lord's recovery,

This letter of agreement was constructed by Benson Phillips and Ray Graver and presented to elders and co-workers to sign. These two brothers had been lining up the churches with the ministry office for five years by this time and their promotions of Philip Lee and the churches' cooperation with him would reach new heights that year, 1986. A new mentality of expectation, cooperation, and oneness was being melded into the minds of elderships everywhere.

Appendix 6

The letter of quarantine below speaks of rebellion and division in the recovery following a superficial review of the history and certainly without a proper gathering of pertinent facts. The letter issued from a mentality of *condemnation before investigation*, a familiar costly practice in the local churches engaged in by elders whose chief priority, it seems, is not the upholding of the truth of a given matter, but to uphold the "one accord". In other words, there is no need to investigate to ascertain truth when official word has already sealed the matter, the only need being to stand in "one accord" to assure the sealing.

Quarantine

An Open Letter From the Churches In California

May 15, 1990

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to the churches and all the saints throughout the earth. We are writing to you as leading brothers from forty-five churches in the state of California, USA. On **March 9-10, 1990**, we gathered together in Anaheim for a time of prayer and fellowship concerning the present situation in the Lord's recovery. During that time we reviewed the history of the present rebellion among us. A number of churches in California have been affected by this rebellion among us, and we have been eyewitnesses to many of its words and events, as well as of the damage it has caused. Through our fellowship together and through four enlightening messages by Brother Witness Lee, we have gained an understanding of the intrinsic problem among us and its scriptural remedy.

After our time together, we felt burdened to write a letter to all the churches to fellowship our realization of the problem and our action to protect the churches from further damage. We also would like to fellowship our encouragement regarding the present going on of the recovery here in California. In spite of the attack of the evil one, the churches and the ministry are going on in one accord for the spreading and building up of the Body of Christ.

Since the fall of 1987, the churches here have suffered under the dissension and rebellion led by four brothers who were once among us: Joseph Fung, John So, Bill Mallon, and John Ingalls. In the beginning many things were done and said by these brothers in a way that was both subtle and hidden. As a result, a number of saints were deceived and thus did not know the true nature of what was taking place. Today, however, there is no question about where these brothers stand. We do not like to see any more of the saints damaged by opening themselves innocently to the words spoken by these brothers. Therefore, we feel that we must warn the churches of the true standing of these four and their followers.

These four brothers 1) have denied the standing of the churches in the Lord's recovery; 2) have produced divisive meetings; 3) have attempted to draw saints away from the local churches to follow after themselves; and 4) have made unfounded and malicious attacks upon some leading brothers in the recovery, and especially upon Brother Lee and his ministry. The details regarding these matters are summarized here and are fully documented in Brother Lee's book *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* as well as in their own writings.

In an article written by John So and edited by John Ingalls and Bill Mallon, [Editor's Note: Bill had nothing to do with the editing, printing, or distribution of this article; John Ingalls had nothing to do with the distribution. Bill was in Oregon and when he returned he learned about this article being printed and disagreed with it going out. John Ingalls, then, agreed that it should not go out. Both felt that it would not be good to send out this article to the saints. They both regret that the article did go out. Younger brothers, John So and others, who were convicted that the article should be distributed, felt to follow through and did so] these brothers said that the ground of the meeting of the church in Anaheim on Ball Road is Witness Lee and his ministry. Thus, they said, that meeting "is NOT" the church in Anaheim. They accused the saints in the church of usurping the church ground as the Moslems usurp the temple site in Jerusalem. We brothers reject this accusation as false and testify that the church in Anaheim is genuinely on the ground of oneness, as it has been since it began in 1974. To say that because a church receives Brother Lee's ministry, it is not on the church ground is as false as saying that the churches in the New Testament were not on the ground because they received Paul's ministry. To accuse the church in Anaheim in such a way is to accuse all the churches in the recovery of having a wrong standing. Such an understanding is utterly false and surely is divisive.

The speaking of these brothers has produced divisive meetings in a number of places in California. A divisive Lord's table meeting has been set up in Anaheim on Brookhurst Street, near the meeting hall of the church in Anaheim on Ball Road. In Huntington Beach the followers of these brothers have set up a separate Lord's table meeting in division apart from the church's meeting. Other divisive meetings have been established in Cupertino and in South San Francisco. What was once the church in Rosemead has broken off fellowship with all other churches in the Lord's recovery. Joseph Fung, John So, Bill Mallon, and John Ingalls have attended and given messages in these divisive meetings. These divisions clearly portray the tragic fruit of their work.

These brothers have also held conferences and distributed literature to recruit the saints from the churches in the recovery to follow after them. Although cloaked in spiritual language, their obvious goal is to gain the saints in the recovery, and they have gained a number, while some others have lost all heart for the church life as a result of having contact with them. Recently they have made affirmations that they will fight on in this way to the end. We cannot accept this as something of the Lord. If they have a better way, why do they not go that way, preach the gospel, and build up something positive? Why must they prey on the saints in the recovery?

Finally, they have spoken publicly and printed the most serious of false accusations concerning the leading brothers, and especially concerning Brother Lee. They have accused elders and co-workers of lying, of deception, of covering up certain matters, of conspiring against God, and of rebelling against God. They have charged Brother Lee with replacing Christ as king to rule over the saints; they likened him to Balaam, who prophesied for gain, and accused him of financial corruption; they likened him to Jezebel, who killed the prophets to make herself the unique spokesman for God, and accused him of annulling the function of all the others to make himself the sole oracle of God; they accused Brother Lee of exercising Nicolaitan domination over the saints, holding them in

fear and quenching their function; and they accused him of damaging the churches by engaging them constantly in movements, like the Communists, and compared him to Mao.

These four brothers have spoken many other false accusations, but the above examples should be sufficient to make all the saints clear concerning their intention. All these words are not of the nature to maintain the oneness of the Body through fellowship; rather, they are words uttered out of the flesh and are meant only to destroy people's reputation and ministry. From the very beginning of their ministry, their way has been to do things in deliberate avoidance of open fellowship that would maintain the oneness of the Body. We must reject their words, their spirit, and their way in the strongest of terms, as not befitting Christians.

What then shall we do about the situation? First, we must be clear regarding the truth from the Word that applies to this case. From the New Testament we can see the crucial importance of oneness among the Lord's people. The Lord prayed for it in John 17 as His aspiration before His death. Through His process of death, resurrection, and ascension, He produced the one Spirit and the one Body into which we all were baptized (I Cor. 12:13). This one Spirit and one Body are the main factors of the oneness of the Spirit, which we are admonished to be diligent to keep as our basic spiritual possession (Eph. 4:1-6). Then we are admonished to grow and be perfected until we all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God (Eph. 4:7-13). Thus, the genuine oneness began as the Lord's aspiration, became our present possession, and is also our goal as members of the Lord's Body. This genuine oneness is practiced by the proper one accord in the church and among all the churches.

This oneness was tested many times in the New Testament record, but among all the tests, only three things were judged intolerable: heresy, division, and fornication. Only in these three cases does the Word tell us to remedy the situation by quarantining the troubling brothers. Heresy insults the person and work of Christ, division damages the Body of Christ, and fornication damages the man God created for His purpose. Thus, to preserve the Body as a mingling of the processed Triune God with man, these matters cannot be tolerated.

In the case before us, it is clearly evident that these four brothers have caused division in the Body. While they have made various accusations against Brother Lee and others, none of the matters dealt with in their accusations are excuses for division. With the controlling vision of oneness, problems should be the cause of fellowship in love with a view to resolution, not the cause of division. Therefore, according to the truth, we cannot justify their actions; rather, we must condemn them. Furthermore, in Romans 16:17-18 and Titus 3:10-11 we are told clearly to turn away from such persons, lest others with simple hearts be deceived by them. Just as in medicine a contagious person must be quarantined, so these divisive men must be quarantined. To quarantine these brothers is not to excommunicate them, but to isolate them in order to preserve the health of the Body.

Therefore, we brothers from the churches in California have quarantined Joseph Fung, John So, Bill Mallon, and John Ingalls from the churches we represent.

We who have witnessed first hand the devastation they have produced earnestly recommend that all the saints avoid contact with such persons. Also, we recommend that each church keep a watchful eye for such divisive activity in their church and exercise appropriate fellowship to protect the saints. It is with great sorrow that we must write concerning these who were once among us, but this action is according to the truth and also according to the facts of the real situation.

We hope that with this precaution, all the churches can go on in a safe way for the building up of the Body of Christ. We brothers in California were greatly refreshed in our vision

concerning the need for the genuine oneness and its application by the practicing of one accord in and among the churches and with the ministry. We would like to reaffirm our commitment to go on in one accord with one another and with the ministry in the Lord's recovery for the carrying out of the God-ordained way to build up the organic Body of Christ. Only oneness can satisfy the Lord, the oneness arrived at by our growth and perfecting. For this we need to grow up into the Head and be perfected unto the work of the ministry; then, all the Body will build up the Body. This vision is clearer today than ever before. We brothers give ourselves to this vision and to its practical outworking. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Your brothers, (signatures of 198 brothers representing 45 churches)

Appendix 8

The following is a somewhat edited version of the fellowship John So had with saints in Manila, March 1990, following the publication of *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*. In this talk John So covers 1) his experience with the five brothers from LSM who came to Germany expressly to gain his cooperation with LSM; 2) his ordeal with control issues involving Philip Lee and LSM that greatly impacted John and Stuttgart; 3) his refutations of the claims made against him in *Fermentation*; 4) the England upheaval induced by LSM against John So; 5) the cutting off of the Stuttgart young people by Philip Lee; 6) John So's letter to Brother Lee discussing all the basic problems; 7) his letter of disassociation with LSM due to moral issues and interferences, following the non-response of Brother Lee to desperate needs in Europe.

John So Fellowship in Manila

Well, this time when I came to the Philippines, I never dreamed that the things would happen this way. But in such a situation like this, I think we have to leave it to the Lord's sovereignty. As our brother has shared, and I appreciate his word very much, I also hope that our sharing here is not for anyone to be able to take any sides, regardless of who is right and who is wrong. I think the ground of the church is not for any church to take any sides, right? Because a church or the churches should be standing on the ground of oneness. So I do appreciate our brother's word. And I have prepared a little outline here knowing that tonight I have no choice but to share something concerning the matter. I will try my best to just follow the outline.

We all know the ministry of brother Witness Lee for many years. I'm quite surprised that this book came out [*Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*]. This is the first time I saw it—in Manila, I mean 2 days ago. I hope it is not the ministry, you know. I'm very sorry that due to my being here, you all had to spend 8 long hours to watch the videos. I believe it is a real suffering to all the saints. In the recent past two years I have been unfortunately branded as, even as, a "minister of Satan", as a "wolf", a "false brother", even 1 John chapter 2, the "Antichrist" was referred to me; I'm a "rebellious one", a "conspirator", a kind of conspirator, a "dishonest man", a "pretender", and more. Therefore, I am being quarantined. Right, I am being quarantined. And I am thankful to the Lord that in spite of all this, you're still here willing to hear what I have to say. I mean without fear of being contaminated. I think the Lord will be able to disinfect you. Please bear with me, I really have a very hard time to prepare this. The Lord knows my heart. If I didn't have to do it tonight, I wish I didn't have to do it. I can testify this before the Lord.

Yet I am forced to do it. It was at your request and partially also at Witness Lee's request through his challenge that encourage me to say a few words. Brother Lee said he waited two years to do this, I only have less than two days. So I hope that

these few words will settle this matter once for all. I don't think it'll take 8 hours, let's aim at 80 minutes. Let's try to make it short and to the point. Really it is impossible to talk about this book and about 8 hours of video in a couple of hours. It is really hard. Let's come right to the thing here, let me see where that outline is, ---I would like maybe to just go through Brother Lee's outline, you know, it says the rebellion began to ferment from Stuttgart in 1986. Well, what I would like to do is just give you the chronological events of what took place.

I will only deal briefly with things concerning myself, concerning Stuttgart and Europe, things that I personally know quite well. I don't know, and I am not familiar with, or not thoroughly familiar with, what went on in Hong Kong. I really do not know and I cannot say anything in detail. And I didn't know exactly what happened and what took place in Anaheim in the very beginning. So I cannot speak for brother John Ingalls. And I cannot speak for brother Joseph Fung. I really cannot. And when things happened in Rosemead, I really had no idea what was going on there until I read the literature that they had put out. [See Rosemead, Appendix 12, p. 166] So all of these places do not concern me. I wrote down this sentence, the last sentence on my outline: *"I did not even know that we had ever formed together an international conspiracy ring until Witness Lee said so"*. I am quite surprised. Okay, Witness Lee claims that rebellion and conspiracy started to ferment in Stuttgart in 1986. I'm going to start at this point.

Five Brothers Come to Stuttgart

Using his own term, the fermentation actually started at Stuttgart in 1986 by the coming of five brothers sent by Witness Lee and sent by his office, Philip Lee. Ironically, things didn't start with us. At that time Witness Lee was invited by us to come to Germany and we were all expecting Brother Lee to come. But to our disappointment, Brother Lee didn't come. He said he was busy and instead he and his office sent five brothers to come to Stuttgart. I think brother Ray Graver came, brother Benson Phillips, brother Minoru Chen, brother Ken Unger, and brother Dan Towle. The Lord knows we were disappointed. We brothers had had fellowship just before the brothers came, and I told the brothers--and all the brothers could testify for me--that we should receive these brothers just as Witness Lee himself. We should not make any difference.

So the five brothers came. You have to realize I'm speaking retrospectively—I'm looking back. At that time we thought their intention was to give a conference, even the "one accord" conference that Witness Lee had just given in the elders' meeting in Anaheim. So we welcomed them. But to our surprise, these five brothers themselves proclaimed that their burden was not for the conference, but that their burden was for the afternoon fellowship they would have with the leading brothers from Europe. There were at least a hundred brothers present there, and every afternoon from 3:00 to 5:30 or 6:00, we had fellowship with these five brothers, and they told us what their burden was in coming to Stuttgart. It was concerning the leading of the ministry office, that the churches in Europe would become one with the office of Living Stream Ministry. And I do have the tapes of these meetings. They were on record and since the matter is opened up, I would certainly request the brothers in Stuttgart to transcribe all these messages and make them available to the public. During all those afternoons I was present just a few times and almost at the end of these meetings sometimes. In those afternoons the brothers' burden was very strong to propagate and to promote the ministry office, and at that time, really, none of the leading brothers had any idea what the office is. At one point, somebody was very ignorantly and innocently asking, "Well, what is the office, anyway?" And everybody laughed. Of course, we found out that the office is really Brother Lee's son, Philip Lee.

You know, it might be public knowledge for everybody perhaps, except for the brothers in Europe. Now, this was the motive of these brothers' coming. This is not my judgment—this was their proclamation. They said it themselves.

John So's Understanding of the Office

At that time my understanding of the business office of Witness Lee was exactly what Witness Lee publicly proclaimed it to be - an office to take care of producing tapes, printing books, and distributing the books and tapes to serve all the churches. That was really my understanding. And for some reason, there was a lot of problem in Anaheim, in the home office of the Living Stream. The fellowship there between the churches in Orange County and the office was not very nice, and I happened to be in one of the meetings, that must be in 1982, and Witness Lee was sharing quite strongly to all the serving ones, especially regarding the Chinese work and the serving ones in the LSM office. And obviously there was a conflict between the office, which is Brother Lee's office, which is also Brother Lee's son, and many serving ones there. And Brother Lee again emphasized in those meetings—He said, "Should my private cook in my house also be a spiritual person? What if I hire an unbeliever to print books, this is my business office. My printer doesn't have to be a spiritual person. And I do have the right to hire my son to be manager of my office to take care of this business for me." I fully agreed. At that time, I really said, "fair enough, fair enough." The Lord knows. And in fact one of those afternoons—I wish they had printed this out—because they did print out what I shared in these pages in pages 21-25. If you say this is the beginning of rebellion I do ask you to read every word of what I shared there. I'm glad they printed it out. I really am glad. Because if you read what I shared here word for word, I was not at all rebelling. I would challenge you to find one rebellious word here. In fact, I was supporting these brothers according to my understanding of what the business office of Witness Lee is. I'm glad it was printed out.

At that time, I really meant what I said according to my understanding of the function of the ministry office; and I fully agreed with Witness Lee that if the LSM is only operating on the business side to print books and to distribute tapes, then we brothers should accept this, and cooperate with them.

Indeed, in the earlier years in Germany we had enjoyed marvelous liberty to translate and print books. In fact in 1981 when the Irving office for the Living Stream Ministry was being built, the brothers in Germany asked me, "John, maybe you should go and ask Brother Lee if they want the publishers in Germany to be all under one administration, because we don't want to be doing our own thing". And, really we did not. I went to Brother Lee that summer and in his own home I shared what the brothers asked me to tell him. Brother Lee said, "No, no, no, no, you are doing a good job. Go ahead." So I really appreciated that. We were really one with the office at that time. In a proper way, we were one with the Living Stream Ministry, according to my understanding of the function of the office.

Promotion of Philip Lee as "the Office"

Well, the question is this: I was accused here in *Fermentation* of pretending to be one with them, the LSM, but that really I was against them. Tonight let me say a word. I don't want to vindicate, but I just like to share at least the way we look at it. Everything has two sides. I'm sorry to say, it is not that I am pretending. It is because the LSM office really has a double standard. There is a public declaration that the office is only for the business side to print books, to duplicate tapes, and to send them out to serve the churches. But to my realization, there is another aspect expected of us. During the visit of these five brothers to Stuttgart,

two of them stayed with me in my home—two of them. And these brothers began to somehow fellowship with me concerning the office, that the office is really brother Philip Lee and that brother Philip Lee is the closest and most intimate co-worker of Witness Lee. And that I need to get into the fellowship with him, and that our brother, Witness Lee, needs his son. And after almost every meeting in Stuttgart, they made a long-distance call to the office to report everything that is happening. To the office! The report went to the office.

I was, in short, expected to do the same. I told the brothers in a very good way—we were not fighting—I said, “Brothers, I’m sorry, in short, I just cannot do that. You have the grace to do it, that’s fine, but I just cannot do that.” I told the brothers maybe some other German brothers, like Jorn Urlenbac could do it. I was told, No, no, no, you are the right person to do it. I said, Thank you, but I can’t do it. This is what I realized later was the cause of many problems that we in Stuttgart began to experience with the LSM. A report had gone back to Philip Lee that I refused to do what the brothers were doing. Looking back, this is what caused a serious problem with him.

In my view, however, what they were doing in reporting everything to the office had nothing to do with Witness Lee’s public declaration of what the office is. I didn’t feel there was a need for me to report to the office what we were doing. But these brothers who came to Stuttgart were telling me that Witness Lee’s son is his closest and most intimate co-worker. I have to say I had never heard such a thing before. But these two brothers who stayed with me assured me that this was true though Brother Lee doesn’t say this publicly. Well, I say, if I haven’t heard of this, I just haven’t heard of it. Anyway, a report went back to Anaheim, and somebody wasn’t happy with me. I was happy with everybody, but somebody wasn’t happy with me.

Stuttgart Printers Cut Off By “The Office”

I didn’t realize it at first, but as time went by I could see that we had problems with “the office” because we lacked cooperation with the manager of the office. Listen to this, dear saints. When I encouraged the brothers to follow the office and to cooperate with the office one hundred percent, I meant it. And we did. We did. The office, however, began to behave in a strange way. They wanted us to stop printing books and send all of the camera-ready pages to Irving. There they would print the books and send their finished work back to us, which according to our feeling, was not logical. The Germans are very logical people, you know, and this was not logical because we have the whole facilities right there in Stuttgart, right next to it, you know. It’s just like in the kitchen: You knead the dough. Afterwards, you pull out the dough and the oven is right there to bake the bread. But we were only able to knead the dough, we just couldn’t bake the bread! We had to send the dough, the kneaded dough, somewhere. To South Africa, I don’t know where, to America, and then they will bake the bread and send it to us. For a German mind, this is a little bit illogical. You know the Germans, right? They are very systematic; they are very logical. We did it, though, believe it or not, we did it. In fact, at that time, some brothers were slightly irritated. I told them, I said, “Brothers, listen. All the books bear Witness Lee’s name, he is the author. It does not matter where the books are printed.” You may not believe that we sent within a year and five months over 4100 camera-ready pages to be printed, and we did not receive a response. We did not get at that time one page printed, nothing...nothing...!

I’m not following the chronological order any more or what I’ve written down. Maybe it’s better that way. In fact, brothers, listen, in spite of our hearing nothing from them, the brothers wrote a letter to Philip Lee on March 2, 1987. You see, when I say “follow the office”, I meant what Witness Lee publicly said about the office, that it is for book distribution, etc. Anyway, the brothers wrote to Philip Lee

himself because Witness Lee says, "Please don't come to me concerning the books. Concerning the books, you all have to go to my son, Philip Lee." So they write, "Dear brother Philip: We would like to fellowship with you briefly regarding the future publication of the ministry in European languages here." You could read this. In spite of sending already at that time to LSM so many pages and yet we heard not one word, we still sent a letter to brother Philip Lee. Let me just read a little bit. Okay, we reported to them all of our activities, pending at that time, and we wanted to finish that work, then ask them what we should do next.

Our letter stated, "We are concluding the translation work of the following books which were started earlier and we hope to complete them by the end of April: Life-study of John, Message 1 to 51, Life-study of Hebrews, Message 1 to 69, Life-study of Romans, Message 1 to 31, Life-study of Philippians, Message 1 to 31. We would appreciate your fellowship with us concerning the books we should start working on after this time. If you have the time to see us, we would be happy to meet with you for further fellowship. We hope to hear from you soon." The brothers were even willing to go all the way to Anaheim to see this brother to coordinate with the office concerning the books. No reply. This is written on March 2, 1987. Until this very day we did not receive a reply from this person, from the manager of the LSM office.

It is not right, therefore, to say that on one hand I declare that I am for the ministry office, but on the other hand, I don't cooperate with it. I want to let you know that something more was expected of us at LSM that we could not cooperate with, and, someone was not happy with us about that.

So here I would say is the proof of our cooperation with the office--this letter and our sending of 4,100 pages of camera-ready copies. We kept our mouths shut, not complaining, waiting for the books to come. Nothing came. Nothing came. Okay. Witness Lee then questions my character on page 38 of the book, *Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*. He quoted my negative statement that "All the brothers in Europe could testify of the strong promotion of your office when the brothers came to Stuttgart in the spring of '86, trying to bring all the churches in Europe under the leading of your Office". Of course, I said this in retrospect, looking back after realizing the double standard of the office. He compared this statement to what I had said one year earlier: "we all can surely testify that neither you nor your office have ever controlled us in the past in any way."

Witness Lee then said: "eight months later, another letter, dated September 17, 1987, and signed by John So and twenty leaders of nine churches in Europe, came to me, condemning that sweet fellowship and repeating the same thing by saying that "the five brothers whom you and your office sent to Europe in your place in May 1986 were trying to bring people to come under the influence and control in your name and for your sake." The repeated condemnation both in this letter and in the preceding one contradict the praise [in John So's letter of January 1987]. I am very puzzled as to which of the two contradicting judgments I should believe. At any rate, the two kinds of judgments -- the first, very positive, like bright white, and the second, very negative, like dark black -- indicate that in a short time they fluctuated from one realization to another. This makes it difficult for us to work together for the Lord in one accord" (pp. 61, 26, *FPR*)

Witness Lee should know about the fluctuation. Why? My goodness, if he knows about the consideration of the whole earth, this is a little matter. He should know why there was a fluctuation. The fluctuation was due to the new expectation "the office" had for us, which we could not cooperate with. Of course this did make it difficult for us to work together in one accord with LSM.

Summer Training in Irving 1986

I went to the summer training in Irving in 1986 with an open heart to seek fellowship with brother Philip Lee. Ray Graver promised me he was going to set up a time with Philip, but it never happened. I kept asking Ray, but I went back without having a time with this particular brother.

Then at that summer training, I was asked by Brother Lee through Andrew Yu to go help with the training in Taipei to conduct an advanced class. But I really on the one hand couldn't make it; on the other hand, I did have some reservations about taking the class. Everybody has reservations. Why shouldn't I? But, nevertheless, I feel that since our brother is asking me to go, I would like to go, firstly to see what the Lord is doing there; secondly, to learn what the Lord is doing, and thirdly, to help whatever the brother wants me to help with. I went there, and I passed by Manila on the way. I think you remember, it was in 1986 around October. I passed by for a few days, and I was encouraging you all to go to Taipei, right? I don't know if you remember that.

Statistics Manipulated

I wasn't opposing and I didn't have anything fermenting within me. I'm sorry to say, dear saints, I think there was a plot, a conspiracy, there in Taipei, not on our part, but on somebody else's part, to bring the churches in Europe and myself under a certain leading - under the hidden function of the office. That, I must confess, I cannot fully agree with. But that doesn't mean that if I don't agree, I oppose. I went to Taipei. I joined the door knocking. Okay, I enjoyed it. You might not believe me, but I really enjoyed it. In fact, I fully submitted to the group. You can ask my group leaders. And, I baptized a few people, really. And I was quite fond of that whole group. But when I was there, listen, one major leading brother in Taipei every time he saw me, he told me that the statistics were manipulated. That's the word I think he used. I said, "Are you sure brother?" He said, "Yes." I said, "Why then don't you go and see Witness Lee? If it's manipulated, you have to tell Witness Lee." He told me, "It's very hard to see him. I tried several times, but I can't get through." So, that made me a little concerned.

Of course, I'm not a piece of wood, brothers; I'm a brother, right? I'm not only a person, I'm serving the Lord. If it was really so that the statistics were being manipulated, I'm concerned. Don't say I'm criticizing—I'm concerned.

Well, I went one time to see brother Jim Batten. I love him. He is a very fine young man; I'm really very fond of this brother. I went to him. Of course, I shared with him a little bit of my concern. Brother, wouldn't you share your concern to hear such a thing from a major leading brother in Taipei here? My goodness, if we are manipulating the numbers of those who are saved and baptized, and nobody dares to say anything, my, your work must be a super, super, super, super work. Let me turn to page 40 and also page 139 in the book, *Fermentation*, brother Jim Batten's testimony is here. I just want to show you what was said in this book. I cannot go into every testimony although I would like to.

Baptisms in the Bathtub in Germany

Before Jim Batten's testimony, Brother Lee had been talking about the fermenting, saying that I was beginning to criticize and oppose the training, etc. Let me read to you what he says: *"In that visit, John stayed in Taipei for ten days. During his stay, he said what the training did in the way of baptizing people could be done in Taipei, but if such a thing were done in Germany, the people there would baptize them instead."* I did say that believe it or not. I did say that. But I'm saying it out of my own experience in Germany.

When we went door knocking and tried to baptize people in the bathtub, my goodness, two days later a newspaper came out with an article warning

everybody that a group of people are going about door knocking and are going to put you in the bathtub in Eve's costume. Eve's costume—that means with nothing on. And the newspaper warned the public to be careful about those people who are going to the homes to dump you with no clothes on into the bathtub. I'm glad they couldn't identify us. My goodness, if they could identify us that is their baptizing us!

Okay, the Lord knows I'm not criticizing. We already had baptized people in the bathtub 20 years ago when we were in Germany. When I went to Germany we had no place to baptize people—the best place to baptize them was in the bathtub. I went to East Germany, before the new way came, and we baptized five people in the bathtub. East Germany! I am not against baptizing people in the bathtub. Don't think I am. Okay. Then here is the point: Brother Lee also says, *"John So also said that what Brother Lee was doing in the training in Taipei was just for Taipei, but that he (John So) had to consider the situation of the whole world."* My goodness. You think I am stupid to say that. If you get into the context what I'm trying to tell our dear brother, young brother Jim Batten, it is that this may work in Taipei, but we have to consider that the situation of each part of the earth, of the world, may not be the same. Suppose you go to a Moslem country, Saudi Arabia, and you go door knocking, you might lose your head! That's what I mean. But you see, if you manipulate just one word, my goodness, you will think, "My, John So thought Witness Lee is just caring for that little Taipei, but John So cares for the whole world."

These quotes were used to prove that something was fermenting in me. It is printed here that fermenting John So is opposing the training. I'm sorry, brother, but if this is a testimony against me, I think they will have to deal with it before the Lord. It has been printed, and sent to the whole world. Okay. It is sent to the whole world.

Comparison of the New Way to A Rolls Royce

Jim Batten said further that I considered the new way as a Rolls Royce. Yes, that's right. I think that must have been in 1987 sometime. Brother Lee said in *Fermentation*, "John said to a brother in England that it was better to have one's own body than to have a Rolls Royce." I will give you the background so that you can understand my comment to this brother.

I had gone back to Europe and found that Blackpool, England was fully destroyed. It was fully destroyed to the ground through the establishing of the LSM office there. And at that time nobody was caring for the church in Blackpool, for those poor brothers in Blackpool. And there they were door knocking and boasting how many thousands got baptized in California. If brother Jim Batten would be honest before the Lord, and I have witnesses there. Eddie Wong was there. Some other brothers were there. I was very considerate of Jim Batten. And I had no intention to convince him of anything.

In fact, I explained to him, I said, "Brother, go and door knock. That's fine. That's good. But do not forget about our brothers who are in much trouble in Blackpool. Please take care also of these brothers in Blackpool." And I just made an illustration and asked, "what is more important -- a Rolls Royce or a man's body." I likened the new way to a Roll's Royce and the church to man's body. A best car, you know, is a Rolls Royce. I didn't compare the new way with a Volkswagon or a Fiat or a Manila jeepney. I compared it to a Rolls Royce. My goodness, what is better than a Rolls Royce, right? Don't you want to have a Rolls Royce? But, I said, "No matter how good it is, your body, your health, is more important." I encouraged him, therefore, to take care of the church, along with his care for the new way.

My! You are criticizing the new way! Brothers, let us be logical. Don't believe in such a way that you become superstitious. Just anything that *doesn't* sound like you are for it, people say you are blowing cold wind. "You said the new way is a Rolls Royce." What should I say? A chariot, a heavenly chariot? Okay, I can say it. You know Elijah went with a heavenly chariot of fire and is gone. Okay. If you think that is better than a Rolls Royce, well, compare it. This is not the way. Really, brothers, this is not the way. Let us be normal. Let's be able to talk in a normal way. "My, that is something fermenting in John So." Oh my, you see, a testimony is written here to prove that I am rebelling. Rebellion is fermenting in me. Our brother Na Ning said that you're not the jury. I'm going to consider you tonight as the jury. Whether you like it or not, Na Ning, I'm going to consider you as a jury, and I'm not afraid to be judged by you here. One day I'm going to be judged by the Lord anyway. And, let's bring this book to the Lord, and let Him judge. Just by this alone they want to prove that rebellion and conspiracy was fermenting within me. I don't like to talk about these things—the Lord knows. I had a hard time preparing this crazy thing.

Anyway, anyway, at least, I hope they will correct the mistake. Maybe they will find other witnesses that are correct. They can always put another piece of paper into the book and say, "Correction, that witness is wrong." Otherwise, you should write in here, "With false testimonies; maybe it's a misprint."

Taipei Training 1986

Let's go back to my experience in Taipei. I'm not through with that yet. This book, *Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*, mentioned Howard Higashi and Lin Rung. When I was there in Taipei, they invited me for dinner. Shortly before I was leaving, do you think I would be so stupid to tell them to their face, I'm rebelling, if that is what I was going to do? I'm not that stupid yet. I am not that clever but I still have some sense in me. You know, I was trying to think back, "What did I do there with Lin Rung and Howard Higashi that caused a problem with them?" Then I began to realize, "Maybe, I told them that my burden was for the high schoolers." I just gave them a little suggestion that maybe it would be important and quite easy to gain all the high schoolers also.

"My you are not in a position—you are not following the burden of the ministry now." My goodness, you cannot expect me to go to Taipei without opening my mouth and say a little bit of my feeling. I am not a piece of wood here. Okay, then because of some unfinished business I had to do for my brother, by the Lord's sovereignty I had to go back to Germany. I was very polite. I went to ask one leading brother and said, I'm leaving.

That brother said, "No, you should go and tell that brother you're leaving." I went to that brother, and that brother says, "Yes, it is good that you tell me. You should go to that brother", and I went to that brother and I said, "I'm leaving".

He said, "Yes, you have to call the United States, you have to call brother Philip Lee and tell him that you are leaving." By that time I said, "I came here freely, I go back freely, you know. I'm a free man, my goodness." So I told Howard Higashi very clearly—I said, "Brother, I thought Witness Lee's burden is to tear down the hierarchy." If I am conspiring, if I am rebelling, I won't tell Howard Higashi that I am. And, I was not rebelling. Maybe I'm wrong. Okay. "Boy, that must be a big conspiracy. I don't know...I don't know what they thought—but that must be a terrible conspiracy. Or rebellion." Okay. I said goodbye. I didn't call Anaheim, I'm sorry, sometimes I am really a little bit rough and tough. I don't know why, but you know, I'm a human being, okay. But within my heart I have no intention to rebel against anybody. Okay, then I went back.

At that time Witness Lee did say he also sovereignly had to go back to the United States because he was sick. I went back to Germany, also sovereignly. When I went back to Germany, my goodness, a big turmoil was going on in England. In England! A big turmoil happened in England. I made a copy of some letters here.

England in Upheaval 1986

What happened in England really shocked me. You know, in the summer of 1986 about twenty-five saints from England went to the Living Stream office in Irving to serve. And I encouraged them to go. Can you imagine that? They were there for approximately two months. When they came back, they began to say strange things. They said that Stuttgart is resisting and John So is resisting the activities of the ministry. And that John So is controlling. And that we are withholding tapes of the Living Stream Ministry and not distributing them to other churches. My goodness. The whole church in Blackpool and all the churches in England became chaotic. Who caused this chaos? Where did that storm come from? Certainly not from Stuttgart. It fermented rather, I think, in Irving. There was a conspiracy in Irving to destroy us. Who was conspiring? Me? Was I conspiring or rebelling? I was in Taipei to try to help. And I, by accident, went back to Stuttgart and found that trouble had come in to our locality, as well as in to the churches in England.

A brother from England then came and told me about what was happening. This brother, Bill Kirkham, had written a letter full of respect to Witness Lee. It was a five-page letter written November 11, 1986 about matters that had happened during that year. Yes, Witness Lee is right to say that something was fermenting, but the question is: What is fermenting? Who is conspiring? All of a sudden they drop a bomb in England. Listen, Witness Lee said himself that he begged me to go to Taipei, okay? He begged me to go to Taipei. And I went.

And then when I was in Taipei, they dropped the bomb in England against me and against the church in Stuttgart, and against the publishers in Germany, saying that since they're not cooperating, the blessing has not come to England. The LSM, therefore, set up a brother in England. This one brother really was the most problematic one in the whole of England as the head. He also testified here in *Fermentation*. I'm going to spare him tonight, okay? I don't want to be a bad guy telling everybody.

Bill Kirkham's Letter To Brother Lee

I better calm down a little bit. I was shocked. The brother, Bill Kirkham, wrote this letter to Brother Lee and sent me a copy. He said, "Dear brother John, I'm enclosing a copy of the letter which I have just sent to Brother Lee. These matters have been troubling me so much that I felt I had no alternative but to write to our brother. I hope that Brother Lee may have time to write to help clear up this situation. If you have any fellowship regarding it, that you feel would be helpful to me, I would surely appreciate it. I strongly pray that nothing will come between the churches in Europe to cause damage to the Lord's testimony. Your brother in Christ, Bill Kirkham".

Let me ask our dear Brother Lee, who is conspiring? Yes, somebody is conspiring. And, rebellion is fermenting, but what is the source of this fermentation in the recovery?

Bill wrote five pages to Brother Lee. Let me just read to you. The first part is about that dear young man, who was set up to be the head in England. England was so concerned that the LSM got the wrong guy there. There are so many good guys. Why you got the wrong guy? Bill shared concerning him not because

they were jealous, but because they were concerned. The second point in the letter is about all the lies spread against me, against the church in Stuttgart, and about the German publishers. The third point—let me read to you the third point. Bill Kirkham says, “In all the years of the Lord’s recovery in Europe, we have never had any shadow of division between here and Germany, but now we are hearing things that will cause such a division.”

I’m not sure whether or not I should mention the fourth category because it concerns brother Philip Lee. Bill Kirkham writes, “but I think that I must stress that I have never had, nor ever will have any problem or personal feeling against brother Philip, nor have I ever had reason to have had.” (I am reading it like this to show you how careful our brother is, because he is desperate.) “In your recent letter to us in Great Britain you told us, you Brother Lee, told us that we should not follow a man, nor should there be any intrinsic element of exalting any human being or promoting any movement, so that the enemy will have no ground to damage the Lord’s recovery with discord any longer. But now here in England the situation is just contrary to what you have said. It is being strongly promoted that we must follow brother Philip Lee absolutely, 100%, and while serving in Living Stream affairs, we should serve in complete obedience without asking any questions. And it was shared that the church life is not up to the standard of the kingdom, but that the office is, so if you want to be in the kingdom life, you should come and serve in the office.”

Bill Kirkham said, “Among the things I have heard, Brother Lee, I would like to share with you two or three examples. In general, fellowship with the saints about how we should serve, promoted that we should serve like the saints do in the Living Stream office; that is, when brother Philip speaks, the saints drop everything and run.” This letter was sent to Witness Lee. You can read it. The brother was more blunt and frank and straightforward than most brothers, not knowing what’s going to happen, that he might get knocked in his head.

Bill Kirkham said, “to help to put the point across more clearly, maybe I should relate the following story to you. This story was used to promote this”:

“While working in the tunnel in Taipei, there was a problem with water considered by brother Philip Lee to be a leak and not a problem of ground water. After digging, and searching for some time to discover the source of the water, brother Ray Graver asked a young brother from Manchester, England what he now thought the problem was, in order to test him. The brother thought, ‘Well, it was ground water, that may be.’ Ray told him, ‘If Philip Lee says it’s a leak, then it’s a leak.’”

This brother from England, I’m sorry to say, is not very tactful. If I were to write this letter I probably would eliminate this story about the leak. But nevertheless, he’s honest. At least he wrote it.

Bill Kirkham continued to say to Brother Lee, “This story was an example of how we should follow absolutely. Also, brother Ray Graver told Chris Lee that you told him recently the thing now is to follow Philip Lee 100%.”

I think that’s enough reading, because it’s too much junk. If a person cannot take these things, is he fermenting? Conspiring? Rebelling? You judge. Now you are not the jury, you’re the judge. I let you be also the judge. You judge if I am conspiring, and if you want to execute me, you can come down and hang me.

What was the reply from Brother Lee to this letter from Bill Kirkham? Witness Lee replied with two pages. This is the first page. The second page is the signature. Let me read to you his reply to such a grievous, grave letter:

Thank you for the fellowship conveyed in your letter dated 11/Nov/1986 which caught me one day before I left Anaheim for Taipei in November. Sorry, I couldn't find a time to fellowship with you in answering your letter during the four weeks I was there in Taipei. I came back to Anaheim five days ago and am ready to go to Irving tomorrow for winter training. After that I will be back to stay in Anaheim till the beginning of February, then I will go back to Taipei again for three months or more to complete the Chinese Recovery Version of the New Testament. Your prayers and the church's will be much appreciated. This morning I got some time to fellowship about the points in your letter. Above all, I would like to say it would be wise and profitable not to make an issue of anything. However, one thing solid I would like to let you know: The Living Stream does feel burdened to set up a little branch office in London for the distribution of both the video and audio tapes in UK and the continent. Although the Living Stream is not organized with any church, we earnestly expect that all churches, especially the nearby churches, would render much help in the carrying out of our purpose in the ministry of the Lord. Since brother Chris Lee came to the summer training in Irving and rendered some help in working on the tapes, and since he does have a heart with a burden to carry out this purpose, the Living Stream has asked him to start in this matter in London." (Which was really in Blackpool—it was started in Blackpool.) "I do look to the Lord that this could be a real blessing for the furtherance of the Lord's move in His recovery in European countries. Your brother in Christ, Witness Lee.

What would you think if you received such a letter? In the meantime, the whole church in Blackpool was destroyed to the ground. Destroyed to the ground. One sister wept continuously for eight to nine months. Nothing was done to rectify any situation and meanwhile they were still boasting about continuing at that time for "the furtherance of the Lord's move". And am I rebelling? Conspiring? Are we rebelling in Stuttgart? Only the Lord knows who is really conspiring.

Stuttgart Young People Shunned in Irving 1986

Meanwhile, still in 1986, our saints went to the training in Taipei. We sent about 25 to 30 young people there. They were the best of our young people. If we are conspiring, we wouldn't send anybody there. I would send the worst of our young people. Of course, in the church life, everybody is the best, okay? They began to tell our young people from Stuttgart, who were in Taipei, "Stuttgart stinks like garlic. Don't go back to Stuttgart."

Listen, we sent our young people there to Taipei to be trained, not for you to tell them that they stink. Maybe the trainers smell the fermenting there, their own fermenting. I don't know if fermenting has an odor or not—I am not an expert, you know. They told our young people, "Don't go back to Stuttgart. Stuttgart stinks like garlic." That shocked our young people. That's worse than my telling Jim Batten that if you baptize people in Germany, they're going to baptize you. What is worse, tell me? You judge. Na Ning, you challenged me tonight—you judge what is worse?

I never told people Taipei stinks. But they told our young people: "Stuttgart stinks." Using this word: "stinks"—oh, my goodness. When I heard that, I wondered what did those five brothers smell who came to Stuttgart? The five brothers. Maybe they smelled something in Stuttgart, but at least if we stink, please tell me. But the German saints liked the stinking Stuttgart. They probably were used to the stink in Stuttgart so they came back. They wanted to come back. So they are disobedient now - we tell you not to go back, yet you want to go back—you are really this bunch of rebellious people, contaminated by John So.

So our young people wanted to go back, they wanted to go to the training in Irving on the way to stinking Stuttgart. They wanted to go to the Irving training. Fine, you know, go. Even though it was said that we stink, we still let them go to Irving.

So the training in Taipei ended on the 15th. These dear young people were so tired out after the training, you know, digging and the full schedule—my goodness—they all lost weight. They wanted to rest in Anaheim. They made arrangements with the church in Anaheim to take hospitality with them. Al Knoch says, “Yes, praise the Lord. We’ll take you”. My, my, my, “the office” found out about this.

What? Anaheim is going to give hospitality to the Stuttgart young people, and they already made plane arrangements to go to Anaheim? Authoritative word came down, “No, you cannot give hospitality to these saints from Europe.” Poor Al Knoch, he had to come there and tell them, “Sorry dear saints, we cannot give you hospitality.” You know Al Knoch, right? He was so embarrassed. Well, the saints said okay, then we will go straight to Irving. So they changed the ticket again. Each time you change, you have to pay fifty dollars each, okay? And these people are not very rich, huh? Like the Filipinos here, right? So they change to go to Irving. Then word came again, “Sorry, we cannot take you that early. You should just come one day before the training starts.” And they changed again. Then they flew to Irving one day before the training started. When they arrived there in the office to register they were told, “We are not sure whether you could attend the training, come back tomorrow.” By that time our young people are boiling already. You cannot realize. They are not just fermenting, they are boiling. They are really boiling.

Special Red Tags for Stuttgart Young People

You know the Germans, right? If they boil, they really boil. So they came the next day, and were told, “Okay, we’ll let you in with a special red tag, and you will sit in a disciplinary section right in the back, in a red tag section. You have to sit there to show everybody you’re under discipline.” Now they are steaming—from fermenting to boiling to steaming. Do you think they can enjoy the training like that? Sometimes if it’s not the Lord that contains me, I’ll steam up.

One of our leading young brothers there says, “I demand to have an explanation”.

Ray Graver said, “I don’t know who made this arrangement.” What are you doing? Training, or are you playing? Maybe that’s part of the new way, I don’t know. I’ve never heard that before. That’s something new. Then one brother said this, “Do you really want to know? Do you really want to know the reason?”

“Yes, yes.”

“Ask John So.”

Ask John So? What did I do? And, if it’s really my fault, let me sit there and give me the red tag. What do these young people—these 35 young people—what do they have to do with me? I am not their father. I am not their commander-in-chief. I am not their source. I am not their apostle. Under such circumstances, brothers, tell me who of you would have an ear to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches? Jesse, would you have an ear to hear under such a circumstance? And they say I’m rebelling?

You don’t know, when these saints came home, they were just angry. It was quite late already, when they came home to Stuttgart. And, I had to calm them down. And, I had to assure them that their experience had nothing to do with the ministry of Witness Lee—but I guess I’m a little mistaken.

I can tell these stories inside out. I can even dream these stories when I am sleeping. Send a tape of this meeting to our dear Brother Lee with my compliments. I have nothing to hide. Too many things happened....

John So Letter to Witness Lee - January 1987

I got the shock of my life. I was already shocked, but then another shock wave came. I wrote Witness Lee a letter. Remember, brothers, at that time, the Lord knows, I still respected Brother Lee. But I am beginning also to boil. I am not a superman, you know. I am not the first class apostle that cannot shed tears. I wrote him a letter, and this is the letter. I wrote him a five-page letter: one, two, three, four, and five. I wanted to explain things to him, and I did not expect an answer from him, because I still respected him. At that time, I still thought maybe he didn't know exactly what was going on.

Let me backtrack a little bit before I go on. We can make a movie of this, you know. Forgive me, I have to let out some air, you know. I wrote him the letter. I answered quite a few of his charges. He read part of this letter in the video that you watched recently. I didn't see the video yet, because I don't think I can stand to see it. But I know that this letter was read from it. Out of five pages, our dear brother showed five lines to give a picture, to give a wrong picture, and a wrong impression: He said, "You see, you see, he changed, he changed. Look, he changed." Why you just show five lines, Brother Lee? I wrote five pages. If you want to show the letter, show all the pages.

Then Witness Lee called me about two months later. This letter was written January 11, 1987. When Witness Lee called me on the phone it was the end of February. He said, "John, Oh, the misunderstandings are so numerous, it is impossible to clear up." I told Brother Lee, "I wrote you this letter just to keep the record straight and that's it. I don't expect you to answer me."

He said, "Yeah, yeah, I knew you would say that, I knew you would say that."

That's it. I was not going to make any more issue out of that. Something was definitely fermenting. But at that time, it was no longer just fermenting. I don't know what's happening. And I don't know on which side it's fermenting.

Let me stop there and backtrack a little bit again, because Brother Lee mentioned in his book that letter signed by all the brothers. He used that, you see. He said specifically, "*John So signed this letter with all those brothers. How come he changed?*"

I will quote from *Fermentation* all that he said about this, then explain what the important factors were that are missing from his story: Witness Lee said,

Furthermore, in his letter to me dated January 7, 1988, John So said that brother Benson Phillips proposed that we write a letter similar to that which the brothers in the States signed during the elders' meeting in Orange County early 1986... In retrospect, [John So said] I regret that I signed that letter and was not faithful to follow conscience.

Actually, shortly after all the brothers had signed such a letter in Orange County, we had some fellowship amongst us here to see if we should do the same, and we definitely felt it was not necessary, and even to some extent not right, to write such a letter. However, to keep the 'one accord', we agreed to Benson's proposal.

Witness Lee goes on to say:

The letter referred to here by John So was signed in the States by the brothers, including three brothers from the church in Stuttgart. Two of the three brothers signed the letter in February 1986 and also signed this

letter, on which I am making my remarks, in May of the same year. Between the two signings there was only a short interval of three months. And, John So told me in his letter that “shortly after all the brothers had signed such a letter in Orange County [i.e., the letter signed by them on February 21, 1986], we had had some fellowship amongst us to see if we should do the same, and we definitely felt it was not necessary, and even to some extent, not right to write such a letter.” Since they had already had such a strong negative feeling concerning the signing of such a letter, why did two of the three brothers who had signed the letter in the States also sign, with John So, the letter of May 23, acting against their conscience? Could they give a reasonable and logical excuse for their action? If they acted so unreasonably and so illogically, how could others place their trust in them for co-laboring in the Lord’s work? John So offered the excuse that they signed the letter in order to keep the “accord.” It is not honest to be in one accord in a pretending way that is against one’s conscience. To be in one accord requires that we see the vision concerning the one accord. If one is void of such a vision, yet he pretends to be in one accord with others in order to please others, this is a falsehood, a deceiving behind a mask. It is no wonder that this one would fluctuate from pretending to opposing, and even to attacking others. Nonetheless, John So and sixty-three brothers did sign a letter that praised the five brothers’ fellowship with them to the uttermost, and later he said that he signed the letter against his conscience. Could one put in writing such high, praising words as are shown in this letter, in pretense, while he is bothered in his conscience? Why was there no hint of the claimed crisis of conscience expressed then? Rather, John So’s remarks contradict his claim of conflict in his conscience.”

The Reasonable and Logical Excuse

I wrote to Brother Lee in January of 1988. At that time I told him I was wrong in signing that letter and had violated my conscience. And, I explained to him why. Because when all the brothers were there in the elders’ meeting, February of 1986, signing that letter, including a couple of brothers from Germany, we brothers got together in Stuttgart and wondered if we should also follow the churches and sign such a letter? But we felt, “No it’s not necessary. If we are really one—we are really one. There’s no need to sign such a letter.” And besides, people might think, you know what? Do you belong to Witness Lee? They will misunderstand us. So we said, “No, no no, we shouldn’t sign it. It is not right.” That doesn’t mean we are against the one accord.

Please, please, this is the whole trouble, again—I want to say that we are believing so much that if something is said that is just a little bit different, this means, my goodness, that that one is against the one accord. Don’t be like this, please. Let’s learn something out of this. Don’t have a chicken heart. Do you know what a chicken heart is? How big? It’s a very small heart. It’s a very small heart. And then if you still have the cardiosclerosis, that’s it. That’s the end. If you have a chicken heart, enlarge your heart, please. Let’s enlarge our heart a little bit. What actually happened? What happened?

We five brothers got together, and finally one of them suggested at the end of our meeting, “Let’s write such a letter to Witness Lee.” My goodness, at that time they are promoting so much the one accord—it’s not that we are against the one accord, okay? I think that we were just as much for the one accord at that time as others, but we just felt that it is not so right to sign the letter, but we went ahead. We brothers said, “Let’s sign it”. We signed it. We signed it. I wrote to Witness Lee later and said, “For the sake of one accord we signed it, but really it is not according to our feeling to sign such a letter.” I don’t mean we are against the oneness, okay? Please, you know that is the whole problem, right? We

always try to misunderstand one another instead of understanding? So we signed, we signed.

My goodness, when problems came in Anaheim and in the United States in December 1987, we saw the videos.

Brother Lee told the brothers, I want to remind you that this is your pledge. The good-will letter becomes a pledge. If any of you elders here remember watching that video, Witness Lee pulls that letter out in the midst of the problem there and said to the brothers, "please, you pledged". It becomes a pledge. When the German brothers saw that he made it a pledge, they were very upset. Pledge? What! Did we pledge our lives to him? We didn't mean that. They were mad. It was I who calmed them down. I said, brothers, don't worry about that. Such a letter really doesn't mean too much.

They were going to write to Brother Lee, all of them, and sign the letter, requesting him to send us back the letter. It was I who stopped them, and tried to convince them, no, no, no. We're going to get into more trouble if you do that. I told him about our feeling concerning signing the letter -- that should be enough. I said there is no need for all of us to write another letter and retract the one that he wants to use as a pledge.

Who is conspiring? There was no conspiracy. There was no conspiracy.

Okay, You remember I told you about the LSM publishers, right? The publishers. Boy, we sent them 4100 pages and we wrote a letter to Philip Lee even wanting to go see him. Okay, we wanted to go see him. The brothers would like to fly there to go see him concerning the books. No reply. Nothing. Then Neuchatel was afraid that their books would also be boycotted in Switzerland so they quickly called and called and called. That was in June or July. They called and finally around September they got the answer from Benny Danker. "Yes, yes, you may print your Italian and French books in Switzerland under one condition." Uh? "That they are not to be printed in Stuttgart." My goodness. "And if you cannot print them in Switzerland, send them back to Irving. We'll print them for you."

When the brothers in Stuttgart heard that, it was firstly up to here, then it was up to here. Now it was up to here. Finally, it was up to here. They said that's it. This is a proof that they intentionally want to give us trouble. That's it.

What happened? They wrote a letter to Witness Lee in December 1987. I'll read to you that letter.

Letter to Witness Lee from Stuttgart Publishers

Dear brothers, [It's to the LSM with a copy to Witness Lee.]

Since December of last year 1986 we have sent you a total of approximately 4190 camera-ready pages of the following materials which concluded our translation projects started over two years ago, etc, etc. [Those are the Life-Studies and Truth Lessons, etc.] Until the present, we have not heard any word from your office. However, we did hear that the Living Stream Ministry and Benson Phillips have told brother Vincent Jornod of Neuchatel emphatically not to have their French books printed in Stuttgart but in Switzerland. In view of the above facts we see no need to continue operation of the Verlag-der Strom (which is the German publishers.) We therefore kindly ask you to pay the cost of translation, correction, and proofreading, computer typing, paste-up work, phototypesetting, materials, and utilities which amount to DM 137,026.50 Please remit payment as soon as possible to the following account so that

we could cover our debts accumulated due to the above mentioned work and close our books properly according to government regulations here.

(We sent them this. What do you expect me to do? What do you expect the brothers in Stuttgart to do?)

Signed Gert Reimer and Jim Frit-Fritz cc Witness Lee

At that time in November of 1987 Brother Lee called me and said, "John, you have to come." That was before we wrote this letter. "Let's have some fellowship." I said I cannot come right now but definitely in January I promise you I'll come. But things are heating up. It's not fermentation. I don't know what's heating up.

In that December training in Irving of 1987 one of our brothers, an elder from Germany, whose name is Hans Gunter Vop, went to the training there in Irving. One day I received a call from him. I got a call from him. "John, you have to come. You must come because there's so many rumors here going on about Stuttgart, and about you." Stuttgart is the coldest cold windblowers, and all this junk. "You have to come." By that time I felt no. Since there is so much of the rumors about us, because of that I said I will not go.

I wrote Witness Lee a letter January 7 of 1988. You may have a copy to read it.

John So Letter to Witness Lee - January 7, 1988

Dear Brother Lee, originally, I did plan to go to Anaheim to have some personal fellowship with you as you requested by phone early December. (I must say at this time I was not too polite anymore to Brother Lee. If you would consider that as maybe a rebellion, that's fine with me. Consider it as a rebellion. Conspiracy, that is also fine with me. I don't care what you consider it. I just like to be faithful to my feelings and I do not want to play politics.) In my last page, the last word to him I told him, "Please do not think that I'm against you or am opposing you because of my writing you this letter. I do not have the slightest intention to oppose your work or your ministry. Neither do I have any desire to convince any brother. By the Lord's grace, I like to be straightforward and follow my conscience, not to hide anything and not play politics, not to please anyone, or to offend anyone. May the Lord have mercy on all His churches. (I ended the letter that way.)"

No Basic Problems? July 1988

Witness Lee said in *Fermentation*, "In July 1988 he [John So] came to Anaheim, but he did not contact me. One week after his arrival, I called and invited him to come to me. He came the next day. I asked him if there were any basic problems. He told me no. I said that since there are no basic problems, how about if we forget about the past. He agreed, and he told me that he would leave Anaheim within a few days."

This is not correct. I had actually written to him about all the basic issues. Brother Lee kept on saying that I said in his home, "there is no basic problem. We don't have any basic problem." In this letter that I wrote to him -- I even wrote to him, it's written down, and it was sent to him -- I dealt with all the basic problems in that letter. I poured out everything that is on my heart, whether he wants to hear it or not, whether I offend him or not. I'm sorry. I had no intention to offend, but if I

was wrong, then I was wrong. I began the letter by telling him about the saints in England when they came back from Irving. I also brought up Bill Kirkham's letter and Brother Lee's reply to the letter that "it is wise and profitable not to make any issue". I told him there in his home, "Bill Kirkham wrote you that letter. It was like somebody's house is on fire and called the fire department and the chief of the fire department says, oh, don't make an issue, and then he hangs up. And not only did you not help the situation in England, you put gasoline into it to widen the fire in England. Then you told others regarding Bill Kirkham's letter that the one who wrote this letter wants something for himself."

After writing this to our dear brother, do you think I would say to him there is no problem? That I have no problem, that everything is all right? At his home, Brother Lee said to me let's draw a line and forget about the past. It's all over. I said, how can it all be over? What have you done? I said to him Brother Lee I have nothing to tell you because what I want to tell you is already in the letter. He said, "Oh, I didn't have time to read the letter". I said that's fine. At that time we were still friendly.

Brother Lee Apologizes On Behalf of LSM

Well, can we have a little bit more time? I'll take another twenty minutes, okay? I told you I wrote this letter to Witness Lee. At the same time, the Verlag wrote this letter to Witness Lee, and he got both of these letters. Then he called me in March, the end of March. Three times he called me. We had a long talk each time in March.

Listen, in the last conversation Brother Lee really did his best to convince me, and he did pay for the publishing work. He paid quickly in March and apologized for what the LSM had done. He paid this with two checks, I think. I don't know because it was not sent to me.

Telephone Conversation With Brother Lee

In a telephone conversation with Brother Lee, April 4, 1988, I was supposed to tell him certain things for the brothers after fellowshipping with them. I said, "the brothers were encouraged that you called, but actually no one has the heart to talk about all the things. They want you to know that the whole issue was never to cut off fellowship with you. They accepted your apology concerning all the trouble caused by your office in relation to the Verlag."

The brothers from England were also there, and they told me to tell Brother Lee that since his LSM branch office in England has caused so much trouble, the brothers in England requested that he do something in writing. Not for an apology. They don't even want an apology from Witness Lee, but they did want him to clear up the things that were spread in order to restore fellowship among the brothers in the churches.

I told him, "The brothers said they accepted your apology concerning all the troubles caused by your office in relation to the Verlag, the German publisher, although they did find it hard to believe that you didn't know what was going on." Witness Lee had continually said that he didn't know. Of course, I'm sorry, I still don't believe he doesn't know. Okay? If he could sit there and know the "conspiracy" in the whole world, my goodness, from the North Pole to the South Pole, east and west, he knows the whole conspiracy and then he doesn't know what his office is doing? I don't believe that too much anymore. Maybe at that time I believed it, but now I'm sorry to say, I don't believe that too much. Maybe a little bit. Maybe. If I try my best.

I told Brother Lee, "They find it hard to believe that you don't know anything about what was going on, because the brothers who came here in May 1986 assured us that everything that went on in the office is in close fellowship with you. They really assured us." Brother Lee, in answer to that said it is not true that everything that went on in the office is in close fellowship with him. Okay. So, you judge if it is or it is not. I don't know who is telling the truth. I don't know.

Nevertheless, we accepted his apology. Brother Lee asked me to convey to the brothers what he said several times to me on the phone, that it was in his heart that they should not close down the Verlag, but continue printing.

The brothers responsible for the Verlag acknowledged this request but they can only do this now on a very, very small scale because all of them, except one, have already gone back to work. We already closed down at that time.

And then concerning England, the brothers from England wanted me to tell him something over the phone, and this is what I told him. Brother Lee wanted to come, and I told Brother Lee that the brothers are not against his coming but that they feel now is not the right time. I said nobody likes to bring up all the things again which is not good for both you and us. It's better to wait for a little time until things cool down. The brothers were afraid of opening old wounds. In *Fermentation*, however, Brother Lee doesn't say this.

He gives people a different and wrong impression instead, saying, "*In the same phone conversation I also told John So that I would go in the spring of 1988 to fulfill my promise to finish the speaking on the second half of God's New Testament economy and to satisfy their repeated invitations to me through the past three years that I might finish the speaking on God's New Testament economy. But he would not agree*" (p. 60-61, *FPR*). Witness Lee tells people that I would not agree, as if we didn't want him to come at all.

Witness Lee even said to me, "If you feel that it is better that I visit later, it's okay. According to my schedule I have time at the end of May or the beginning of June. I also could come after the summer training." I told Brother Lee that I would fellowship with the brothers and that I would be in Anaheim in July and talk about it with him.

In *Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* Brother Lee said, "*During the meeting in Stuttgart, John related his phone conversation with me to the brothers there and, together with some of the other elders, mocked me. This shows the extent to which the opposition had already proceeded...Finally, John tried to force a decision upon them, namely, that they would all sever their ties with the Living Stream Ministry office. John also accused the five brothers who went to Stuttgart from the United States in 1986 of spying on them (cf. the letter to me from thirty-nine churches in Europe and Africa on May 23, 1986, in which they considered the five brothers' fellowship with them 'sweet fellowship')*" (p. 61, *FPR*).

Again, we understood that the motivation of the five brothers coming to Stuttgart was to get us to line up with "the office". We did feel that they were checking us out for this purpose, and, they themselves declared that this was their burden. We did, in fact, have serious problems with their request for us to line up with Philip Lee, in the way they requested it. This is why our feeling changed.

Summer Training 1988

Brother Lee said in his book that when I went to Anaheim in the summer, I wouldn't go see him. There was a reason. Witness Lee promised in our phone conversation that he was going to take care of the situation in England concerning all the issues that were made known to him. And all the brothers in England were quite happy. Nobody was mocking him. It seems that some weight was gone.

Okay, let me show you what Witness Lee did. He said he was going to address the problems. Previously, when Witness Lee had written to Bill Kirkham in answer to his letter, we all just sank -- we sank, okay, we sank, because such a grave, serious letter that Bill wrote was answered in such a way, without addressing the issues, while in the meantime, everything is crumbling in England and very much due to the LSM. There was certainly no blessing. Still, Bill Kirkham respected Brother Lee at that time, and he wrote again to him. This was the letter:

Dear Brother Lee,

(written on the 16th of January, 1988.)

Thank you for the fellowship conveyed in your letter dated the 17th of December, which I received on January 6th. I do trust and respect your ministry and appreciate your answer to my letter. I see that it is wise and profitable not to make any issue of anything. I together with you look to the Lord for the furtherance of His move in His recovery in Europe. I will do whatever I can to help."

Now, does the brother who wrote this letter sound like someone who wants something for himself as Brother Lee had earlier indicated? Okay. After my conversation in April with Witness Lee, he promised he was going to do his best to deal with the whole situation there in England. This is what he did. This is the way he wrote the letter,

'Dear Brother Bill,

I have to thank you first for your precious letter of the 16th of January 1987. (Listen. This was a reply to a letter written by Bill Kirkham over a year before.) And your word through brother John So in our phone conversation in April 1988 has been conveyed to me when I was in Anaheim, for which I am also grateful to you. I do have a burden of much interest for the Lord that I would have a time to fellowship with you face to face. I do look to the Lord for the right time to visit you again in His mercy and grace. I left Anaheim with my wife for Taipei last week and will stay here probably till the end of May. Then we will go back to Anaheim for the summer training. Your prayer will be much appreciated.'

That is all that he did to clear up the situation in England. When the brothers in England read that letter, they phewwwww, what, what, what is this? How are we going to clear up all the divisions and problems and what-not caused by the LSM office in England with that letter. You just tell me. You judge. How can the brothers use that letter to clear up anything? When we saw that letter, we, oh my goodness, what is this all about? What can we do? The brothers were feeling, "I give up, I give up."

Nevertheless, I went there in the summer to the training. I thought that I had nothing to talk to him about anymore. I really had nothing to say to him. My mother-in-law told me, you are not being polite if you don't call him. I said, "Mom, I don't want to play anymore, I don't want to play politics. I have nothing to say."

Brother Lee did call me and asked me to come to his home, and I went. I was not against him in anything. And that was when I told you a little bit of our conversation. And Brother Lee claimed in his book that I say there is no basic problem. That's impossible. I wrote him all the basic problems and our dear Dan Towle accused me and confirmed the same thing in his testimony, and why didn't he also write what he said to me. He said, "John So, you are a dangerous man." Why didn't he write that? He should also testify that. He might get a double star for saying that. I said, "I beg your pardon. I didn't come out for lunch or dinner with you to be accused like that. Would you mind explaining what you mean, I'm a dangerous man...?"

He said, "So many brothers who talk to you all become basket cases." I said, "name one." He named two. He named Ken Unger and he named Ned Nossaman. I said, "they're not basket cases. I just saw them a couple of weeks ago. Who else?" He said, "No more." I said, "You said many." Then I told him. "Well aren't you afraid to talk to me? You might become the third basket case." I said, "I think we better go home before you become a basket case."

Right after that day that I talked to Witness Lee, he called me and asked me to have fellowship with him at his home. I already had a breakfast appointment with a brother, and Witness Lee told me that he wants me to come over at nine o'clock in the morning. I said, I'm sorry, I will try my best to be early but I could not because I already had an appointment and I could not cut it short just to please somebody. I had no more intention within me to please anybody. Even I myself, I don't know, was up to where?

I went to meet with him at 10:15 and later I found out he was so offended that I let him wait. But I told him that I already had a breakfast appointment. Okay. After talking to Witness Lee (it's useless to talk about the content anymore), that evening I was invited by a family for dinner and lo and behold another couple was also invited. And this sister was one of the most trusted employees of the LSM office and was involved in some misconduct there [related to Philip Lee__Ed]. And after that night of fellowship I couldn't sleep. I couldn't sleep.

The next morning, lo and behold, Brother Lee's son-in-law called me, "I heard you had a talk with Witness Lee. What was the outcome?"

"Well", I said, "we really didn't talk too much because, we agreed at that time right there not to say anything and I had nothing to say." I already wrote him a letter. I had nothing to say. So, we had nothing to say. But, I told this brother, "Last night I couldn't sleep because I talked to a certain person, and, I went away after that conversation quite bothered about what I had heard." I told him I then went to a breakfast appointment with someone this morning, and when I came back my wife said that Brother Lee had called and urgently requested that I call him back. So, we talked again by phone. My heart was quite heavy and very upset.

Brother Lee said, "I heard from my son-in-law that you want to talk to me, that you have some questions to ask me." I said, "no, it must be a misunderstanding. But I will tell you anyway what happened last night", and I told him about the conversation I had with the LSM sister. I then said to him, "Brother Lee, I realize now why the churches don't have blessings in all these years" (See Appendix 2).

"Oh, there are lots of blessings."

I said, "Where?"

"Taipei".

I said, "I'm not very sure. I'll see it for myself."

"You should come, come, come right now. Let's have a talk."

I said, "Brother Lee, I don't have the heart and I'm not in condition to talk to anyone right now. Just wait till my heart cools down. Wait till I can calm down." I never told our brother that there is "no basic problem", that everything is all right. I don't remember that I would have said that.

This book said he asked me many times if there was any problem, and that I said no, there was none. This isn't correct. Actually, I told him exactly what I heard and what I knew. I was quite disgusted!

So when we went back to Germany still nothing happened. We never heard from Brother Lee and our concerns were never addressed. Finally, the churches, the brothers in Manchester, the church in Blackpool, and the church also in Stuttgart wrote a letter to Witness Lee to disassociate with some of the things that have been occurring in the LSM, which we feel for the testimony's sake before the Lord, we just have to do. Right or wrong, we'll let the Lord judge.

Letter of Disassociation 1989 John So and nine churches in Europe

"Dear brother Witness Lee,

It has come to our attention recently through several witnesses that gross immorality and some other sins mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5:11 have been committed by your son Philip Lee (who is identified as your Ministry Office) on more than one occasion over a long period of time. This deeply disturbs us. It grieves us even more that you and some of your close co-workers were aware of the situation and yet not only tolerated it but covered it up. What is worse is that, while this was happening, you and your co-workers were promoting and exalting him to the extent that he was able to intervene in the churches' affairs in recent years. The peak of this promotion was evident at your elders' training in Taipei in June 1987. Some of your co-workers were not only themselves under the influence and control of Philip Lee, but were also openly bringing elders and young people of many local churches to come under the same influence and control in your name and for your sake. The five brothers whom you and your Office sent to Europe in your place in May 1986 were trying to do the same here. Our young people who went to your training in Taipei have also testified of the same.

Before God, before the brothers and sisters in the local churches, before the Christian public, and for the sake of the Lord's testimony, we are compelled by our conscience to fully disassociate ourselves from such sins and behaviour in your work".

(signatories were twenty-one brothers from nine churches in Europe who effectually withdrew from the recovery with this letter on September 17, 1989.)

This is in brief the whole thing that had happened.

Lastly, I want to go to one testimony from the book, *Fermentation*, by Chris Lee of England. In all of his testimony, the impression he gives about me is altogether negative. He said that John So was the first one to spread the rumor that a number of those baptized in Taipei was false. If it was a rumor, it surely was not I who started it. Somebody told me, a quite a reliable brother there in Taipei told me, ...and the impression he gave is that John So is supposed to have said that he could raise up an army of brothers in the United States who are unhappy with the training. Supposed to have said! Such kind of testimonies pollute the heavenly court.

Did I or did I not say these things. Such a testimony is a bogus testimony. He said I did not care so much for the condition and faith of the saints. My goodness, I thought, who is not caring for the condition and faith of the saints?

This is what's happening and what had happened. If this is conspiracy, that's fine. I don't know what it is. Okay, I'm not accusing anybody of anything. And here I don't want to defend myself. You forced me to do it. And you don't have to

believe me. I don't have tonight hoards of testimonies. I don't think I need them. And I'm not here to vindicate myself.

And let me tell you, the church is not any man's church. It is the church of the saints. You're free to follow Witness Lee, but not in such a way that would damage the testimony of the church. You're free to reject me if you think you will be contaminated. I won't fight for whatever. I don't know what people are fighting for. If you want to receive me, that's fine. If you want to reject me, that is also fine with me. But at least I have been in the Lord's recovery for the last twenty years, and I have seen a few things, and whatever I wrote, I wrote it hopefully to help us come back to the right track. I am not assuming anything, but I do feel that I'm responsible before the Lord just to share a few things that I feel would be useful to correct ourselves. Right?

Don't divide yourselves because of any men. It's not worth it. We are nothing. Nobody's anything. If you don't want me to come back to Manila, I don't live here so don't be afraid of me. I don't think my home is in Manila. It's too hot for me. Too many mosquitoes. And I'm afraid of amoeba. I hope that this little time of fellowship could clear up a few things, and I have no intention for you to take any side or say, oh, he is vindicated. No, forget about it. After you hear this message, forget about it. That's fine with me.

Tonight, even last night preparing this, has been the hardest time of my life because I have no intention to argue about these things. I don't think there is any need for any more questions. If you believe whatever you believe, that's fine. You know. It's ten o'clock. I told you just eighty or ninety minutes. It's a little bit over. Well, thank you for your patience.

Appendix 9

Speaking the Truth In Love

John Ingalls 1990

Introduction

Having been a close observer of the tumultuous events that have transpired and the change of course that has taken place during the past few years in the local churches under the leadership of Witness Lee, and having been myself an intimate co-worker of Witness Lee's and an elder in the local churches for more than twenty-five years, I feel it is appropriate and indeed obligatory for me to relate an account of my own observations, inward exercises, and responses. I do this for the sake of an historical record and for the benefit of any who may be profited thereby. My burden is not to write exhaustively, for that would be too tedious for the reader, but to give an objective and as accurate an account as possible of the main concerns and burdens that have brought me to my present position and of the related events that have transpired over the past few years.

Moreover, many things have been spoken in recent elders' meetings by Brother Witness Lee and his co-workers that totally misrepresent the facts and contain many untruths. Motives and intentions are imputed to us that we never imagined, not to say practiced. We are being called despicable names and are being displayed in the worst light. But we do not desire to stoop to the level of name calling, pejorative epithets, or blatant vindication. We would like to speak the facts sincerely before God in Christ. May the Lord judge us in every attitude and action, as indeed He has continually been doing with all of us. We commit ourselves to Him. We desire to give a true account of the facts and our intentions and let the readers judge.

We certainly never imagined that we would pass through the experiences and conflict that we have in recent years. We loved the Lord's recovery and gave everything for it for over a quarter of a century. It was this love and investment of our lives that compelled us to respond and speak out. We had seen something that was exceedingly precious, and it was in jeopardy. Moreover, we were concerned that the Lord's testimony would be brought into shame and disgrace and suffer great damage. Sadly, our fears have eventualized. But we believe the Lord will still go on to recover and rebuild.

I will now proceed with the account and my testimony.

Early Stages

In the summer of 1987 I began to be concerned for the first time about some of the things taking place under the direction of the Living Stream Ministry Office. The things that were done and promoted in the high school training in Irving, Texas, in August 1987 greatly disturbed me, especially knowing that Philip Lee, the manager of the LSM office, was giving direct instructions and "fellowship" for the training's execution. The despising attitude that was instilled in the young people towards the elders of their churches was appalling. This was manifested in the arrogance and rudeness with which they addressed a good number of elders who were present, exhorting them to be baptized again. I was there and saw it. But then, learning afterwards there was some amount of repentance for this accompanied with an apology to the elders, I was somewhat comforted. However, many young people who attended were afterward very disappointed and discouraged in their Christian life, and some were seriously damaged in their attitude toward the Lord and the church as a result of that training, some of them it seems irreparably. The young people in Anaheim suffered a severe blow.

Talks With Bill Mallon

In the following month, September 1987, due to my health, and also due to a burden to fellowship with Bill Mallon, a co-worker with whom I had an intimate relationship for twenty-four years, I decided to go to Atlanta, Georgia, for a two-week period of rest and fellowship. Bill had recently passed through sore trials and sufferings, and I hoped that our fellowship could render comfort and encouragement to him. We drove up to the nearby mountains and had a number of days opening to one another.

At that time I was entirely supportive to Brother Witness Lee and his ministry and work related to the "new way" that was being promoted. I therefore did my utmost to persuade Bill to visit Taiwan and participate in the full-time training. I felt that this might be the answer to his need. On four separate occasions during those days I attempted to convince Bill to take this step, but he steadfastly refused, affirming that he was not free or clear to do that.

During that time Bill explained to me how he had suffered in various ways by events that had transpired in recent months in the churches and in the work in the Southeast. I came away from our talks with one deep impression: Philip Lee was becoming increasingly involved in spiritual things concerning the Lord's work, the churches, the elders, and the co-workers. I had already noticed this in Irving, Texas the preceding month. This, I felt, was completely untenable, incompatible

with his position and person, and intolerable. Philip Lee was employed by his father, Witness Lee, to be the business manager of his office and was reportedly instructed to deal only with business affairs. He was totally unqualified both in position and character to touch spiritual matters related to the work of the Lord and the churches. I became alarmed and began to fear for the Lord's testimony. With this burden I determined upon my return to Anaheim to fellowship with Godfred Otuteye, who then was involved in coordinating with Philip Lee in the Living Stream Office. I wanted to frankly ask him about Philip's role, expressing my alarm and concern.

Discussion Concerning LSM Manager

Godfred had been an elder in the church in Irvine, California, for close to ten years, and had recently been appointed as an elder in Anaheim by Brother Witness Lee. Thus we had been put into a position of more intimate fellowship and coordination. I had known Godfred since 1972 and over the years had numerous occasions of fellowship with him. I respected him for his genuineness, wisdom, and devotion to the Lord. Hence, upon returning from Atlanta on Sept. 22, 1987, I made an appointment for dinner with Godfred on September 25, Friday evening.

We sat together in the restaurant, and after some general conversation, I said to him in a serious tone, "Godfred, I would like to ask you a question. Would you please tell me who Philip Lee is? It seems that he is being promoted and is going altogether too far in his involvement in the spiritual side of the work, greatly overstepping his position as a business manager. Have you noticed this? I myself could never agree with this."

It seemed that my question took him by surprise. We had never discussed these matters before. He hesitated a few moments. Then, in a very grave tone, he replied, "John, the situation is very serious." If he was surprised by my question, I was somewhat taken aback by his answer. Godfred continued, "I have seen and heard many things in the Living Stream Office in recent months. I cannot go into detail, but I can tell you there is much that is very serious and very wrong." Then I began to be more alarmed and concerned. Godfred fully agreed that Philip Lee's involvement in the work was way out of line, but he indicated that there were more serious things than that.

Two days later, on Sept. 27, the Lord's Day, as we met in the Elders' Room before the morning meeting on Ball Road, Godfred had a few moments alone with me, and he said, "John, it is very timely that you opened up to me the other night. Let me tell you that the whole situation is sick and corrupt. I have seen and heard too much." Then I knew that we were really in trouble, though he did not mention any details or any names.

A Shocking Development

September 1987

On the following Tuesday, Sept. 29th, Godfred left for a business trip to Europe. On the next day, Wednesday, Sept. 30th, I received a telephone call from a sister who had a prominent position in the Living Stream Ministry Office, asking if she

could see me that night. I consented. That evening she sat in my living room and with tears opened her heart to me. She had served sacrificially and faithfully for many years in the LSM office, and now she said she could not tolerate anymore the gross misconduct that was being perpetrated upon some and especially upon her. I had been acquainted with this sister for many years and knew her to be faithful, upright, and trustworthy; therefore, I took her word very seriously. I was amazed that she could put up with such conduct for so long. She stated that she tolerated it only for the sake of Brother Lee and his ministry. She said that she had no other recourse but to resign. I confirmed her intention.

That conversation utterly shocked me. I deeply felt that something must be done to acquaint Brother Lee with the situation and to let him know that we would not tolerate it. I obtained Godfred's telephone number in Europe and called him as soon as the difference in time zones permitted, telling him the things that had come to my ears. Godfred listened and said that he already knew it. I was amazed. That night I considered what could be done. That we had to go to Brother Lee I was certain.

Considering How To Bring the Problems Before Brother Lee October – November 1987

The grievous conduct reported by the sister from the LSM office had a precedent that we were well aware of. Ten years previously there had been reports of similar incidents in the LSM office confirmed by several eye-witnesses. This compounded the serious nature of the case. I felt that it was more than a local matter, since the LSM was part of the work of Brother Lee, and the ministry of the office affected churches everywhere. Therefore, I believed it to be reasonable and advisable for a few prominent co-workers who were aware of the history of the case and who were respected by Brother Lee to approach him and inform him of the matter. (Actually, the principle of a group of brothers conferring with Brother Lee about a serious problem, a crisis, in the local churches had already been practiced on March 30, 1978, when a group of brothers – four from Texas, one from Los Angeles, and Gene Gruhler and I from Anaheim – went to see him in his home.) The next day I called Godfred again in Europe and presented my thoughts to him. He agreed.

During the next few days I telephoned several brothers, co-workers whom I respected and trusted and with whom I had served for many years. They were aware of the incidents ten years previously. I informed them in a general way of the current situation and proposed to them that we go together to Brother Lee in an effort to impress him with the gravity of the case and to clear it up. It was the first week of October 1987. We felt we should pray more and consider further what to do, since at that time Brother Lee was out of the country, in Taiwan.

One of the brothers I sought to contact and confer with was Ray Graver, an elder in the church in Irving, Texas, and the manager of the LSM branch office there. I called him in Texas and proposed that I come to see him in Irving. It was thought, however, for us to meet in Irving would attract too much attention; so we settled

on meeting midway in El Paso, Texas. This decision is being censured now as a plan for a secret meeting, as if that in itself is evil and a conspiracy. But I fail to see anything wrong with this. It was with a pure motive and desire and certainly was not a plot to draw him into a conspiracy to overthrow anyone's ministry. Ray was quite willing to do this until Benson Phillips, another co-worker and elder in Irving, Texas, who was then in Taiwan, advised him against it. Had Benson been in Irving, I would have sought to speak with him also. I enjoyed a very good and close relationship with both Ray and Benson for many years.

In those days I had further fellowship with Godfred and with some of the brothers we had contacted, with whom we had intimate fellowship through the years concerning the Lord's work. We realized that the spiritual condition of the churches throughout the United States and in other places, generally speaking, was very poor, very low. We searched for the reason. Something was radically wrong. The Lord's blessing was not among us. Life was at a very low ebb. In a number of places there was considerable discord and dissension, and instead of a steady increase in numbers, there was a steady decrease. We began to realize then that there were practices and tendencies among us that we had never considered before. And, we ourselves as well as others were responsible, having participated in these. But we had not seen clearly or realized previously what was being done. Thus we began to come to some conclusions.

I believe that the first was that the ministry was being given a place above the churches. It was being too highly exalted and emphasized, so that it became imperative for every church now to manifest that they were "for the ministry" and to "serve the ministry". It was no longer, as we were often told, that the ministry was for the churches and that only the churches should be built up; rather the churches now should be for the ministry, and the ministry was being built up. We felt that we should voice such a concern to brother Lee.

About the second week of October we began to fellowship with Dan Towle, an elder in the church in Fullerton and a trainer from the full-time training in Taipei, who was attempting to give direction and help to the fifty or sixty full-timers who had moved from Taipei to Orange County. To his great frustration, the full-timers were taken over by the LSM office and its management, and were charged to do construction and yard work over an extended period of time to the neglect of their gospel preaching. Dan had also heard some things concerning misconduct and irregularities related to the ministry office that greatly upset him, and he had serious concerns as we did for the Lord's recovery. At one point he told me that he considered to resign from the work and to leave. We confirmed his feeling that the situation was indeed serious.

Godfred, Dan, and I came together a few times, joined also by Ken Unger on a couple of occasions to fellowship about the situation and what should be done. Ken Unger, who was an elder in Huntington Beach, had himself also become very concerned. We conferred about our burden to speak with Brother Lee, mentioning a number of our concerns that involved aberrations of truth and practice. When we touched the matter of the full-time training in Taipei, Dan responded by saying that if you touch the FTTT, you touch Brother Lee himself, and according to his observation of Brother Lee's practice, Brother Lee will consider you if you

become in his eyes a problem, and then he will proceed to carry out his burden without you. Godfred confirmed this by saying that he had the same realization, that Brother Lee considers anyone who criticizes him a troublemaker and will consider whether or not that one is expendable. This was indeed a most serious consideration concerning Brother Lee. But we did not care to maintain any position or standing for ourselves. We felt that for the Lord's sake and for the sake of all the brothers and sisters, we must open our hearts to Brother Lee, no matter what it cost us.

As we spoke of our various concerns it was evident that Dan was growing increasingly uneasy. Regarding the FTTT he said, "I was one of the co-conspirators in that." He felt that we were going too far and desired to withdraw from further fellowship.

At this point we felt that it would be useful for the brothers we had contacted to come together to fellowship and pray in preparation for going to see Brother Lee, so that we would be clear concerning the issues we would present to him. Moreover, we believed it would be best not to create any stir among the saints or other elders by doing this openly; so we sought some place where we could all meet privately. This was by no means a conspiracy, as we are being charged. At no time did we ever meet with the purpose of plotting to overthrow Brother Lee and his ministry. That is utterly ridiculous. We never had such a thought – the Lord can testify for us. A private meeting or a secret meeting does not constitute a conspiracy. A conspiracy takes form from the content of the meeting. Is it a conspiracy to pray and fellowship together in preparation for visiting Brother Lee and opening our hearts in frank fellowship? Of course not. We were very concerned for the saints and sought for an extended period to cover the grave matters from them lest they be distraught and we suffer worse consequences.

One of the brothers then expressed rather strongly that it would be better for just a few brothers, namely those from Anaheim, to confer with Brother Lee instead of the whole group of five or six. Hence, after further consideration, we dropped the whole thought of all the brothers coming together, and decided that just Godfred, Al Knoch, and myself, elders in Anaheim, would go.

By this time Godfred and I felt that we must acquaint Brother Al Knoch with the facts and our deep concerns. We did so, and amidst many tears and great grief Al, who was already very much aware of some problems in the LSM office and could readily discern other difficulties affecting us in Anaheim, agreed to accompany us to see Brother Lee. The time was early November.

Brother Lee was still in Taiwan and was not due to return until December 5th, 1987. We felt that we could not adequately or properly discuss such grave issues with him over the phone, and it was not practical for us to make a trip to Taiwan. Therefore we determined to wait for his return and seek the earliest possible opportunity to speak with him in his presence.

During this time we were concerned for the saints in Anaheim and the condition of the church. We had just concluded the gospel “blitz” in Anaheim during the summer training of 1987, when over 3700 were baptized through knocking on doors. There had been a strong effort to follow up the 800 or more who were baptized in Anaheim (the remainder lived in other cities of Orange County and were being cared for by other churches). There were grand scale preparation and follow-up plans with the activity headed up by two brothers, appointed by the church, who gave themselves to the work.

The elders also gave themselves to the labor, though I myself was much restricted by my health. But to our dismay many of those who were baptized had disappeared, many rejected any further visits, and the remaining fruit was sparse.

Some discouragement set in. To compound the problem, a good number of saints had reacted against the practice of door-knocking, not openly or actively, but by simply withdrawing from the church life and the meetings. They felt that if that was the way the church was going to take, it was not for them. And indeed the meetings were filled with door-knocking testimonies, and anyone who desired to speak anything else felt he would be out of the “flow”. In this kind of atmosphere the life in the church ebbed even further from the already low state. We felt that the vision of Christ and the church that had so captured us at the beginning, over two decades ago, had grown dim or had vanished altogether. Those who were still with us in the church were either doing their best to carry out the visitation of the new ones with the methodology of the new way, or simply felt left out since they either lacked the heart or could not match the demands. All were desperately lacking the nourishing supply of the living word, of the Spirit, and of life. Therefore we were burdened to give some messages on the Lord’s Day to try to renew the vision and supply life. We spoke a number of times from Colossians and Revelation, emphasizing Christ as the tree of life. At one point one of the brothers who was taking the lead among the young people, Chris Leu, said to me, “John, you are going to be in trouble!” He indicated that Brother Lee and other leading ones would not be happy with me, because I was not speaking the same thing as Brother Lee in Taiwan concerning the new way. I told him I could not help that; I had to discharge my burden to meet the need. If for that reason I would be in trouble, then I must be in trouble. We had to care for the saints in our locality regardless of what was being spoken in Taiwan or done in other places.

This experience pointed up a fallacy among us – the prevalent concept that everyone must speak what Brother Lee was speaking and conform universally, regardless of the local need. We were aware of that but could not conscientiously follow.

During the months of October and November 1987 the elders in Anaheim met regularly with the other elders in Orange County. We expressed to them our burden our burden concerning the low condition of the churches and the need for the revival of our vision and some of the basic things of life. Others shared similar things. The Thanksgiving weekend was coming up, and there was to be a young people’s conference in the mountains. This was brought up for fellowship, and the question arose concerning who should go to lead the young people.

We learned then that one of the trainers from Taiwan had already been encouraged through those serving in the LSM office to come, and in fact he was preparing to come. Most all of the brothers felt strongly and expressed clearly their disagreement with that arrangement, based upon the damage wrought by the high school training in Irving, Texas, in which this particular trainer had a prominent role. The elders asked two brothers among them to telephone this trainer in Taiwan to inform him of the brothers' feeling that someone else should lead the young people in the coming conference. They did so immediately. It was indeed a shock to the brother in Taiwan. It also was a blow to Philip Lee, who presumed to be directing these affairs.

The elders also agreed that for the rest of the saints it would be profitable to come together on Thanksgiving weekend to share some things concerning Christ, the Spirit, life, and the church. All the elders would share the same burden. A few days before the conference was to start Philip Lee met with the full-timers and told them they had no business attending that conference; they should take care of their new ones. It was clear that Philip was absolutely unhappy with our conference. We felt rather that it was most appropriate for the full-timers to bring their new ones to the conference if they were so led. This is the kind of situation we faced.

A few days after the conference, Benson Phillips came to Anaheim from Taiwan and met with the full-timers. Philip Lee, Dan Towle, and Dan Leslie were also present (the latter two had been attempting with difficulty to lead the full-timers in service). Through Benson's fellowship the leadership of Dan Towle and Dan Leslie with the full-timers was officially terminated, and the full-timers were left under the direction of the LSM office. This was a blow to the two Dan's. The full-timers were left in confusion and serious questions were raised in some of them.

A few days later Benson desired to meet with some of the elders representing churches in the area. A lunch was arranged in a nearby restaurant to be followed by fellowship. Present at the meeting were Benson, Dan Towle, Dan Leslie, Ken Unger, Ned Nossaman, Dick Taylor, Frank Scavo, Godfred Otuteye, Al Knoch, and John Ingalls. During the fellowship the brothers began to question Benson concerning current events with the full-timers and the Living Stream Office and the prospects for the church's relationship with the full-timers. The involvement of the LSM office and its management was a real concern. Benson found it very difficult to answer the brothers' questions and was alarmed at the attitude of the brothers toward the LSM office. He remarked that the atmosphere in Orange County had changed, and he was bothered. We also were greatly bothered.

Recovery Translation Debacle

October 1987

Over a period of eleven years, from 1974 to 1984, I had worked together with other brothers on the preparation of the text for the Recovery Version of the New Testament. During the greater part of that time, and up to the completion, my co-workers were Bill Duane and Albert Knoch. We worked by ourselves in direct conjunction with Brother Witness Lee, presenting to him our work on each book.

Anything to do with the text, any revisions or alterations, were accomplished in direct consultation with Brother Lee. After that he delivered it to the Living Stream Office for all the processes of printing and publication. Hence, in all this work we had no contact whatever with the office.

After the entire New Testament was completed, we anticipated the time when a thorough revision would be made to strengthen various weaknesses in the translation, and to make it more concordant, accurate, and readable. We were informed, however, that the work of revision would be totally headed up by the Living Stream Ministry Office, that is, by its general manager Philip Lee. From past experience and observation we knew that such a relationship would be fraught with great difficulties, and we were full of apprehension. But we had no choice. A room was prepared in the LSM office for this work, and the date for the commencement of the work was set for October 15th.

Kerry Robichaux, a full-time employee of the LSM office was appointed to work with us as a special consultant. he had an advanced degree in linguistics, specializing in Greek; so he was considered a valuable asset to the work. Moreover, he had assisted Brother Lee along with others on the work of the Chinese Recovery Version in Taipei. A Chinese-speaking brother was also appointed to work with us, checking all our work to see that the English revision conformed to the Chinese Recovery Version, which was to be the universal base of other language versions.

On Thursday, October 15, we sat down together in our new facility for the first time and endeavored to lay some groundwork regarding the principles under which we would operate. It was not long before we clashed with Kerry over the guidelines, but we managed to get through and go on. The second day, October 16th, Kerry mentioned some matters regarding the daily schedule which he had received from Philip Lee, with whom he was in continual contact. There was some difficulty over that due to our prior understanding, and Bill Duane proposed that I should be the one to maintain contact with Philip, and not allow room for confusion by both Kerry and I bringing announcements from the office. Relating to the confusion, Bill added, "We should not give any ground for the devil to come in and frustrate our work." Kerry was not happy with Bill's proposal, but we managed to finish the session and arrange to come back the following week.

To my utter amazement I was informed the following day by Godfred, who received a telephone call from Philip, that our work was being immediately terminated, and the translation would be moved to Texas. Kerry had reported what Bill Duane had said to Philip Lee, and Philip blew up, totally misinterpreting what Bill Duane had said, and calling his father in Taiwan to report the whole affair. He believed that Bill had referred to him, Philip Lee, as the Devil, when he said, "We should not give any ground for the devil to come in." Using a Chinese proverb, he said that if you treat the dog evilly, then in effect you render the same treatment to the dog's master, signifying Brother Lee. If you call the general manager of the LSM the Devil, then you call his boss, Brother Lee the same. By this twist of facts and logic, Philip concluded that we were attacking both him and his father. Godfred was appalled and totally disgusted with Philip Lee's reaction and the way the whole affair was being handled. He was outraged, more so than me,

considering that we who had been so closely and deeply involved in the work for years and burdened for its final completion were so abruptly being relieved of our responsibility and replaced. He pointed out to me that this was an example of Philip's untenable, growing influence over the work and over his father.

Early in the morning on the following day, the Lord's Day, Brother Lee called me from Taiwan, and said that he had learned of the problem. He ordered us to stop the work for a week and not continue for a week to allow time to pray and consider what to do. He asked me to pray too. I told Brother Lee over the phone what actually had happened and that it was not at all as he had heard. In any case, Brother Lee felt that to keep the peace there had better be a change. A few days later he had called again to say that he had made the final decision: the work would be moved to Irving, Texas, just as Godfred had been told by Philip Lee. Kerry and others would work there and send their drafts to me, and I would personally render the final review. I acquiesced to this arrangement. It seemed clear that Bill Duane was being excluded from any part in the work. Brother Lee also advised me to use my time to render more help to the church in Anaheim, a matter for which I told him I was burdened.

Fairly speaking, given the parameters of the work under which we were expected to labor, I. E. the ministry office environment with Philip Lee in charge, it would have definitely been necessary sooner or later to make some rearrangement. There would inevitably be friction and unpleasant eruptions. From the beginning I could foresee nothing else. Therefore for the work to continue in peace Brother Lee would eventually be forced to take some sort of action. I am thankful that it occurred sooner rather than later. For me the burden of the work under such conditions would have been a great strain on my health, and I was not ready to sacrifice my life in that way.

Some brothers have recently asserted that I should have used the opportunity of Brother Lee's telephone calls from Taiwan to share with him over the phone our deep concerns. This I would never do. Such grave considerations required face to face encounters.

Bill Duane was utterly revulsed upon learning of Philip Lee's reaction and the way the matter was handled. Under such conditions he was happy to be relieved of any further involvement, but saddened that the translation work came to such a conclusion.

I continued in the work on the revision, polishing the drafts from Texas and passing them on to Brother Lee, for over a year. Eventually, toward the end of 1988, I felt I should withdraw, and tendered a letter of resignation to Brother Lee on December 3rd. That brought to a close a major era in my life and work.

Factors of Problem and Concern

Meanwhile we needed to consider many things, analyzing our history to discover the factors which caused our poor condition. In so doing we arrived at numerous other conclusions that concerned us greatly.

1. An excessive emphasis on numbers

We have already referred to the matter of the work and the ministry being promoted and given a place of undue preeminence and centrality. The "burden of the ministry" was that over the years the rate of increase had been decreasing, and a way must be found to preach the gospel and increase the numbers dramatically. This led to an inordinate emphasis on numbers and increase, with a great stress on budgets, goals plans, methods, and ways, coupled with predictions of millions being baptized over a period of several years and guarantees that if we would follow the prescribed way the numbers in the churches would be multiplied many fold. We listened to many messages and viewed many video tapes from Taiwan to this effect. Most of the churches, including Anaheim, dived into the burden with a very good heart to follow and obey, but the fervor was beginning to diminish and many saints were left languishing.

We fully agreed that the gospel should be preached and that we were short of normal healthy increase and the proper gospel preaching, but what could bring this to pass? What was the remedy? We were not so clear. But we began to be very clear that the diagnosis of our real need and the way that was being prescribed were seriously flawed. This was abundantly confirmed not only by the word of God but by Brother Lee's own ministry on many previous occasions. We have seen through his help a vision of God's economy and recovery, and such an emphasis on numbers, increase, budgets, methods, etc., was at great variance with what we had seen. This was not what we had heard from the beginning. This was not what attracted us to the Lord's recovery and brought us into the church life. Some had come out of Christian groups with this very emphasis, still unsatisfied, hungry, seeking rest and nourishment, oneness and true fellowship.

We analyzed our history in this country and saw that every time numbers and increase were stressed serious problems arose, and eventually there was a loss, not a gain. On January 17, 1983, Brother Lee said in a message to the elders which was later printed (entitled Practical Talks to the Elders), "Let us trace a little of our history. The recovery in the United States began in Los Angeles in 1962. For ten years, from 1962 to 1972, I had very little concern. My only burden was to keep pressing on....Then we became careless, or more accurately, distracted. *We were distracted from what the Lord had shown us, and turned our attention to the increase. From 1972 there was a tendency to promote numbers, to be occupied with getting the proper place and the proper people. That opened the door for some things to creep in to damage the Lord's recovery....Then I began to say that we must turn our attention away from the increase and come back to the central lane, the lane of life, the lane of God's focus (emphasis ours)*".

It was evident that we were embarked upon the same damaging cycle again. We were deviating from God's focus and God's economy. This was undoubtedly the work of the subtle one. We surely needed to return to the lane of life as Brother Lee had stated. We felt that as those who had served with Brother Lee for many years we should speak honestly and faithfully to him concerning this.

2. The Influence and Control of the LSM Office

Another matter that concerned us greatly was the growing influence and control of the LSM office, i. e. Philip Lee) over churches, elders, co-workers, and the full-time training in Taiwan. We had numerous examples of such an intolerable and unscriptural situation. With my own eyes I saw some leading ones reporting to Philip Lee what they were intending to share with a gathering of Orange County young people and ask if he thought that would be all right. I could hardly believe it. Was this the function of a business manager? When I reported this observation to some brothers who had coordinated with Philip Lee and associated with him, they laughed at me and said that that was very common. They were amused by my being startled by this discovery. Godfred even admitted later that he had done the same thing himself: he had suggested that before someone was chosen to lead a young people's conference it should be checked out with Philip. Godfred fully repented of that. Dan Towle remarked that this was our "life-style". How far off we were!

Moreover, elders were encouraged to call Philip Lee regarding conferences and many affairs concerning the work and the churches in their areas, asking his advice and who should come to help them. A few places actually practiced this. There are a number of instances of churches and whole areas being cut off by the management of the LSM office from the supply of literature and tapes due to some alleged offense of the elders, regardless of the suffering imposed upon the saints in those churches. When the elders repented in a manner satisfactory to the office, the ban was lifted. Some adjustments, we understand have been made in the administration of the LSM office, but at that time the situation was bad and worsening. The portent for the future was threatening. This was a genuine concern.

3. Aberrational Speaking and Activity in the FTTT

In addition we began to hear reports, see video tapes, and read printed messages published by the Full-time Training in Taipei of some of the things that were being said and done. Now this really alarmed us. Foremost among these was the fact that Philip Lee was the administrator of the training, supposedly only on the business side, but actually exercising supervision in much more than business affairs. He was in daily fellowship with twenty-four of the trainers and leading ones who called and reported to him all activities (failure to do so resulted in an offense). The trainees were even told that Philip was administrating the training. His power and position were growing immeasurably.

Statements made by some of the trainers in Taipei amazed us, as I am sure they did many others. Some examples are as follows:

- 1) "There is no need to pray about what to do; just follow the ministry."
- 2) "We don't even need to think; we just do what we are told."
- 3) "Follow Witness Lee blindly. Even if he's wrong, he's right."
- 4) "If you leave the training, you'll miss the kingdom."
- 5) "Our burden is to pick up Brother Lee's teaching and way to make us all Witness Lees, like a Witness Lee duplication center."
- 6) "To be one with the ministry is to be one with Brother Lee, the office, and Philip Lee."

- 7) Since Christianity is in ruins, the Lord raised up the recovery; since the recovery is in ruins, the Lord raised up the FTTT.

An account of Brother Lee's position was given by one of the leading trainers of the FTTT to a group of brothers in Dallas, Texas, in the summer of 1986, in the context of how to be one with the ministry. There are witnesses to confirm it. It goes as follows.

"The Father is number one, the Son is number two, the Spirit is number three, and Witness Lee is number four; and then there are those who are with Witness Lee." A brother asked, "And who is number five"? The trainer replied, "It is not yet quite clear who number five is", but pointing out "You brothers do not have access to brother Lee. I and another trainer do. We can walk into brother Lee's apartment any time and have breakfast with him. The way to know what brother Lee wants us to do is to be in contact with those who have access to him. They will tell you what he wants you to do." The hosting brother asked, "Isn't this a hierarchy?" The trainer replied, "No!" The brother asked, "How then does this differ from what we've been condemning?" The trainer answered, "If the elders in a local church would practice in this way to carry out their burden, it would be a hierarchy; but if this is practiced to carry out the ministry's burden, it is not a hierarchy."

When Brother Lee heard through us the above speech of his trainer, he took steps to rebuke and correct him. That such nonsense could be spoken by one chosen by Brother Lee to lead his training after all we have passed through and heard from Brother Lee's ministry is difficult to understand.

Many aspects of the training bothered us considerably. Elders who attended the training in Taipei were instructed explicitly to carry out the same training in their localities. Pressure was exerted upon the churches and elders to follow, implement, and conform to everything that came out in Taiwan. Failure to do so created problems. The effect on so much emphasis on ways, methods, and practices – all externals – resulted in a wilted wilderness condition among many of the saints.

Many faithful older saints were rebuked and given the impression that because of their age they were through. All official assertions to the contrary, the full-timers became a special class of people, and the full-time training was exalted above the churches, which were considered to have grown decrepit and were at best "better than nothing" (Andrew Yu, in *Voice of the Young Heart*). The elders were publicly degraded and blamed for all the ills. And yet the churches with the elders, and especially many of the older saints who were somewhat despised, gave generously and sacrificially to support the training. Their money was gladly accepted. In fact some of the churches were drained financially due to the heavy burden of supporting their full-timers and other projects that were promoted.

Video tapes of the FTTT convention on Nov. 23, 1986, and the FTTT graduation ceremony on June 1, 1987, surprised us with the mixture of worldly ways and gimmicks that were practiced and hitherto strongly condemned among us...

I have no relish in mentioning these things. My object is to record and inform the readers of the matters that burdened and concerned us in the fall of 1987.

4. Misconduct Related to Personnel in the LSM Office

Last, but not least, there was the matter of serious misconduct related to the personnel in the LSM office. Our fear here is that this would eventually reach the ears of the media, and we would have a major public scandal to face. We remembered how in the latter days of the Exclusive Brethren in England there were extremely serious consequences due to various abuses which the saints could not cope with. This threatened us. Worst of all, the Lord's testimony would be smeared terribly and Brother Lee's ministry would suffer great damage. These are the concerns that we wanted to share with Brother Lee.

Meeting With Brother Lee December 12-16, 1987

On December 5th, 1987, Saturday, Brother Lee returned to Anaheim from Taiwan. Godfred Otuteye, Al Knoch and I plus a number of other brothers went to meet him at the Los Angeles Airport. As soon as time permitted we called him at home and made an appointment to see him the following Saturday morning, December 12.

As the time drew near we received a call from Ken Unger asking if he could accompany us on Saturday morning to see Brother Lee. He himself was intending to visit Brother Lee privately to express his concerns, but another brother in Orange County had counseled him not to go alone but to go with others. We agreed for Ken to come and we called Brother Lee. He also agreed.

Thus on December 12, the four of us – Godfred, Al, Ken, and I – went to Brother Lee's home. We were thankful that we were finally having the opportunity to open our hearts to him. I began to speak with a few introductory remarks as follows: "Brother Lee, we have some deep concerns which we want to fellowship with you, concerns which in some ways make it difficult to know how to go on, as we will indicate. But as brothers and co-workers who have been very close to you for many years, we feel we owe it to you to speak our concerns in an honest and full way. We ask that you would please listen to us until the end and hold any remarks you may have until then. You may wonder why we are concerned about some points, but subsequent fellowship, we believe, will clear that up." We said this because we were afraid we would get hung up on some point and would not be able to present a full view of our concerns in the time we had. We, of course, would have been very happy to fellowship further concerning any matter if Brother Lee desired it, and we did indeed do that.

I continued then to share with him concerning the low state and morale of the churches, as we have mentioned before. I myself was aware of the condition of the churches in most area of the country. Concerning life, the level was very low; concerning truth, in some important aspects it was lacking and little apprehended;

concerning service, there was very little heart to serve. Concerning the gospel, referring especially to Anaheim, though there were a few faithful ones caring for the new believers, the number had diminished considerably; moreover, the saints were polarized between those who go out and those who do not. I explained to him that it was not due to a lack of getting into the new move, since most elders and churches had done their utmost to carry out whatever his burden was.

Concerning Brother Lee's ministry, we had observed, appreciation for it had decreased, and to some extent the credibility of his ministry had been lowered. This was largely due to the fact that so many changes had been introduced and then retracted, and new change made, that many saints were pushed beyond their limit and could not tolerate anymore. We told Brother Lee that many brothers were concerned not only for the Lord's recovery, but for him and his ministry, which was a surely suffering.

I then spoke about what we felt at that time was one of the major causes of the deterioration, the excessive emphasis on numbers, methods, ways, and activities, which left many of the saints undernourished and dry. More seriously, I said that we had deviated from the central lane of God's economy according to Brother Lee's own words. I read to him what he had said about being distracted from life to increase in the publication entitled, "Practical Talks to the Elders" (quoted earlier). Then I analyzed briefly our history, pointing out that every time numbers were emphasized, serious problems were brought in and instead of an increase we eventually experienced a decrease. At a later date, when speaking to Brother Lee again about the excessive emphasis on increase, he replied, "Yes, I admit that whenever we touched the matter in the past we had problems, but we still need the increase." In years past we had a marvelous increase without emphasizing it at all.

I mentioned that by taking the way of seeking great numbers we were building the great tree of Matthew 13:31-32. Some of us will never forget Brother Lee's conference in 1963 in Los Angeles exposing the big tree of Matthew 13, referring to the church, which should by the proper growth of a mustard seed be like an herb, but which has grown abnormally great to become a tree, with its nature and function changed. He warned us strongly against this at that time.

I concluded by saying, "the Lord's recovery is in great jeopardy at this time. There is the great peril of emptiness and division, which we are already experiencing. If we did not speak to you, we would not be faithful to you or to the Lord. We need healing, we need relief, we need to be brought back to the enjoyment of Christ. Otherwise, the new way will not be successful and the saints will be incapable of receiving new help. We hope that maybe you, Brother Lee, may be able to help in this way, perhaps in the coming training."

Ken Unger continued and spoke with Brother Lee about the promotion and development of Philip Lee's influence. He mentioned how this promotion had begun in Irving, in 1981, under the leadership of Benson Phillips and Ray Graver. (Ken himself had been strongly influenced by them, and became in orange county one of the strongest proponents of the office and Philip Lee. This gave him an inside view of many things. His wife had faithfully served in the LSM office for years and also had seen and heard much. By this time Ken had deeply regretted

his participation in this promotion.)

Ken then spoke of the influence of the LSM office over the churches. He reviewed the matters concerning this that we have outlined previously, and added this important point, that brothers were being frustrated from fellowshiping with Brother Lee directly. Rather they were told to fellowship with Philip Lee. We had passed through the very same kind of activity, only with another brother, in the crisis of 1977-1978.

Then Ken made a number of points of concern regarding the full-time training in Taipei. Some of these have also been outlined previously in this report. He referred to the arrogant attitude and the aberrational remarks of some of the trainers appointed by Brother Lee in Taipei which misrepresented Brother Lee's ministry. Ken himself had been one of the trainers in Taiwan, so he was familiar with many things. He pointed out how the FTTT was being viewed as a big organization having a hierarchy, with Philip Lee and the trainers at the top. One of the trainers had just recently (in the high school training in Irving, Texas) referred to some things that were being spoken in the "higher echelons of the Lord's recovery".

Ken spoke strongly and frankly regarding his concerns for the Taipei training but at no time with Brother Lee did he or anyone else demand that the training be terminated.

Al Knoch then repeated to Brother Lee a number of statements made in the Taipei training and elsewhere that had stirred up our concern...

Finally Godfred spoke frankly and openly to Brother Lee concerning the serious misconduct related to personnel in the LSM office. Brother Lee listened attentively.

I must say at this point that no time did Godfred or anyone else demand that the manager of the LSM office be discharged, as we are being accused of doing.

By this time the morning had ended and we had to draw to a close. But we were most gratified by Brother Lee's response. He was very humble and receptive, beyond our anticipation, and he thanked us sincerely for our frankness and openness, shaking each one's hand. He begged us to pray with him and help him to handle the problem of the misconduct in the LSM office, regarding which he was especially concerned. We assured him that we would do what we could. He then urged us to return in the afternoon for further fellowship and prayer. We gladly consented, and left his home encouraged, yet still realizing it would be a difficult road ahead.

We returned to Brother Lee's home at 4:30 P. M. that afternoon at his request, expecting to have a good season of prayer. We urgently needed to pray. But we were disappointed when Brother Lee began, without prayer, to share with us for some time his burden for further steps in his work and ministry and the churches. Eventually we had some very brief prayer. Brother Lee then said that the hardest case to deal with was the misconduct in the LSM office. He asked us what we

thought he should do, and we discussed the situation. Brother Lee remarked that all the things we shared with him in the morning regarding this matter may be true. Regarding the controlling of the churches by the management of the LSM Office, Brother Lee said that he had advised Philip Lee never to give any impression of such a thing. He told us that he had instructed him ten times never to touch the churches, the elders, the co-workers, or the work. That Brother Lee had to tell him ten times indicates that there was indeed a problem. But this matter, he said, would not be hard to deal with.

Brother Lee then requested that we return again in the evening for further fellowship, which we gladly agreed to. At 7:30 P. M. we met again and at the end of our talk, Brother Lee asked us to return again the following Monday morning. To this we also agreed. But when we left we were not so encouraged. Brother Lee, however, was quite concerned about finding a way to resolve the matter of the misconduct, realizing, I believe, that this was a substantial threat to his ministry

Monday morning, December 14th, we came again to Brother Lee's home. After some brief prayer, Brother Lee gave his analysis of our past history, leading with the very low rate of increase in recent years – in the U.S., in Taiwan, and in Germany. It was at this point that he admitted that the emphasis on increase in the past had brought trouble. He felt that we had a good start in the U.S., which reached a high point in 1969-70. Then we lost it. The migrations were the factor. In Los Angeles all the saints were concentrated in one place and under the proper leadership. But when the migrations came, what was gained in Los Angeles was lost. In 1974 he had the burden to put out the life-studies, and for twelve years he focused on that, neglecting the proper care of the churches. This also accounted for the loss and poor condition. The spread has been good, he said, but the increase has been short. No one rose up to care for the churches in Taiwan and the U. S. and he got disappointed. Where were the brothers, he asked, to care for the churches as in Elden Hall, Los Angeles?

He referred to the problem of the full-timers in Orange County. Who should care for them? To whom could he hand them over? The training from Taiwan had spread everywhere, he said. Only one church in the Far East was troubled by the training. The Lord got the victory in Taipei. But in the U.S. there were two groups of saints {those who agreed with him, and those who dissented from him}, which caused a real problem. England did not get much help, he stated, because they became opinionated, and opinions kill things. You must have one driver in the driver's seat. Where is the one accord today? Pooh!

Brother Lee went on. At this juncture, he said, the problem of Philip Lee came in and made the clouds thicker. If the brothers were stronger, Philip Lee could never have come in. Benson Phillips' and Ray Graver's promotion of Philip Lee was wrong. Have I ever made Philip Lee a co-worker? He asked rhetorically? He remonstrated with the leading brothers among the Chinese saints, saying, why did you refer certain things to Philip Lee? Philip Lee is not ambitious, he said, but if you open to him and give him some ground, then he takes it.

Addressing us, Brother Lee asked, Why didn't you brothers with Bill Mallon come to me a long time ago with what was bothering you? (I have already said why we

felt we needed to wait till Brother Lee returned from Taiwan in order to face to face.) Brother Lee then outlined his plans for the future. He said he would visit all the places and encourage the saints to enjoy Christ more and more. But by that alone the Lord would not be satisfied; we must go on to 1 Corinthians 14 {concerning the proper meetings}. We still need the old way, he said {perhaps by this he meant one-man ministry}, to bring them back and work on them. He himself must return to Taiwan, for they {the churches in Taiwan} were not yet steadily founded. He also had the burden to visit the churches in the U.S. and clear up many misunderstandings.

I mention this talk of Brother Lee's in some detail to show what his thoughts were at that juncture.

A Surprising Elders' Meeting

On the evening of Monday, December 14, 1987, Brother Lee called a meeting of the elders of southern California. There was a fair number there representing most of the churches in the area. After prayer, Brother Lee opened the fellowship by giving a long word concerning the new way and its great success in Taiwan. Then he asked for fellowship from the brothers, desiring especially to know how successful the new way had been in their locality.

Dick Taylor, an elder in Long Beach, started with a lively, full-of-enjoyment kind of testimony, such as Dick is well-known for, thanking the Lord for the door-knocking and the Gospel preaching in Long Beach, but ending with an honest word about the depression and the discouragement among some of the saints. This was unusual for Dick but he was telling it like it was. Other brothers followed who also spoke very honestly about dissensions concerning the new way and discouragement among the saints in their localities, for which they were very concerned. In some places divisions had arisen over the new way. John Smith, an elder in San Diego, ended the time of sharing with an honest account of his concerns for the saints in his church, mentioning how he feared that with the overemphasis on methods, numbers, and increase the saints would become activity-centered instead of Christ-centered.

What was extraordinary was the elders speaking up in such an honest and forthright way, knowing that such reports were not what Brother liked or wanted to hear. We were not accustomed to doing this due partly to a sense of intimidation. To my knowledge this was the first time that had been done. This was encouraging. But Brother Lee was visibly bothered, and later reacted strongly to the brothers' speaking, saying of one brother's sharing (John Smith's) that it was like pouring iced water on him.

We were not the only ones who went to brother Lee with our concerns during these days. We heard that Dan Towle, individually, and Frank Scavo together with Dick Taylor also went to see Brother Lee to express to him their concerns about the present situation.

Brother Lee called the four of us who had met with him for another time of fellowship on Wednesday, December 16th, the day before he left for the winter

training in Irving. The fellowship did not issue in any conclusions. He said then that he wanted to continue to meet with us after he returned from the training to resolve the problem related to the LSM office. We agreed.

Ken Unger and I were burdened to attend the coming elders' meetings to take place prior to the winter training in Irving, Texas, December 22 and 23, 1987. We prepared to leave on December 19th, a few days early, as we desired to have an opportunity to speak with Benson Phillips and Ray Graver before the elders' meetings commenced.

Another Shocking Development **December 19, 1987**

In the morning of December 19, just before Ken and I were to leave for Texas that afternoon, the sister from the LSM office who had spoken to me on September 30th called and asked to speak to Godfred and me. We met with her and were utterly amazed at what we heard. He began to relate to us in detail some of the things she suffered while in the service of the LSM office. She wanted us to realize how grave the problem was. We were revulsed to the depths of our being, and when the conversation ended and we parted, we so full of abhorrent feelings that we were literally in a daze.

Godfred drove me to the airport to meet Ken. We were in a state of shock and utter disgust. All this had taken place in what we called the Lord's recovery! We felt that Benson Phillips and Ray Graver, who were deeply involved in the LSM operation, must surely know something of these matters. Therefore, we resolved to confer with them about this when we got to Irving.

Elders' Meetings and Fellowship **With Brothers in Irving Texas**

On Saturday afternoon, December 19th Ken Unger and I flew to Irving. I did not relate to him what the sister from the LSM office had just told us. On Monday, December 21st, we made an appointment to see Benson Phillips and Ray Graver in the morning. Having been intimate co-workers with them for many years, and knowing that they were aware of many things, we mentioned the concerns that we had presented to Brother Lee.

On December 12th, excluding the matter of the misconduct in the LSM office. We wanted especially to let them know how strongly we felt regarding the colossal mistake they had made in promoting and exalting the office and Philip Lee, starting in 1981. They said that they did not feel they had erred much. This really surprised and disappointed us. We tried to impress them how serious this matter was. They invited us out for dinner, and we decided to meet again in the afternoon to continue our fellowship.

Upon coming together we attempted amid protests to mention the matter of the misconduct in the LSM office. They steadfastly refused to hear about it, but we proceeded to speak. Ray Graver then quickly rose and exited the room. Benson

(in whose home we were meeting) also rose to register his displeasure. We felt that they had knowledge relevant to the matter and wanted to confer with them about it. Benson admitted that the same sister from the LSM office (mentioned previously) had come to him in Taipei to disclose a related event, but he strongly protested our bringing this matter before them. They argued that this affair was exclusively under the jurisdiction of the church in Anaheim, and they had no business being involved. We felt, as we mentioned earlier, that it was more than local, and that since that they were leaders in the LSM operation, they could be consulted. Some time later, however, I apologized to Benson and Ray for this, feeling that if they chose not to hear, we should not have forced the issue.

That night we met with some of the elders who had arrived for the elders' meetings and had some fellowship and prayer. At the same time Bill Mallon was meeting with Brother Lee to open his heart to him.

The next morning, December 22nd, the elders' meetings began with Brother Lee giving a word that was well accepted. While speaking, he referred to Bill Mallon with very commendatory words, saying that he wanted all the brothers to know that he stood with Bill, and he was not happy that other brothers had criticized Bill. Titus Chu, seeking to encourage Bill, said that Brother Lee had never done that for any brother. I personally had never heard Brother Lee support a brother so strongly.

In the elders' meeting that night the atmosphere entirely changed. Brother Lee was fighting mad. It seemed clear to us that Benson Phillips and Ray Graver had gone to Brother Lee that afternoon and told him all that we had told them. He was on fire. His whole message was a vindication of himself regarding some of the concerns we had shared with him.

It was obvious that he was rebuking and dealing with us publicly, though not mentioning our names. We had seen him do this kind of thing a number of times with other brothers. Perhaps he feels that this is the scriptural way.

The next morning in the last elders' meeting, Brother Lee went at it again, lashing out fiercely concerning a number of things. He was exceedingly hot and strongly vindicated himself while rebuking his supposed opposers, especially us. I felt he was not fair, not speaking truly, and not acting appropriately. A number of brothers were grieved and disturbed. After the meeting I went up to him and asked if we could have a little time of fellowship that afternoon. He was quite willing and we set the time at 3:30 P.M.

Following my contact with Brother Lee after the meeting, John Chang, one of the leaders in Orange County among the Chinese saints, approached Ken and me. Ken had talked at length with John the previous evening and discovered that he shared many of the same concerns we did. This brother in the morning meeting had sat next to one of the leading elders from Taipei, Lin Rong, and had mentioned to him that we were very concerned about the present situation. Lin Rong responded that he would like to have some time with Ken and me if we were willing and if it could be arranged. John Chang told us of this, and we consented to meet with him, agreeing to have lunch together. This we did – Lin Rong, John Chang, Ken Unger,

and myself. We were really surprised that one of the elders from Taipei would like to speak to us and that he too was concerned, and we wondered what would come out of that.

At the restaurant we began to fellowship. Lin Rong appeared very solicitous of the fellowship and indicated that he also was quite concerned about the situation, although I noted that he never mentioned what his concerns were. He was desirous to know our concerns, so we opened to him and eventually mentioned, with tears, the items we had shared with Brother Lee. He listened attentively. We then left, delivering the brothers to their respective dwellings, and asking Lin Rong to keep what we had shared with him in confidence. He said he would.

That afternoon I went to Brother Lee's apartment according to our appointment. My desire was to assure him that I was not opposing his burden as set forth in the main points of the "new way" (as it was defined in those days). He had indicated that we were indeed opposing. I told him that I was absolutely not against the preaching of the gospel by door-knocking or by any way; that I was absolutely not against the practice of home meetings; and that I was not against any other matter he emphasized. Rather, I was for these things. Brother Lee received my fellowship and remarked that he had never had any problem with me; he only felt that I should have stayed in Anaheim more and not traveled so much. Our talk ended peacefully, but I was not encouraged. That evening the winter training began, and the next morning Ken and I together with Dick Taylor caught an early flight back to Los Angeles. At the airport to meet us, according to an arrangement made in Irving, was Gene Gruhler. Gene wanted, he said, to have a time of fellowship with me, and the only time available was to talk as we drove back to Anaheim from the airport. The conversation in the car was not pleasant. I rebuked Gene, and he rebuked me. I rebuked him for something he said in the elders' meetings in Irving which I felt misrepresented the feeling of a number of. He rebuked me for sharing my concerns with others, which he felt was forming a party. Actually, I had only spoken to a few brothers at that time, brothers with whom I was closely related in the Lord's work and with whom I had opened my heart for years. And, it was for the purpose of going to see Brother Lee together. I did not consider this forming a party.)

Then Gene said that if we didn't take Brother Lee's leadership, who would be the leader? "You??!!" he said, indicating me. But I had no desire to be such a leader; I am not that kind of person. He exhorted me to take Brother Lee's leadership. I told Gene that I would follow Brother Lee's leadership in the sphere of life and truth. Gene interpreted that to mean that I would not follow his leadership in practice, and he remonstrated with me concerning this. In some things that was true. I could not conscientiously follow everything in all good faith as I had done before. Gene's intention, no doubt, was to try to help me, and I appreciate that. He surely was disappointed. He dropped Ken and me off at my house and then went to see Al Knoch to try to render him some help. So ended a turbulent and exhausting trip to Texas.

Further Meetings With Brother Lee

After Brother Lee returned from the training in Irving, he called me on the phone and said that he would like to meet with Ken Unger and me on Thursday night, January 7th, 1988, and with Al Knoch, Godfred Otuteye, Ken Unger, and me on Friday night, January 8th.

On Thursday evening Ken and I sat before Brother Lee in his home. He told us at the outset that he knew about our talk with Benson and Ray and what we said to them (we were already aware of that). He also told us that he knew about our meeting with Lin Rong, the Taipei elder. Lin Rong had gone to Brother Lee, and, we believe, to others following our time with him and informed them of everything we said. This is the one who had come to us apparently so solicitous and with all confidentiality. It is not that we were ashamed of what we said, but his motive in seeking our fellowship was highly suspect and his conduct unethical and reprehensible. I was disgusted.

Brother Lee was very disturbed by some of the things we said to these brothers. He heard that in speaking to Lin Rong we made reference to “central control” among the churches, and this was a very great offense to him. I told Brother Lee that what we actually said was that there was a tendency toward centralization. Central control and centralization, of course, indicate approximately the same thing, though the term centralization puts the practice in a little better light, reducing somewhat the idea of control. In retrospect, we had much more than a tendency toward centralization. This word went to the heart of the problem. We always had said that our headquarters was not in Anaheim or in Taipei or in any place on this earth, but in the heavens. Could we honestly say that now? Taipei was called the center of the universe by some in the full-time training in Taiwan.

Brother Lee mentioned then that Bill Mallon, John So, and myself all used the same term – central control. He deduced that we must have consulted or “conspired” together. The fact was that we all had the same realization because of separate similar experiences without any consultation and certainly without any “conspiring” with each other. John So began to be concerned in 1986, Bill Mallon in the spring of 1987, and myself in the fall of 1987. Eventually, as we had done for years, we had telephone contact with each other, and our heart’s burden came out.

The next evening, Friday, January 8th, the four of us met again with Brother Lee at his request. – Al, Godfred, Ken, and I. He condemned us strongly for the way we had handled things and said that we no longer qualified to help him deal with the misconduct in the LSM office or to deal with it as the church. He was especially perturbed that we had brought up this matter with Benson and Ray and also with Lin Rong. Thus he said we had disqualified ourselves. Brother Lee’s attitude and demeanor were very disturbing to us. Outside his home, after we left, we conversed for a few minutes, all of us somewhat in a daze, deeply disappointed and troubled. There was a hardness in our brother that made us feel it was hopeless to engage in any further fellowship.

Brother Lee Meets With Full-timers and Elders -- January 30, 1988

On Saturday morning, January 30th, Brother Lee met with all the full-timers in Orange County, along with a number of the elders. He gave them a message and

then took them all out from under the hand of the LSM office and turned them over to the churches, charging them to submit to the elders in the localities in Orange County...

In Anaheim there were about twelve full-timers or part-timers for whom we were responsible. They were indeed precious and prospective young people. I always considered them such and never said anything to the contrary, as I am being charged. We loved them and cared for them. (I am still in contact and good fellowship with a number of them.) We were burdened to help them get into the Word regularly and diligently; hence for four mornings every week beginning in February 1988 Al Knoch and I labored with them in the Word, beginning in Philippians, then Galatians, and then Colossians. This brought us into the month of June, when we stopped in time for the summer training. The word was very rich to us and full of light...

A Very Threatening Incident -- December 1987 - March 1988

In late December a brother in the church in Anaheim who had been severely damaged through the misconduct in LSM office was so traumatized psychologically that he sought revenge and took definite steps to execute a very grave act. (Thank God it never happened.) This came too the ears of one of the elders in Anaheim, who without any delay met with him to calm and divert him. Some time later two of us met with him. The dear brother was greatly disturbed emotionally, with good cause humanly speaking. But, he was very open to us, and the Lord was merciful to him. Actually, he had already halted in his course – the Lord would not let him proceed – but his feelings were still very raw, and he desperately needed help. We loved him and did our best to comfort him. This incident illustrates the gravity of the situation.

In March 1988 this affair also came to the ears of Dan Towle, who was an elder in Fullerton, and who with great alarm took upon himself to call Brother Lee and divulge all the details to him. He did not know that the brothers in Anaheim were already caring for the brother, since he did not take pains to call them. Brother Lee told him to contact us. So he called, telling us what he had done and asking for fellowship. We got together – Dan, Godfred, and I. We were very annoyed with Dan for taking matters into his own hands and calling brother Lee without contacting the brothers in Anaheim and we told him so. The course he had taken totally neglected the proper fellowship among the churches we should have. Of course, he was relieved to hear that the problem was resolved.

Special Fellowship With Brother Lee - March 24, 26, 1988

There was a couple in Anaheim who were seriously injured by the misconduct related to the LSM office, and they were deeply offended with Brother Lee for tolerating such a situation to exist and also for not giving them an ear to relate the problems they had experienced when they went to him earlier in the year. We felt that Brother Lee should be made aware of the great offense on his part suffered by this couple, therefore we requested a time to speak with him. It was granted and on March 24, Godfred, Al, and I met with Brother Lee in his home. We explained the

feeling of the couple toward him and appealed to him to give them a hearing. He agreed to do this, and a date was set for the following Saturday.

While we were with Brother Lee he remarked that it had been one hundred days since we had come to him on December 12th 1987, and opened our hearts regarding our concerns. He said that not one day had passed that he did not consider what to do. Moreover, he added that he felt that he should not do anything and not succumb to any pressure exercised upon him.

On Saturday evening, March 26th, Godfred, myself, and the husband of this couple met with Brother Lee. (Brother Lee felt it would be too awkward for the wife to be there as well.) The husband opened up with a very good attitude and related in some detail the mistreatment his wife had experienced in serving with the LSM office in the full-time training in Taipei. Brother Lee listened attentively with a most serious demeanor, and then expressed his feeling of sorrow for the whole affair, saying, "My heart is broken!" He explained why he did not feel free to listen to them previously, and then spoke of his appreciation for the faithful service of the wife over many years. At the end of the time Brother Lee pronounced the Lord's blessing on this brother and his wife. We prayed and then departed, the brother feeling somewhat relieved that he was able to discharge his grief and burden to Brother Lee, but still not at all happy about the whole affair. This was the settlement rendered on one side to deal with a very serious offense stemming from the service in the LSM office.

Conferences In Charlotte and Miami – April 1988

On Easter weekend, April 1-3, 1988, the church in Charlotte, N. C. invited me to come and share the word of the Lord. I did so. Many saints representing the churches in North and South Carolina plus some from Virginia a

Factors of Problem and Concern

Meanwhile we needed to consider many things, analyzing our history to discover the factors which caused our poor condition. In so doing we arrived at numerous other conclusions that concerned us greatly.

1. An excessive emphasis on numbers

We have already referred to the matter of the work and the ministry being promoted and given a place of undue preeminence and centrality. The "burden of the ministry" was that over the years the rate of increase had been decreasing, and a way must be found to preach the gospel and increase the numbers dramatically. This led to an inordinate emphasis on numbers and increase, with a great stress on budgets, goals plans, methods, and ways, coupled with predictions of millions being baptized over a period of several years and guarantees that if we would follow the prescribed way the numbers in the churches would be multiplied many fold. We listened to many messages and viewed many video tapes from Taiwan to this effect. Most of the churches, including Anaheim, dived into the burden with a very good heart to follow and obey, but the fervor was beginning to diminish and many saints were left languishing.

We fully agreed that the gospel should be preached and that we were short of normal healthy increase and the proper gospel preaching, but what could bring this to pass? What was the remedy? We were not so clear. But we began to be very clear that the diagnosis of our real need and the way that was being prescribed were seriously flawed. This was abundantly confirmed not only by the word of God but by Brother Lee's own ministry on many previous occasions. We have seen through his help a vision of God's economy and recovery, and such an emphasis on numbers, increase, budgets, methods, etc., was at great variance with what we had seen. This was not what we had heard from the beginning. This was not what attracted us to the Lord's recovery and brought us into the church life. Some had come out of Christian groups with this very emphasis, still unsatisfied, hungry, seeking rest and nourishment, oneness and true fellowship.

We analyzed our history in this country and saw that every time numbers and increase were stressed serious problems arose, and eventually there was a loss, not a gain. On January 17, 1983, Brother Lee said in a message to the elders which was later printed (entitled Practical Talks to the Elders), "Let us trace a little of our history. The recovery in the United States began in Los Angeles in 1962. For ten years, from 1962 to 1972, I had very little concern. My only burden was to keep pressing on....Then we became careless, or more accurately, distracted. *We were distracted from what the Lord had shown us, and turned our attention to the increase. From 1972 there was a tendency to promote numbers, to be occupied with getting the proper place and the proper people. That opened the door for some things to creep in to damage the Lord's recovery....Then I began to say that we must turn our attention away from the increase and come back to the central lane, the lane of life, the lane of God's focus (emphasis ours)*".

It was evident that we were embarked upon the same damaging cycle again. We were deviating from God's focus and God's economy. This was undoubtedly the work of the subtle one. We surely needed to return to the lane of life as Brother Lee had stated. We felt that as those who had served with Brother Lee for many years we should speak honestly and faithfully to him concerning this.

3. The Influence and Control of the LSM Office

Another matter that concerned us greatly was the growing influence and control of the LSM office, i. e. Philip Lee) over churches, elders, co-workers, and the full-time training in Taiwan. We had numerous examples of such an intolerable and unscriptural situation. With my own eyes I saw some leading ones reporting to Philip Lee what they were intending to share with a gathering of Orange County young people and ask if he thought that would be all right. I could hardly believe it. Was this the function of a business manager? When I reported this observation to some brothers who had coordinated with Philip Lee and associated with him, they laughed at me and said that that was very common. They were amused by my being startled by this discovery. Godfred even admitted later that he had done the same thing himself: he had suggested that before someone was chosen to lead a young people's conference it should be checked out with Philip. Godfred fully repented of that. Dan Towle remarked that this was our "life-style". How far off we were!

Moreover, elders were encouraged to call Philip Lee regarding conferences and many affairs concerning the work and the churches in their areas, asking his advice and who should come to help them. A few places actually practiced this. There are a number of instances of churches and whole areas being cut off by the management of the LSM office from the supply of literature and tapes due to some alleged offense of the elders, regardless of the suffering imposed upon the saints in those churches. When the elders repented in a manner satisfactory to the office, the ban was lifted. Some adjustments, we understand have been made in the administration of the LSM office, but at that time the situation was bad and worsening. The portent for the future was threatening. This was a genuine concern.

4. Aberrational Speaking and Activity in the FTTT

In addition we began to hear reports, see video tapes, and read printed messages published by the Full-time Training in Taipei of some of the things that were being said and done. Now this really alarmed us. Foremost among these was the fact that Philip Lee was the administrator of the training, supposedly only on the business side, but actually exercising supervision in much more than business affairs. He was in daily fellowship with twenty-four of the trainers and leading ones who called and reported to him all activities (failure to do so resulted in an offense). The trainees were even told that Philip was administrating the training. His power and position were growing immeasurably.

Statements made by some of the trainers in Taipei amazed us, as I am sure they did many others. Some examples are as follows:

- 1) "There is no need to pray about what to do; just follow the ministry."
- 2) "We don't even need to think; we just do what we are told."
- 3) "Follow Witness Lee blindly. Even if he's wrong, he's right."
- 4) "If you leave the training, you'll miss the kingdom."
- 5) "Our burden is to pick up Brother Lee's teaching and way to make us all Witness Lees, like a Witness Lee duplication center."
- 6) "To be one with the ministry is to be one with Brother Lee, the office, and Philip Lee."
- 7) "Since Christianity is in ruins, the Lord raised up the recovery; since the recovery is in ruins, the Lord raised up the FTTT."

An account of Brother Lee's position was given by one of the leading trainers of the FTTT to a group of brothers in Dallas, Texas, in the summer of 1986, in the context of how to be one with the ministry. There are witnesses to confirm it. It goes as follows.

"The Father is number one, the Son is number two, the Spirit is number three, and Witness Lee is number four; and then there are those who are with Witness Lee." A brother asked, "And who is number five"? The trainer replied, "It is not yet quite clear who number five is", but pointing out "You brothers do not have access to brother Lee. I and another trainer do. We can walk into brother Lee's apartment any time and have breakfast with him. The way to know what brother Lee wants us to do is to be in contact with those who have access to him. They

will tell you what he wants you to do.” The hosting brother asked, “Isn’t this a hierarchy?” The trainer replied, “No!” The brother asked, “How then does this differ from what we’ve been condemning?” The trainer answered, “If the elders in a local church would practice in this way to carry out their burden, it would be a hierarchy; but if this is practiced to carry out the ministry’s burden, it is not a hierarchy.”

When Brother Lee heard through us the above speech of his trainer, he took steps to rebuke and correct him. That such nonsense could be spoken by one chosen by Brother Lee to lead his training after all we have passed through and heard from Brother Lee’s ministry is difficult to understand.

Many aspects of the training bothered us considerably. Elders who attended the training in Taipei were instructed explicitly to carry out the same training in their localities. Pressure was exerted upon the churches and elders to follow, implement, and conform to everything that came out in Taiwan. Failure to do so created problems. The effect on so much emphasis on ways, methods, and practices – all externals – resulted in a wilted wilderness condition among many of the saints.

Many faithful older saints were rebuked and given the impression that because of their age they were through. All official assertions to the contrary, the full-timers became a special class of people, and the full-time training was exalted above the churches, which were considered to have grown decrepit and were at best “better than nothing” (Andrew Yu, in *Voice of the Young Heart*). The elders were publicly degraded and blamed for all the ills. And yet the churches with the elders, and especially many of the older saints who were somewhat despised, gave generously and sacrificially to support the training. Their money was gladly accepted. In fact some of the churches were drained financially due to the heavy burden of supporting their full-timers and other projects that were promoted.

Video tapes of the FTTT convention on Nov. 23, 1986, and the FTTT graduation ceremony on June 1, 1987, surprised us with the mixture of worldly ways and gimmicks that were practiced and hitherto strongly condemned among us...

I have no relish in mentioning these things. My object is to record and inform the readers of the matters that burdened and concerned us in the fall of 1987.

5. Misconduct Related to Personnel in the LSM Office

Last, but not least, there was the matter of serious misconduct related to the personnel in the LSM office. Our fear here is that this would eventually reach the ears of the media, and we would have a major public scandal to face. We remembered how in the latter days of the Exclusive Brethren in England there were extremely serious consequences due to various abuses which the saints could not cope with. This threatened us. Worst of all, the Lord’s testimony would be smeared terribly and Brother Lee’s ministry would suffer great damage. These are the concerns that we wanted to share with Brother Lee.

Meeting With Brother Lee

December 12-16, 1987

On December 5th, 1987, Saturday, Brother Lee returned to Anaheim from Taiwan. Godfred Otuteye, Al Knoch and I plus a number of other brothers went to meet him at the Los Angeles Airport. As soon as time permitted we called him at home and made an appointment to see him the following Saturday morning, Dec 12.

As the time drew near we received a call from Ken Unger asking if he could accompany us on Saturday morning to see Brother Lee. He himself was intending to visit Brother Lee privately to express his concerns, but another brother in Orange County had counseled him not to go alone but to go with others. We agreed for Ken to come and we called Brother Lee. He also agreed.

Thus on December 12, the four of us – Godfred, Al, Ken, and I – went to Brother Lee's home. We were thankful that we were finally having the opportunity to open our hearts to him. I began to speak with a few introductory remarks as follows: "Brother Lee, we have some deep concerns which we want to fellowship with you, concerns which in some ways make it difficult to know how to go on, as we will indicate. But as brothers and co-workers who have been very close to you for many years, we feel we owe it to you to speak our concerns in an honest and full way. We ask that you would please listen to us until the end and hold any remarks you may have until then. You may wonder why we are concerned about some points, but subsequent fellowship, we believe, will clear that up." We said this because we were afraid we would get hung up on some point and would not be able to present a full view of our concerns in the time we had. We, of course, would have been very happy to fellowship further concerning any matter if Brother Lee desired it, and we did indeed do that.

I continued then to share with him concerning the low state and morale of the churches, as we have mentioned before. I myself was aware of the condition of the churches in most area of the country. Concerning life, the level was very low; concerning truth, in some important aspects it was lacking and little apprehended; concerning service, there was very little heart to serve. Concerning the gospel, referring especially to Anaheim, though there were a few faithful ones caring for the new believers, the number had diminished considerably; moreover, the saints were polarized between those who go out and those who do not. I explained to him that it was not due to a lack of getting into the new move, since most elders and churches had done their utmost to carry out whatever his burden was.

Concerning Brother Lee's ministry, we had observed, appreciation for it had decreased, and to some extent the credibility of his ministry had been lowered. This was largely due to the fact that so many changes had been introduced and then retracted, and new change made, that many saints were pushed beyond their limit and could not tolerate anymore. We told Brother Lee that many brothers were concerned not only for the Lord's recovery, but for him and his ministry, which was a surely suffering.

I then spoke about what we felt at that time was one of the major causes of the

deterioration, the excessive emphasis on numbers, methods, ways, and activities, which left many of the saints undernourished and dry. More seriously, I said that we had deviated from the central lane of God's economy according to Brother Lee's own words. I read to him what he had said about being distracted from life to increase in the publication entitled, "Practical Talks to the Elders" (quoted earlier). Then I analyzed briefly our history, pointing out that every time numbers were emphasized, serious problems were brought in and instead of an increase we eventually experienced a decrease. At a later date, when speaking to Brother Lee again about the excessive emphasis on increase, he replied, "Yes, I admit that whenever we touched the matter in the past we had problems, but we still need the increase." In years past we had a marvelous increase without emphasizing it at all.

I mentioned that by taking the way of seeking great numbers we were building the great tree of Matthew 13:31-32. Some of us will never forget Brother Lee's conference in 1963 in Los Angeles exposing the big tree of Matthew 13, referring to the church, which should by the proper growth of a mustard seed be like an herb, but which has grown abnormally great to become a tree, with its nature and function changed. He warned us strongly against this at that time.

I concluded by saying, "the Lord's recovery is in great jeopardy at this time. There is the great peril of emptiness and division, which we are already experiencing. If we did not speak to you, we would not be faithful to you or to the Lord. We need healing, we need relief, we need to be brought back to the enjoyment of Christ. Otherwise, the new way will not be successful and the saints will be incapable of receiving new help. We hope that maybe you, Brother Lee, may be able to help in this way, perhaps in the coming training."

Ken Unger continued and spoke with Brother Lee about the promotion and development of Philip Lee's influence. He mentioned how this promotion had begun in Irving, in 1981, under the leadership of Benson Phillips and Ray Graver. (Ken himself had been strongly influenced by them, and became in orange county one of the strongest proponents of the office and Philip Lee. This gave him an inside view of many things. His wife had faithfully served in the LSM office for years and also had seen and heard much. By this time Ken had deeply regretted his participation in this promotion.)

Ken then spoke of the influence of the LSM office over the churches. He reviewed the matters concerning this that we have outlined previously, and added this important point, that brothers were being frustrated from fellowshiping with Brother Lee directly. Rather they were told to fellowship with Philip Lee. We had passed through the very same kind of activity, only with another brother, in the crisis of 1977-1978.

Then Ken made a number of points of concern regarding the full-time training in Taipei. Some of these have also been outlined previously in this report. He referred to the arrogant attitude and the aberrational remarks of some of the trainers appointed by Brother Lee in Taipei which misrepresented Brother Lee's ministry. Ken himself had been one of the trainers in Taiwan, so he was familiar with many things. He pointed out how the FTTT was being viewed as a big organization having a hierarchy, with Philip Lee and the trainers at the top. One of

the trainers had just recently (in the high school training in Irving, Texas) referred to some things that were being spoken in the “higher echelons of the Lord’s recovery”.

Ken spoke strongly and frankly regarding his concerns for the Taipei training but at no time with Brother Lee did he or anyone else demand that the training be terminated.

Al Knoch then repeated to Brother Lee a number of statements made in the Taipei training and elsewhere that had stirred up our concern...

Finally Godfred spoke frankly and openly to Brother Lee concerning the serious misconduct related to personnel in the LSM office. Brother Lee listened attentively.

I must say at this point that no time did Godfred or anyone else demand that the manager of the LSM office be discharged, as we are being accused of doing.

By this time the morning had ended and we had to draw to a close. But we were most gratified by Brother Lee’s response. He was very humble and receptive, beyond our anticipation, and he thanked us sincerely for our frankness and openness, shaking each one’s hand. He begged us to pray with him and help him to handle the problem of the misconduct in the LSM office, regarding which he was especially concerned. We assured him that we would do what we could. He then urged us to return in the afternoon for further fellowship and prayer. We gladly consented, and left his home encouraged, yet still realizing it would be a difficult road ahead.

We returned to Brother Lee’s home at 4:30 P. M. that afternoon at his request, expecting to have a good season of prayer. We urgently needed to pray. But we were disappointed when Brother Lee began, without prayer, to share with us for some time his burden for further steps in his work and ministry and the churches. Eventually we had some very brief prayer. Brother Lee then said that the hardest case to deal with was the misconduct in the LSM office. He asked us what we thought he should do, and we discussed the situation. Brother Lee remarked that all the things we shared with him in the morning regarding this matter may be true. Regarding the controlling of the churches by the management of the LSM Office, Brother Lee said that he had advised Philip Lee never to give any impression of such a thing. He told us that he had instructed him ten times never to touch the churches, the elders, the co-workers, or the work. That Brother Lee had to tell him ten times indicates that there was indeed a problem. But this matter, he said, would not be hard to deal with.

Brother Lee then requested that we return again in the evening for further fellowship, which we gladly agreed to. At 7:30 P. M. we met again and at the end of our talk, Brother Lee asked us to return again the following Monday morning. To this we also agreed. But when we left we were not so encouraged. Brother Lee, however, was quite concerned about finding a way to resolve the matter of the misconduct, realizing, I believe, that this was a substantial threat to his ministry

Monday morning, December 14th, we came again to Brother Lee's home. After some brief prayer, Brother Lee gave his analysis of our past history, leading with the very low rate of increase in recent years – in the U.S., in Taiwan, and in Germany. It was at this point that he admitted that the emphasis on increase in the past had brought trouble. He felt that we had a good start in the U.S., which reached a high point in 1969-70. Then we lost it. The migrations were the factor. In Los Angeles all the saints were concentrated in one place and under the proper leadership. But when the migrations came, what was gained in Los Angeles was lost. In 1974 he had the burden to put out the life-studies, and for twelve years he focused on that, neglecting the proper care of the churches. This also accounted for the loss and poor condition. The spread has been good, he said, but the increase has been short. No one rose up to care for the churches in Taiwan and the U. S. and he got disappointed. Where were the brothers, he asked, to care for the churches as in Elden Hall, Los Angeles?

He referred to the problem of the full-timers in Orange County. Who should care for them? To whom could he hand them over? The training from Taiwan had spread everywhere, he said. Only one church in the Far East was troubled by the training. The Lord got the victory in Taipei. But in the U.S. there were two groups of saints {those who agreed with him, and those who dissented from him}, which caused a real problem. England did not get much help, he stated, because they became opinionated, and opinions kill things. You must have one driver in the driver's seat. Where is the one accord today? Pooh!

Brother Lee went on. At this juncture, he said, the problem of Philip Lee came in and made the clouds thicker. If the brothers were stronger, Philip Lee could never have come in. Benson Phillips' and Ray Graver's promotion of Philip Lee was wrong. Have I ever made Philip Lee a co-worker? He asked rhetorically? He remonstrated with the leading brothers among the Chinese saints, saying, why did you refer certain things to Philip Lee? Philip Lee is not ambitious, he said, but if you open to him and give him some ground, then he takes it.

Addressing us, Brother Lee asked, Why didn't you brothers with Bill Mallon come to me a long time ago with what was bothering you? (I have already said why we felt we needed to wait till Brother Lee returned from Taiwan in order to face to face.) Brother Lee then outlined his plans for the future. He said he would visit all the places and encourage the saints to enjoy Christ more and more. But by that alone the Lord would not be satisfied; we must go on to 1 Corinthians 14 {concerning the proper meetings}. We still need the old way, he said {perhaps by this he meant one-man ministry}, to bring them back and work on them. He himself must return to Taiwan, for they {the churches in Taiwan} were not yet steadily founded. He also had the burden to visit the churches in the U.S. and clear up many misunderstandings.

I mention this talk of Brother Lee's in some detail to show what his thoughts were at that juncture.

A Surprising Elders' Meeting

On the evening of Monday, December 14, 1987, Brother Lee called a meeting of

the elders of southern California. There was a fair number there representing most of the churches in the area. After prayer, Brother Lee opened the fellowship by giving a long word concerning the new way and its great success in Taiwan. Then he asked for fellowship from the brothers, desiring especially to know how successful the new way had been in their locality.

Dick Taylor, an elder in Long Beach, started with a lively, full-of enjoyment kind of testimony, such as Dick is well-known for, thanking the Lord for the door-knocking and the Gospel preaching in Long Beach, but ending with an honest word about the depression and the discouragement among some of the saints. This was unusual for Dick but he was telling it like it was. Other brothers followed who also spoke very honestly about dissensions concerning the new way and discouragement among the saints in their localities, for which they were very concerned. In some places divisions had arisen over the new way. John Smith, an elder in San Diego, ended the time of sharing with an honest account of his concerns for the saints in his church, mentioning how he feared that with the overemphasis on methods, numbers, and increase the saints would become activity-centered instead of Christ-centered.

What was extraordinary was the elders speaking up in such an honest and forthright way, knowing that such reports were not what Brother liked or wanted to hear. We were not accustomed to doing this due partly to a sense of intimidation. To my knowledge this was the first time that had been done. This was encouraging. But Brother Lee was visibly bothered, and later reacted strongly to the brothers' speaking, saying of one brother's sharing (John Smith's) that it was like pouring iced water on him.

We were not the only ones who went to brother Lee with our concerns during these days. We heard that Dan Towle, individually, and Frank Scavo together with Dick Taylor also went to see Brother Lee to express to him their concerns about the present situation.

Brother Lee called the four of us who had met with him for another time of fellowship on Wednesday, December 16th, the day before he left for the winter training in Irving. The fellowship did not issue in any conclusions. He said then that he wanted to continue to meet with us after he returned from the training to resolve the problem related to the LSM office. We agreed.

Ken Unger and I were burdened to attend the coming elders' meetings to take place prior to the winter training in Irving, Texas, December 22 and 23, 1987. We prepared to leave on December 19th, a few days early, as we desired to have an opportunity to speak with Benson Phillips and Ray Graver before the elders' meetings commenced.

Another Shocking Development December 19, 1987

In the morning of December 19, just before Ken and I were to leave for Texas that afternoon, the sister from the LSM office who had spoken to me on September 30th

called and asked to speak to Godfred and me. We met with her and were utterly amazed at what we heard. He began to relate to us in detail some of the things she suffered while in the service of the LSM office. She wanted us to realize how grave the problem was. We were revulsed to the depths of our being, and when the conversation ended and we parted, we so full of abhorrent feelings that we were literally in a daze.

Godfred drove me to the airport to meet Ken. We were in a state of shock and utter disgust. All this had taken place in what we called the Lord's recovery! We felt that Benson Phillips and Ray Graver, who were deeply involved in the LSM operation, must surely know something of these matters. Therefore, we resolved to confer with them about this when we got to Irving.

Elders' Meetings and Fellowship With Brothers in Irving Texas

On Saturday afternoon, December 19th Ken Unger and I flew to Irving. I did not relate to him what the sister from the LSM office had just told us. On Monday, December 21st, we made an appointment to see Benson Phillips and Ray Graver in the morning. Having been intimate co-workers with them for many years, and knowing that they were aware of many things, we mentioned the concerns that we had presented to Brother Lee.

On December 12th, excluding the matter of the misconduct in the LSM office. We wanted especially to let them know how strongly we felt regarding the colossal mistake they had made in promoting and exalting the office and Philip Lee, starting in 1981. They said that they did not feel they had erred much. This really surprised and disappointed us. We tried to impress them how serious this matter was. They invited us out for dinner, and we decided to meet again in the afternoon to continue our fellowship.

Upon coming together we attempted amid protests to mention the matter of the misconduct in the LSM office. They steadfastly refused to hear about it, but we proceeded to speak. Ray Graver then quickly rose and exited the room. Benson (in whose home we were meeting) also rose to register his displeasure. We felt that they had knowledge relevant to the matter and wanted to confer with them about it. Benson admitted that the same sister from the LSM office (mentioned previously) had come to him in Taipei to disclose a related event, but he strongly protested our bringing this matter before them. They argued that this affair was exclusively under the jurisdiction of the church in Anaheim, and they had no business being involved. We felt, as we mentioned earlier, that it was more than local, and that since that they were leaders in the LSM operation, they could be consulted. Some time later, however, I apologized to Benson and Ray for this, feeling that if they chose not to hear, we should not have forced the issue.

That night we met with some of the elders who had arrived for the elders' meetings and had some fellowship and prayer. At the same time Bill Mallon was meeting with Brother Lee to open his heart to him.

The next morning, December 22nd, the elders' meetings began with Brother Lee

giving a word that was well accepted. While speaking, he referred to Bill Mallon with very commendatory words, saying that he wanted all the brothers to know that he stood with Bill, and he was not happy that other brothers had criticized Bill. Titus Chu, seeking to encourage Bill, said that Brother Lee had never done that for any brother. I personally had never heard Brother Lee support a brother so strongly.

In the elders' meeting that night the atmosphere entirely changed. Brother Lee was fighting mad. It seemed clear to us that Benson Phillips and Ray Graver had gone to Brother Lee that afternoon and told him all that we had told them. He was on fire. His whole message was a vindication of himself regarding some of the concerns we had shared with him.

It was obvious that he was rebuking and dealing with us publicly, though not mentioning our names. We had seen him do this kind of thing a number of times with other brothers. Perhaps he feels that this is the scriptural way.

The next morning in the last elders' meeting, Brother Lee went at it again, lashing out fiercely concerning a number of things. He was exceedingly hot and strongly vindicated himself while rebuking his supposed opposers, especially us. I felt he was not fair, not speaking truly, and not acting appropriately. A number of brothers were grieved and disturbed. After the meeting I went up to him and asked if we could have a little time of fellowship that afternoon. He was quite willing and we set the time at 3:30 P.M.

Following my contact with Brother Lee after the meeting, John Chang, one of the leaders in Orange County among the Chinese saints, approached Ken and me. Ken had talked at length with John the previous evening and discovered that he shared many of the same concerns we did. This brother in the morning meeting had sat next to one of the leading elders from Taipei, Lin Rong, and had mentioned to him that we were very concerned about the present situation. Lin Rong responded that he would like to have some time with Ken and me if we were willing and if it could be arranged. John Chang told us of this, and we consented to meet with him, agreeing to have lunch together. This we did – Lin Rong, John Chang, Ken Unger, and myself. We were really surprised that one of the elders from Taipei would like to speak to us and that he too was concerned, and we wondered what would come out of that.

At the restaurant we began to fellowship. Lin Rong appeared very solicitous of the fellowship and indicated that he also was quite concerned about the situation, although I noted that he never mentioned what his concerns were. He was desirous to know our concerns, so we opened to him and eventually mentioned, with tears, the items we had shared with Brother Lee. He listened attentively. We then left, delivering the brothers to their respective dwellings, and asking Lin Rong to keep what we had shared with him in confidence. He said he would.

That afternoon I went to Brother Lee's apartment according to our appointment. My desire was to assure him that I was not opposing his burden as set forth in the main points of the "new way" (as it was defined in those days). He had indicated that we were indeed opposing. I told him that I was absolutely not against the

preaching of the gospel by door-knocking or by any way; that I was absolutely not against the practice of home meetings; and that I was not against any other matter he emphasized. Rather, I was for these things. Brother Lee received my fellowship and remarked that he had never had any problem with me; he only felt that I should have stayed in Anaheim more and not traveled so much. Our talk ended peacefully, but I was not encouraged. That evening the winter training began, and the next morning Ken and I together with Dick Taylor caught an early flight back to Los Angeles. At the airport to meet us, according to an arrangement made in Irving, was Gene Gruhler. Gene wanted, he said, to have a time of fellowship with me, and the only time available was to talk as we drove back to Anaheim from the airport. The conversation in the car was not pleasant. I rebuked Gene, and he rebuked me. I rebuked him for something he said in the elders' meetings in Irving which I felt misrepresented the feeling of a number of. He rebuked me for sharing my concerns with others, which he felt was forming a party. Actually, I had only spoken to a few brothers at that time, brothers with whom I was closely related in the Lord's work and with whom I had opened my heart for years. And, it was for the purpose of going to see Brother Lee together. I did not consider this forming a party.)

Then Gene said that if we didn't take Brother Lee's leadership, who would be the leader? "You??!! he said, indicating me. But I had no desire to be such a leader; I am not that kind of person. He exhorted me to take Brother Lee's leadership. I told Gene that I would follow Brother Lee's leadership in the sphere of life and truth. Gene interpreted that to mean that I would not follow his leadership in practice, and he remonstrated with me concerning this. In some things that was true. I could not conscientiously follow everything in all good faith as I had done before. Gene's intention, no doubt, was to try to help me, and I appreciate that. He surely was disappointed. He dropped Ken and me off at my house and then went to see Al Knoch to try to render him some help. So ended a turbulent and exhausting trip to Texas.

Further Meetings With Brother Lee

After Brother Lee returned from the training in Irving, he called me on the phone and said that he would like to meet with Ken Unger and me on Thursday night, January 7th, 1988, and with Al Knoch, Godfred Otuteye, Ken Unger, and me on Friday night, January 8th.

On Thursday evening Ken and I sat before Brother Lee in his home. He told us at the outset that he knew about our talk with Benson and Ray and what we said to them (we were already aware of that). He also told us that he knew about our meeting with Lin Rong, the Taipei elder. Lin Rong had gone to Brother Lee, and, we believe, to others following our time with him and informed them of everything we said. This is the one who had come to us apparently so solicitous and with all confidentiality. It is not that we were ashamed of what we said, but his motive in seeking our fellowship was highly suspect and his conduct unethical and reprehensible. I was disgusted.

Brother Lee was very disturbed by some of the things we said to these brothers. He heard that in speaking to Lin Rong we made reference to "central control" among the churches, and this was a very great offense to him. I told Brother Lee

that what we actually said was that there was a tendency toward centralization. Central control and centralization, of course, indicate approximately the same thing, though the term centralization puts the practice in a little better light, reducing somewhat the idea of control. In retrospect, we had much more than a tendency toward centralization. This word went to the heart of the problem. We always had said that our headquarters was not in Anaheim or in Taipei or in any place on this earth, but in the heavens. Could we honestly say that now? Taipei was called the center of the universe by some in the full-time training in Taiwan.

Brother Lee mentioned then that Bill Mallon, John So, and myself all used the same term – central control. He deduced that we must have consulted or “conspired” together. The fact was that we all had the same realization because of separate similar experiences without any consultation and certainly without any “conspiring “ with each other. John So began to be concerned in 1986, Bill Mallon in the spring of 1987, and myself in the fall of 1987. Eventually, as we had done for years, we had telephone contact with each other, and our heart’s burden came out.

The next evening, Friday, January 8th, the four of us met again with Brother Lee at his request. – Al, Godfred, Ken, and I. He condemned us strongly for the way we had handled things and said that we no longer qualified to help him deal with the misconduct in the LSM office or to deal with it as the church. He was especially perturbed that we had brought up this matter with Benson and Ray and also with Lin Rong. Thus he said we had disqualified ourselves. Brother Lee’s attitude and demeanor were very disturbing to us. Outside his home, after we left, we conversed for a few minutes, all of us somewhat in a daze, deeply disappointed and troubled. There was a hardness in our brother that made us feel it was hopeless to engage in any further fellowship.

Brother Lee Meets With Full-timers and Elders -- January 30, 1988

On Saturday morning, January 30th, Brother Lee met with all the full-timers in Orange County, along with a number of the elders. He gave them a message and then took them all out from under the hand of the LSM office and turned them over to the churches, charging them to submit to the elders in the localities in Orange County...

In Anaheim there were about twelve full-timers or part-timers for whom we were responsible. They were indeed precious and prospective young people. I always considered them such and never said anything to the contrary, as I am being charged. We loved them and cared for them. (I am still in contact and good fellowship with a number of them.) We were burdened to help them get into the Word regularly and diligently; hence for four mornings every week beginning in February 1988 Al Knoch and I labored with them in the Word, beginning in Philippians, then Galatians, and then Colossians. This brought us into the month of June, when we stopped in time for the summer training. The word was very rich to us and full of light...

A Very Threatening Incident -- December 1987 - March 1988

In late December a brother in the church in Anaheim who had been severely

damaged through the misconduct in LSM office was so traumatized psychologically that he sought revenge and took definite steps to execute a very grave act. (Thank God it never happened.) This came too the ears of one of the elders in Anaheim, who without any delay met with him to calm and divert him. Some time later two of us met with him. The dear brother was greatly disturbed emotionally, with good cause humanly speaking. But, he was very open to us, and the Lord was merciful to him. Actually, he had already halted in his course – the Lord would not let him proceed – but his feelings were still very raw, and he desperately needed help. We loved him and did our best to comfort him. This incident illustrates the gravity of the situation.

In March 1988 this affair also came to the ears of Dan Towle, who was an elder in Fullerton, and who with great alarm took upon himself to call Brother Lee and divulge all the details to him. He did not know that the brothers in Anaheim were already caring for the brother, since he did not take pains to call them. Brother Lee told him to contact us. So he called, telling us what he had done and asking for fellowship. We got together – Dan, Godfred, and I. We were very annoyed with Dan for taking matters into his own hands and calling brother Lee without contacting the brothers in Anaheim and we told him so. The course he had taken totally neglected the proper fellowship among the churches we should have. Of course, he was relieved to hear that the problem was resolved.

Special Fellowship With Brother Lee - March 24, 26, 1988

There was a couple in Anaheim who were seriously injured by the misconduct related to the LSM office, and they were deeply offended with Brother Lee for tolerating such a situation to exist and also for not giving them an ear to relate the problems they had experienced when they went to him earlier in the year. We felt that Brother Lee should be made aware of the great offense on his part suffered by this couple, therefore we requested a time to speak with him. It was granted and on March 24, Godfred, Al, and I met with Brother Lee in his home. We explained the feeling of the couple toward him and appealed to him to give them a hearing. He agreed to do this, and a date was set for the following Saturday.

While we were with Brother Lee he remarked that it had been one hundred days since we had come to him on December 12th 1987, and opened our hearts regarding our concerns. He said that not one day had passed that he did not consider what to do. Moreover, he added that he felt that he should not do anything and not succumb to any pressure exercised upon him.

On Saturday evening, March 26th, Godfred, myself, and the husband of this couple met with Brother Lee. (Brother Lee felt it would be too awkward for the wife to be there as well.) The husband opened up with a very good attitude and related in some detail the mistreatment his wife had experienced in serving with the LSM office in the full-time training in Taipei. Brother Lee listened attentively with a most serious demeanor, and then expressed his feeling of sorrow for the whole affair, saying, "My heart is broken!" He explained why he did not feel free to listen to them previously, and then spoke of his appreciation for the faithful service of the wife over many years. At the end of the time Brother Lee pronounced the Lord's blessing on this brother and his wife. We prayed and then departed, the

brother feeling somewhat relieved that he was able to discharge his grief and burden to Brother Lee, but still not at all happy about the whole affair. This was the settlement rendered on one side to deal with a very serious offense stemming from the service in the LSM office.

Conferences In Charlotte and Miami – April 1988

On Easter weekend, April 1-3, 1988, the church in Charlotte, N. C. invited me to come and share the word of the Lord. I did so. Many saints representing the churches in North and South Carolina plus some from Virginia and Georgia gathered for the conference. I ministered to them concerning the Lord's word to the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3, mentioning nothing whatever of the problems we had encountered. We emphasized the need of coming back to the beginning, as the Apostle John emphasized in his ministry, back to Christ as the tree of life and back to our first love for Him.

A number of brothers in North Carolina – in Charlotte, Greensboro, Chapel Hill, and Raleigh – already had very much the same concerns as we had, and we fellowshipped with them outside the conference meetings regarding our situation in the work, the ministry office, and the churches. We also talked with Brother John Little, who came there from Nashville, about some of the present problems, and he was very open to us, agreeing at that time with all our concerns regarding the present situation in the work, the ministry office, and the churches. We were burdened to open to him since we had known him well for many years and wanted him to know how we felt. At the end of April 1988 I was invited to come to Miami, Florida, for a conference with the churches in Southern Florida. It was held April 29th through May 1st. I spoke there again on the Lord's word to the seven churches, but in a different way, this time emphasizing the practicality and spirituality of the local churches: the practicality being embodied in the local nature of the church, and the spirituality in the three matters of love, life, and light, so stressed in John's ministry. Concerning the practicality, I emphasized the need for local administration in every church balanced with mutual fellowship together among all the churches.

I had been helped much through a re-reading of Brother Watchman Nee's *The Normal Christian Church Life* to see the "intensely local" nature of the church and as a result felt that we were seriously straying from this important aspect. I stressed in the conference the need for the elders in each church to go directly to the Lord praying and seeking His leading regarding their particular church, just as the parents of a family take special care for the needs of their own family, whatever the requirements of other families might be. This preserves the practical, real, and direct headship of Christ over His people. On the other hand, there is the need for much fellowship universally with other churches and all saints to receive their grace, their fellowship, their portion, walking together with them as one body. This preserves the reality and organic unity of the Body of Christ. We need both the local administration and universal mutual fellowship. This was my main burden.

After the conference I had several times of fellowship with a smaller group of brothers with whom I shared some of our concerns regarding the present situation in the churches. I sincerely regretted after these times of smaller group fellowship

that we dwelt too much on the problems and not adequately on the positive side of our going on. The content of our fellowship, however, did express my honest observations and concerns.

Brother Lee informed me at a later date that a full report of what I had spoken both publicly in the large meetings and privately in the smaller groups was passed on to him. Some of the things I was reported to have said troubled him and offended him greatly, and he has repeated them many times. Perhaps I should address and give a true account of some of the matters at this juncture.

In the last meeting of the conference I made reference to Abraham's marriage to Hagar and its fruit, Ishmael. However, I made no application to our present situation, as the tape recordings of that meeting will bear out. We had been studying Galatians with the full-timers in Anaheim, and the passage concerning Abraham and Hagar in chapter four had been freshly and deeply impressed upon me. In the small group meetings I made some remarks that I felt we were indeed in danger in the present move of participating in the works of the flesh as Abraham did with Hagar with the result of bringing forth Ishmael. We also noted that because of this act God did not appear to Abraham for thirteen years. It has been reported that I said these thirteen years, in our present experience, started from 1974 (when Brother Lee began the Life Studies of the Bible) and continued to 1987. This surprised me. I do not remember ever having this thought, to say nothing about speaking it. Moreover, I do not believe that the Lord did not speak to us during that period. Much was being said in Taipei about their being thirteen years until the Lord comes back, from 1987 till 2000. Now that particular thirteen years did occur to me as having a possibility of similarity, and I feared that what happened to Abraham might be our plight in the coming years. I believe I mentioned this to the brothers at that time. Perhaps this is what the reporter was referring to.

The conference in Miami caused a great stir, particularly regarding our comments on the local administration of the churches. This was the first time I had ever spoken this, and it came out of a fresh realization and burden, though it was a truth I always believed to be scriptural. I will refer to this matter later in the narrative.

An Unprecedented Meeting in Anaheim – May 15, 1988

It had been our habit in the church life for the elders to make all the decisions concerning meetings, service, etc., and simply announce them to the saints, expecting everyone to comply and follow, which most did. What we greatly lacked was adequate fellowship with the saints to learn their feeling regarding various aspects of the church life. We were impressed that we should proceed no longer with this glaring deficiency of communication, nor should we make all the decisions by ourselves and hand them down as a kind of ruling oligarchy.

In the church in Anaheim during the Spring of 1988 it was necessary to come to some conclusions regarding the schedule of our meetings and the place of the Lord's Table meeting, whether in the homes or in the hall. We believed that it was fitting to call a special meeting of all the saints to seek the best way together. This we did on the Lord's Day evening, May 15th. The atmosphere was excellent, and

everyone was very happy and participated well. Many shared their impression concerning the issues, and the decisions were made in a very good flow with the whole body concurring. The saints felt honored and appreciative that they were all included and could participate as proper members of the Body. After the meeting we had a love feast, and one brother said to me exultingly, "Hallelujah, I'm actually a member of the Body!"

For this organic function of the Body to succeed, it is imperative, of course, to be in the Spirit, denying themselves, and open to the Lord and to one another. The saints should be encouraged to do this. Although there may be difficulties, with patience and faith and the flesh being brought into subjection, I believe we will have a further experience of the fellowship of the Body. We do not mean by this to practice a democracy. We are not for that. Neither are we for a theocracy or an oligarchy. We desire a true theocracy, the kingdom of God, where the Head makes His mind known through the members of His Body.

Further Conferences - May – June 1988

During the months of May and June 1988 I was asked to minister in a number of places, in almost all of which I was burdened to share from the Lord's word to the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3. We emphasized the need to come back to the beginning, saying that the way for us to go on is to come back – back to the living person of Christ as the tree of life. We also spoke in some places concerning the need for local administration in the churches to preserve the Lord's headship as we did in Miami. Some saints who were in these conferences were disturbed because we were not speaking exactly the same things as Brother Lee concerning the "new way", although we certainly were not teaching anything different from God's economy, Christ and the church.

The brothers in Orange County, California, were desirous of having a conference and arranged for one meeting to be held in Long Beach (Friday night), another in Huntington Beach (Saturday night), and the last in Irvine (Lord's Day evening). This transpired over the weekend of June 3-5, 1988. The Lord's blessing was on these meetings as we spoke here locally the same as we had spoke in other churches elsewhere: coming back to the beginning, Christ as our unique Head and center, and local administration and universal mutual fellowship. In Irvine we also stressed the need of all the saints to feed richly on the Word of God for the building up of the church.

Attending the conference meeting in Irvine were Joseph Fung of Hong Kong and Paul Ma of Santa Cruz, California. It was the first time I had seen these brothers in years and I did not know just where they stood in regard to the concerns we had. They, on the other hand, did not know where I stood. They asked to have a time of fellowship with me the next day, Monday, June 6th, at which time I testified to them what we realized and passed through in recent months. They fully echoed our concerns. I was impressed to learn that Joseph Fung, as well as many others in the Far East had the same burden and realization as we had. This was an encouragement and strengthening.

The brothers in Anaheim wanted me to share the Word in a little conference there. This I did in two meetings, Saturday evening and the Lord's Day morning, June 18th and 19th. On Saturday evening we ministered from Ezra on leaving Babylon (which had been

manifested in the confusion, division, and depression among us in Anaheim) and returning to Jerusalem to build the house of the Lord. There was a strong sense of the Lord's speaking and presence, and the sharings of the saints were excellent and very inspiring.

Additional Fellowship With Brother Lee – June 20, 22, 1988

On Monday morning June 20th, Brother Lee called us – Godfred, Al, and me – to come to his home for further fellowship that night. Due to the restrictions of my health I told Brother Lee that I would have to leave by 10:00 P.M., knowing how easy it is for such meetings to be prolonged late into the night. He replied that there would be no problem, that the meeting would probably be concluded by 8:30 P.M. During this time he especially mentioned he had recently received complaining about my speaking in various conferences. He rose out of his seat and went into his office, bringing back with him a file folder which he reported was full of letters concerning my speaking. We could only see it across the room at a distance, and it appeared to contain a large amount of 8 ½ x 11 paper, which I assumed to be transcripts of some of my messages sent to him by saints desiring to express their loyalty and faithfulness to his ministry. I was not surprised. Such a reaction was inevitable considering the concept governing the saints. We went on to discuss the current problems.

The hours passed as I was certain they would, and it was soon 10:00 P.M. I was already worn out, so I asked the brothers if they would please excuse me according to my word. As I rose to leave, Brother Lee turned to me and asked me to forgive him for anything he had done over the years that may have offended me, thinking that my speaking in the conferences was occasioned by some offense I suffered from him. His voice broke as he spoke. I assured him that what I said was due to nothing whatever of that nature, and that I had no personal problem with him at all, but rather that I spoke out of genuine concern for the truth. He abruptly dropped the matter, and turning to the other brothers he changed the subject. I then departed, leaving Brother Lee, Godfred, and Al engaged in further discussion.

Godfred and Al continued their fellowship with Brother Lee until 11:00 P.M., the content of which was reported to me the next morning by Godfred. I was told that at one point in answer to Brother Lee's inquiry, asking what we should do to deal with the issues, Godfred proposed that a number of brothers come together with Brother Lee for several days to confront the issues in fellowship and arrive at a satisfactory resolution. At first Brother Lee was not receptive, feeling that because of what had transpired he would not have the ground with certain brothers to invite them to come. Then he suggested that both he and ourselves could sign a letter of invitation to make it more acceptable to come. This satisfied him, and he became very favorable to the proposition. But no definite decision was made that night, as Godfred and Al said that they would have to speak with me about the matter.

Upon hearing Godfred's proposal the next morning I had a deep sense of apprehension and was reluctant to agree. Yet since the brothers felt to proceed in this direction I forced myself to go along. Brother Lee called Godfred that morning to learn what decision was made, and Godfred told him he would have to call me, which he did. We talked about the matter and came up with names of about fifteen elders and leading co-workers throughout the United States and Europe who would be invited. Brother Lee then suggested that some time after the summer training would be suitable to him and that we should decide what days would suit us and let him know. He would then try to arrange his schedule accordingly. I agreed very reluctantly, that we would do this.

During the following days I considered the whole matter at length and after much thought felt deeply that it would not be profitable for the truth's sake, and that however misunderstood we may be we should not proceed. We had already met with Brother Lee a

good number of times, opening to him and expressing our concerns to him, and made very little progress. Moreover, we feared, from past experience, that if we had such a meeting Brother Lee would dominate it, overwhelm us, and eventually whitewash the issues. Frankly speaking, my trust in Brother Lee, which had once been so high was greatly reduced; he had lost much of his credibility with me. I shared my conclusion with Godfred and Al, and they agreed not to go ahead with it. We did not, however, communicate with Brother Lee immediately. Later, when he inquired concerning the matter I told him that we felt not to proceed.

A little while afterwards, when speaking on the phone with one of the elders in Long Beach, I told him of the proposal and our decision. He agreed with me that it would not be profitable. But his concurrence did not influence me; I was already convinced.

Since Brother Lee had expressed the thought that some sort of personal offense had given rise to my speaking, I felt it would be profitable to have an additional time to open again to him my burden and concern, indicating that I was only concerned with the truth and its practice and that there was no personal problem involved. I called him the day following our last visit and proposed another meeting together, this time with just the two of us. He welcomed my proposal, expressing his desire that we should meet. The next morning, Wednesday, June 22nd, we sat down together in his home. Again I covered with Brother Lee in a rather full and complete way all my anxieties concerning the churches and the work, speaking frankly and trying to make my feelings clear. Brother Lee heard me out, but it seemed that he was merely tolerating me and what I had to say. He had little to say in response. It was not encouraging. At the end of the time I remarked that unless he would have some change it would be difficult for the churches to go on. This was now the twelfth session that I had with Brother Lee since December 12th, 1987, either individually or with others.

It was about this time that Brother Lee notified us that he had discharged Philip Lee from the management of the Living Stream Office, stating that it was a very hard step for him to take.

Summer Training and Elders' Meetings in Anaheim

July 1988

The summer training began in Anaheim on June 29th and covered the first part of Leviticus. Godfred had no heart to attend the training, I attended part time mornings, and Al Knoch attended full time. We were troubled by the way Brother Lee used some of the messages to deal with the present situation. He was obviously preoccupied by it. This was the last training of Brother Lee's that I ever was to attend. Following the training Brother Lee called for two elders' meetings to be held on Saturday morning, July 9th. There were approximately four hundred elders and learning elders present. Brother Lee gave two messages: in the first he spoke on God's administration and addressed the matters of "autonomy" and "federation". This was a very clear reference to the things I had spoken regarding the local administration of the churches, warning against the dangers of church affiliation or federation, which lead to central control and denominationalism. Brother Lee believed strongly that my stress on local administration would lead to the independence of all the local churches. As a matter of fact, I never once in all my speaking used the word "autonomy." But in Brother Lee's own publication, *The Beliefs and Practices of the Local Churches*, the word "autonomy" is used positively two times. I believe Brother Lee felt that, by my speaking, his concept of all the local churches moving and acting as one body under his leadership was threatened. Therefore, he fought against the imagined devil, autonomy, in every conference of his for months to come, referring to it as a wind of teaching brought in by the sleight of men to fabricate a system of error. The word "federation," which I did indeed use, offended him greatly. He believed I was classifying all the local churches under his leadership as a federation, whereas he insisted they were the "organic Body of Christ." He began to use the word "organic" frequently. I wish the churches were so organic. We were witnessing so much that was absolutely inorganic

among the churches, things that were rather organizational and exhibiting signs of a hierarchy, for example in the FTTT. Therefore, I warned the saints against a kind of federation. Actually, I used the word "affiliation" much more, which is a milder form of federation, but nonetheless fraught with perils. The local churches had surely become an affiliation.

We had seen that in church history, whenever the Lord had raised up groups of His people for His testimony, they had persistently degraded into denominations; and the first two signs of this degradation were unfailingly: 1) the affiliating of the groups under a central leadership; 2) the establishing of a central training center, where their full-time workers could be educated and equipped to serve in their sphere of fellowship. When these two steps had eventualized, they were well on their way to becoming just another denomination, however advanced in the knowledge of truth they were. It was more than obvious that we in the local churches had taken those identical steps and were going down the same road. Should we remain silent?

In his second message of the elders' meetings, Brother Lee spoke concerning our going on. After all our sessions and hours of fellowship with Brother Lee, we had hoped that he would take steps to clear up a number of things publicly. This was surely an excellent opportunity, a perfect forum, and an appropriate time. He did give a few principles for our going on which would be helpful if practiced. He did say, "It is altogether wise and profitable that we do not expect all the churches to be the same," and, "Do not talk about who is for this or who is for that... We should not label ourselves or label others." We were thankful to hear these comments and urgings. But we were deeply disappointed that he did not go much further. What he should have cleared up he covered up, e.g., problems regarding the LSM office and the FTTT training in Taipei. We hoped he would have repented for some things that had caused many problems, not just for allowing saints from the U.S. to attend the training in Taiwan. We surely would have respected him had he done this, and the situation could have been altogether different than it turned out.

At the close of Brother Lee's second message, Dick Taylor (of Long Beach) and Frank Scavo (of Irvine) asked questions which Brother Lee attempted to answer. Dick's question was quite appropriate and fit our situation. It was as follows: "Many times you reach a point in your experience where you have genuine concerns. How can you fellowship about these concerns without being considered as negative and thereby causing another problem? This is a concern to me and this is related to the freedom of seeking the Lord and the truth." In Brother Lee's response he said that if you have a genuine concern for anyone in regard to the Lord's recovery you should go to him alone without talking to anyone else. Any "pre-talk", he said, opens the door for the devil to come in. Now this may be true in many cases, but in our history of contacting Brother Lee over our concerns we felt we could not and should not do that. Since the issues were so momentous we needed fellowship for a clearer understanding and preparation for visiting him. In fact, Brother Lee and brothers around him have also had a lot of consultation among themselves regarding concerns for other brothers before going to them. I know because I myself participated in such discussions.

Brother Lee's attitude while speaking was gentle and persuasive; he was seeking in this way to reconcile all the brothers and to set a course that would calm any fears or anxieties and eliminate any problems. Many were very happy with his fellowship; I was not at all happy or at peace.

During these elders' meetings I sat next to an elder who had spoken with me a few times previously and was very sympathetic with our concerns, having much the same concerns himself. We agreed to meet together for some fellowship that evening over dinner. This we did, and as we ate we conversed about Brother Lee's messages that day and their impact on the situation in general. The brother felt happy and said to me, "John, I think this is the best we can expect from Brother Lee. Be thankful." I tried to be; I tried to take his view. But in the depths of my being there was a nagging disappointment. Nothing had

been dealt with. No wrongs had been righted. The root was not touched. The question loomed before us, What shall we do now? I knew I had to be true to my conscience and the truth I had seen.

Annual Board Meeting of Living Stream Ministry

July 15, 1988

The following week Brother Lee notified me of the annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the Living Stream Ministry. I had been a board member and the secretary of the corporation since its inception in 1968, and I still occupied these positions. The meeting was to take place at his home, Friday morning, July 15th. Present at the meeting were Brother Lee, Sister Lee, Philip Lee, Francis Ball, and myself, the five board members. Brother Lee as the president called the meeting to order and announced that the main purpose of the meeting was to elect officers for the coming year. He then nominated the following persons for election as officers: Witness Lee, president; Francis Ball, secretary; and Benson Phillips, treasurer. Brother Lee wanted to terminate my function and replace me as secretary, and I could understand that. With my present standing I was unsuited for the post, and I myself had been considering what I should do about my involvement with the LSM and when. He asked for a vote by the raising of hands, and we voted unanimously in favor of his nominations. The resolution was then made that the above mentioned brothers fill those positions for the coming year.

The position of secretary of the LSM had been for me a total rubber-stamp function. In fact, all the board members, of whom three were family members, had merely a rubber-stamp function (with the exception of Brother Lee and the possible exception of Philip Lee). In the early years of the corporation in Los Angeles in the late sixties and early seventies, the board members did participate in some amount of fellowship concerning various proposals, but in the years following that there was rarely if ever any discussion concerning any issues to arrive at a decision. I was called upon as a secretary to write the minutes of the meetings and keep the minute book in order, and also to sign important papers as the need arose. It was purely perfunctory. Brother Lee announced his intentions and decisions and we acquiesced and fulfilled the necessary functions to make them legal. Through many years we esteemed him very highly and were content to simply do his bidding, yet knowing that it was not a normal operation. It was his business, and we were helpers.

After the vote I queried whether I should still remain on the board as a board member. Brother Lee answered that if I chose to do that it was all right with him; if I chose not to remain it was also all right. I could do whatever I felt I should do. I said then that for simplicity's sake I had better resign, and I notified him of my intention to do that. He responded that in that case I should write a letter and put it in writing. I said that I would.

After the board meeting was adjourned, Sister Lee and Philip Lee left the room, and Brother Lee continued to talk at length with Francis Ball and myself about the current situation. I just listened, saying very little. He said how much he and Philip Lee and their families had suffered through all the talk about them. He then stated, "Philip, of course, is not perfect; nobody is perfect!" It shocked me that he would make such an inappropriate statement as that after all that had been said and done.

I went home and typed up the minutes of the meeting, my last minutes as secretary of the LSM, and turned it over to Francis Ball, the current secretary, assuring him of my willingness to help in any matter related to his assuming that function should he need it. I also typed a letter of resignation from the Board of Directors of the LSM and delivered it to Brother Lee personally the following Monday morning. As I stood at his door, I told him what it was and he received it with a noticeably pained expression on his face. It was indeed a sad occasion, the end of a certain relationship that had been maintained for many years, and it was felt. And so, for me, ended another era.

Part 3

Some Anaheim Saints Hear of the Serious Problems

Spring, Summer 1988

During the Spring of 1988 some of the Anaheim saints began to hear, not through us but others, the serious improprieties in the LSM office, and they were infuriated. We had endeavored to cover such matters, hoping there could be a satisfactory resolution of the problems without disturbing the saints, but it was of no avail. Others who knew or found out thought that it should be exposed. Word spread fast, and by the summer months the number of saints who were affected swelled considerably. Some had been personally mistreated by the LSM office and were very indignant and bitter. Some who could not cope with the reports that came to them refused to hear anything at all, calling everything a pack of lies. We were very grieved about the whole situation and hardly knew what to do.

On Saturday evening, August 6th, Godfred and I met with thirty-four saints, at their invitation, in a sister's home. Most of them had already withdrawn from the church meetings and were in a state of great disgust and revulsion with the Living Stream Ministry, with Brother Lee, and with the church for any supposed relationship with the LSM and Brother Lee. We listened while they poured out their complaints and vented their abhorrence of what they had seen and heard. Most of them had given a good part of their lives to what they considered to be the Lord's recovery, and they felt deeply cheated and violated.

Word was passed around that the elders were coming to that meeting, and they welcomed the opportunity to confront us and urge us to action. They urgently demanded that we make a public announcement in the church meetings, completely severing and disassociating ourselves from the Living Stream Ministry. We addressed them finally expressing our concern for the situation, yet maintaining that we must have the clear leading and support of the Lord before making any public stand. Most of them could not hide their disappointment with us, and could not understand why we would not speak out immediately to deal with unrighteousness, throwing caution to the wind. We were endeavoring to care for everything and everyone involved in a proper way.

The following Wednesday evening, August 10th, Godfred and I joined by John So (who had recently come to Anaheim with his family), met with these saints, thirty-four in number. They all looked to John So for counsel, and he gave them a very wise word to fit the situation, saying that the elders should move positively to render solid ministry to the church, bringing the saints back to Christ. He urged all in that gathering to come to the church meetings to support the elders. What they had done in Germany to deal with the problem, he said, could not be done in Anaheim, and they should not expect that since here is a divided situation. A number of them were very disappointed with John since he did not advocate a strong course of reaction. One brother there asked John if a real apostle could become a false apostle. John replied that he honestly did not know; he had never thought about it. The next morning John So left to return to Europe. Following these meetings Godfred, Al, and I had serious fellowship regarding how to face the situation. These thirty-four saints represented a significant portion of the church. We knew we had to try to help them as well as all the others. Hence we felt that we needed a meeting to make our standing as the church clear to everyone on both sides, whether for or against a relationship with the LSM, so that all may be helped to see where they should stand and how we should go on. Therefore, a special meeting for the whole church was announced for the Lord's Day evening, August 28th.

Meanwhile Brother Lee was visiting churches in the Northwest, speaking out against "autonomy" and "federation." Saints in the Northwest came together in Seattle over the weekend of August 19-21. We heard that brothers were stirred up to fight against the "winds of teaching" (like autonomy) being brought into the Lord's recovery.

Fellowship With the Elders in Anaheim Chinese-Speaking Meetings

In the Spring of 1988 Minoru Chen had returned from his stay in Taiwan as a trainer in the FTTT to resume his eldership in Anaheim, as appointed by Brother Lee in February 1986. Yet for some months he had hardly any contact with us. On Thursday evening, August 18th, Godfred and I had a long and frank fellowship with him. Godfred spoke at length, presenting his realization of the misconduct in the LSM office. I gave an account of my realization of the whole situation and our present standing. Minoru listened passively to our fellowship. Due to the lateness of the hour he was unable to reply adequately. We had confronted Minoru with reports that he had spoken negatively about us behind our backs to others about grave concerns he had for us, his fellow elders. He admitted that he had done this to the leading brothers in the Chinese-speaking work.

On Friday evening, August 26th Godfred, Al, and I came together with Philip Lin and Minoru Chen, the two elders on the Chinese-speaking side. Altogether we constituted the five elders of the church in Anaheim. We noted that this was the first time ever that all five of us had come together for fellowship. That was remarkable, since we had all been in the position of elders since February 1986, two and one half years prior to that time. We had some very frank fellowship regarding the problem of the Chinese-speaking meetings, which had always been a source of great frustration and troubling to the church since they were started in 1980. It was as if we had two different churches in Anaheim with two different leadings, a situation that we simply tolerated and could do very little about because of the involvement of Brother Lee and the Living Stream Ministry with the Chinese-speaking meetings. The brothers insisted that they considered the Chinese-speaking meetings a part of the church, and they desired henceforth to practice that oneness under one eldership. This began a period in which we sought to maintain more fellowship and coordination as one eldership with these brothers.

Minoru inquired regarding the content of the special meeting set for August 28th, and Godfred gave him a resume of the points we would cover.

More Fellowship With Brother Lee August 25, 26, 1988

On Thursday, August 25th, Brother Lee asked me to come to his home for further fellowship. He said then that he would ask Godfred and Al to come to his home the following day, Friday. It seemed strange to me that he would separate us, asking me to come on one day and them on another. But he said I could come too on Friday if I liked. On Thursday alone with me, Brother Lee asked me what changes I thought he should have. This greatly surprised me. Perhaps he was thinking of my fellowship with him on June 22nd, when I told him that if he did not have some change, it would be difficult for the churches to go on. I said, "Brother Lee, please give me a moment to collect my thoughts." I was concerned what I should say to him. Then I proceeded to mention a few of the concerns previously mentioned. Moreover, I tried to impress him that I never tried to use the term "autonomy" in all of my speaking. Throughout these months I had told him this several times. I stated that I was burdened to speak about local administration together with universal fellowship (as we have in our hymn, #824, authored by Brother Lee and translated from Chinese: *Administration local, each answering to the Lord; Communion universal, upheld in one accord.*) He responded, "that's my teaching." I agreed that it was indeed his teaching. So what was wrong?

The next afternoon, Friday, August 26th, I joined Godfred and Al at Brother Lee's home. Godfred spoke strongly, asking Brother Lee first if he had spoken anything against us recently. He replied that he had not. Then Godfred reasoned with him: How is it that you speak against autonomy, considering that a problem, but you will not deal with the problems that we brought to your attention. Godfred spoke earnestly and impressively. He

said, "the center of the church should be Christ, but He has been replaced by you and your ministry." Brother Lee was touched by what Godfred said, and perhaps considering that what he had just alleged afforded some light for clearing up the problem, he said, "I like to hear that." I recall the scene vividly, and his words still echo in my ears. It seemed that this time Brother Lee appreciated the frank fellowship and was trying to warm up to us. But we could not seem to make any real progress. Brother Lee remarked that everything that had happened in Europe which had caused so great a problem between the churches and the Living Stream Ministry was just a misunderstanding. After the meeting Godfred told us that he wanted to leave the eldership and was fully disgusted with the whole situation.

Sixteen Points *August 28, 1988*

As the day drew near for special fellowship with the church as we had announced, Godfred, Al and I came together for prayer and fellowship regarding the content of the coming gathering. We only knew that we needed to clear up some matters, and set a direction for the church, and we had been praying individually for guidance concerning the specific points that should be covered. I proposed to the brothers that we briefly expound a number of basic matters according to the Word of God that set forth the proper standing of the church, touching especially the aspects both of truth and practice that related to our current situation. The brothers consented. After some consideration we decided that I would cover eight points concerning the truth and Godfred would cover eight points regarding the practice; in conclusion Al would give a testimony of confirmation.

The appointed time arrived for the meeting. (Brother Lee meanwhile was in San Gabriel, meeting with the Chinese-speaking saints.) This time, we felt, was very crucial to our going on. There were over two hundred saints on hand, including some on the Chinese-speaking side who understood English (a good number considering our usual attendance). Brothers Minoru Chen and Philip Lin with the three of us sat together in the front. We launched into our burden and experienced much strengthening, release, and anointing. As contemplated, I covered the points concerning our standing related to the truth. This touched the following points (in a greatly abridged form):

1. Our standing in relation to the Word of God. It is our sole authority, our constitution, and we should check everything by it.
2. Our standing concerning the church. In this age the church is central and supreme; no other corporate body is recognized by the New Testament.
3. Concerning the genuine oneness. It is organic; it can never be organized or forced. Spiritual leaders should not divide us.
4. Concerning other Christians. We should never mock or belittle other Christians with an elitist attitude; rather, we should love, honor, and receive them all.
5. Concerning our vocation. It is to build up the Body of Christ, not any work or ministry.
6. Concerning our purpose or aim. It is to be the Lord's testimony; we are not here for any work.
7. Concerning the ministry. It is the imparting of God into His people to produce the church. It is not the ministry of any one person; we all have a share in it.
8. Concerning the apostles. They are always plural, and there are a number of them on the earth today. We should not exalt any apostle or servant of God beyond what is written.

I spoke honestly and frankly according to the solid principles revealed in the Word, which we had been taught and which we had believed and held for years, applying some of the points to our present situation. I was not aiming at Brother Lee. I was burdened to present

the basic truths concerning our standing and correct some misconceptions held by the saints. The present need demanded that we touch specifically the matters which we addressed. I have heard Brother Lee repeat a number of times what he had been told by a brother. "These sixteen points are sixteen bullets aimed at you {Brother Lee}." That is not true. If anything hit him it is not because we were aiming at him.

Godfred followed and covered eight points regarding our practice:

1. In relation to church administration. It should be local, with no central control. The elders in each place should seek the Lord directly for his timely leading according to the need in their locality.
2. The Living Stream Ministry Office. It is a business office and has no authority over the church. As the church we disassociate ourselves from certain practices and conduct there that we find intolerable.
3. The Life Studies and Christian literature in general. We should never allow spiritual materials to become a crutch or replacement for the reading of the Bible. To insist upon reading only LSM material or to oppose the reading of LSM material is going too far.
4. The church book sales. We will continue this service, but we will no longer advertise or promote any books.
5. The semi-annual trainings. We will no longer interrupt our church life for the trainings. Anyone who wishes to attend the trainings should feel free to do so.
6. The other churches. We should respect and highly esteem all other churches, but we should not compel the church in our locality to practice like other churches.
7. Various practices. In all these matters we must practice generality. Any practice which is not sinful we should not oppose; neither should we impose it.
8. The gospel. There is no particular way to preach the gospel; any proper way is good.

Godfred spoke earnestly and to the point with a good spirit. He apologized to the church on our behalf for coming under the influence of external pressures in past years and not seeking the Lord's leading directly according to the local need. He confessed to the saints on our behalf the promoting of an improper relationship with the LSM office, so that we declared our oneness with that office and thus associated ourselves with its conduct. The blame for that relationship, he said, must be borne by us elders, and not put on the doorstep of the office.

Godfred closed with this statement, which I want to quote in full: "Our reason for having this fellowship is not to vindicate anyone or to condemn anyone, or to do anything for ourselves. We are having this fellowship for the purpose of bringing us all back to the Lord Himself. He is our Head, He is our center; and He should be the entire unique content of the church life! We hope that the things we have briefly mentioned will clear up the past so that we all can go forward together positively as the church in our city." This was a fitting conclusion to the sixteen points.

Al Knoch then followed with an appropriate confirming testimony, saying that we were not there to oppose anything which the Lord had given us through the years. He cited questions being raised by saints in local churches in Europe, where he had recently visited with his family. They were asking, "Are we really the local church with a general standing, open to every Christian in our city? Or are we a sect?" These are legitimate and timely questions. Then he added, "They found out that gradually they were becoming a very special kind of 'church', not a local church...." Al also apologized for his part in all the promotions and for all that he had done and said.

When Al finished I spoke just a few words regarding our going on, how we needed much prayer and the Word. We did not have time to impress these matters upon the saints, so we just made a few announcements, expecting that the meeting would soon be brought to a close.

When I sat down a number of brothers, most of whom were in the home meetings Godfred and I visited a few weeks previously, were very burdened to speak and had come to the meeting well-prepared. They felt that what we had spoken had left the job only half done, and they desired to complete it. Therefore, they stood one by one crying out against various evils and especially remonstrating against sin being tolerated and sinful persons being put into a position of influence. One brother quoted Watchman Nee's word that the judgment of sin is the basis of oneness. (*Love One Another*, pp. 148-149). The pent-up feelings of some of them burst out in strong protest against practices and abuses they could brook no longer. Although we sympathized with a number of their burdens, we felt the spirit of the meeting had changed, and there was considerable stridency and rancor. That left a bad taste. Accusations were made and some personal matters were raised that should have been handled in private, not in that forum. The meeting began to erupt in an exchange of words at the end, and Godfred arose and with God-given wisdom calmed the storm and turned the saints to pray, thus concluding the meeting. We regretted that it should end in such a manner.

Toward the conclusion of the session as we were starting to pray, Minoru arose and made a couple of statements which I want to note for the record. He said that he agreed in principle with all the points that we had made, but he stated that he wanted to reserve himself regarding some matters; and concerning some of the points, particularly those made by Godfred, he stated that he would not say in a definite way that he agreed or disagreed. He also referred to Godfred's apology for participating in certain promotions, which, he said, took place mainly in 1986. (He was alluding to the promotion of the LSM office and Philip Lee.) He said that he wanted to amen what Godfred had shared and declared that there was an excessive amount of this promotion, thereby bringing the saints into confusion and despondency, and the church into suffering. He also wanted to ask the forgiveness of the whole church for his part in this very matter.

Some are saying today that our presentation of the sixteen points concerning our standing opened the door for all the other speaking that began that night and continued for many weeks. This is definitely not true. Those who spoke at the end of the meeting August 28th, together with others who did not speak, were at the bursting point, somewhat similar to the oppressed people of Eastern Europe in recent times. They came prepared to occupy as much time as would be given to them. One of them said that he came with a notebook full of material to present. Hence what we spoke, or whether we spoke at all, made little difference.

The meeting was finally dismissed at a late hour, and I retired to my home and rested that night filled with a profound peace that what we had spoken in the sixteen points was right and was delivered in a proper spirit. I only regretted that the meeting could not have been concluded in a better way, and that the last part diluted the impact of the first.

A few weeks later we discovered that the sixteen points Godfred and I shared together with Al's confirming testimony had been transcribed, edited, and printed, and were being mailed out all over the world – all this without our knowledge. Belatedly I was able to obtain a copy and perused it, finding it, happily, to be an accurate and well-edited rendering of the spoken form. We had no prior thought or intention whatever that the contents of that meeting would be disseminated. We considered the meeting and the points to be totally a local affair. But this distribution was out of our hands, and by that time, had we desired, there was nothing we could do about it. However, I believe it was sovereignly allowed of the Lord.

On September 10th, Benson Phillips, who had been in Anaheim for several days caring for LSM affairs, called me and asked for a time of fellowship. We made an appointment for Monday evening, September 12th. Al Knoch joined us that evening. Benson declared that he wanted to keep the oneness with us, not allowing anything to come between us and separate us. We appreciated that. We spoke with him further regarding our serious concerns over Brother Lee and his son, Philip, who had managed the LSM office. He told us that Brother Lee himself was now managing the LSM office. The matter of the sixteen points spoken on August 28th was brought up, and we explained that they were addressed to the local need and were intended for that. He remarked that he did not think they had any need of covering those same needs in Irving, at least not now. Then he proceeded to share with us some news of the full-time training that was being conducted in Irving, Texas. At that time they had forty-two trainees in two terms of training.

Calls Received Regarding the Sixteen Points

September-- November 1988

Soon after the August 28th meeting, saints began to visit us and call on the phone, some bothered by implications they felt were made, and some very happy and thankful for what was spoken. Copies of the edited transcript were soon received in other places. Some went to the Cleveland, Ohio area, and Titus Chu the leading co-worker in that area, called, quite alarmed over this. He said that if they had been sent only to the leading ones that would have been different, but they were being sent to ordinary saints who were being disturbed by them. He asked that we halt the dissemination of this material, though we had sent none.

I called a brother who I thought may have sent copies to the Ohio area, since he used to live there and knew a number of saints. He had done it, and I asked him if he would cease, because it was causing trouble. The brother replied that because I asked him to stop sending them he would send them out now by the thousands, and he strongly rebuked me for my weakness in not standing for the truth before brothers like Titus.

Elders Meetings in Atlanta – September 1988

In September Brother Lee had a conference in Atlanta with two elders' meetings, one on Friday, September 16th, and the other on the Lord's Day, September 18th. The second meeting was exceptional with brothers from all over country attending. I would like to briefly describe it, noting a few significant things that were said, (I myself was not present but I received reports from a number of brothers concerning it.)

Brother Lee strongly vindicated the way he had taken against all criticisms. He drew a line; any who would not take this way, he said, are "dropouts", and the Lord will have no mercy. Addressing the brothers, he said that none of them understood what he was doing. None knew what he was doing in Taipei; hence there was no one that he could fellowship with. When I went to Taipei, he said, I did not fellowship with one person concerning what I was going to do. He continued: None of you is perfected. Who can say that he is perfected? So you are not qualified to criticize what I am doing. I didn't include you in my fellowship – how can I? So let there be no more talk about anything I do. You criticize my young trainers in Taipei, telling me their mistakes, but I was doing everything; what they did was to carry out my burden.

I want to comment here on what I consider to be a very serious lack of fellowship. Every one of us, from the smallest member to the largest, needs the fellowship of the Body for a safeguard and balance. For example, I feel that in Taiwan had Brother Lee had more fellowship, especially with the older brothers, many problems could have been eliminated. But the older elders and co-workers who had labored diligently to build up the churches were put aside and much younger brothers, novices, were brought into the inner circle. I

am reminded of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, who instead of receiving the counsel of the older men who had stood before Solomon his father, he forsook them and followed the counsel of the young men who had grown up with him (2 Chron. 10:6-11). His choice was disastrous and resulted in a great division in Israel. I fear that history has been repeated.

The elders' meeting in Atlanta went on from 4:00 P.M. till 8:00 P.M. with Brother Lee speaking for close to three and a half hours. At the end he told what a great success the work had been in Taipei in the recent years. They had gained their objectives, and now they were going to evangelize the entire island. He then asked Benson to outline the plans for doing this.

Don Rutledge, an elder in Dallas before moving to North Carolina, told me, "That meeting was the most devastating and discouraging experience of all my time in the church." What particularly bothered him was Brother Lee's attitude toward the brothers. The atmosphere, he said, was heavy, oppressive, and abusive. (Reports came to my ears from a number of brothers who attended that meeting; all indicated something similar.) Brother Lee had wanted to have a time of fellowship with Don immediately following the session, but Don was so troubled and depressed that he told Brother Lee he had to go home. As he walked out the door, Titus Chu came up and said to Don, "I'm afraid this will make our situation worse. I hope not."

A few months later at the elders' meetings in Irving, Texas, Don Rutledge asked Titus, "why did we need such a meeting as that?" Titus told him that it was because of one brother who was present in that meeting – a former elder in the church in San Jose. Brother Lee had been informed concerning him that he was going from house to house influencing people against his ministry (which was not true).

A Gathering Storm *September – October 1988*

Beginning on the Lord's Day, September 4th, and continuing in every Lord's Day morning meeting for over a month, some of the saints in Anaheim interrupted the meeting with derogatory remarks concerning Brother Lee, even mentioning his name. Most all the saints, including ourselves, felt grieved over this, considering it to be out of place and not helping the situation. That the saints were outraged was evident; that their grievances were justifiable, we believed in major part they were; but the way they took was objectionable. This sort of activity continually worsened and became intolerable, and the number of saints attending the meetings dropped off considerably. We realized that we could not go on like that. Some felt that we needed to address the matter once for all to clear up everything, and then go on, and one troubled brother, a former full-timer, expressed that to us.

After the prayer meeting on Tuesday, September 20th, a sister in the church who worked closely with Brother Lee stood and strongly proclaimed, "We have to do some business!" (She meant that we have to deal with some matters.) She went on to say that in the last few Lord's Day meetings she had been killed (by the derogatory statements concerning Brother Lee) and she didn't want to be killed anymore. Henceforth, she said, she would stay home during the Lord's Day morning meeting, and she encouraged others to stay home as well. Others followed this sister's proclamation to confirm it and say that they also did not want to be killed. Some said that they just wanted to enjoy the Lord. Then a bold and rather out-spoken sister rose and said that all that kind of talk was too petty. We need to be the Lord's testimony, she said, and then she began to mention some alleged sin in our midst. This greatly provoked some of the saints, who tried unprevailingly to stop her. Others went on to speak from conflicting viewpoints. I was the only elder present (Godfred was in Europe on a business trip, and Al was not feeling well). I did not interrupt but allowed the saints to speak freely for some time. After about 45 minutes the meeting was brought to a close. It was a stormy session.

A couple of days later Godfred returned from Europe, and I shared with him about the recent events and worsening situation we were facing. The tension was mounting each day, and the pressure from all sides was increasing. It seemed that we could not have peace until the underlying problems were dealt with. Because Godfred had returned I felt I could leave for a few days needed rest, and I did.

The next day, the Lord's Day, September 25th, a few saints on both sides of the issues tried to speak and bring up inciting negative matters. Godfred asked them all to sit down. "We are not here for that", he said, "We are here to get into the Word." He succeeded and peace was maintained. Godfred was much better at this sort of thing than Al or I, and we greatly appreciated his gift. But the conflict continued to mount both inwardly and outwardly and was obviously headed for some kind of climax.

Final Fellowship With Brother Lee - September 28, 1988

In the midst of all this Brother Lee called and said he desired to meet with all the elders on Wednesday evening, September 28th. His main purpose was to advise us regarding the church. There were the five of us: three on the English side – Godfred, Al, and me – two on the Chinese side – Minoru Chen, and Philip Lin. He said that in the morning when he was with the Lord he thought of the story of Solomon and the baby boy, whom Solomon proposed should be divided and given to the two women who each claimed as her child. By this the true mother was discovered and the child was given to her. He said that the church in Anaheim was his baby, and that he does not like to see it suffer.

He apparently had heard that some saints might come to the next Lord's Day morning meeting and explode a bomb, figuratively speaking, and he was alarmed, telling us these ones needed to be stopped. We also had heard a similar report.

Then Brother Lee spoke with us about the matter of excommunication and the need to love and care for the sinning brother, appealing to the scripture in Galatians 6:1. He was sending a message to us, for he feared that excommunication was about to be exercised upon a certain brother in the church in Anaheim.

Finally Brother Lee showed us a letter he had just received from Germany signed by the elders of a number of churches. This letter stated that reports had been received, confirmed by several witnesses, of gross misconduct over a long period of time related to the LSM office, and that Brother Lee was aware of it and not only tolerated it, but covered it up. Because of this the churches in Europe were disassociating themselves from such misconduct in Brother Lee's work. A similar letter had been received from England.

Brother Lee was greatly upset by this and he urged us – Godfred, Al, and me – to write a letter to the elders in Europe in reply, stating on his behalf that he was not aware of the misconduct and did not learn of it till December 12, 1987, when we went to him and opened up the matter. We indicated that we could not write such a letter. Since we only had it on his word that he was not aware of the matter, then he should write the letter. He said that we must rescue the churches in Europe.

He also showed us a copy of the transcript that he had just received of the sixteen points we had spoken on August 28th, just one month previously. (Actually he had requested of me a tape recording of the sixteen points the day after that meeting was, and I loaned it to him. After that meeting we again felt that it was absolutely useless to have any more times of fellowship. And so it was. That was the last time we sat down with Brother Lee for face to face communication. It was the sixteenth time that I had met with him either individually or with other brothers, since December 12, 1987, nine months prior to that time, to discuss the present situation and open our hearts regarding our concerns. We had spent many hours and long sessions together concerning these matters.

The next morning Brother Lee spoke with me on the phone, saying that he reconsidered what he proposed concerning the elders writing a letter to the churches in Europe, and he

felt now that we should not do it since such an act on our part would not be in nature organic.

Visits From Titus Chu - September 29, 30, 1988

In December 1987, before we went to see Brother Lee on December 12th, Titus Chu was in Anaheim, and we had lunch together. At that time since I respected Titus as a senior co-worker and had considerable fellowship with him in the past, I opened to him in a general way my heavy concern for the work and the churches. He agreed with my realizations and convictions and indicated that he had the same concerns.

On Monday, September 26, 1988, Titus came to Anaheim to see Brother Lee and also wanted to see me. I did not get back to Anaheim from a few days rest until Wednesday, September 28th. He came to the Anaheim prayer meeting on Tuesday evening and spoke with Godfred afterwards, complaining about the mailing of the transcripts of the sixteen points to Ohio and seeking information concerning a certain problem of misconduct. On Thursday morning, September 29th, the day after we had our final fellowship with Brother Lee, he came to see me and fellowship for over two hours. He was quite tender and soft and said that he fully understood what I was passing through; he had passed through a similar experience himself. He wanted to assure me that he was standing with me, and he emphasized this point. He was concerned, he said, for the going on of the churches should Brother Lee pass away. He also said that he felt that Brother Lee still had some ministry for the churches, and we must find a way to receive whatever he has. He left, asking if he could return to have further fellowship the following morning. I agreed.

The next morning Titus came with a totally different attitude and demeanor. It seemed that he took an adversarial position, and said rather decisively that now we have to cover some practical matters. He was very strong, telling me that I had damaged the Lord's recovery by the conferences I had, and that I must not speak anything contrary to Brother Lee. He is the one carrying out the work, he said; we are his co-workers with him, and we should submit to him. He warned me that if I continued to speak as I did I would damage myself most of all, and he would have to take some action concerning me among the churches in the Midwest. Moreover, I would lose my field for ministry because the churches would not invite me. I was surprised to hear this, for that was of no concern to me and did not influence me at all. I feel that no faithful servant of the Lord should have such a consideration, but seek to simply and faithfully follow the Lord in all things, come what may. I was not ambitious to be welcomed everywhere, and was prepared to be rejected.

Before Titus left he urged me with much feeling to go to Brother Lee, to open myself to him, and to ask how he feels about me. I had no response at all to this, since I already had many sessions with Brother Lee, and I believed I knew what he felt about me. But because he kept repeating it, I said I would consider it. Titus returned to Cleveland and a couple of weeks later called me on the phone. I told him that I felt not to see Brother Lee as he had proposed, and he replied that that was all right and made no further mention of it. I was surprised at this, expecting that he would again urge me to see him. He wanted to assure me once more that he was standing with me – that seemed to be the main point of his call. It was a very brief conversation, lasting not more than two or three minutes.

I was surprised when nearly four months later I had received a letter from Titus, co-authored by James Reetzke (an elder in Chicago long known to me), dated February 12, 1989, in which Titus reprovved me among other things for not taking his fellowship to see Brother Lee. The letter was full of rebuking and censuring concerning the conduct of the elders in Anaheim and contained this statement: "Is it not a fact that you brothers and the church in Anaheim owe him {Brother Lee} your existence?" I am grateful to Brother Lee for his love and service to the saints (including myself) in past years, and I thank the Lord for what we have received through his ministry, but we surely do not owe our existence to him – that is absurd. The source of whatever we are and have, physically or spiritually, is God and no one else.

I am still puzzled by what Titus means when he says, "I am standing with you." I can only ask, considering his words and actions, Is this the way you stand with a person? I refrain from saying more at this point.

The Storm Breaks – October 9, 16, 1988

What Brother Lee feared regarding an explosive outbreak in the Lord's Day morning meeting in Anaheim October 2nd did not materialize. It was an uneventful meeting with a good fellowship in Ephesians 1:1-14. There were no disturbances as in the previous Lord's Day meetings. But it turned out to be the calm before the storm.

The next Lord's Day morning, October 9, 1988, Godfred, Al, and I met as usual in the Elders' Room before the meeting. We were expecting to fellowship that morning regarding the last part of Ephesians chapter 1. I went upstairs to the meeting hall, the other brothers lingering behind in the Elders' Room to attend to some matter. As I reached the top of the stairs, I saw all the saints who had spoken out hotly against Brother Lee and the LSM office lined up in the rows near to the front. Some of them had ceased coming to the meetings, but this morning they were all there in force. Moreover, I saw saints from other churches entering the meeting hall whom I knew to be agitated and vocal concerning the current problems. There were some from Fullerton, Huntington Beach, Torrance, and elsewhere. I knew something was up. Obviously, others had been alerted and they were planning to do something. I turned around and hastened down the stairs to notify Godfred and Al. This was it. We must decide what to do.

We sang a hymn or two and had some prayer as usual. Meanwhile Godfred and I were conferring together in whispers as we sat on the front row. We could just dismiss the meeting. But that, we knew, would cause a tumult to erupt. After a little consultation we felt it would be better to just let them speak and get it over with once for all, and then we could go on in the coming meetings with a good order.

Soon one of them was on his feet, a dispositionally quiet brother who had been with us in the church life since the beginning in this country and had never caused any problem. He began by saying that we are not negative, we have some genuine concerns, and to have the harmony among us we all need to know the facts and deal with them. Then he referred to misconduct in the LSM office. At this point Godfred rose to his feet and asked to say something. A number of saints thought he was about to exercise control and stop the brother from speaking, so they loudly shouted, "Let him speak! Let him speak!" There was pandemonium. Eventually Godfred was able to calm them down and then said, "All right, anyone who does not desire to hear what these saints have to say may leave the meeting. Anyone who wants to hear them may stay." About a quarter of the saints rose and walked out, and the first brother who had started to speak continued.

It was said then by these saints that since the elders had not dealt with problems publicly, they could not keep quiet. They felt fully exasperated by the elders for continually delaying to take public action against disorders, the judgment of which they felt was long overdue. Such feeling had intensified to the bursting point.

Further reference was then made to the misconduct in the LSM office, and a brother in the meeting who was a former law enforcement officer interrupted the speaker, shouting, "Did you see it? Did you see it? And indicated that if he did not see it he should not talk about it. This ignited some other brothers, one of whom claimed to be an eye-witness, who proceeded to give detailed accounts of the misconduct in anguish and outrage, mentioning the names of involved parties. Such things never should have been spoken publicly. He said, "It's a shame for us to have to stand up here and talk like this, but if we don't do it there will never be any blessing on us," indicating that because of a sinful situation among us, God's blessing was not with the church. These saints surely felt they had cause for action. For over two hours they went on exposing some things and accusing the elders for

not having dealt with them. The elders were just as much a target of their accusations as anyone else. One sister said that "the elders were weak spiritually, psychologically, and physically," and that is why they hadn't dealt with the problems.

Eventually the meeting was brought to a close. Never in our history had there been a meeting like that. Although we sympathized with their concerns, we could not agree with their way of handling them. Yet, we allowed it to continue, and when Godfred spoke, he spoke for all of us. It was over at length, and we felt that we must now shut the door on that kind of behavior and not have it repeated again. The meeting was surely worthy of blame, but let those who shake their finger and raise their voice and write letters in reproof equally blame those responsible for the problems which were the root cause of such a meeting. If there was no ground for it, no problems of such enormous magnitude, these saints who loved the Lord's recovery and gave themselves for it, and some of whom were naturally meek and mild, would never have erupted in that way.

To our great dismay we learned later that some saints who had recorded the October 9th meeting had sent out copies of the tapes to the elders of the churches in this country. We had no idea that they intended to do this or were carrying it out, and when we heard we strongly disapproved of their action. Just recently (March 1990) we found that the one responsible for this distribution was someone in another place, another church, altogether apart from the saints in Anaheim. But he had used the P.O. Box of someone in Anaheim who was not meeting with us for a return address.

We then began to receive numerous letters from elders all over the country addressed to the elders in Anaheim, castigating us for allowing such a meeting to take place. Many of them sent a copy of their letter to Brother Lee. But I wonder what they would have done had they been in our shoes and passed through what we had passed through. It is easy to criticize from a distance (I think that many who wrote were glad to be at a distance from the church in Anaheim), but when you are in the middle of the problem and have to deal with it, it is another story.

The following Saturday we met with some of the brothers with whom we usually met to pray (Minoru Chen and Philip Lin were not there; we met with them on Friday nights), and we decided that we would by no means permit another meeting like that on the previous Lord's Day to take place again. If those same ones would insist on continuing, we would dismiss the meeting.

The next Lord's Day morning, October 16th, the same group of saints who spoke on October 9th came again obviously to prolong their denunciations. Godfred stood at the beginning and spoke, begging them to desist and allow us to continue our study of Ephesians. They interrupted him frequently, and he patiently answered their questions. Then we proceeded to read some verses in Ephesians and in a tense atmosphere some bravely attempted to share from the Word. Eventually the saints who were intent on speaking more problematic things begin to take over the meeting with much turmoil, upon which Godfred stood and summarily dismissed the meeting. About sixty percent of those attending, including the elders, left the meeting, leaving about thirty or forty, who remained and had their own meeting.

In our absence they stood and read 1 Corinthians 5 together, and took upon themselves to excommunicate a certain brother whom they believed to be guilty of gross misconduct. The elders had not done it so they did it. One of them then proceeded to tear up the announcements on the church bulletin board regarding the coming training and the Chinese Recovery Version, and threw in the trash some LSM books on display in the bookroom. This one called two days later and apologized for such unruly behavior, and we accepted the apology. Due to the chaotic condition we cancelled the evening meeting at the hall and met that night in homes.

That week we were contacted by those who had expressed their concerns so vocally, who said that they desired further fellowship with the elders. They had met for prayer and

fellowship and felt they needed direction. We made an appointment to meet with them that Saturday evening in one of their homes. This was our third private meeting with this group, the other two, in August, having already been mentioned. They expressed their desire for the church to somehow go on from this point in time. They also protested some of the things we had said, and Godfred spoke very strongly and frankly to them, reproving them for things they had said and done. They urged the elders to take over the Lord's Day morning meetings and share some needed things with the saints.

The next Lord's Day morning, October 23rd, Godfred gave an excellent and appropriate word on the headship of Christ from Ephesians. It was well received, though he spoke strongly against exalting any worker to take the place of Christ as our Head. All blessing, he brought out, depends on His headship. Godfred ministered again the following Lord's Day from Ephesians, emphasizing the oneness of the Spirit. The number in the meeting was down to about one hundred. A number of the saints were not coming and, we believed, were attending meetings of other Christian groups. In the Lord's Table in the hall that evening there were only about fifty, probably the lowest number we had ever had.

Saints Holding A Different Viewpoint - October 27, 1988

On October 27th the elders had a meeting with five concerned brothers in the church who had asked for fellowship. They had written a letter to us on October 18th in which they outlined four areas of concern:

1. They did not agree that the Lord's Day morning meeting be turned into a forum to discuss issues other than the Word of God.
2. They did not agree with the after-meeting on October 16 when a group of saints in the absence of the elders excommunicated a certain brother. They hoped that the elders would make a statement to denounce it.
3. Any problem that any elders or saints may have with Brother Lee should be settled properly and privately. They did not agree with all the public accusations toward Brother Lee and those who would receive him.
4. They did not agree that the Living Stream Ministry be made a continual issue in the church meetings.

Their special concern, they said, was how the saints could go on in this situation, and they were opening for fellowship along this line. They said, moreover, that they stood with us in this difficult time. Therefore we met with them, addressed the issues they raised, and took the opportunity to share with them our concerns for the whole situation, agreeing with some of theirs. By this you can realize the feelings of a number of saints in the church in Anaheim who had a different view.

Newspapers Call Desiring Information - October 1988

On October 11 a religious editor from the Los Angeles Times called me seeking further information regarding the problems in the church and the Living Stream Ministry. It was obvious that he had received considerable input. I answered that we do have some difficulties, but that we are seeking to solve them ourselves. He asked specific questions about the LSM office and its personnel, and I refused to respond. He pledged on his own initiative not to do anything until he had contacted us first.

Just one week later we received another call, this time from an editor of the Religious News Service, based in Philadelphia, which served some forty periodicals, if I remember the number correctly. He said he wanted information concerning the turmoil in the churches, having already received much information including some transcripts. I would make no comment.

Exercising Discipline Upon A Brother - November 6, 1988

During the months of September and October 1988 we had much consideration with all the elders in Anaheim regarding how to handle the problem of a certain brother and what action should be taken. It was a matter of serious misconduct on the part of the brother, and due to the ramifications of the affair Godfred, Al, and I, who were more familiar with the case, felt that church discipline should be exercised. Minoru and Philip, the other two elders, did not agree but said they would not try to stop this being done.

The date was eventually set for the Lord's Day, November 6th. Minoru and Philip still dissented from the decision, but Godfred, Al, and I due to the serious nature of the problem, felt that we must go ahead to deal with it on the English-speaking side even without unanimity with the other two brothers on the Chinese-speaking side. The two brothers agreed to read our statements in the Chinese-speaking meeting, and then follow it with statements of their own dissenting from the action and explaining why. In the English-speaking side we would make our statement and follow it by reading the statements of Minoru and Philip.

Thus at the end of the Lord's Day meeting, November 6th, Godfred stood and asked all the saints to read 1 Corinthians 5:6-11. He then said that in obedience to the Word of God we must ask all the saints not to associate with the brother being disciplined since we had sufficient evidence that he was such a one as described in 1 Corinthians 5:11. He then read statements by Minoru and Philip dissenting from the announcement. Of course it was a highly unusual step to take without the consensus of the brothers and indeed regrettable that all the elders could not concur in this matter. By this you may realize the situation among the elders and realize how strongly we felt about the matter.

After the meeting Godfred and I visited the wife of the disciplined brother and told her that this action did not apply to her or her children. She had come to the meeting in defiance of Godfred asking her not to come. She was greatly grieved, and we felt sorry for her.

Godfred Resigns From the Eldership - November 13, 1988

Early this year (1988) Godfred informed Al and me that due to the impossibilities of the present church situation as he saw them, he was seriously considering to withdraw from the eldership. We were shocked. I strongly urged him not to do that but to continue with us for some time until we see how things would turn out. We desperately needed his help. To our great relief he assented to do that

On September 30th Godfred again informed Al and me that this time he definitely intended to resign from the eldership and that the next day he would go to Brother Lee to notify him of his decision. He felt that due to all his complications in Anaheim it was impossible to have a church. But he indicated that he would remain with us in the eldership a little longer until the problem related to the brother whom we disciplined was resolved. Thus, when the disciplinary action was taken on November 6th, Godfred informed us that he would promptly resign the following Lord's Day and would announce it to the saints.

On the Lord's Day morning, November 13th, I communicated with Godfred before the meeting, hoping at the last moment to forestall his resignation. I urged him to delay a little longer so that eventually, if the Lord should lead, we could all resign together. It seemed better to me that it would be better for us to act together. But he felt definitely and strongly that he must take this step. His course was set, and he could not be turned aside.

We had good fellowship in the meeting over Ephesians 4:17-32. At the close Godfred stood as planned and announced that he was resigning as an elder in the church in Anaheim, saying that it was a matter of conscience. The elders of the churches, he said, were expected to carry out Brother Lee's burden and he could not conscientiously do that because of various practices and teachings that had come in. It was an exceedingly short statement, but it caused quite a stir. After the meeting about a dozen saints gathered

around him and plied him with many questions and concerns. He lingered there in the meeting hall and conversed with them till nearly 2:00 P.M. Many saints had a high esteem for Godfred and his function and were wondering what would happen now that he was leaving. Al and I also wondered what we would do at this juncture. We felt we had no alternative but to remain, at least for some time, in the eldership.

Part 4

A Visit With Two Senior Co-Workers From Taiwan - November 1988

During the past year I had heard of two senior co-workers from Taiwan who were living in the San Francisco Bay Area, Brothers Chu Shun Min and Jeng Guang Ming, and I longed to have fellowship with them. I had first met Brother Chu in Kaohsiung, Taiwan, in 1965, and had seen him a few times since then at conferences and trainings. Although I did not know him well I had heard of his fruitful labors in Taiwan to build up the churches, especially in Kaohsiung and Taipei. Brother Jeng I had also met many years ago and was aware of his labor for the Lord in Bangkok and other places. The turmoil in Anaheim having grown and intensified, I was especially burdened to see them, having heard of their burden and concern for the present situation.

Thus on November 9th I flew to San Francisco and was met by Brother Jeng and Brother Daniel Wu, a former co-worker in Manila, who was living in the South San Francisco area. They transported me to Brother Jeng's home in Los Altos, where for three days I met with the brothers. They were intensely interested in the progress of events in Anaheim, and I opened freely and fully to them. Likewise, Brothers Chu and Jeng opened freely and fully to me regarding their convictions and concerns for the churches and the work of the Lord. I would like to share in some detail their fellowship with me, beginning with Brother Chu Shun Min, who had been closely related to Brother Witness Lee since the revival in Chefoo in 1943 and the ensuing years. He knew Brother Lee and his family very well.

Brother Chu began by saying that he hoped that Brother Lee would have some change, but he had not seen a trace of this. Only a few know the source and the gravity of the problem. The reasons, he stated, for the present degraded situation of the churches were as follows:

Brother Lee's position among the churches was overly exalted. The matter of greatest concern is that he would be idolized and thus replace the position of the Lord and the Holy Spirit in the church.

Brother Lee's teachings and messages were overly read and repeated in the churches, causing us to be concerned that the position of God's Word would be replaced. The words of man flourishes, and the Word of God languishes. The opportunities for the Holy Spirit to speak are scarce. These first two points are the fundamental problems.

Brother Lee's leading has become a factor of discord and even of division among the brothers and sisters (e.g., door-knocking). Originally his leading was a factor of oneness.

Today we have overemphasized deputy authority more than the Bible teaches. The result is that people follow blindly and damage the Lord's testimony. Obedience is a spiritual virtue, but we must be very careful lest we damage the Lord's testimony through blind submission. Those who coordinated with Brother Lee in the past all learned the lesson of submission, but they were overly submissive with a tendency to exalt man. That caused trouble. The co-workers did this, and they led the saints also to do this. Thus the co-workers bear the responsibility for damaging the testimony.

Today there are too many practices that are not according to the truth. It was because of the truth that Paul resisted Peter, as recorded in Galatians 2. Today we don't stand for the truth, but talk about deputy authority and raise up a pope. Thus the Holy Spirit

is much restricted in the church. We talk about the Holy Spirit, but we don't have the Spirit. We should only submit to the Spirit.

In many churches Brother Lee only set up as elders those who fully followed him. They are the ones who will execute his strategy. He did not consider whether those ones were immature or not; he only considered whether they would listen to him. Therefore someone called them "baby elders." Those who were experienced in the Lord, those who possessed the qualities of an elder and were manifested as such, were set aside.

Brother Lee's leading was intended to help and supply the churches. However, unfortunately, he eventually used all kinds of methods to control: the ministry office, the trainings, the elders' meetings, etc. He utilizes the simplicity of the brothers and sisters as a means of control. He controls the full-timers to influence the rest of the saints. He uses some of his writings and the way of reading.

Deviations in Brother Lee's leading:

He causes the saints to overemphasize his writings (e.g. Life Studies, Truth Lessons, Life Lessons, etc.), leading to a reduction in the reading of the Lord's Word.

He causes the saints to overemphasize prayreading and calling on the Lord (matters which are meant to help the saints), leading to a reduction of genuine prayers to the Lord. The result is that the brothers and sisters do not know how to pray, and those who are newly saved do not learn how to pray.

He overemphasizes and twists the matter of meetings in 1 Corinthians 14 so that the function of those members who can speak for the Lord as mouths in the Body is gradually diminished. Thus no gifts and functions are produced.

I would like now to record some of the comments made by Brother Jeng Guang Ming. He spoke as follows: "We co-workers in the past have not had genuine fellowship among us concerning any questionable practices in the churches due to the prevailing concept that we should have no opinion, but rather just listen and submit. Brother Lee has related his experience and attitude toward Brother Nee in order to kill all opinions as well as all feelings and concerns. But our genuine fellowship is in sharing the feelings the Lord gives us, and in this we discover the leading of the Holy Spirit."

"I very much treasure Acts 13, where the Holy Spirit spoke, 'Separate unto me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' I believe that the speaking of the Holy Spirit to the brothers there in Antioch must have been through the genuine fellowship of the feelings which the Holy Spirit Himself gave to them. The same thing occurred in Acts 15. As long as the Holy Spirit speaks among us there will be no problem. But we don't have today the leading of the Holy Spirit as in Acts 13 and 15, a leading in fellowship, a subjective leading manifested by each one speaking his own feeling before the Lord. The plurality gives the Holy Spirit opportunity. If we emphasize the one leadership so much how can the Holy Spirit have opportunity? The Spirit's leading in the Body is in the prayer and fellowship of all. The kind of submission being practiced today kills the move of the Holy Spirit in the churches through the genuine fellowship among the saints. We have no intention to rebel or overthrow Brother Lee. We have suppressed our feeling for many years, though we sensed there were many points of deviation. In Taiwan Brother Chu and I had no such fellowship concerning the abnormal situation in the churches today as we now have. We feel that the genuine fellowship must be like that recorded in Revelation chapters 2 and 3, where the Lord did not refrain from pointing out the negative aspects as well as the positive, the real situation.

"One basic item of the change in nature in the Lord's recovery is that it appears the Lord's work has become Brother Lee's work; the churches have become Brother Lee's churches; and the Lord's workers have become Brother Lee's workers. All things have become personalized, and everything appears to require Brother Lee's approval to be legitimate.

He can acknowledge and he can also deny the validity of the Lord's workers, elders, and even churches. This concept has been injected to all the brothers and sisters, particularly those who have a heart for the Lord. This is how denominations are formed. But the Lord had preserved some for Himself. This situation did not develop suddenly, and we cannot expect it to clear up suddenly."

Brother Chu Shun Min then told me how that on April 1, 1988, he had a conversation with Brother Lee in the Bay Area. He presented a number of serious concerns to Brother Lee and asked him to bring all these things to the Lord. Brother Chu told me that Brother Lee listened quietly and passively to all his points (with one exception), making no comment, neither admitting nor denying. The exception was a point he made concerning Brother Lee's son, Philip Lee. In conclusion, Brother Chu told Brother Lee, "All the sweet feeling we had in the past is lost. All the rest in our spirit is over."

I will mention just a few more comments made by Brother Chu. He said that he feels very sorry for the present state of things -- he gave his whole life to this. He has received letters from elderly ones in Taipei that are full of blood and tears. There are very few elderly ones there who are not discouraged or withdrawn. The warfare now is fiercer than in Watchman Nee's day when the issue was that of leaving the denominations. We are at a critical juncture. We cannot be silent regarding the change of nature in the Lord's recovery. We should have no part in it. This is a day for further recovery. We need a new beginning to recover us back from the change of nature to the Lord's original intention. We must discard all the changes of nature. The main direction is to come out of the system; it cannot change.

I greatly respected these brothers for their years of faithful labor, their knowledge of the Lord and His ways, their maturity in Christ, and their penetrating discernment. Their fellowship was a strong confirmation and encouragement to be steadfast for the truth's sake. It seemed outwardly that Brothers Chu and Jeng were in a state of retirement from the work, but inwardly they were active and aggressive, praying and watching and fighting in the spiritual warfare. I have been greatly inspired by them. They count very much for the Lord's interests.

Conference and Elders' Meeting in Pasadena - November 1988

On the Thanksgiving Day weekend of November 1988 Brother Lee, just returned from Taiwan, held a conference of five meetings in the auditorium of the Pasadena City College in California. The conference was followed by an elders' meeting November 27th in the meeting place of the church in San Gabriel. In that meeting Brother Lee proclaimed that though he had a hall in Anaheim, he was not happy to use it (no doubt because of certain people who were in Anaheim). The brothers in the Los Angeles area invited him to have a conference and arranged the place in Pasadena. He said that when he heard that it would be in Pasadena he was happy. These people, he said, "exalt" me: I am happy to be exalted.

Before the conference began a report came to us that a flyer had been printed and would be placed on the windshields of all the cars of those attending the conference in Pasadena. On the flyer, we were told, some sinful disorders were mentioned. We fully disapproved of such action. Not knowing who authorized or printed them or who intended to distribute them, but knowing a couple of brothers who we thought might be aware of it, we called them and urged them to do whatever they could to stop the distribution. It seems that our word was heeded, at least to some extent, for no flyers were distributed at the conference. We discovered later, however, that they were put on some cars in the Anaheim meeting hall parking lot. Such acts we believe to be of the flesh and not the way to protest wrongdoing. Some time later, after the conference, we obtained a copy of the flyer. It was entitled *Significant Dates in the History of the Church in Anaheim*.

In the first meeting of the conference, November 25th, Brother Lee was in a fighting spirit, fighting against "autonomy" and "federation." He referred to some books authored by George Henry Lang, a servant of the Lord in England during the latter part of the 19th

century and the first half of the 20th. In one of his books, entitled *The Churches of God*, Lang emphasized the need for local administration in the churches. This was the book that troubled Brother Lee. (I had read this book, and being deeply impressed with its strong scriptural basis and timely application to our present need, I had recommended it to others.) Brother Lee called Lang's book heretical and told the saints if they had them to burn them. I consider this kind of talk reckless and lawless. Brother Lee in years past had commended Lang for his insight and writing on the truth of the kingdom. His books have been recently reprinted and are available today.

In the conference meetings he strongly vindicated himself and his work. He gave a message in which he recounted a number of revelations brought forth by him which he said no one else besides the Bible authors had ever seen. Regarding the enjoying of Christ he said, "I invented this term, enjoying Christ." He continued, "I invented this term, experiencing Christ, exhibiting Christ." I believe a number of saints could testify that they heard of enjoying Christ or enjoying the Lord long before Brother Lee ever came to the United States. I for one did. My step-mother, seeking to help me, spoke to me of this in 1949. No doubt she heard this from other Christian teachers. The term, experiencing Christ, has also been spoken by other Christian teachers for years. Brother Lee did not invent that term. He mentioned many other items, claiming that they had all been revealed to him in the past twenty or so years; no one else had ever seen or spoken of them.

He referred to the title he has used for the Holy Spirit – "the all-inclusive Spirit of Christ as the consummation of the processed Triune God" – and asked who made such a title. Webster? he asked. Then he answered his own question, "That Lee! Lee has to be famous! Lee! Lee! Lee must have the credit! And if you listen to me, you do not listen to Lee, you listen to the very God in His oracle spoken by me." A little later in his message he said, "Going with God's oracle, surely there is the deputy authority of God in this oracle. Whoever speaks for God, he surely has certain divine authority. I'm claiming this for Lee!"

Now I would ask, are these the words of a sober man, the words of a spiritual man, a man of God? To me it is shocking to hear him speak this way, for he has indeed been used of God in the past to speak His Word. But to vindicate oneself so blatantly and boastfully indicates to me a fall. May the Lord have mercy on us all.

Following his message he asked for testimonies to be given by brothers from five countries: Brazil, the Philippines, Korea, Taiwan, and the United States. All these told of the success of the new way in their place, especially giving statistics regarding the number of churches and new ones baptized. The Lord alone knows the real situation. If there is any real blessing from Him we rejoice and give thanks.

In the elders' meeting following the conference Brother Lee read from a list of items, mentioning what he said were the top ten revelations received by him, seen previously by no one else. Some of them were as follows:

"The last Adam became a life-giving Spirit" (1 Cor. 15:45)

"He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit" (1 Cor. 6:17).

Prayreading.

Calling on the name of the Lord.

The seven Spirits.

The dispensing of the processed Triune God into the tripartite man.

The New Jerusalem as a corporate man.

The lampstand as the embodiment of the Triune God.

Now we thank God for these revelations from His holy Word, but to claim that he was the first one to see these is going altogether too far. Moreover, concerning at least a number of

these items, Brother Lee was in fact not the first to see them. Regarding the last Adam becoming a life-giving Spirit and our being one spirit with the Lord, there were a number of other Christian teachers who saw and wrote of these things. We have evidence of this. Concerning prayreading, many have seen this and practiced this, as recorded in the book authored by Ray Graver and published by the LSM entitled, *Lord...Thou Saidst*. Calling on the name of the Lord was not a recent discovery by Brother Lee or by us. The New Jerusalem as a corporate person was also seen by others—T. Austin-Sparks for one. If we have time or if there is the need, we may document all these instances.

The revelations mentioned are indeed great and precious. Fairly speaking, some of these matters may have been fresh revelations to Brother Lee. The Lord alone knows. And some of them he may have enunciated more clearly than his predecessors. But for anyone to claim that no one had ever seen these things before but him is totally insupportable, since we are not omniscient. Moreover, such self-vindication is very unbecoming and repugnant.

Brother Lee went on to say, "You cannot deny the fact that the Lord's oracle has been with me. I claim this at the face of Jesus Christ. The deputy authority of God is in His oracle; so whoever speaks for God has His deputy authority. But I never used it."

In the elders' meeting, Brother Lee referred to some anonymous papers being circulated and blamed the elders in Anaheim for not stopping the distribution. He then referred to the flyer which had been printed and was to be put on the windshields of the cars at the conference. I then rose from my seat and said that we wanted Brother Lee and all the brothers to know that we fully disapproved of that action and had done whatever we could to stop it. Brother Lee took the opportunity then, while I was on my feet, to question me publicly about a few things. He asked me about an anonymous writing entitled ***Reconsideration of the Vision*** (which had troubled him greatly) and if we had done anything to stop its circulation. I said that we had not.

Regarding some brothers, probably including me (or, especially me), Brother Lee said, Whether you are for me or not, I know; I know everything. I know what restaurant you were eating in, what day, and with whom. I have a lot of colleagues who write me long records of ten to twenty pages about you. He said further, Which church is under my hand? You have a church; I have none. I know which church welcomes me, and which has a cold heart toward me.

Near the end of his word he proclaimed, I don't care for the loss of any church. Even if the entire U. S. A. is closed to me I don't care. I only care for ten to twenty faithful ones meeting together to practice the truth. When he sat down and asked for fellowship, a brother from Anaheim, Paul Kerr, rose toward the end of the time and asked two questions. The first consisted of two queries: Why have other brothers besides you not been raised up? And, Why do you have no contemporaries to challenge you and fellowship with you? Brother Lee's answer was simply, "I don't know." And then he said that since 1945 he has been watching to see if anyone else could speak God's word as God's oracle. He could find none. Paul Kerr's next question concerned John So and John Ingalls. He asked, "How is it that in the past you referred to these two brothers as pillars and today's Timothy, and today you have nothing good to say about them?" Brother Lee's reply was that brothers can change. Demas loved the Lord, but then he changed and loved the world. I can change, he said; we all can change. So we all need the Lord's mercy.

Brother Lee was beside himself in this meeting. I had never personally observed him in such a state as I witnessed him there. He was obviously exceedingly agitated. That was the last elders' meeting with Brother Lee that I ever attended.

Telephone Conversation With Brother Lee

Dec. 13, 1988

On December 6 Brother Lee called, saying that he would like to meet with Al Knoch and me before he went to Irving, Texas for the training on December 14. He hoped to meet with us on Saturday, December 10th. I told him that we felt we needed to pray more and wait for some time before having further fellowship with him, but he was rather insistent. On December 12 he called again, and then again on December 13, at which times I told him that we still felt it better that we pray more and wait for a time. He said that there were a number of points which he desired to share with us. Finally I asked if he could just share them with me over the phone, and he agreed. I relate them as follows in Brother Lee's words in a somewhat abridged form:

Take my word, I have no intention to do anything bad to you. I have prayed, Preserve my brother's usefulness in Your hand. I don't like to see any part damaged.

Regarding the translation work on the revision of the Recovery Version, I never had any feeling that I would give you up. I prayed about the work being moved to Irving, and I believe that was the wisdom of the Lord. I like to get this work done in a peaceful and happy way. I never said anything bad about your part. I told the brothers just recently that the whole recovery is indebted to John for his work on the hymnbook and his polishing of other books for publishing. Now I have received a letter from you saying that you would withdraw from the work. I don't know what to say. Now that you would stop, who can continue? It is much better to get one thing done by the same person. I still would ask you to do this work, and I beg you to reconsider. This work is not only for the saints in the Lord's recovery, but for the Lord's people as a whole. Please do not think that you will be doing anything for me, but for the Lord's interests on the whole earth. I must have a definite word from you.

I told him that I had already given much consideration to this matter before writing the letter of resignation from the work.

Regarding the flyer that has been circulated, you said that you have stopped it, but on the Lord's Day it was distributed in the Anaheim meeting hall after the meeting. A sister was holding a bundle of them and giving them out to some of the saints. The saints in Fullerton also got copies. My name is printed on that flyer in a very negative sense. Since I am a brother in Anaheim and such a thing is still going on, I ask you as a brother in the church where I meet to take care of this. You have already had an excommunication {to deal with the problem}; so that's it! Why is such a flyer put out?

On August 28th you put out sixteen points, eight by you and eight by Godfred. I wanted to fellowship with you about these points, but I did not have time. After the coming training in Irving, I hope to sit down with you to study some of these points. They were sent out to all the churches. One brother told me that they were sixteen bullets aimed at me to put me aside from the church in Anaheim or from the Lord's recovery.

At the end of the training in Irving there will be some elders' meetings. So many elders will attend. I am burdened in those meetings to speak something very positive and give the Lord a way to lead us on positively. We will not go back to touch the things that have happened in the past. (Note: See under the following sub-title the contents of these elders' meetings.) The present situation is damaged and divided. The Lord's recovery was brought to this country through me, and you were the first one to take this way. Our hearts have been for the Lord's recovery, and I believe you still have such a heart. I ask you to please go to Irving for the elders' meetings. I believe they will be a great help, resulting in a very positive and profitable issue. We must endeavor to give the Lord a way.

Brother Lee told me that he had called other brothers in Orange County encouraging them to go. I know that he also called Bill Mallon. I myself was not led of the Lord to go.

Very honestly, not only as a brother, but as a friend, I want to speak to you about Joseph Fung. It is very hard for me to say anything bad about anyone. But he was spreading the news that Hong Kong and Rosemead were genuine local churches. The genuine local churches were more than one hundred, Joseph said. All the others were

ministry churches. He indicated that the churches in Southeast Asian countries, excluding the Philippines, all joined together with the churches in Europe to be against me. (Note: This includes Brother Lee's interpretation of what Joseph said. Joseph never said that any church, including Hong Kong, was against Brother Lee.)

I thanked Brother Lee for his concern, and we said goodbye. That was the last time I spoke with Brother Lee.

Elders' Meetings in Irving, Texas

Dec. 31, 1988 – Jan 2, 1989

In the elders' meetings in Irving, following the winter training, there were 340 elders present, a large number, and Brother Lee spoke to them on the following four points:

1. Gospel preaching: door-knocking is the best way.
2. Home visitation for meetings with the new ones.
3. Mutuality in the meetings.
4. Church meetings for building up.

Brother Lee had spoken many, many times on these same things before; so there was no new light or direction. When I heard the contents of the meetings I felt confirmed in my not going.

At the close of the elders' meetings, Francis Ball, a long time elder and co-worker with us, rose and proposed a nationwide day of fasting and prayer on January 11th, to pray especially for the critical condition of the recovery and the churches. He then turned to Brother Lee and asked if he would approve of it. Brother Lee responded by saying that the condition of the recovery was not that bad, and what we were experiencing was only a passing storm. Then he said that only Germany and Anaheim have problems due to the danger of changing the truth.

I considered Brother Lee's singling out of these two places and his charging them with being in danger of changing the truth to be serious. I would like to know what truth we have ever changed or are in danger of changing. Rather we have sought to be faithful to the truth, much of which we have seen through the help of Brother Lee's ministry. Our problem in the past has been related not mainly to the truth itself, but to its practice, which we are seeking diligently to remedy. However, one crucial matter affecting the truth I will mention here. In Ephesians 4 there are seven factors of our oneness and only seven. But today other factors, at least in practice, have been added, such as, one ministry, one leadership, one deputy authority, and one divine oracle. These have been made factors of our oneness, so that if any individuals or churches do not adhere to the "one ministry", or the "one leadership", etc., they are cut off or labeled negatively. Now, is this not true? We have many examples to substantiate it.

Brother Lee has told the brothers who were serving with him a number of times, including myself, that if he ever left the way of God's recovery, we should not follow him; rather we should go forward according to the truth to follow the Lord. We believe that in some degree this very thing has occurred, and we are taking Brother Lee's own word to go on in the truth. May the Lord grant us mercy and grace to be faithful.

Newspaper Articles Appear

January 1989

On Saturday, January 7th, 1989, in the religious section of the Los Angeles Times, the first article regarding the problems among us appeared. It was rather long, covering two columns, and was entitled *Crisis Threatens Future of Little-Known Church*. It referred to the publication of an anonymous twenty-page pamphlet critical of Brother Lee and quoted from it. It stated that Philip Lee is a "powerful figure in the church second only to his father." Worst of all it mentioned some charges of sinful acts taking place. This is what we

had feared most of all for over a year and had warned Brother Lee that this might occur if nothing was done promptly to clear up the disorder. Mentioning my name, the article attributed me as saying, "the problems were best handled internally out of the public eye," and then stated that I had refused further comment.

Referring to information they had received, the writer said, "Some former members furnished The Times with transcriptions of taped emotional meetings in Anaheim and a copy of the pamphlet that has been circulated widely among church members in Taiwan and the United States." I strongly feel that such "former members" did not serve the Lord's interests well by giving out such information. It is indeed shameful that there should be any ground for such an article to appear in print in a major newspaper – shameful to Brother Lee, to his ministry, to the churches, and to all the saints. Worst of all it is a smear on the Lord's testimony.

We understand that another article regarding our problems was also printed in the Chinese World Journal, a Chinese periodical published in Monterrey Park, California, with global circulation. We did not see it, nor could we read it except by translation. It was no surprise to us to learn that Brother Lee was deeply disturbed over these two newspaper articles. There may have been more in other cities in the country that have not come to our attention.

In the fall 1988 issue of The Christian Research Institute Journal there was also an article about us entitled *Turmoil in the "Local Church"*. It carried as well a photo of Brother Lee and his wife. This writing quotes at length from the twenty-page pamphlet mentioned above. It also speaks of various disorders that are disgraceful. I have no heart to say any more.

Tense Conversations and Strained Relationships With A Group of Saints

December 1988 – February 1989

On December 20, 1988, after the church prayer meeting, a letter dated December 16, 1988, was handed to us by Daniel Sun, a brother in Anaheim, addressed to the elders and signed by eleven saints in the church including both brothers and sisters. After referring to the meeting of October 27th when we met with some of them, the letter said, "In view of what has developed, we feel the need of further fellowship and request that you meet with us as soon as possible due to the urgency of the issues." The letter then addressed seven areas of their concern. Because these concerns expressed the feelings of a number of saints in Anaheim, we will record them here in an abridged form. For the convenience of the reader, we will also include our response in an abridged form under each item.

Distribution of transcripts of the meeting on August 28, 1988 (sixteen points given by Godfred and me and confirmed in testimony by Al). They desired us to denounce this distribution openly before the saints and also to write an open letter to other churches to denounce the same. They further requested that we clarify that those points did not represent the feelings of all the elders or of all the saints, specifically those who signed this letter.

Response: We feel that the distribution of the sixteen points was allowed sovereignly by the Lord and used by Him. The points are solidly based on the Word of God and are for the greater part what we have always believed and taught in the Lord's recovery since the beginning. Therefore we do not feel that we can or should denounce their distribution either by word or by letter. Of course, some of the points were especially suited to our local situation and should be viewed as such. It is clear from the transcript that we did not purport to represent all the saints or all the elders. Should any saints have difficulties with these points, we encourage them to indicate their difficulties specifically in writing and send them to us; we will be happy then to address them in further fellowship.

The distribution of the flyer entitled *Significant Dates in the History of the Church in Anaheim* (in English and Chinese). They asked us to publicly denounce the

distribution of the flyer and to rebuke those who were responsible for it in order to stop such lawlessness.

Response: We feel it is wholly out-of-character and unbecoming to Christians to distribute such a flyer anywhere. We hope it will not be distributed in our meeting hall or in any place where the saints gather.

Untrue statements, public accusations, and character assassinations. They said that many untrue statements had been made during recent meetings which should be corrected and dealt with by the elders. Moreover they said that many public accusations had been made in the last few months which had grieved and offended many saints. They felt that the elders should help those who spoke these to deal with their offenses.

Response: Concerning some of the statements deemed offensive and untrue, Godfred has already publicly denounced and rebuked these. We encourage the saints offended by other matters shared to go directly to the brothers themselves according to the Lord's teaching in Matthew 18. We have spoken privately to a number of saints whose speaking may have been offensive, advising them to consider before the Lord what action He would have them to take.

Our relationship with Brother Lee. They felt that since the church had a long and close relationship with him, and since many saints consider him as the Lord's servant and would like to continue to receive help, the elders should be fair to all the saints and allow the same freedom of close fellowship between the church and him.

Response: We acknowledge the long and close relationship with Brother Lee and desire to be fair to all the saints. Our attitude is that we would like to practice true generality, where all the saints are free to follow their own conscience. Any saints desiring to receive Brother Lee's ministry by attending trainings and conferences or reading his books are at full liberty to do so. If any prefer not to do this, we should also afford them this liberty.

Brother Joseph Fung's visit to Anaheim. They felt that the presence of this brother at this time was not profitable to the church since he associates himself, they said, with many of the saints opposing Brother Lee's ministry and has made many slanderous and divisive statements.

Response: Whether or not Joseph's presence here is profitable for the church, only the Lord knows and can judge. We do not have any jurisdiction to ask him to leave the area. In fact, we consider that his visit has been helpful to many saints, and that our fellowship with him has been constructive for the building up of the church.

Regarding discipline exercised upon a certain brother. They did not agree with any decision issuing from an eldership that was not unanimous.

Response: Of course it was a highly unusual step to take without the consensus of the brothers and indeed regrettable that all the elders could not concur in this matter. By this you may realize the situation among the elders and how strongly we felt about the matter.

How do we go on? Regarding this point they said, "We feel we do love Christ and the church. We need to go on not only for a few saints but for many. We need your fellowship in this area."

Response: We answered this question under four headings:

By receiving the Word of God. Our greatest need is for the Lord to speak to us through His Word. Without the Lord's speaking it is impossible to go on or have a proper church life. The best way to overcome many troubling factors is to be well-nourished by the living, spoken Word of God. Our church life and daily life should be governed in all things solely by the Word of God, not by any expediency, tradition, or extraneous influence.

By following the Spirit's leading. In order to do this we must give the Lord His rightful place as our unique Head. As the church and as individuals we are directly responsible and accountable to the Lord and we need to receive our leading in all things from Him Who is now the Spirit within us. In order to seek the Lord's leading we need much more earnest prayer than we now have.

By practicing and keeping the oneness of the Spirit. To do this we must learn to receive all whom God receives with the love and grace of Christ regardless of their concepts or convictions. We hope that we will come out of any party or sectarian oneness that excludes other members. Moreover, we must learn to practice the proper generality in our attitude toward one another. In Anaheim at the present time we have the best environment to practice this generality that we have so long been taught but very little lived.

By preaching the gospel to the unbelievers and shepherding the saints. We sincerely hope that the Lord will raise up a healthy, normal, daily gospel preaching among us; this is vital to our going on. We hope that we may have a happy church life as a strong base and impetus for the spread of the gospel. With the gospel preaching we need adequate shepherding of all the new believers with the best use of home gatherings, either in their homes or in the homes of the saints.

After receiving the letter from these three brothers, we began to consider how best to respond. After much consideration we felt that due to the serious nature of the matters raised and demands made, we would answer the signatories of the letter in writing. Furthermore, due to the fact that many saints (not only the signatories of the letter) held concerns about the same matters, we decided to distribute copies of our response to all the saints that they may know where we stood on these matters. In the response distributed to all the saints we deleted our reply to item #6 since that touched upon a highly personal and sensitive matter. We also decided to append to the response an edited copy of the sixteen points given on August 28th so that they may have it for their reference, since it was referred to several times in the response.

We distributed the response to the signatories of the letter on Saturday evening, January 7th, and after the Lord's Day morning meeting, January 8th, we gave out an amended copy of the response (as mentioned above) to all the saints. Some of the brothers who had signed the letter to us were very unhappy that we made such a distribution to the saints; so we promised to meet with them the following evening to talk about the matters.

On Monday evening, January 9th, 1989 we met then with the brothers who had signed the letter to us. On February 7th, about one month later we met with them again. During those times the brothers grilled us and accused us in a manner that was quite out-of-character for them. This led us to suspect that they were receiving direction from behind the scenes. (We received a definite report through one of them to another brother that they had met with Brother Lee and talked with him about the Anaheim elders.) The atmosphere in these meetings was tense and oppressive. We felt that it was altogether not profitable for anyone or for the whole situation to meet in such a way. The chief spokesman for the brothers said to my face bluntly, emphatically, and with great finality, "We will not follow your direction!" Minoru Chen, one of the other elders in Anaheim, strongly confirmed and supported them. The meetings succeeded only in letting us know how they felt about some things, matters which we held an altogether different view and told them so.

These brothers, with two or three exceptions, had been with us for many years and knew us well, as we did them. Most all of them were exceedingly quiet and retiring brothers, but they represented a number of saints who desired to receive Brother Lee's ministry and leadership and were not happy with the way we were taking, although we endeavored to practice generality toward all saints regardless of their preference. They obviously did not agree with that or appreciate that. It was abundantly clear that, at least to them, our eldership was in name only. It was a grievous situation and one that could not continue much longer.

Elders From the Church in Raleigh, N.C. Visit Brother Lee

January 1989

I include in this narrative a brief account of the visit of the Raleigh brothers to Brother Lee, as related to me by them, since it affords another window upon the actual situation and since Brother Lee asked the Raleigh brothers to convey some concerns and questions to the elders in Anaheim. In the summer of 1988 Tom Cesar of the church in Raleigh came to Anaheim to discuss with Brother Lee the points of a seventy-one-page compendium entitled *Concerns with our Practice Regarding Truth and Life*, which had been mailed to him earlier. The brothers in Raleigh had labored for many hours over this work in the expectation that Brother Lee would read it, be apprised of their concerns, realize the gravity of the situation, and hopefully make some major changes in the course we were taking. Under each point they had put together xeroxed copies of pages with quotes from Watchman Nee and Brother Lee's earlier printed ministry together with quotes from his recent ministry to prove that there had been significant changes contradicting Brother Lee's own teaching. While Tom was in Anaheim that summer I saw him, and learning that he had presented Brother Lee with this writing I commented, "I doubt that Brother Lee will read it. He doesn't like to read things of that nature that raise questions concerning his work or ministry."

In the early fall of 1988 Brother Lee wrote to the brothers in Raleigh saying that he desired to meet with them face to face and clear up their concerns point by point. Later in December of that year he telephoned and asked them to come to Irving, Texas for the elders' meetings, and he would meet with them there. The Raleigh brothers were not free to come to Irving, so they agreed to come instead to Anaheim the week after the training to meet with Brother Lee. He said he would answer their questions. They arrived on Saturday, January 7, and met with Brother Lee that night. They met also on the Lord's Day morning, afternoon, and evening, and again on Monday morning – a total of approximately ten hours. The first evening Brother Lee did most of the speaking, giving them a history of the "conspiracy and rebellion." However, the brothers were able to say a few things. Tom pointed out how the church life was going down, and they were looking for answers. He said they had no problem with the matters of the new way, but how it was carried out was a problem. They were not concerned for right and wrong, but for God's righteousness. They read some verses to him and quoted from the *Normal Christian Church Life* by W. Nee, but Brother Lee did not want to hear it. He said that he knew what Watchman Nee meant in that book, and what Watchman Nee meant then does not apply to today's situation. He said, moreover, that there is no basic problem among us, but only a storm in Germany and Anaheim. John So, he said, exercises a strong control over Stuttgart, and just like Bill Freeman (a former elder of the church in Seattle) he is trying to set up another ministry. One of the Raleigh brothers then asked how you can identify another ministry. Brother Lee replied that it is very difficult. The brothers said that Brother Lee was very defensive at times and was like a ball bouncing from one matter to another. Tom Cesar asked, "Why can't brothers come together to discuss their concerns without being considered to be conspiring?" But Brother Lee, they said, had no ear to hear them. It was as if they were talking to the wall. He didn't want to clear up their points; he hadn't even read the outline they had presented to him the previous summer. He would not answer their questions directly. They were impressed that he never asked how the saints in the church in Raleigh were doing, as if he was not concerned for them. The brothers were very disappointed.

Brother Lee asked Tom Cesar to be his mediator and to convey four points of concern he had to Brother Al Knoch and me, which he did. I present them here with my answers:

Brother Lee has had a unique relationship with the church in Anaheim over the years, and now he has been excluded by the brothers.

Answer: We did not exclude him. Rather, we met with him repeatedly hoping that various problems could be resolved and eliminated so that we could go on together in a normal

relationship. The fact is, Brother Lee stayed away from the meetings in Anaheim of his own choice for at least two years before we were awakened to the problems and opened to him about them. We wondered why he never came. He said publicly before a large assembly of elders at that time that he "lost interest in the church in Anaheim."

Why in the past fourteen months have the elders in Anaheim not invited Brother Lee to speak in the church?

Answer: Why did Brother Lee not come to the church meetings? Every Lord's Day we got into the Word, and there was opportunity for everyone to speak. We were not burdened to invite him to hold a conference or give some special messages. We did not feel the church had need of that.

Why did the Anaheim brothers not share the sixteen points with him before the meeting of August 28, 1988?

Answer: After all our previous fellowship with Brother Lee, we did not feel it would be useful or profitable to do that.

Why did John Ingalls drop the matter of having a meeting with Brother Lee and some brothers to study together the concerns that have been raised?

Answer: I have already answered this question. [We had already met with Brother Lee a good number of times, opening to him and expressing our concerns to him, and made very little progress. Moreover, we feared, from past experience, that if we had such a meeting Brother Lee would dominate it, overwhelm us, and eventually whitewash the issues. Frankly speaking, my trust in Brother Lee, which had once been so high, was greatly reduced; he had lost much of his credibility with me. I shared my conclusion with Godfred and Al, and they agreed not to go ahead with it...A little while afterwards, when speaking on the phone with one of the elders in Long Beach, I told him of the proposal and our decision. He agreed with me that it would not be profitable. But his concurrence did not influence me; I was already convinced.]

Brother Lee also told the Raleigh brothers that John Ingalls has the concept that Witness Lee is a king, and John is trying to raise himself up to that level. (The Lord knows all our hearts and will judge.)

Brother Lee's Remarks At a Conference In San Diego

January 1989

On the weekend of January 27-29, 1989, Brother Lee had a conference in San Diego. He believed he had discerned the reason why some of the older elders and co-workers had some concerns regarding his work and the local churches, and he enunciated his feelings in one of the conference meetings. He spoke as follows:

"So today, let me tell you, the problem among us is this: there is a kind of consideration among the older co-workers -- not all, but some. There was a kind of consideration -- Where shall they be? Brother Lee was the one who brought the recovery to this country and was the one who through the Lord's ministry brought many, many of the older co-workers into the recovery. But now this one who brought the recovery to this country is seemingly deviating. Deviating from what? Into what? That's right, deviating from the old into the new. Now some of the co-workers have to consider where they should be. Shall they remain in the old, or shall they go forth into the new? Go forth? To say this is easy. You have to pay a price, especially the older ones. They have made a success in the recovery according to the old way, but now the old way was annulled. Then what shall we do? If you were them, surely you would consider. I must tell you, this is the root of all the troubles among us today. All the other things are on the surface; the root is here. Now you know."

This analysis absolutely missed the mark. I was surprised when I read the transcript that he could judge so superficially by saying that the root of all the problems is that the older co-

workers would not leave the old way and take the new. At the present time he has revised his explanation, yet still misjudges. He went on to speak of himself as follows:

"When I was told that I had deviated from the recovery, I checked with myself. Where? Where could I find my deviation? I couldn't find [anything]. So I could not have anything to repent of. I'm not proud. I'm sincere. I'm honest. I'm open. To tell you the truth, I like to repent. I have repented to the saints openly at least two or three times. Right? I didn't deviate from the recovery; rather I got into it more deeply. Right?

"I was in the Lord's interests exactly sixty years. Right? I surely, humbly tell you, I know what I'm doing. Especially a man at this age would not do anything in haste, not knowing what he is doing. I got attacked – you all know this. Right? I like to suffer, because I like to suffer for what I'm doing. I know."

"Dear saints, you have to realize that what we all have seen in the past is just some kind of organizational things. It was not organic. Right? I do not mean that there was absolutely nothing at all organic -- I would not say that. There were some parts organic, but the main situation was not organic. Could you follow me? And today what the Lord wants is to have a main item. The main item must be organic."

I record these remarks here because they manifest how Brother Lee felt about us at the time, and how he felt about himself and his work. The reader may make his own judgment from Brother Lee's words.

An Unprecedented Annual Business Meeting Of The Church In Anaheim

The church in Anaheim was registered with the state of California as a non-profit religious corporation, and according to its by-laws must hold an annual business meeting of all the members (consisting of all those who were regenerated and expressed their intention to meet with the church in Anaheim) with the main purpose of electing directors of the corporation. Each year this matter was held speedily at the close of the Lord's Table meeting on the first Lord's Day of March. The directors, according to our practice, were always elders though not required by law to be elders – any bona-fide member could be nominated and elected. The election was held by a voice vote of all the members present with usually none dissenting, and the meeting was adjourned, the whole affair lasting not more than five minutes. I believe many of the local churches are familiar with this practice. The saints were told and all realized that the church was not a secular entity to be administered as a business corporation in a worldly way, but since it owned property and received tax exemption it must in obligation to the State perform these legal functions however minimized they may be. Therefore, we endeavored to dispense with them as quickly as possible.

There were three directors who, according to the by-laws, served a three-year term on a rotational basis, meaning that every year one of the directors terms expired, and he must be either re-elected or replaced at the annual business meeting. The custom was to re-elect the one whose term expired, and it was always accomplished without any problem. Minoru Chen, Al Knoch, and myself were the directors. The one whose term expired that year was Minoru Chen, a brother who was transferred by Brother Lee from the church in Huntington Beach and appointed an elder in the church in Anaheim in March 1986. Most of the saints were aware that it was he whose term expired and that he must be considered for re-election. Now the problem to a number of saints was that he was an elder who stood strongly for Brother Lee's leadership, whereas those saints did not, and they would like to see him replaced. The rest of the saints desperately desired to see Minoru in that position. Such an abnormal and divided condition we had never experienced before.

The business meeting and election were to take place on the Lord's Day, March 5th. On Thursday evening, March 2nd, Al and I met with Minoru Chen and Philip Lin to discuss the agenda for the business meeting. Minoru made a point very strongly that according to

our custom the directors should always be elders. In fact, without our knowledge, in the preceding Lord's Day meeting on the Chinese-speaking side, Minoru had educated the saints to this effect, pointing out that in the coming election for directors, they should do the same on the English-speaking side. This we declined to do in the present divided situation, since the by-laws expressly stated that any member of the corporation could be nominated and elected to the post. We anticipated that this time we would have to vote by ballot as there would likely be more than one candidate nominated.

As the day drew near, we learned, there was much activity in progress to get out the vote, one side wanting to maintain Minoru in office as a director and the other wanting to replace him. The phone lines were hot. It was quite unseemly to say the least. Many saints were informed that they must show up in order to vote. If Minoru was voted out and replaced by someone who was not absolute for Brother Lee's leadership, that for some saints forebode an extremely unstable situation for the church and the property. If Minoru was elected that to some saints meant a foothold for Brother Lee and the LSM. We, speaking for Al and me, did not have any taste for the whole affair and were certain that in any case Minoru would be re-elected. If Al and I had wanted to remove Minoru (as some were charging us), since we constituted the majority of directors (two against one), we could, according to the by-laws, call a director's meeting and vote Minoru out of the directorship. But this we would never do.

At the close of the morning meeting on March 5th, the Chinese saints from their meeting on the other side of the building filed in, making a total of close to three hundred in attendance. As the president of the corporation, I was responsible to preside over the meeting. I stood and made a few introductory remarks concerning the nature of the meeting: I explained again that as a corporation we were bound legally to have the meeting and that it was a business meeting governed by by-laws, not a church meeting where anyone was free to speak as he was moved. The meeting was then called to order, the purpose of electing a director stated, and the meeting opened for nominations from the members. I endeavored to direct the meeting very strictly according to parliamentary procedure and the by-laws, to assure order, not give any ground for accusations, and eliminate any kind of maneuvering and disturbing behavior. It went fairly well considering the situation.

After a flurry of nominations, a number of which were declined, two persons remained to be voted upon: Chris Leu, who was not an elder, and Minoru Chen. Cards to serve as ballots were distributed, and four brothers chosen previously by the elders collected them and counted the vote. I myself abstained from voting. Minoru was elected, receiving 195 votes, to Chris Leu's 69. It was as I expected. When the count was announced by Al Knoch, the secretary of the corporation, many saints applauded with clapping of hands for Minoru's election. The meeting was soon adjourned.

I determined after that morning that I would never preside over such a church business meeting again. Such a function is wholly out of character with the church and utterly distasteful to the spirit. I was thoroughly fed up with the whole affair.

It has been said that since I failed through the election to have someone else installed to replace Minoru, for that reason I resigned from the eldership. The Lord knows that this is far from the truth and is the product of someone's overworked imagination.

Albert Knoch and John Ingalls Resign From Eldership

March 19, 1989

On Tuesday, March 14, 1989, Godfred, Al, and I had fellowship and prayer during the morning and then lunch together. It was a memorable time, a decisive time. I expressed strongly to the brothers my feeling concerning the futility and dishonesty of playing the role of elder in Anaheim any longer. It was hypocritical to go on in that status feeling as

we did with strong conviction that we were in a system. Moreover, we were totally incapable of changing the course of the church or of practicing a generality with the saints where all were free to follow their own conscience. These considerations dictated that we should resign. Both Godfred and Al agreed. Of course, Godfred had already resigned and withdrawn from the eldership on November 13, 1988, about four months earlier, but he was still concerned for Al and me. We fellowshiped about this matter and felt very clear that we should take the step and resign. I proposed that we wait to announce this to the saints until I would return from a trip to Europe planned for the end of March, but both Godfred and Al urged that we should do it immediately. We decided then to make a statement to this effect in the coming Lord's Day morning meeting, giving the reasons for it.

This was a critical and momentous decision for us. I had been an elder in the church in Los Angeles for twelve years and in the church in Anaheim for fifteen years, during all this time closely associated with Brother Witness Lee. This decision would change the course of our lives and of the church, but we believed it was of the Lord.

On Friday evening, March 17th, Al and I met with the other elders, Minoru Chen and Philip Lin, and announced to them our intention to withdraw from the eldership, giving them some explanation. They received it and urged us to notify Brother Lee immediately. This we intended to do, and did so by letter the next day.

Thus on the Lord's Day morning, March 19th, I rose at the close of the meeting and announced our decision to withdraw from the eldership of the church. I made a few introductory remarks, saying that "I began to realize that our practices have differed and deviated from our vision. Our vision was the same, our teaching was mostly the same, the truth is always the same, but our practice has really differed." I included a statement that the nature of what we called the Lord's recovery had changed, and then spoke in a number of points the reasons and basis for our decision to withdraw. I did this briefly without much elaboration, speaking for twenty-two minutes. I record here in abridged form the salient points.

1. There has been a change in emphasis to the building up of the work or the ministry more than the local churches. The ministry has been promoted, exalted, and built up, and the churches have suffered greatly in the process.
2. There had been a great effort and promotion to unite the saints and the churches around a certain leader and organization.
3. There has been much pressure with full expectation that all the saints and the churches will conform to the burden of the ministry and be identical with one another in full uniformity of practice to carry it out.
4. In February 1986 we had signed a letter along with 417 other elders agreeing that we would be identical with all the churches, that we would follow the ministry absolutely, and that we realized Brother Lee's leading was indispensable to our oneness. Since these matters were not in agreement with the Word of God, we greatly regretted that we had subscribed to them, and I stated publicly that I would retract my signature.
5. There has been an emphasis, at least in practice, on a centralization of the churches and the work.
6. There has been a pervasive control exercised over the church, not so much directly, but very much indirectly, which makes it difficult to go on by getting our leading directly from the Lord.
7. Church history reveals that denominations have begun with the affiliation of groups of saints under one leadership followed by the commencement of a training center. We were also going that way.

8. I greatly appreciate Brother Lee's portion, but he has been exalted and honored above what is written, according to 1 Corinthians 4:6.
9. Brother Lee and his ministry have been made a great issue and factor of division among us.
10. Our going on and our relationship with the saints and with the church is made to depend on our relationship with Brother Lee. When this is done the ground of oneness is replaced with something else.
11. We have applied the teaching concerning the ground of oneness in a divisive and sectarian way, so that we divide ourselves from other Christians. This is due to an improper attitude and application of the truth. In the local churches we have become narrow and small as manifested in our attitude toward other Christians and in our reception of other saints.
12. Our attitude toward other Christians is one of belittling them and thinking we're superior. What we need is the reality of oneness, not just the teaching or slogan.
13. The Lord told us in His Word to go forth to Him outside the camp. The Lord is still calling His sheep out of every fold and every camp so that there can be one flock with one shepherd.
14. Our oneness should be as large as the whole Body of Christ. Any oneness that is smaller than this we should leave and not keep.
15. We should all go directly to the Lord for His leading in the church in order to have a local administration, at the same time maintaining a proper fellowship with other saints and other churches. At this point I quoted some sentences from a pamphlet entitled *The Beliefs and Practices of the Local Church*, published by the Living Stream Ministry. One sentence reads: "In all administrative affairs, the local churches are autonomous and locally governed."
16. There has been an over-stressing and distortion of the teaching concerning deputy authority, which has caused the saints to be fearful to follow their conscience, to be one with their spirit, and sometimes to speak their genuine concerns.
17. There has been too much emphasizing of methods more than the inner anointing, and external big success more than the experience of the inner life.
18. We have no problem with the matters of the "new way". We wanted to make that clear. Actually these things are not new.

In conclusion I said, "Based on the above points, we feel we must withdraw from the eldership. We are not able to lead you in this way, nor are we able to lead you out of this way. Many of you feel strongly that you would like to take a certain direction, and as elders we cannot lead you in that direction.... We really love you in the Lord. The Lord knows that. We care for you, and we wish you all the very best in the Lord. You are in our prayers. You will always be in our prayers. We ask you to pray for us too. Pray for Brother Al and me. If we've offended any of you saints, we ask you to please forgive us. We surely never intended to offend any one of you. We still like to keep our fellowship with you all as fellow-members of the Body of Christ."

Al Knoch then rose and spoke for eleven minutes, giving a very genuine and touching statement regarding his inner feeling about the eldership. I will just quote briefly here. He began: "I am so thankful that John could share those points, because I could not do it so clearly. I hold the same concerns.... These were the same concerns we presented to Brother Lee in all our times with him. So he knows all of these things already, and he has considered them....As elders in the recovery we do have a problem with many of our practices, and there's no way we could in a good conscience continue on in the position without the reality. How can we lead you? We can't lead in that way, and yet the recovery is going that way."

"So we brothers feel...it's good for us, it's good for you, and it's good for the Lord that we withdraw at this time. The reason we didn't withdraw sooner, though we were clear to withdraw last December, is that we felt the need to stand here for these very concerns for a while longer to see what could be done, and to see how the saints would respond to this kind of stand. But the more we have done this, the more clear we have become that there will not be any change at this time in the way the recovery is going."

The saints, generally speaking, listened well, only interrupting once. The Lord's presence and strengthening were with us. Minoru Chen closed the meeting, saying that we all must realize that the points I had made were an expression of my own personal view. He made a special point of controverting my assertion that the nature of the recovery had changed. He said that the nature of the recovery had indeed not changed. That was his view.

I also resigned by letter from the board of directors and the presidency of the corporation. A great step had been taken and a turn made.

The next day I left with my wife for Europe, where I rested, while visiting and fellowshiping with a number of churches. Upon returning to Anaheim on May 2nd I was not led of the Lord to return to the meetings on Ball Road, where I had met with the saints for fifteen years, and where I had resigned from the eldership on March 19th. I continued to gather with saints for the Lord's Table in one of the couple's homes, where I had been meeting for some time prior to resigning.

New Elders Appointed To Replace Knoch and Ingalls

April 2, 1989

On the Lord's Day, April 2nd, at the end of the meeting, Minoru Chen stood and read a letter addressed to the saints from Brother Lee in Taiwan, appointing two brothers to replace Al and me in the eldership. They were Eugene Gruhler, who was brought from Denver, and Francis Ball, who was transferred from San Gabriel. These brothers had been elders in Anaheim some years previously. They were both present in the meeting as Minoru read Brother Lee's letter.

In the letter Brother Lee acknowledged that he had received our letter notifying him of our resignation, and had also heard of its accomplishment. He remarked, "I am very sorry for the two brothers that their course in following the Lord would have such an issue." He went on to say that he was very much concerned for the eldership in the church in Anaheim, and that he had felt led of the Lord to ask Eugene Gruhler and Francis Ball to "reassume their eldership in Anaheim in meeting the urgent need there...." Later in the year we heard that six more elders had been appointed by Brother Lee to the eldership in Anaheim, making a total of ten. Thus our eldership had been replaced, revised, and greatly enlarged in number. **End of John Ingalls' book**

Appendix 10

The following word by Brother Lee about avoiding family entanglements was given about a year and a half before the new way began. Brother Lee's son had already been in position for several years as business manager of the Living Stream Ministry and, as it turned out, was to soon take on new and greater responsibilities in the work during the new way. Yet, Brother Lee shared in an elders' meeting, "*When the family is brought into the church leadership, or into the work, there is a peril that the thing would not be so pure.*"

In name, Philip came into the LSM operation as manager of books and tapes distribution. In actuality, he was an integral part of the work, with people answering to him throughout Southern California, the United States, and the world. Brother Lee vividly proved his own

point about family entanglements when he inexplicably did not apply his own advice to himself.

John Ingalls shares,

Regarding the controlling of the churches by the management of the LSM Office, Brother Lee said that he had advised Philip Lee never to give any impression of such a thing. He told us that he had instructed him ten times never to touch the churches, the elders, the co-workers, or the work. That Brother Lee had to tell him ten times indicates that there was indeed a problem. But this matter, he said, would not be hard to deal with (December 12, 1987).

Nevertheless, Philip continued to wreak havoc in the churches, and he still worked in the LSM office amidst reports of his moral misconduct. Neither the reports about his interferences in the churches nor the reports of his moral misconduct were acted upon. Phyllis Clover said an Irvine sister, the wife of an elder, attempted to contact Brother Lee seven times without response from him about her concern over Philip's misconduct in the office of LSM. An LSM sister from Huntington Beach tried to give a report in person to Brother Lee about Philip's interferences in the churches, and Brother Lee would not let her speak long, as if he didn't want to know. He seemed to only be concerned that advances were being made to establish LSM in localities around the world.

Avoiding Family Entanglements

By Witness Lee

According to human affections, it's really hard for anyone not to have his family involved in his career. If you have a business or some kind of enterprise, it is easy for your family to get involved in it. Nonetheless, in spiritual things family involvement is always an entanglement. The relationship among the apostles and among the elders and even among the churches should be absolutely and purely in the spirit. I do believe this is the basic reason that in the early days of the church and the work, the elders and particularly the apostles didn't bring in their families. When the family is brought into the church leadership, or into the work, there is a peril that the thing would not be so pure.

I have seen a few places—praise the Lord, not many—where the co-workers brought their family into the relationship with other saints. In some places also I have seen where the elders brought their families into relationships with others. Eventually, with not one exception, wherever there was such an involvement, there was suffering and loss...

The point is this. In the eldership we must bear the responsibility in a very pure way. There must be purity in the motive, in the intention, in the procedure, and in all the doings related to the leadership.

It is always good to draw a clear line between the leadership and your family. It is not easy. Because you are of those taking the lead, things will come to your attention at home. Then your wife or children can easily get involved. For the long run it is always profitable to draw a clear line.

No Friendships

In all the years I knew Brother Nee, I can testify that he never had any family friends among the saints. He only had fellowship with the brothers; he never had friendship, even with the co-workers and elders. Furthermore, he never brought his relatives into the church leadership or into the work. As Mrs. Nee later testified, before they were married Brother Nee told her, "I am taking you as my wife; I am not marrying you as a co-worker." All the time I was there and saw the situation, Mrs. Nee never came into the work. She

was a good sister but she was not brought into the work. Nor was she even a deaconess in the church. Brother Chang knows this quite well.

This is a serious matter. Apparently to have the family brought into the work is a help to us. Actually it doesn't help. Eventually it will cause great suffering. In some places I have seen a family influencing and even controlling. In some cases it went as far as controlling other places....

It is hard to be pure, and it is hard to be in spirit, as long as the family is involved. Our relationship should only be spiritual with the co-workers, with the brothers, and with other saints. It should be absolutely pure, and purely in the spirit.

No Honey

These days I have been working on the three epistles of John. The last one does say, "The friends greet you" (3 John 14). And the Lord Jesus did say, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep" (John 11:11). There was a kind of friendship. But that friendship was a spiritual friendship; it was not based on natural affection. What I mean is this: natural affection should be kept aside. This is typified by the word not to put honey in the meal offering (Lev. 2:11). Natural affection is not that evil, like leaven; it is something sweet. Well, there must be no honey in the Lord's work, no honey in the church leadership. The relationships should be pure; the fellowship should be genuine, in the spirit.

We must avoid honey, natural affection, especially in the church responsibility. Once our family comes in there is a real impureness. This doesn't mean that our wives and children shouldn't come into the Lord's interest. They should. But the line should be drawn (excerpt from *Practical Talks to the Elders*, pp. 69 –73, 1983).

Appendix 11

Francis Ball and Philip Lin show by their comments that their integrity must have been quite challenged during the late eighties test in Anaheim.

Reflections On the Truth

1. Francis Ball Comment and more

In a Paul Kerr email

In a leaders meeting held in Rosemead during the Pasadena conference, Brother Lee was complaining about how much the church in Anaheim was mistreating him and his son and how much he and his family were suffering because of the church in Anaheim. At the end they had a question period so I got up to ask a few questions, stating something like, "I just wanted to preface my questions with a remark to clarify this issue publicly before all the brothers here so there is no misunderstanding. In fact, it is not the church in Anaheim causing suffering to Brother Lee and his family but it is Brother Lee and his son Philip that is causing suffering to the church in Anaheim. Now I have a couple of questions... In the Genesis life-studies you [Brother Lee] claimed that John So was a pillar in the church, and we should follow his example. In the Timothy training you turned to John Ingalls and declared publicly that he was your Timothy. But now that they disagree with you and your son, instead of accepting their fellowship you attempt to discredit them before others and cut them off. How could a pillar and Timothy so easily be cut off? Why would you treat these brothers in such a fashion?"

[Brother Lee answered ED], then immediately after my questions the so-called "question and answer fellowship" part of the meeting ended, and Francis jumped up to abruptly end the meeting, shamelessly declaring that he was delighted to be

an ostrich with his head in the sand. Shortly thereafter he was chosen as a replacement "elder" in Anaheim.

Was I shunned afterwards? Anaheim was in an uproar. It was chaos at almost every meeting. I wasn't thinking about whether I was personally shunned or not. It was not in my consciousness because I was trying to help the faithful elders rescue a situation that was quickly becoming a theater of the absurd. They were being aggressively undermined by a certain segment of the church and I countered this at every given opportunity publicly and privately, not as a matter of "sides" or preferred personalities but as a matter of truth. When Godfred resigned I talked to him after the meeting and tried to encourage him to continue leading in an "unofficial" capacity to help bring the church through the proverbial shark infested waters. He appreciated my efforts but I could tell, and he basically stated, that he had enough. Of course I understood this completely. Some people had even stooped to make racist remarks about him, calling him "Ham" i.e. he wouldn't cover up Lee [Noah] so he is cursed like Africa i.e. the descendents of Ham where, of course, he came from. Can you imagine such drivel being said about such a well-educated dignified brother in Christ? Shameful.

2. Philip Lin Comment

Philip Lin, an Anaheim elder during the late eighties on the Chinese side and in good standing today, spoke honestly during the turmoil:

Paul Kerr shares in an email:

The introduction of truth into any situation is like a spot light and forces those involved to either submit to it or not. In the Lord's work when we find ourselves weaseling around the truth for personal loyalties, financial considerations, politics, etc. we have already compromised ourselves.

Along this line, I recall a leaders meeting before a Sunday morning meeting in Anaheim during the late eighties turmoil. A few of us younger brothers who were learning to serve in the church, helping the elders, etc. were there and had been involved in such meetings for quite some time. I had asked the question: "Why should we let 2 brothers [Brother Lee & his son] who don't even come to the meetings wreak havoc on a church of over 500 people? Let's just ignore them and go on." Just after I asked it, Philip Lin walked in late. He asked, "What did Paul ask?" Godfred replied, "It was a very good question, Paul go ahead and ask it again?" So I did, and this was Philip Lin's almost verbatim response: "I know in my conscience you brothers are right according to the truth, but in my culture I must be loyal to brother Lee." Of course he was not just referring to my question but to the overall situation, the 16 points the faithful elders had previously ministered, etc. Frankly, I appreciated and admired his honesty. It was so striking I still clearly remember it today. He was one of the few who openly admitted that his loyalty was personalized.

Appendix 12

Rosemead has often been referred to in the ministry, but not in an accurate way before the Lord and in the churches. This word by an elder of the church in Rosemead was given to set the record straight about the developments in Rosemead that led to division in that locality.

Rosemead

Exposing the Falsehood in the Publication entitled “A Clarifying Statement Concerning the Chinese Work in Southern California”.

By David Wang

“Therefore do not fear them; for nothing is covered which shall not be revealed, and hidden which shall not be made known. What I say unto you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops. And do not fear those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; but fear rather Him Who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell Gehenna.” Matthew 10:26-28

On May 10, 1989 two brothers, David Dong and James Lee came to my home. They brought five copies of “A Clarifying Statement concerning the Chinese Work in Southern California” (hereafter referred to as “the statement”). Earlier, I read a pamphlet entitled “A Joint Statement by the Responsible Brothers of the Chinese Work in Southern California.” The contents of these two statements are similar. They address the events which occurred in the Church in Rosemead. The difference is that the new statement changed some parts and added more material. Also, eleven brothers signatures were added. (Thomas Hwang, Irvine; John Chow, Irvine; Abraham Ho, Cerritos; Gilbert Chang, Cerritos; William Yueh, Hacienda Heights; John Chang, Fullerton; Simon Yang, Huntington Beach; Philip Lin, Anaheim; Minoru Chen, Anaheim; David Dong, Monterey Park; and James Lee, San Gabriel.)

When I read the first statement, I did not feel inwardly that I should do anything. After I finished reading this new statement, there was an urging from the Lord within me, causing deep feelings and touching words.

Almost two years have passed since various churches used the meeting hall of the Church in Rosemead to start the “door-knocking” training in the San Gabriel Valley area. The coordinating and serving brothers in the Church in Rosemead have not published anything to bring to the light the events which occurred. Also, many saints who were concerned about us hoped we would write something so that they would know the truth. Because the saints in many cities were not clear about the situation, rumors abounded. These events were of a negative nature and they involved problems with certain saints. If they were exposed, they would only bring out the worst and result in shame to the Lord’s name. It would be better if each of us would remain quiet before the Lord and let him illuminate and vindicate Himself. Because of this, we were silent toward the outside, hoping that in time these negative things would pass.

I have read carefully through these two statements. Instead of “clarifying” matters, they will cause those who do not know the facts but solely rely on these statements to have a mistaken impression of the Church in Rosemead. It will further destroy the fellowship among God’s children and divide God’s churches. The damage to the church will far exceed the damage brought on during the door-knocking movement.

I was personally involved in the events that occurred in the Church in Rosemead. If these misleading statements with partial truth are allowed to circulate among God’s children, if they are used as “standard answers” and I remain silent, an injustice would be done to the brothers and sisters in the Church in Rosemead. For this reason I feel the responsibility to bring out the truth in detail. After fellowship with the coordinating and serving brothers they all said, “Amen”, and they also felt that it was necessary to release the truth.

There were some truths in the statement. However, there were also many errors, twisting of facts, intentional covering up of truth, and lies. I want to start from the beginning, point by point to describe what actually happened. At the end, I will share my personal feelings before the Lord.

- I. Page 2 of the statement – “1. In the San Gabriel Valley area where these events took place, only the Church in Rosemead had a meeting hall. So, it was decided that all the activities related to the door knocking “gospel festival”, including meetings and trainings be held in the Church in Rosemead. During the meeting, brother Wang expressed that he was happy to let the brothers use the meeting hall. He also expressed that the other elders would consent.”

True, it was agreed upon by John Kwan, Joseph Chu, and myself. But, during the ten days or so that followed, in dozens of big and small meetings, the brothers responsible for the door knocking training used many inflammatory remarks, revolutionary terms, and uttered nonsense. The damage they brought to the church was beyond our wildest dreams. Some of the trainers’ remarks were as follows:

- “Success of revolution depends on propaganda. To take the New Way we need to learn from the Communists in their propaganda techniques. The way of propaganda is through the clever use of our tongues.”
- “We need to learn from the Red Guards. Even, “we need to learn from Satan, for whenever God wants to do a work, Satan is always one step ahead.”
- “The New Way requires no prayers. The more you pray, the more confused you are. Just follow the instructions and do it. You’ll be all right.”
- “At the end of 1987, we’ll have ten new churches set up in the San Gabriel Valley to present to Brother Lee as a present to please him.”
“Even though he says he does not want people to elevate him, actually in his heart he likes us to do it. Therefore, just go ahead and do it. This is the secret I have learned in the past years.”
- “We need to squeeze money out of brothers and sisters. For where their treasure is, there will their heart be also.”

Several saints who were originally from mainland China privately expressed that this kind of “leading” resembled the “Communists”. It brought them back to nightmare scenes of the past. One Lord’s Day morning after ten days of gospel “blitz” (a nazi term commonly used for door knocking), two men came to the meeting hall. They wanted to see the person in charge. First, they wanted to ascertain if there was indeed a church. Second, they wished to protest the disturbance the door knockers brought to their community. After I explained and apologized, they left. Later, I found out that one of the men had pulled out a gun and chased the door knockers from his home.

It is true, we opened the door and willingly let brothers use the meeting hall. Our initial intention was pure and simple: to spread the Gospel and lead people to salvation. But today after almost two years, my personal feeling is that we have let in the wolves, causing great damage to the church!

- II. Page 3 of the statement – “3. It was decided that all the expenses relating to the gospel festival would come from the participating churches through their offerings. They would be passed on to the Church in Rosemead and be designated for the gospel festival. Brother Wang would personally handle the accounts for receipts and disbursements.”

This is an intentional covering up of the truth so that the readers would be led to believe that during that period, I was solely responsible for all the financial matters. The facts are as follows: At the time, myself, William Yeuh and Jacob Ho were responsible for the financial matters. Three of us were proposed by Minoru Chen and agreed upon by all. All of the expenditures, including those for the full-timers and their traveling expenses were approved, some by me, some by Jacob Ho. Those items with larger sums were co-approved by two of three. Copies of these documents are still on file in the Church in Rosemead. I did not handle the detailed accounts either. It was assigned to specific persons in the Church in Rosemead. Here, I would like to especially point out one thing that happened.

The planner of the door knocking training probably only had Witness Lee's approval but did not present it to Philip Lee to secure his permission. Then one day in his office, Philip demanded to know who initiated this? Who gave permission? Who decided to have the offerings handled by the Church in Rosemead? Later, the planner confessed and repented to him. From then on, as it was announced in the meetings, the saints were to write their checks to “Living Stream Ministry” and designate the checks for the “Chinese Work”. After that, the Church in Rosemead was not involved in the matters of receiving and disbursing funds.

- III. Page 3 – “On July 21, 1987, the Chinese-speaking brothers and sisters from Southern California held the first combined prayer meeting in Rosemead. There were one hundred sixty in attendance. The following week, it increased to one hundred ninety-eight”.

There is an error. The first combined prayer meeting was on July 14, not July 21. The attendance was one hundred sixty-five. One hundred ninety-eight came in the third week, not the second.

- IV. Page 4 – “On August 28, 1987, the saints from other localities continued to arrive to participate in the activities. The gospel festival formally started the same night. In the first meeting, there were about four hundred fifty people.”

This is also an error. That night there were five hundred thirty in the meeting. In the young people's room (via closed circuit TV) there were eighty-five. The total was six hundred fifteen.

- V. Page 5 - “Because of the need, on the first Monday after the gospel festival (December 9, 1987) the brothers started the first home meeting training in Rosemead”.

Again an error. September 9 was a Wednesday, not Monday.

- VI. Page 5 – “After a week, four brothers from the Church in Rosemead asked brother Wang to arrange for a meeting with Jacob Ho to fellowship regarding the cleaning of the meeting hall and repairing the damaged chairs. Brother Jacob Ho suggested that all the responsible ones from the Chinese-speaking meetings should meet, fellowship and resolve the matters”.

This is a twisting and purposely covering up the important facts, so that the reader would be misled to think: (1) cleaning the meeting hall and repairing the chairs were such minor matters. A few in the Church in Rosemead would capitalize on this matter and blow it out of proportion, causing problems and “resulting in discord among the saints, causing confusion and destroying oneness” (page 10 of the statement). Therefore, it was most unfortunate. (2) Jacob Ho’s proposal was right. Therefore, everything that happened in the Church in Rosemead was brought on by the saints themselves.

Here are the facts:

On the evening of September 16, 1987, after the church prayer meeting (that meeting was accused by some as a gathering to incite division), I remarked that because of the continuous use of the meeting hall for the training, there was continuous traffic day and night. It was a difficult job to keep the meeting hall clean, chairs arranged and the place kept safe. We needed to find a way for all to participate. Later three responsible brothers, Daniel Chu, Pang-Ho Chen and Albert Lee (not four) were compelled to seek fellowship with Jacob Ho. The reason they sought to have fellowship with Jacob Ho was because David Dong had returned from Chicago after the ten-day door knocking training to move his family here. At the same time, Jacob Ho was leading a group of young full-timers. Because he came to the meeting hall almost daily and he was more acquainted with the situation. We hoped to coordinate with him so that the responsibilities would not be solely borne by the saints in Rosemead.

When I called Jacob Ho, he very reluctantly agreed to meet and the time was set to have fellowship in the meeting hall on Saturday morning. Later he called to say that he did not have peace to meet with the other three brothers. He also said that if myself, Joseph Chu and John Kwan would like to meet instead, he was willing. I was puzzled by his uneasiness to meet with the other three brothers. I wondered if there were other hidden reasons. However, in order not to bring hardship on him, I cancelled the meeting originally scheduled for Saturday morning.

On the Lord’s day afternoon, Joseph Chu tried to reach me at the meeting hall. I was not there, but Jacob Ho happened to answer the phone. Joseph Chu took the opportunity to encourage Jacob Ho not to refuse fellowship with the brothers. If he was to continue in the area but was not willing to receive fellowship, there would be difficulties.

From the beginning of the door knocking movement, Joseph Chu did not agree with certain practices. On the one hand, his conscience did not allow him to follow blindly. On the other hand, he did not want to stop others from following. He felt the best way was to withdraw.

Several months before the door knocking training the English-speaking saints in the Church in Rosemead were led by John Kwan to go out door-knocking. Often, the Lord’s day meeting was cancelled. There were divisions and complaints everywhere.

Because of that, the Chinese-speaking saints were much more reserved concerning the New Way and door knocking. Many held the attitude of “wait and see”. That was why, during the ten-day door knocking training, many serving brothers and sisters from the church in Rosemead did not enthusiastically participate.

During that period, David Dong, Jacob Ho, and Aaron Lee paid two visits to Joseph Chu. Since they had known each other for years, Joseph Chu shared his feelings with these young co-workers. However, this fellowship later was used to secretly report on him.

After Jacob Ho refused to fellowship with the brothers, and while I was waiting for an opportunity to coordinate with the brothers holding the training in regards to cleaning the meeting hall and other services, I received an unexpected phone call from Taipei. Tuesday, September 22, 1987, from the telephone answering machine, I received a message from brother Witness Lee to call him in Taipei at 6:00 pm. At the time I had a feeling that the storms were gathering. Later it became very clear to me that “the authorities” had gathered enough information and had come to a decision to start taking action against those in the church in Rosemead who were not zealous for the New Way. Looking back today, their strategy was very obvious: first, to replace the eldership; second, to use the new elders to deal with the “disobedient” ones. That’s why the matter of fellowship with Jacob Ho concerning the meeting hall services took a new turn and became a step toward subsequent events.

- VII. Page 6 – “Later, John Kwan called Witness Lee in Taipei, asking Francis Ball to return from Taipei to help administer the church...Shortly after, Witness Lee talked to David Wang over the phone, inquiring about Joseph Chu. David Wang said that he did not recall Witness Lee ever setting up Joseph Chu as an elder. Lee said, ‘Yes, I only arranged for Joseph Chu to be a co-worker. I hope he would continue as a co-worker and minister truth and life to the Church in Rosemead.’ The news that circulated that Witness Lee had terminated the eldership of Joseph Chu was inaccurate”.

This is confusing the facts on purpose, attempting to find a scapegoat, in order to mislead the reader into thinking:

- (1) In the church in Rosemead there was an elder by the name of Francis Ball who was visiting Taipei. Since the Church in Rosemead now had problems, John Kwan quickly called Witness Lee in Taipei to send Francis Ball immediately to help take care of the church. Witness Lee because of his care for the church in Rosemead quickly agreed. (I had no idea that John Kwan made the phone call. Maybe it was one of those “private fellowships” which he often used as a reason. As to Francis Ball I have more to say later.)
- (2) When Witness Lee talked to David Wang over the phone, he inquired about Joseph Chu. It was David Wang who had problems with Joseph Chu and brought up the matter questioning whether Joseph was even an elder. Witness Lee simply confirmed that Joseph Chu was only a co-worker, not an elder.
- (3) Witness Lee cared for Joseph Chu very much even though he was not an elder. Witness Lee still hoped that he would continue, as a co-worker, to minister truth and life.
- (4) Since both David Wang and Witness Lee denied that Joseph Chu was an elder, the news that was circulated about Witness Lee’s termination of Joseph Chu’s eldership was inaccurate.

The truth of the matter is: At 6:00 pm on Tuesday, September 22, 1987, I returned the phone call to Witness Lee. Right away Witness Lee asked, “David, could I ask you to tell me the entire matter concerning Joseph Chu?” To me, the question was not just unexpected, but too broad. I did not know where to start. I said, “Is it that you wish to know Joseph Chu’s attitude toward the New Way?” Witness Lee said, “O. K., let’s go ahead.”

Wang: “I feel that Joseph Chu had two problems with the New Way. First, that no one should bring the new ones to the church meetings (referring to the Lord’s Day meeting).”

Lee: “This is a wind from the devil. It is not my teaching ... Who said that?...Whom did you hear it from?”

At his demand for an answer, I told him Andrew Yu said it. (As a matter of fact, this is Witness Lee’s own teaching. It is one of the important rules in practicing the New Way.) The reason I brought up Andrew Yu was because during the ten-day door knocking training Andrew Yu came to Rosemead and said it in the meeting. At this time, Witness Lee seemed to be taken by surprise. He paused for a while and the phone remained quiet. (Later, Andrew Yu called me. Then I found out that he was next to Witness Lee, listening to the entire conversation. He admitted that he had said it.) Then Witness Lee asked what was the second point Joseph Chu had problems with.

Wang: In order to release the spirit, it was necessary to raise both hands and jump on chairs.” (I meant the kind of teaching emphasized outward methods and neglected the reality in our spirit within, but Witness Lee interrupted me.)

Lee: Whose teaching is this? Who said it? This is not my teaching” (From his voice, he sounded very upset.)

Similarly under pressure, I told him Jacob Ho told people at Rosemead to do it. (Actually, Jacob Ho was not the only one.)

Lee: “What any co-worker says and does cannot represent me. Only what I said from my lips can represent me. What’s inside of me no one knows, only I myself do.”

Then he spent a great deal of time describing how he personally received a burden from the Lord, how the New Way is practiced, and so forth. At the end he said again, “If someone agrees (referring to the New Way), let him follow positively. If he opposes, it is a lack of wisdom.” Then the subject was returned to Joseph Chu.

Lee: “David, in your memory, do you recall if I ever set up Joseph Chu as an elder?”

Wang: “I remember when Joseph Chu first came to the United States, you asked him to go to Elden Hall (first meeting place of the Church in Los Angeles) to serve there.”

Lee: Yes, I was the one to ask him to go to Elden Hall. However, I asked him to go as a co-worker to help the saints in life and truth. Try to remember again. Did I ever set him up as an elder?”

Under his questioning, I said I did not remember. (It was the spring of 1977 when Joseph Chu came to Elden Hall to serve. At that time I was not yet entered into the coordination of the responsibility in the church. There was no way I could remember.)

Lee: “Yes, I remember, I did not. You asked Francis Ball to come to Rosemead to help. He is now in Southeast Asia. As soon as he returns to Taipei, I’ll ask him to go to Rosemead right away. As for now, the elders in the Church in Rosemead shall consist of you, John Kwan and Francis Ball, three of you. From now on, the matters for the church in Rosemead, you three decide. You don’t need to consult with Joseph Chu any more.” (When I heard this, I was stunned.)

After three days, on September 25, 1987, Francis Ball arrived in Rosemead.

At this point, I would like to share my feelings. Witness Lee totally ignored how Joseph Chu had coordinated with the brothers in the Church in Rosemead in the past ten years and denied his eldership in the church in Rosemead. This showed that he totally disregarded the feelings of the Church in Rosemead. Even if Joseph Chu is no longer an elder but a co-worker, concerning the church matters should not we consult with him anymore?

The fact is, ten years is not a short time. From the time in Elden Hall through moving to Rosemead, Joseph Chu followed the example of Paul as a “tent-maker”, supporting himself, his family and helping others, laboring to serve the church, longsuffering, shepherding God’s flock. He was not only gifted in the Word, but especially gifted in spiritual discernment. He not only ministered the Word in the church, but privately continued to care for and encourage the saints. For every decision in the church, whether it be minor or major, or setting up the serving ones, he always participated. He was always functioning as an elder in the church here. Witness Lee was not unaware of it. Now he had such a drastic change in attitude toward Joseph Chu, simply because Joseph Chu was not enthusiastic about the New Way. What is this? This is to set aside the dissenters.

VIII. Page 6 – “Francis Ball was an elder in the Church in San Bernardino. In January 1987, two elders in Rosemead, John Kwan and David Wang, requested Witness Lee to arrange for Francis Ball to come to Rosemead to strengthen the eldership there. After Witness Lee agreed on February 1, 1987, during a combined Lord’s table of the English-speaking and Chinese-speaking saints, John Kwan and David Wang formally announced it to the church”.

This is twisting the truth by using half the facts.

- (5) Only John Kwan and David Wang were mentioned. Joseph Chu was deliberately left out. The reader would be led to think that Joseph Chu was not involved in the matter. The fact is, it was decided by the three of us.
- (6) The request to Witness Lee was made in January 1987. Witness Lee agreed immediately. Francis Ball was notified and was ready to move to Rosemead. There, on February 1, we formally announced him as an elder in Rosemead. The whole matter transpired in less than a month. This kind of inaccurate statement led the reader to think that since February 1, 1987, Francis Ball had been an elder in the Church in Rosemead. It tries to show that in September 1987, when Francis Ball came to Rosemead he was not “sent” but rather “returned” to Rosemead.

The truth is: The reason that three of us brothers had fellowship to consider inviting Francis Ball to Rosemead stemmed from the fact that since March 1986 Don Hardy was forced to leave the church in Rosemead for obscure reasons (more detail later). The English-speaking saints here needed help.

In June 1986 we brought this matter up. After fellowship and the decision, around July we asked John Kwan to ask Francis Ball privately if he had a burden to come. He expressed that no decision could be made until he had fellowship with Witness Lee.

In August 1986, Witness Lee held several conferences in Anaheim sharing about door knocking and home meetings. All of a sudden Witness Lee sarcastically said in one meeting, “the Church in Rosemead would even invite Francis Ball to be a pastor.” At this time, we found out Francis Ball had already talked to Witness Lee, but we still had not received a definite answer from Francis Ball whether or not he was coming to Rosemead.

In January 1987, we discussed the same matter again. Even though Witness Lee had consented, Francis Ball had to go to Taipei immediately to serve at the American school. Having no timetable when to come back to the states, we arranged to have brother Francis and sister Martha meet with the saints in Rosemead on February 1, 1987.

Before the meeting on February 1, 1987, we four brothers (myself, Joseph Chu, John Kwan, Francis Ball) met at the elders' room to pray. Francis Ball specifically asked the church not to announce his eldership till he came back from Taipei. So during that meeting brother and sister Ball were introduced to the church. No so-called "formal announcements were made by John Kwan and David Wang". Afterwards, I checked with the leading one in the Church in San Bernardino regarding the living support of Francis Ball, and was told that Francis Ball is still an elder there, so they will continue to support his living.

In September 1987, Francis Ball came to Rosemead but he still would go back and forth to the Church in San Bernardino. He told me this matter to my face, so I clearly knew the situation. Up to this day, the Church in Rosemead has never formally announced Francis Ball's eldership.

On September 25, 1987, Francis Ball came to Rosemead. That same night he and John Kwan came to my home. Through his notes from Taipei, Francis Ball told me and John Kwan what Witness Lee wanted Francis Ball to tell us:

- (1) The accusation against Joseph Chu that as a result of several times of fellowship between local saints and Joseph Chu, many saints were influenced by him and not following the New Way.
- (2) Witness Lee never appointed Joseph Chu as an elder.
- (3) Repeated Witness Lee's message about the New Way and its practices. If you agree, then you should pursue the New Way aggressively. Witness Lee would not tolerate any opposition.
- (4) From now on, the elders of the Church in Rosemead are three: John Kwan, Francis Ball and David Wang.

On September 27, 1987, the whole church in Rosemead came together on the Lord's Day. It was Francis Ball's first meeting in Rosemead. He gave a message entitled, "Following a Man". He said explicitly we have to follow Witness Lee – the Lord's up-to-date ministry. After Francis Ball finished his message, Daniel Chu stood up and said, "Brothers and sisters, we can no longer keep silent, we can no longer go against our conscience. We have to rise up and speak." A tremendous echo of "Amen" was heard in the meeting. After the meeting, many saints surrounded Francis Ball and questioned him. On a Lord's day approximately two to three weeks later, Francis Ball got even more bold to announce that only the Lord's table meeting is a meeting of the church, all other meetings are ministry meetings. Some left the meetings and some contended with Francis Ball after they heard what he announced.

- IX. On Page 6 the statement said, "October 1, 1987, Thursday, Lin Rang, Paul Wu and Titus Chu came to the United States from Taipei. The next night the leading ones of the Chinese-speaking meeting decided to have a special Lord's day meeting in Anaheim on October 4. The three brothers from Taipei would share the practice and blessings of the New Way in Taipei. Saturday, Francis Ball tried several times to contact David Wang without success, so

Francis Ball and John Kwan tentatively decided that the whole church should attend the special meeting in Anaheim. Then late at night, Saturday, Francis Ball finally got hold of David Wang on the phone and decided that Rosemead would have their regular meeting on Sunday, October 4. The saints would be free to attend either the meeting in Rosemead or in Anaheim. The rumor that Francis Ball locked up the door of the meeting hall and wanted to excommunicate a brother is not true.”

The above is a lie with the intention of covering up the facts. Until some saints called me, I did not know about the arrival of the three brothers from Taipei nor the decision to have the special meeting in Anaheim. They were asking whether there would be a meeting in Rosemead or if we were all to go to Anaheim. Then this matter was made known to me. I felt confused and wondered why this matter was kept secret. Because on the last Lord’s Day the church had announced a joint meeting in Rosemead with Alhambra. How come, all of a sudden, the meeting was changed to Anaheim? Who made the decision? After this whole matter was over, I heard that that special meeting was intended to be held at the meeting hall in Rosemead originally, but because of some unknown reasons, they could not make up their mind until the last moment. What were the other goals beside “share the practice and blessings of the New Way in Taipei”?

On October 3, Saturday evening, the young people had a meeting in the home of Daniel Chu. Midway through the meeting David Dong and Francis Ball suddenly appeared unannounced. After the meeting, Daniel Chu announced in Chinese that there would be a special meeting in Anaheim on Sunday, the next morning. Because the meeting had been announced on such short notice, there was no way to notify all the saints. Thus the saints were free to go to either the meeting in Rosemead or in Anaheim. The Church in Rosemead would still have a regular meeting. David Dong interpreted the above to Francis Ball and gave him the wrong impression, saying that Daniel Chu asked the saints not to go to Anaheim.

At 12:30 a. m. the same night, Francis Ball called me and complained that Daniel Chu was not an elder nor authorized by any elder. He asked why Daniel Chu dared to tell the saints not to go to Anaheim. To Francis Ball, this was an extremely serious matter. I asked him, Where are you now? He said that he is in the meeting hall. I told him that since it is so late, to wait until morning. Francis Ball replied, “No, I already had fellowship with Philip Lee and John Kwan and made the decision that we three (Francis Ball, John Kwan, and David Wang) should deal with Daniel Chu strongly and promptly. I said that in dealing with any matter, for the sake of fairness, we ought to hear the story from both sides. He answered, Let us call Daniel Chu right away, and ask him to come. Then I said, “it is almost 1:00 a. m., better wait till morning”. But, Francis Ball still insisted on dealing with Daniel Chu right away. He said that there was no need to hear Daniel Chu’s side since David Dong was a witness. Francis Ball also blamed me for not believing him. I said that my conscience would not allow me to deal with Daniel Chu without hearing his side. Then, the conversation stopped unhappily. This was not fellowship, but forcing to connive with what they had already decided to do. This is the first time I experienced such a thing in my church life and my spirit was already grieved.

After a short while, my phone rang again. It was brother Francis Ball again. He said tomorrow (actually today, Sunday, as it was already well-past 1:00 a. m.), the three brothers from Taipei would conduct a ministry meeting in Anaheim. All the churches in Southern California would go to Anaheim. So John Kwan and Francis Ball decided to padlock the meeting hall gate requiring the saints to go to Anaheim. I told him that I disagreed

Then Francis Ball asked me, “Is the Rosemead church one with the ministry?” At this time, both of us raised up our voices and began to argue. I said that oneness is of the Spirit. If we are not one in the Spirit, there is no oneness even though we sit together. If we are one in the Spirit, even though physically we don’t go, we still are one. Based on our past experience, every time we locked up the meeting hall and went to Anaheim, there were still some saints who went to the hall as usual. And this conference was arranged in such a sudden way, there is no way to inform everybody. Even if we were able to inform every saint, because of long traveling distances, some still would want to meet in Rosemead. What should we do? Ask the saints to go home? Francis Ball said, “That is right. Just fit into the ministry’s leading to meet at home”. I suggested to give the saints freedom to go or to remain, just don’t try to stop the meeting at the hall, but Francis Ball disagreed.

So the phone conversation stopped gloomily. I was grieved to the uttermost. There was not the problem of right or wrong, wise or unwise in dealing with the church affairs. The problem was with his spirit. That was not the so-called “fellowship” either. It was something like prior to a certain meeting, he already made up a copy of resolution of that meeting and sent it to me and forced me to sign on that resolution.

After a while, the phone rang a third time. Francis Ball said that I should try my best to notify the saints to go to Anaheim. (The time was past 1:00 a. m., there was no way to notify the saints.) Rosemead would still have a meeting that Lord’s day. By this time I had nothing to say. I could not sleep the rest of the night. I cried before the Lord for the church, for the children of the Lord, and for the overall situation today. I just wept with extreme sorrow.

At 4:00 a. m. that day, there was a strong earthquake in the Rosemead area. The Lord spoke to me, His words strengthened me, and I renewed my consecration. Early in the morning, I went to the meeting hall to inspect for any damage. There I found Daniel Chu also there, so I asked him why he told the young people not to go to Anaheim. He denied saying such a thing and said that there were over forty saints at that meeting who can be his witnesses. Later on, I verified this with many saints who had been at that meeting that Daniel Chu was right. From that day on, I refused to have any more fellowship with Francis Ball. I also decided to withdraw from the eldership.

To deal with Daniel Chu and to lock the meeting hall were not coincidental events. Daniel Chu did not participate in the door knocking training. He was one of the three that sought fellowship with Jacob Ho. In addition to these, in that morning meeting, Francis Ball gave the message of “Following a Man”. Daniel Chu was also the first one to stand up to oppose him to his face in that meeting. No wonder he became a target for attack. It is a fact that the Church in Rosemead did not follow the leading of the ministry and ministry station in an absolute way. Francis Ball came to Rosemead with a special mission to put the church in proper order and to use any means to accomplish his mission. The October 1987 phone bill revealed that Francis Ball had talked to Philip Lee for eleven minutes at 12:25 a. m., October 4. That’s about the same time he called me to demand that I deal with Daniel Chu and lock up the meeting hall.

- X. Page 6, “Next Lord’s Day, October 11, 1987, David Wang unexpectedly read a letter of his resignation from the eldership. In the letter, he also mentioned that Joseph Chu is no longer an elder.”

On October 11, I read the letter of resignation in the meeting, to declare my resignation from the eldership. The reason was not only that Joseph Chu was removed from the eldership, but also because of the following three points as the content of the letter:

- (7) Don Hardy was forced to leave Rosemead. Up to now there has been no explanation. The sweet coordination and oneness was destroyed, and the church was damaged. (Don Hardy was one of the elders in Rosemead, and also served the Lord as a co-worker for over twenty years. In March 1986 he was forced to leave Rosemead by a five-man committee for an unknown reason. The five-man committee was set up as a result of John Kwan going to Anaheim to accuse Don Hardy. Afterwards, none of the five men would bear the responsibility to explain the matter to the Church in Rosemead.)
- (8) Since the start of the so-called New Way and the System Reform, serious division and confusion occurred among the saints. This happened firstly among English-speaking saints, then among Chinese-speaking saints. Anyone who hoisted the emblem of the ministry could do whatever he pleased and the elders were rendered helpless.
- (9) Because Joseph Chu was not enthused with the New Way, he was removed from the responsibility of the church affairs. The real shepherd of the flock of God was put aside. A man-pleaser was put in charge. My conscience could not go along with that. When Francis Ball first came to Rosemead, I intended to cooperate with him, but after a few weeks, it was clear to me from his actions and words that he did not come to shepherd the flock.

- XI. Page 7 – “When Witness Lee heard about David Wang’s resignation, he called David Wang to ask him to remain. Witness Lee also asked David Wang to tell the church to correct the wording in his resignation letter which mentioned that Joseph Chu was no longer an elder. And also what Witness Lee had shared with David Wang over the phone regarding how Joseph Chu should continue to release the truth and supply life. David Wang consented but did not do so”.

The above is a lie. I did exactly what brother Witness Lee told me to do. There are tapes of the meeting to prove it. To say I agreed to do so and did not is a flagrant lie.

- XII. Page 7 – “On October 18, 1987 (Lord’s Day), after the Lord’s table, the meeting was in chaos with a few saints accusing Francis Ball. On the next Lord’s Day, October 25, 1987, the meeting was even more chaotic. Some even tried to remove the elders and elect new ones”.

On page 12 – “In the Bible, in the history of the Lord’s recovery, we cannot find any truth or example that saints remove elders or elect elders”. On the same page, “The Church in Rosemead elected elders in the meeting. This kind of practice is totally against the Truth, and is unprecedented in the Lord’s recovery”.

The above sayings are deceptive and deceiving. Before I reveal the true picture, Let me insert a word. Within the booklet entitled “Clarifying Statement” a letter was enclosed. It stated in the letter, “In writing this ‘clarifying statement’ we have had much, much fellowship and have endeavored to find out the origin and the progress of the disturbance, hoping to precisely and accurately present the whole picture before the saints’ consciences”. If this is so, why are there so many errors and mistakes? Let me present to you more accurate information. To give you an example: the so-called election of the elders took place on November 1, and not October 25.

On November 1, 1987, the Chinese-speaking and English-speaking saints all met together. Before the meeting, Don Hardy had agreed with Francis Ball and John Kwan that Don Hardy would tell the whole church how the five-man committee carried out orders to remove him. He gave a detailed description of the course of events. In general, Don Hardy said that “Witness Lee and the “Ministry Station” were very unhappy with him and were waiting for an excuse to expel him. So when John Kwan went to Anaheim to accuse Don Hardy before some co-workers and elders, the opportunity had arrived. The matter was considered very serious and so, a five-man committee was set up using worldly methods to crush him (this expression was used by Don himself) and to force him to walk away. They not only demanded him to give up the eldership, but also to stop serving the Lord. (Minoru Chen and Francis Ball were members of this five-man committee. The other three have already apologized to Don Hardy, one of them even tearfully apologized to the Church in Rosemead. Their names won’t be mentioned for the sake of gaining these brothers. Up to now, John Kwan denies that he accused Don Hardy. He said he went to Anaheim just to seek private and personal fellowship.)

After Don Hardy’s fellowship, the facts were exposed and many saints started to speak. They felt that the church eldership system was intervened, and the sovereignty of local administration was destroyed. This kind of practice was not only contrary to the truth, but also unrighteous. John Kwan and Francis Ball have to bear the actual responsibility for the “Don Hardy incident”. Saints rose up to rebuke John Kwan and Francis Ball and pointed out that John Kwan is the one who should resign from the eldership instead of Don Hardy. They also requested Francis Ball to leave Rosemead and take responsibility for the event. At this time, a brother who had been saved for two years, stood up and suggested electing elders by majority vote. While he was asking the saints to vote, by raising their hands, Daniel Chu stopped him and calmed him down. If the electing and changing of elders had been pre-arranged, why would Daniel Chu pull the new brother down? Who was elected and who was replaced? “The statement” repeatedly stressed this incident with the intention of creating confusion and damaging the image of the Church in Rosemead.

- XIII. Page 7 – “On May 7, 1988, the board of trustees, acting on behalf of the Church in Rosemead, wrote a letter exposing Francis Ball and John Kwan. This letter demanded that these two brothers vacate the church premises before May 21, 1988, and forbade them to step onto the premises of the church. Should they not comply with this directive, the board will take appropriate measures to have them forcefully evicted.”

It was very unpleasant to require Francis Ball and John Kwan to leave. But to a discerned one who should ask the following question: “What was the reason that the saints in Rosemead took such a drastic action?” The statement never mentioned a word about such a crucial question. Only if such a thing happened in your own family could you realize our feeling at that time.

Frankly speaking, the root of the problem in today’s so-called local churches is that the leading ones have seriously deviated from the truth. Since February 1986, the movement started in the whole U.S.A. for all the elders to sign their names to a letter submitting absolutely to Witness Lee. From then on, it was to be under one leadership, one goal, one trumpet, one way and one ministry. Waves and waves of movements followed. This is what caused John Kwan and Francis Ball to show their absolute loyalty to Witness Lee. They lorded it over the saints. They did not shepherd the Church of God, but on the contrary, they used highhanded methods and did a lot of things to damage the church. The trustees of the Church in Rosemead wrote an eight-page letter to Francis Ball and a four-

page letter to John Kwan. In these letters, we gave details, facts and evidences of all the things they had done unrighteously and contrary to the truth.

In summary, the reasons Francis Ball was asked to leave are as follows:

- (1) At the beginning, we were expecting that he came here to help the local church, especially the English-speaking saints. If he would come to Rosemead with the burden to take care of the church and shepherd the saints, he should first of all visit the saints and spend time to observe the saints and to realize their situation and needs. He should meet with the serving ones and pray with them looking to the Lord for leading. Regrettably, he disappointed all the saints. The first Lord's Day after his arrival, he gave a message on following a man, meaning to follow Witness Lee. Isn't this the spirit of division and parties which we see in the Church in Corinth which resulted in the Apostle Paul's condemnation? Due to Francis Ball's message, anger was stirred up in the meeting. Most of the saints were already unhappy. He should have had some feelings about the reactions of the saints. The way Francis Ball delivered his message was not accidental or a mistake. After that, his behavior and actions proved his intentions. These included: contact with the ministry station in dealing with the so-called dissenters, locking up the meeting hall, and forcing the saints to go to Anaheim's ministry meetings, to express his absolute oneness with "the ministry". This is concrete evidence that Francis Ball came to Rosemead with the mission to force the church to submit to "The Ministry of Witness Lee" using highhanded tactics. It was not only against our intention to invite him to Rosemead, but also contrary to the vision which we have seen.
- (2) After the incident of Don Hardy was exposed, much blame was put on Francis Ball because he was one of the five-man committee. As a matter of fact, at that time the saints lost their confidence in Francis Ball. If he was really concerned about the church and had some feeling for the saints, he should openly apologize, and voluntarily resign the eldership to show his responsibility and let the church have a chance to recover from the wound. He not only wouldn't depart but seemed careless about the suffering and agonies of the saints. He acted as if nothing had happened, and continued to carry out his mission as usual. Was he a good shepherd led by the Lord, or a hired one?
- (3) We had patiently waited for six months hoping the situation would improve. But things developed in the opposite direction: the coordination was paralyzed. We had one church and yet two Lord's tables with two breads. There was a deepening of mistrust among the saints. We realized that as long as Francis Ball stayed in Rosemead, the church had no way to simply follow the headship of Christ and the leading of the Holy Spirit. But to whom could we appeal?
- (4) Under normal church conditions, the headship of Christ is respected; the apostle confirms the elders' established by the Holy Spirit; the elders administrate the church. This is a glorious testimony. But if the condition is abnormal, and the headship of Christ is usurped, then the emphasis of "the Apostle's authority" and "the elders position" is not only meaningless spiritually, but fall into the worldly principle and methods. The church is the church of the saints (1 Cor. 14:33).
- (5) When the church is being damaged, every member has a responsibility to rise up to protect the church. The board of trustees has an even greater responsibility. Even though not all the trustees were elders, starting from Elden Hall they all were bearing responsibility for the church. They were all clear about the church's condition, and consecrated everything for the Lord's testimony in this locality.

When the church was manipulated to such an extent, it was the duty of the brothers to rise up and defend the church. In order to stop Francis Ball from continuing to do things that damaged the oneness of the church, he was asked to leave. Titus 3:10 says, "Reject a factious man after a first and second warning".

Concerning brother John Kwan:

- (1) It is unpardonable that John Kwan has not borne responsibility for the incident that forced Don Hardy out of the eldership by a five-man committee without any explanation. He claimed that he sought "personal fellowship" with the co-workers in Anaheim and did not have an accusation, which became a pretext to form a five-man committee. He could have stood up to clear up the matter and made an apology to the church if he had been utilized to cause damage to Don Hardy, the Church in Rosemead, and himself. If he had done so, I believe that the brothers would have excused him. Yet, he refuses to apologize and denies any wrongdoing. As a result of such incidents, the sweet coordination of the leading ones in the Church in Rosemead has been damaged and has never been restored.
- (2) In the past period between late 1986 and early 1987 when door knocking was at its peak in many churches in the United States, John Kwan strongly promoted the door knocking movement in the English-speaking meetings in Rosemead. With charts of statistics, maps, and 'The Mystery of Human Life', etc. By canceling the Lord's Day morning meetings, everyone was forced to go door knocking. After protests from some saints, those who did not participate in door knocking were allowed to remain in the meeting hall. They would pray-read the scripture verses used for the door knocking gatherings and home meetings. After several months, saints were murmuring everywhere. And meeting attendance decreased gradually. This was contrary to reports I heard that the English-speaking meeting in Rosemead was very successful in the door knocking and became a "model" for every church in the states. On one occasion, Witness Lee praised John Kwan in an elders meeting. That praise ruined him and caused him to strive for even more recognition. He was numb to the feeling of the wounded saints. The attendance in the English-speaking meeting that had been over one hundred decreased to thirty or forty. There were no new ones brought in. The damage to the Church in Rosemead became worse.
- (3) Being an elder in our locality, it should have been John Kwan's duty to feed the local flock. He should have considered the real situation and the need of the saints and to go on in the fellowship of the saints. He could have endeavored to keep the unity of the Spirit and to build up the church in peace. He could have ceased to jump into the "New Way". John Kwan also had the responsibility to advise Francis Ball who, after arriving in Rosemead, took the risk and tyrannically carried out his mission without a clear understanding of the situation in our locality. This was opposite to what we had expected. John Kwan has no intention to repent for the damage caused to the Church in Rosemead by the dismissal of Don Hardy and the door knocking movement. Because of his lack of repentance, there is no chance for the brothers to forgive him. Furthermore, he has fully cooperated with Francis Ball and pressed on all the way. Before sending the two letters from the board of trustees, brother Abel Chu begged the brothers to give him one last chance to urge John Kwan to repent. One day Abel Chu spent about an hour during a

lunch break to fellowship with John Kwan at a place near John Kwan's office in Pasadena. Abel Chu's exhortation had no effect. Finally, we decided that he would not repent and he has allowed the situation to drag on. To halt the departure of the saints and damage of the church, we had no choice except to send out the two letters that expelled John Kwan and Francis Ball.

XIV. Finally, I would like to fellowship some of my personal feelings before the Lord.

- (1) Most of the original saints in the Church in Rosemead moved here from Elden Hall of the Church in Los Angeles. In 1974, there were less than one hundred saints left in Elden Hall after the migration to Anaheim. They were greatly blessed by the Lord for the saints were in one accord. By January 1980 there were about two hundred saints. To meet the practical need, the Chinese-speaking meeting began on June 15, 1980. They started with sixty-eight in attendance. In April 1982, a parcel of land, where the meeting hall in Rosemead is now situated, was purchased. The construction of the meeting hall began in July 1983, and was completed in February 1984. The new meeting hall was officially used in March 1984. The attendance increased to two hundred fifty because the saints were in one accord in the gospel, coordination of service, and there was harmonious building up of the church. In 1985 we began outreach. On January 13, thirty saints from Rosemead began to meet in Hacienda Heights. On March 3, several saints from Rosemead went to meet in Torrance. On December 1, ninety plus saints originally from the Church in Rosemead began to meet in Alhambra and raised up the Lord's testimony there. Brother Abraham Chang had personally reported to brother Witness Lee that he had never seen any church among the churches with as much blessing by the Lord as the Church in Rosemead for the genuine and sweet oneness and coordination there.
- (2) The Church in Rosemead began to suffer these heavy trials in early 1986. This situation reflects that the relation between the work and the church is very abnormal. The matter in the Church in Rosemead is a typical "symptom" and just the tip of the iceberg. The ministry work is for the church. The church should not be for the ministry work. That is in accordance with the principle in the scriptures. Unfortunately, things have gone the wrong direction and men have tried their best to let the work control the churches. "Authority" has been emphasized. The saints are required to follow a person without any questions. This is definitely against the principle in the Bible. I absolutely believe that today there would not be the so-called "Rosemead Incident" if the abnormal situation never happened.
- (3) I would like to say a few words to those eleven brothers who signed the pamphlet "Clarifying Statement". It is possible that the "genealogy of Chang" may be written by the Lee family. As stated by Luke in the beginning of his gospel, "It seemed good for me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, ...that you may know the truth concerning the things of which you have been informed". Luke wrote his gospel, even though he wasn't one of the original twelve disciples of the Lord and had not followed the Lord while he was on the earth. Brothers, I know your character because you have been my acquaintances for many years. I regret that you have signed a statement so full of mistakes, disguising the facts, concealing the real situation, and devising all kinds of falsehood. Are you clear about the real situation in the Church in Rosemead? Have you followed all things closely? Did you read the pamphlet "Clarifying Statement" carefully before signing your name? Do you dare to bear the responsibility in every point made in the statement? Is this the

way you show that you are loyal to a certain person? Are you forced to submit to certain pressures? Are you willingly being utilized by someone? Why did you follow the footsteps of the 1986 five-man committee that was utilized to deal with Don Hardy and to cause the damage to both Don Hardy and the Church in Rosemead?

- (4) In the past year, the Church in Rosemead has been peaceful. The saints have been very diligent in the Lord's Word. In personal life or church life, we have learned to be under the headship of Christ. We have to be humble before the Lord, fear Him and trust Him in the days to come because the enemy continues to isolate and divide us.

Hallelujah, thanks be to the Lord. I have said what He has directed me to say. I am very released and am enjoying the presence of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord grant every one of us a pure heart and a discerning spirit. May the Lord bless His people and His churches. I would like to close this writing with a hymn written by Watchman Nee.

Thy saving arm a refuge is,
My Savior God to me;
Thou as the Father keepeth them
Who put their trust in Thee.
The sheep and shepherd are of one,
The head and body same;
None e'er can pluck from out Thy hand
The child who trusts Thy Name

A thousand hands won't hinder me,
Nor will ten thousand eyes;
The thorns upon the road but help
Me onward to the prize.
Arise my spirit and my heart,
And let the world go by;
The Lord of life will take me soon
To be with him on high.

The truth should triumph and be king,
And Freedom should be queen;
But falsehood, which has rampant run,
Head of the world is seen.
We ask thee, Truth, to quickly come
And bring Thy light from heav'n;
The foe be crushed and all Thy sons
Into Thy bosom giv'n.

Your brother in the Lord, David Wang
June 1989, Rosemead, California

Appendix 13

Francis in Rosemead

The Church in Rosemead

2454 No. San Gabriel Blvd
Rosemead, Ca 91770
213-280-9991

May 7, 1988

To: Francis Ball,

The primary purpose of this letter is to serve notice to you that as of the date of May 21, 1988, you must vacate the premises of the church in Rosemead. Its secondary purpose is to give you just a few of the many reasons why such a demand is being placed upon you and why it is altogether incumbent upon you to comply with it. All of the contents of this letter were arrived at through much prayer, consideration, and fellowship, with many brothers and sisters before the Lord. As you read each point, we pray that His light would emanate from it into your heart. To touch your conscience and bring you into a very clear and stark realization that you, and many like you in His “recovery” today, though seemingly staunch, stalwart, and adamant for what you call “the ministry”, have actually strayed from His precious pathway of Life.

Commencing with your arrival here in The Church in Rosemead, you, along with both your attitude and actions, have been a constant and increasingly great offense to the majority of the saints meeting here as The Church in Rosemead. What you have consistently espoused and expressed in both words and actions has irreparably damaged the already existing fragile stability and autonomy of The Church in Rosemead (which came about as a result of problems that had arisen through the actions of John Kwan with respect to his apparently secret and subtle instigation of the unscriptural and unrighteous removal of Donald Hardy from the eldership of the Church in Rosemead by you and other “co-workers” of the “ministry”). You and your continued presence here have brought about and sustained the complete polarization and division of the brethren meeting here as The Church in Rosemead.

With respect to your actions:

- 1.) You, as an extra-local “elder” from another locality, took the lead with four other extra-local “elders” in carrying out the above-mentioned unscriptural and unrighteous removal of Donald Hardy as an elder of this locality.
 - A. It was unscriptural because there is absolutely no precedent given in the entire New Testament of any individual being removed from the eldership of any church, whether by example or injunction, in the way that you accomplished his removal. The only portion in the New Testament regarding dealing with improper elders is given in 1 Timothy 5:19 and 20. These two verses contain two very clear and specific injunctions given to the New Testament believers by the Holy Spirit for the divine protection of both the elders and the saints: they protect the elders from individuals who might falsely or unreasonably accuse them; and they protect the saints from any “improper” elders and from any individuals who might falsely or unreasonably accuse their “proper” elders. Neither one of these two precious injunctions that were given a divine protection for all of us were carried out by you and those who participated with you in Don Hardy’s removal. Hence, Donald Hardy was afforded absolutely no scriptural protection from you or his accuser whom you became one with. Moreover, the saints in The Church in Rosemead under the eldership of which Donald Hardy was an integral part had absolutely no scriptural protection from you or his accuser either.
 - B. It was unrighteous because you removed him without ever giving him any reason or explanation for doing so, and hence, you did it without

proper cause. Furthermore, it was all done in secret: the accused was never confronted by his accuser before you were his judges in order that he might have the opportunity to respond to his accuser's accusations. Firstly, you received the accusations against him from his co-elder, John Kwan. Then, you proceeded to seek information from his other two co-elders by calling them to only one meeting and questioning them. After that one meeting with his co-elders, you called him to a meeting in Anaheim at which none of his three co-elders were present. According to Donald Hardy's own testimony which he later gave before yourself, John Kwan, and two other brothers from the Church in Rosemead in the elders' room of The Church in Rosemead (and which was also recorded on tape by one of the two brothers), in that one meeting, when he was told that he should go get a job, he responded by asking, "What about the 'the work'?" He was then told, "No, no more 'work'." Then he asked, "No more eldership?" The response to which was, "No more eldership; we feel you should step aside." His very next words in his testimony were: "No explanation. No prior knowledge. You could have picked me up off the floor with a blotter. I was in a state of shock!" Even to this very day, he still says he does not know why he is removed. Even the law courts of the world would never allow any judge or group of judges to conduct themselves in such a manner as you conducted yourself in this matter with Don Hardy. (Actually, these two points, A and B, make it quite evident that you, and those who acted in concert with you, had already been predisposed, for whatever reasons, to do away with Donald Hardy; you simply utilized John Kwan, and his coming to you, as a cloak to do it.)

- C. Thus, you should now be able to clearly understand why it was stated to both you and John Kwan by the brothers in the November 1, 1987 Lord's Day morning meeting of The Church in Rosemead: "The eldership of The Church in Rosemead was touched and the government was defiled."

Moreover, on top of all that has been stated with respect to this one matter, to add to the offense, you came to reside among us, meet with us, and take up and attempt to retain a position in the eldership among us (the very position that you unscripturally and unrighteously removed Don Hardy from) while being fully conscious of the fact that the majority of the saints know all of these things and absolutely refuse to accept you in that capacity.

- II. You attended a church home meeting in Abel Chu's house one Saturday night during which a sister from another locality called on the telephone to tell the saints that there was going to be a combined "ministry" meeting down in Anaheim the very next morning. At the end of that meeting, Daniel Chu, the brother who received the phone call, faithfully made an announcement regarding this suddenly-called Lord's Day morning "ministry" meeting saying that all who could go should go and that the saints who were unable to go would still be meeting together in The Church in Rosemead meeting hall. That same night you called David Wang after midnight and told him that you had "fellowshipped" with Philip Lee and John Kwan and that your feeling was to "deal with Daniel Chu" regarding his making this announcement, and that it should be done right away. When David attempted to put it off until the next day so that he could hear Daniel Chu's side of the story, your tone changed and you became obnoxiously persistent that he call Daniel on the phone immediately (at 12:20 A. M.!!!) to "get him out now". However, David remained adamant in refusing to handle the situation in the way in which you were proposing, and thus, the phone conversation ended. We daresay that if David had not refused to cooperate with you in this Gestapo-like tactic in

dealing with a saint (Just who do you think you are?!?!?), there is no telling what kind of damage you may have caused, not only to Daniel Chu himself, but to all the dear saints who were in that meeting with him and heard that absolutely harmless announcement which only expressed a genuine care and concern for the spiritual well-being of all the local saints and who might have heard about what you have done to Daniel after you did it. Actually, as will be proven by the third, fourth, and fifth actions of yours given in points (III, IV, and V.) below, you only have a mind to carry out the desires, activities, and goals of the “ministry” at any and all cost without any regard whatsoever either to the circumstances, condition, or feelings of the individual local saints or to any possible detriment of the Church in Rosemead as a whole. The real reason why you wanted to “deal with Daniel Chu” for making that announcement was because he made a provision in addition to the “ministry” meeting in Anaheim so that the Rosemead saints who, for whatever reason, could not go to the Anaheim meeting on such short notice, could have a meeting and not feel left out or abandoned. Actually, between the two of you, he was the one who exercised the real wisdom and had the proper heart for the local saints. (Solomon knew you should not divide the baby and the mother had the proper heart to not divide the baby.) If Daniel were to have made that announcement according to your desire, he would have had to announce: “Tomorrow morning’s Lord’s day morning meeting of the Church in Rosemead is **cancelled** because ‘the ministry’ has called a combined ministry meeting down in Anaheim. (Period!)” All of this is clearly proven in the points below.

- III. Ten minutes after the first phone call mentioned in point II.) above, which resulted in a failed attempt on your part to get David Wang to cooperate in immediately “dealing with Daniel Chu”), you called David Wang back again. This second phone call was an attempt on your part to put pressure on David to deal with the meeting that Daniel Chu mentioned in his announcement in Abel Chu’s house that was to be for the saints in the Church in Rosemead who would be unable, for whatever reason, to go the “ministry” meeting that had suddenly been called down in Anaheim on such short notice. In this second phone conversation you said that you and John Kwan felt this way: that the gate to the property of the Church in Rosemead should be locked on that Lord’s Day morning and that a sign should be posted on the gate telling the saints to go to Anaheim. David told you in very strong terms that he absolutely did not agree with your “so-called” feeling. Furthermore, he not only told you that he disagreed, but he also gave you two very good, proper, and valid reasons for his disagreement.
 - A.) The first reason he gave was that there was no way for him to contact all the saints to let them know in advance that there would definitely be no meeting in Rosemead. Hence, without notice, many of the saints, regardless of their coming and reading the posted sign would not be prepared to go to Anaheim and would thus be turned away because of the locked meeting hall gate.
 - B.) The second reason was that according to his past experience, it doesn’t matter what kind of meeting there is in Anaheim, people will still come to their locality for the Lord’s Day morning meeting.

After David gave you these reasons, once again your tone changed and you again became obnoxiously persistent. It was here at this juncture that you unfurled your true colors. You said that if we were still going to have the meeting here in Rosemead after knowing that there was a “ministry” meeting in Anaheim, then we were not “one with ‘the ministry’”. Hence, the real reason for attempting to deal with Daniel Chu and for attempting to lock the gate to the meeting hall of the Church in Rosemead came out. Both

were simply attempts on your part to stamp out what you perceived to be opposition to being “one with ‘the ministry’”. Thus, the locking of the gate was a ruse used by you, not only to prevent the saints from meeting in the meeting hall, which in and of itself is a very shameful deed on your part, but also to apply some degree of pressure to force them to go down to Anaheim. If you did not have the impure ulterior motive of applying this pressure to make them go to Anaheim, you would have no doubt acted in the same pure way toward the 120 adult saints (who came to the Rosemead meeting hall and remained there for the meeting even after finding out that there was a combined “ministry” meeting down in Anaheim) as Daniel Chu and David Wang did. As was stated above, this clearly reveals that you only have a heart and a mind to carry out the desires, activities, and goals of “the ministry” at any and all cost without any regard whatsoever either to the circumstances, condition, or feeling of the individual local saints or to any possible detriment of the Church in Rosemead as a whole.

Even though your argument with the saints who reprimanded you in the November 1, 1987 Lord’s Day morning meeting for your callousness was that you never really did do it, yet we must point out to you and to anyone else who might read this letter, that your attitude was strongly to do it **until you were met with even greater opposition by brothers who genuinely had a heart to take care of the local saints.** Only then did you relent, (not “repent!”) and back off from your improper and unkind intentions. If there had happened to be no one there to hinder or interfere with what you had in mind to do, you no doubt would have locked that gate.

- IV) You turned the Lord’s Day morning meeting into a forum and platform from which you could further the work, activities and goals of “the ministry” of another extra-local individual which has lately been nothing but dreams, human ideas, reports, numbers, statistics, propaganda, and lies (where are the 1016 who were saved and baptized in the Chinese-speaking “gospel blitz” in the San Gabriel Valley??? And where are the 200 people that he boldly stated in the 1987 winter training were “solidly added to the church” in the San Gabriel Valley, as a result of that “blitz”???), rather than the genuine spiritual feeding that he used to give so richly. These matters became the content of the Lord’s Day morning meetings rather than the opening of God’s rich Word for the nurture, admonition, and building up of the saints. In fact, in one of the Lord’s day morning meetings of the Church in Rosemead where you were the main and only speaker, you stated clearly and vehemently that “This big meeting (i. e. this Lord’s day morning meeting here in the meeting hall of the church in Rosemead) is to get rid of the big meeting (i.e. it is to get rid of every Lord’s Day morning meeting here in the meeting hall of the Church in Rosemead)!” Moreover, in another Lord’s Day morning meeting of the Church in Rosemead (October 18, 1987), while the saints were telling you to sit down and to stop taking “the chief seat” among them as exhibited in the way you were chiding with them and upbraiding them, you had said: “This is a ‘ministry meeting’!” This kind of arrogant talk and belligerent attitude toward the saints in Rosemead after months of nothing but dreams, human ideas, reports, numbers, statistics, propaganda, lies, and even grave abuses of their meeting hall facilities during the previously mentioned gospel “blitz” from those who claim to represent “the ministry”, plus the knowledge of what you did in the matter of Donald Hardy, were the chief reasons why the majority of them reacted to you in the extremely negative way they did. That such a person as yourself with such a terribly presumptuous attitude would be sent into our midst by “the ministry” absolutely does not speak well of “the ministry” at all. Hence, after you exclaimed, “This is a ‘ministry’ meeting!”, you were even forced to sit down by some of the younger brothers.
- V) You contributed to the running up of a major part of the Church in Rosemead’s October phone bill (to the point where it was over \$700) with no intention whatsoever of paying for the phone calls that you made. Only when

it was pointed out to you by the Board of Trustees of the Church in Rosemead did you “make amends” by paying what you righteously owed. Even then, as you as you were making payment to one of the brothers who pointed out your “breach”, you had the audacity to insist to him that the calls you made (the majority of which were to Taiwan and other long distance places) were “church business”, when David Wang, who was an elder of the Church in Rosemead during the above-mentioned period, knew nothing of the calls that you made. Not only so, this occurred when the giving of the saints had fallen below the level sufficient even to take care of its normal financial obligations (which, incidentally, was the result of the gradually increasing negative response to the “ministry” activities that were being carried out among us at that time and during the previous months). Thus, once again, we have another clear exhibition of your lack of concern and your complete disregard for the well-being of the Church in Rosemead.

With respect to your attitude, which is clearly evident by all the above listed deeds and actions, it has simply reflected your position as an insensitive, hardhearted, stiff-necked, hardened, deceived, and deceitful “co-worker” to a possibly well-intentioned extra-local individual rather than one who genuinely cares for and seeks the welfare of the local brothers and sisters meeting here as the Church in the city of Rosemead. You have made it absolutely clear that your priority is the goals and activities of this extra-local individual without any regard to the feelings of the majority of the local brethren and the local situation here in the Church in Rosemead. The clearest and best example of this is that in spite of the strong vocal objections to you and your presence here in the Church in Rosemead which was expressed by the majority of the local brethren in two of our regularly scheduled Lord’s Day morning meetings (October 18, 1987 and November 1, 1987), you still have not departed from the Church in Rosemead as you told the saints you were going to do in their November 1, 1987 meeting in response to their vehemently expressed desire and request. Moreover, your failure to depart as requested by this majority has brought about the division that is among us today.

In the light of all that has been stated above, and after patiently waiting for six months for you to voluntarily remove yourself as you had said you were going to do, we, the undersigned brothers in the church in Rosemead, hereby inform you that you are no longer permitted to use the facilities of the Church in Rosemead for any reason whatsoever. Furthermore, according to the authority vested in us, and based on all of the damage having been wrought and still being wrought on the Church in Rosemead by you and your continued presence here, commencing May 21, 1988, you may no longer set foot on the premises of the Church in Rosemead. Should you not comply with this directive, we will take any and all appropriate measures to have you forcefully evicted.

The Board of Trustees of
the Church in Rosemead

David C. Wang, President
Michael T. Dwyer, Secretary
Abel A. Chu, Treasurer
Edward Y. Michioka, Asst. Treasurer

Appendix 14

Details Not Included in *FPR* about the Rosemead Incident

The reporting in *FPR* concerning Rosemead is not complete. It is lacking in statements of facts and offering of details that would tell what the elders and the church faced in that locality. What was described as a rebellion in Rosemead, was actually a normal rejection in the Spirit of LSM's drive and agenda to infiltrate the churches, inappropriately and abnormally. Before LSM arrived in Rosemead, the church there could testify of the oneness of the Spirit they enjoyed and the fruitfulness it obtained through the gospel, migrations, and submission to the headship of Christ in their locality, as David Wang relates:

Most of the original saints in the Church in Rosemead moved here from Elden Hall of the Church in Los Angeles. In 1974, there were less than one hundred saints left in Elden Hall after the migration to Anaheim. They were greatly blessed by the Lord for the saints were in one accord. By January 1980 there were about two hundred saints. To meet the practical need, the Chinese-speaking meeting began on June 15, 1980. They started with sixty-eight in attendance. In April 1982, a parcel of land, where the meeting hall in Rosemead is now situated, was purchased. The construction of the meeting hall began in July 1983, and was completed in February 1984. The new meeting hall was officially used in March 1984. The attendance increased to two hundred fifty because the saints were in one accord in the gospel, coordination of service, and there was harmonious building up of the church. In 1985 we began outreach. On January 13, thirty saints from Rosemead began to meet in Hacienda Heights. On March 3, several saints from Rosemead went to meet in Torrance. On December 1, ninety plus saints originally from the Church in Rosemead began to meet in Alhambra and raised up the Lord's testimony there. Brother Abraham Chang had personally reported to brother Witness Lee that he had never seen any church among the churches with as much blessing by the Lord as the Church in Rosemead for the genuine and sweet oneness and coordination there.

The Church in Rosemead began to suffer heavy trials in early 1986. This situation reflected that the relation between the work and the church was very abnormal. The matter in the Church in Rosemead is a typical "symptom" and just the tip of the iceberg. The ministry work is for the church. The church should not be for the ministry work. That is in accordance with the principle in the Scriptures. Unfortunately, things have gone the wrong direction and men have tried their best to let the work control the churches. "Authority" has been emphasized. The saints are required to follow a person without any questions. This is definitely against the principle in the Bible. I absolutely believe that today there would not be the so-called "Rosemead Incident" if the abnormal situation never happened (from *A True Account*)

The following section from *FPR* (pp. 52-55) about the Rosemead incident warrants our careful consideration of the important details that were left out.

Rosemead Participating in the International Conspiracy and Rebelling against the Recovery in 1987

Witness Lee: The church in Rosemead originated with the church in Los Angeles in Elden Hall. The church in Los Angeles moved into Elden Hall in 1965 for the increase. In 1970 the first migration took place mainly from Los Angeles. Then in 1974 a great part of the saints moved from Los Angeles to Orange County. A small part remained as Hall One of the church in Los Angeles. During that period of time I arranged to have Don Hardy, David Wang, and John Kwan help Brother Samuel Chang in the eldership. I also assigned Joseph Chu as a co-worker to help the church there in the ministry of the word.

Around 1982, Hall One of the church in Los Angeles was moved to the Monterey Park area, and later it bought a piece of land in Rosemead and built the present hall there.

In the purchase of the land in Rosemead for the meeting hall and for the design of the hall, the leading ones consulted with me. Elden Hall and Elden House were all sold, and the cash was all turned over to Rosemead. The Living Stream also gave the church there \$100,000 as a gift. From the beginning of the church life there until September 1987, the church there always maintained a good and sweet fellowship with me. In 1985 brother Samuel Chang went to be with the Lord.

In the winter of 1986 brothers David Wang and John Kwan came to me, asking if Brother Francis Ball could join them in the eldership there.

David Wang response: Only John Kwan and David Wang were mentioned. Joseph Chu was deliberately left out. The reader would be led to think that Joseph Chu was not involved in the matter. The fact is, it was decided by three of us.

The reason that three of us brothers had fellowship to consider inviting Francis Ball to Rosemead stemmed from the fact that since March 1986 Don Hardy was forced to leave the church in Rosemead for obscure reasons. The English-speaking saints here needed help. (from *A True Account*)

[Brother Lee did not explain in FPR that Rosemead's need for an elder resulted from the unscriptural and unrighteous removal of Don Hardy from the eldership in Rosemead. That would have been to draw attention to mistakes and to a prime example of control and interference in the eldership and in the churches. Don Hardy's name does not appear again in the Rosemead account. ___ED]

Witness Lee: continuing his paragraph in *FPR*

Subsequently, on February 1, 1987, Francis was introduced to the church in Rosemead by John Kwan and David Wang during a Lord's Day morning meeting. Not long after that, because of the need in Taiwan, Francis went to Taipei...When I became aware that Rosemead had a problem, I asked Francis Ball to go back and help the situation, because he was one of the elders there.

David Wang: Francis Ball specifically asked the church not to announce his eldership till he came back from Taipei. So during that meeting brother and sister Ball were introduced to the church. No so-called "formal announcements were made by John Kwan and David Wang". Afterwards, I checked with the leading one in the Church in San Bernardino regarding the living support of Francis Ball, and was told that Francis Ball is still an elder there, so they will continue to support his living.

In September 1987, Francis Ball came to Rosemead but he still would go back and forth to the Church in San Bernardino. He told me this matter to my face, so I clearly knew the situation. Up to this day, the Church in Rosemead has never formally announced Francis Ball's eldership.

This kind of inaccurate statement [about Francis being an elder ___Ed] led the reader to think that since February 1, 1987, Francis Ball had been an elder in the Church in Rosemead. It tries to show that in September 1987, when Francis Ball came to Rosemead he was not "sent" but rather "returned" to Rosemead (from *A True Account*)

The problem in Rosemead was related to their having global connections, which were the result of their alarm over LSM interferences. Francis Ball was being sent to Rosemead, *not* to "put out the fire" caused by those interferences, but to "add fuel to the fire", that is, to promote LSM and Witness Lee in Rosemead, which Francis did, but in an inordinate manner. Brother Lee referred to the interferences as "attempts by LSM to have fellowship". Rosemead was charged with "rebellion" and "conspiracy" for not cooperating with those "attempts" by LSM to have "fellowship" and for their sharing of

their deep concerns “globally”, (which actually meant reaching out to a few responsible members of the Body of Christ overseas).

The Problems with LSM:

1. **LSM:** In the San Gabriel Valley area where these events took place, only the Church in Rosemead had a meeting hall. So, it was decided that all the activities related to the door knocking “gospel festival”, including meetings and trainings be held in the Church in Rosemead. During the meeting, brother Wang expressed that he was happy to let the brothers use the meeting hall. He also expressed that the other elders would consent.”

David Wang: True, it was agreed upon by John Kwan, Joseph Chu, and myself. But, during the ten days or so that followed, in dozens of big and small meetings, the brothers responsible for the door knocking training used many inflammatory remarks, revolutionary terms, and uttered nonsense. The damage they brought to the church was beyond our wildest dreams

2. **LSM:** It was decided that all the expenses relating to the gospel festival would come from the participating churches through their offerings. They would be passed on to the Church in Rosemead and be designated for the gospel festival. Brother Wang would personally handle the accounts for receipts and disbursements.

David Wang: This is an intentional covering up of the truth so that the readers would be led to believe that during that period, I was solely responsible for all the financial matters. The facts are as follows: At the time, myself, William Yeuh and Jacob Ho were responsible for the financial matters. Three of us were proposed by Minoru Chen and agreed upon by all. All of the expenditures, including those for the full-timers and their traveling expenses were approved, some by me, some by Jacob Ho. Those items with larger sums were co-approved by two of three. Copies of these documents are still on file in the Church in Rosemead. I did not handle the detailed accounts either. It was assigned to specific persons in the Church in Rosemead. Here, I would like to especially point out one thing that happened.

The planner of the door knocking training probably only had Witness Lee’s approval but did not present it to Philip Lee to secure his permission. Then one day in his office, Philip demanded to know who initiated this? Who gave permission? Who decided to have the offerings handled by the Church in Rosemead? Later, the planner confessed and repented to him. From then on, as it was announced in the meetings, the saints were to write their checks to “Living Stream Ministry” and designate the checks for the “Chinese Work”. After that, the Church in Rosemead was not involved in the matters of receiving and disbursing funds.

Witness Lee: As soon as [Francis Ball] returns to Taipei [from Southeast Asia], I’ll ask him to go to Rosemead right away. As for now, the elders in the Church in Rosemead shall consist of you, John Kwan and Francis Ball, three of you. From now on, the matters for the church in Rosemead, you three decide. You don’t need to consult with Joseph Chu any more.

David Wang: When I heard this, I was stunned.

After three days, on September 25, 1987, Francis Ball arrived in Rosemead.

At this point, I would like to share my feelings. Witness Lee totally ignored how Joseph Chu had coordinated with the brothers in the Church in Rosemead in the past ten years and denied his eldership in the church in Rosemead. This showed that he totally disregarded the feelings of the Church in Rosemead. Even if

Joseph Chu is no longer an elder but a co-worker, concerning the church matters should not we consult with him anymore?

The fact is, ten years is not a short time. From the time in Elden Hall through moving to Rosemead, Joseph Chu followed the example of Paul as a “tent-maker”, supporting himself, his family and helping others, laboring to serve the church, longsuffering, shepherding God’s flock. He was not only gifted in the Word, but especially gifted in spiritual discernment. He not only ministered the Word in the church, but privately continued to care for and encourage the saints. For every decision in the church, whether it be minor or major, or setting up the serving ones, he always participated. He was always functioning as an elder in the church here. Witness Lee was not unaware of it. Now he had such a drastic change in attitude toward Joseph Chu, simply because Joseph Chu was not enthusiastic about the New Way. What is this? This is to set aside the dissenters.

On October 3, Saturday evening, the young people had a meeting in the home of Daniel Chu. Midway through the meeting David Dong and Francis Ball suddenly appeared unannounced. After the meeting, Daniel Chu announced in Chinese that there would be a special meeting in Anaheim on Sunday, the next morning. Because the meeting had been announced on such short notice, there was no way to notify all the saints. Thus the saints were free to go to either the meeting in Rosemead or in Anaheim. The Church in Rosemead would still have a regular meeting. David Dong interpreted the above to Francis Ball and gave him the wrong impression, saying that Daniel Chu asked the saints not to go to Anaheim.

At 12:30 a. m. the same night, Francis Ball called me and complained that Daniel Chu was not an elder nor authorized by any elder. He asked why Daniel Chu dared to tell the saints not to go to Anaheim. To Francis Ball, this was an extremely serious matter. I asked him, Where are you now? He said that he is in the meeting hall. I told him that since it is so late, to wait until morning. Francis Ball replied, “No, I already had fellowship with Philip Lee and John Kwan and made the decision that we three (Francis Ball, John Kwan, and David Wang) should deal with Daniel Chu strongly and promptly. I said that in dealing with any matter, for the sake of fairness, we ought to hear the story from both sides. He answered, Let us call Daniel Chu right away, and ask him to come. Then I said, “it is almost 1:00 a. m., better wait till morning”. But, Francis Ball still insisted on dealing with Daniel Chu right away. He said that there was no need to hear Daniel Chu’s side since David Dong was a witness. Francis Ball also blamed me for not believing him. I said that my conscience would not allow me to deal with Daniel Chu without hearing his side. Then, the conversation stopped unhappily. This was not fellowship, but forcing to connive with what they had already decided to do. This is the first time I experienced such a thing in my church life and my spirit was already grieved.

After a short while, my phone rang again. It was brother Francis Ball again. He said tomorrow (actually today, Sunday, as it was already well-past 1:00 a. m.), the three brothers from Taipei would conduct a ministry meeting in Anaheim. All the churches in Southern California would go to Anaheim. So John Kwan and Francis Ball decided to padlock the meeting hall gate requiring the saints to go to Anaheim. I told him that I disagreed

Then Francis Ball asked me, “Is the Rosemead church one with the ministry?” At this time, both of us raised up our voices and began to argue. I said that oneness is of the Spirit. If we are not one in the Spirit, there is no oneness even though we sit together. If we are one in the Spirit, even though physically we don’t go, we still are one. Based on our past experience, every time we locked up the meeting hall and went to Anaheim, there were still some saints who went to the hall as usual. And this conference was arranged in such a sudden way, there is no way to inform everybody. Even if we were able to inform every saint, because of long

traveling distances, some still would want to meet in Rosemead. What should we do? Ask the saints to go home? Francis Ball said, "That is right. Just fit into the ministry's leading to meet at home". I suggested to give the saints freedom to go or to remain, just don't try to stop the meeting at the hall, but Francis Ball disagreed.

So the phone conversation stopped gloomily. I was grieved to the uttermost. There was not the problem of right or wrong, wise or unwise in dealing with the church affairs. The problem was with his spirit. That was not the so-called "fellowship" either. It was something like prior to a certain meeting, he already made up a copy of resolution of that meeting and sent it to me and forced me to sign on that resolution.

After a while, the phone rang a third time. Francis Ball said that I should try my best to notify the saints to go to Anaheim. (The time was past 1:00 a. m., there was no way to notify the saints.) Rosemead would still have a meeting that Lord's day. By this time I had nothing to say. I could not sleep the rest of the night. I cried before the Lord for the church, for the children of the Lord, and for the overall situation today. I just wept with extreme sorrow.

At 4:00 a. m. that day, there was a strong earthquake in the Rosemead area. The Lord spoke to me, His words strengthened me, and I renewed my consecration. Early in the morning, I went to the meeting hall to inspect for any damage. There I found Daniel Chu also there, so I asked him why he told the young people not to go to Anaheim. He denied saying such a thing and said that there were over forty saints at that meeting who can be his witnesses. Later on, I verified this with many saints who had been at that meeting that Daniel Chu was right. From that day on, I refused to have any more fellowship with Francis Ball. I also decided to withdraw from the eldership

Witness Lee: Later in a meeting, David Wang resigned from the eldership, and in his resignation he gave the impression that I stopped Joseph Chu from the eldership and that from then on Joseph Chu was no longer an elder. This was absolutely different from what I had said to him. Moreover, he did not point out that I told him that I still expected Brother Chu to continue to function in the ministry of the word. Then I called him again and pointed out these two matters to him and I asked him to correct his statements in the next Lord's Day morning meeting. However, he never did this. In this way he left the wrong impression that I stopped Joseph Chu from the eldership.

When Witness Lee heard about David Wang's resignation, he called David Wang to ask him to remain. Witness Lee also asked David Wang to tell the church to correct the wording in his resignation letter which mentioned that Joseph Chu was no longer an elder. And also what Witness Lee had shared with David Wang over the phone regarding how Joseph Chu should continue to release the truth and supply life. David Wang consented but did not do so.

David Wang: The above is a lie. I did exactly what brother Witness Lee told me to do. There are tapes of the meeting to prove it. To say I agreed to do so and did not is a flagrant lie.

Witness Lee: Beginning from that time, several anonymous letters and pamphlets began to appear at different times. They were put out by some in Anaheim who were related to the rebellious ones in Rosemead. These anonymous letters and pamphlets were full of lies, slanders, and defamations about me. Around this time, the meetings in Rosemead were taken over by the rebellious ones. In their meetings they openly shamed John Kwan and Francis Ball and tried to have them removed.

Once again, Witness Lee takes no blame for the chaotic condition that LSM brought to a local church, this being Rosemead, the first of several examples of “rebellion” that followed in the churches that encountered the movement of LSM into their locality.

David Wang: On October 11, I read the letter of resignation in the meeting, to declare my resignation from the eldership. The reason I resigned was not only that Joseph Chu was removed from the eldership, but also because of the following three points:

Don Hardy was forced to leave Rosemead. Up to now there has been no explanation. The sweet coordination and oneness was destroyed, and the church was damaged. (Don Hardy was one of the elders in Rosemead, and also served the Lord as a co-worker for over twenty years. In March 1986 he was forced to leave Rosemead by a five-man committee for an unknown reason. The five-man committee was set up as a result of John Kwan going to Anaheim to accuse Don Hardy. Afterwards, none of the five men would bear the responsibility to explain the matter to the Church in Rosemead.)

- (10) Since the start of the so-called New Way and the System Reform, serious division and confusion occurred among the saints. This happened firstly among English-speaking saints, then among Chinese-speaking saints. Anyone who hoisted the emblem of the ministry could do whatever he pleased and the elders were rendered helpless.
- (11) Because Joseph Chu was not enthused with the New Way, he was removed from the responsibility of the church affairs. The real shepherd of the flock of God was put aside. A man-pleaser was put in charge. My conscience could not go along with that. When Francis Ball first came to Rosemead, I intended to cooperate with him, but after a few weeks, it was clear to me from his actions and words that he did not come to shepherd the flock.

The Rejection of Francis Ball and John Kwan

David Wang: It was very unpleasant to require Francis Ball and John Kwan to leave. But to a discerned one who should ask the following question: “What was the reason that the saints in Rosemead took such a drastic action?” The statement never mentioned a word about such a crucial question. Only if such a thing happened in your own family could you realize our feeling at that time.

Frankly speaking, the root of the problem in today’s so-called local churches is that the leading ones have seriously deviated from the truth. Since February 1986, the movement started in the whole U.S.A. for all the elders to sign their names to a letter submitting absolutely to Witness Lee. From then on, it was to be under one leadership, one goal, one trumpet, one way and one ministry. Waves and waves of movements followed. This is what caused John Kwan and Francis Ball to show their absolute loyalty to Witness Lee. They lorded it over the saints. They did not shepherd the Church of God, but on the contrary, they used highhanded methods and did a lot of things to damage the church. The trustees of the Church in Rosemead wrote an eight-page letter to Francis Ball and a four-page letter to John Kwan. In these letters, we gave details, facts and evidences of all the things they had done unrighteously and contrary to the truth.

In summary, the reasons Francis Ball was asked to leave are as follows:

1. At the beginning, we were expecting that he came here to help the local church, especially the English-speaking saints. If he would come to Rosemead with the burden to take care of the church and shepherd the saints, he should first

of all visit the saints and spend time to observe the saints and to realize their situation and needs. He should meet with the serving ones and pray with them looking to the Lord for leading. Regrettably, he disappointed all the saints. The first Lord's Day after his arrival, he gave a message on following a man, meaning to follow Witness Lee. Isn't this the spirit of division and parties which we see in the Church in Corinth which resulted in the Apostle Paul's condemnation? Due to Francis Ball's message, anger was stirred up in the meeting. Most of the saints were already unhappy. He should have had some feelings about the reactions of the saints. The way Francis Ball delivered his message was not accidental or a mistake. After that, his behavior and actions proved his intentions. These included: contact with the ministry station in dealing with the so-called dissenters, locking up the meeting hall, and forcing the saints to go to Anaheim's ministry meetings, to express his absolute oneness with "the ministry". This is concrete evidence that Francis Ball came to Rosemead with the mission to force the church to submit to "The Ministry of Witness Lee" using highhanded tactics. It was not only against our intention to invite him to Rosemead, but also contrary to the vision which we have seen.

2. After the incident of Don Hardy was exposed, much blame was put on Francis Ball because he was one of the five-man committee. As a matter of fact, at that time the saints lost their confidence in Francis Ball. If he was really concerned about the church and had some feeling for the saints, he should openly apologize, and voluntarily resign the eldership to show his responsibility and let the church have a chance to recover from the wound. He not only wouldn't depart but seemed careless about the suffering and agonies of the saints. He acted as if nothing had happened, and continued to carry out his mission as usual. Was he a good shepherd led by the Lord, or a hired one

3. We had patiently waited for six months hoping the situation would improve. But things developed in the opposite direction: the coordination was paralyzed. We had one church and yet two Lord's tables with two breads. There was a deepening of mistrust among the saints. We realized that as long as Francis Ball stayed in Rosemead, the church had no way to simply follow the headship of Christ and the leading of the Holy Spirit. But to whom could we appeal?

4. Under normal church conditions, the headship of Christ is respected; the apostle confirms the elders' established by the Holy Spirit; the elders administrate the church. This is a glorious testimony. But if the condition is abnormal, and the headship of Christ is usurped, then the emphasis of "the Apostle's authority" and "the elders position" is not only meaningless spiritually, but fall into the worldly principle and methods. The church is the church of the saints (1 Cor. 14:33).

When the church is being damaged, every member has a responsibility to rise up to protect the church. The board of trustees has an even greater responsibility. Even though not all the trustees were elders, starting from Elden Hall they all were bearing responsibility for the church. They were all clear about the church's condition, and consecrated everything for the Lord's testimony in this locality. When the church was manipulated to such an extent, it was the duty of the brothers to rise up and defend the church. In order to stop Francis Ball from continuing to do things that damaged the oneness of the church, he was asked to leave. Titus 3:10 says, "Reject a factious man after a first and second warning".

Concerning brother John Kwan:

1. It is unpardonable that John Kwan has not borne responsibility for the incident that forced Don Hardy out of the eldership by a five-man committee without any explanation. He claimed that he sought "personal fellowship" with the co-workers

in Anaheim and did not have an accusation, which became a pretext to form a five-man committee. He could have stood up to clear up the matter and made an apology to the church if he had been utilized to cause damage to Don Hardy, the Church in Rosemead, and himself. If he had done so, I believe that the brothers would have excused him. Yet, he refuses to apologize and denies any wrongdoing. As a result of such incidents, the sweet coordination of the leading ones in the Church in Rosemead has been damaged and has never been restored.

2. In the past period between late 1986 and early 1987 when door knocking was at its peak in many churches in the United States, John Kwan strongly promoted the door knocking movement in the English-speaking meetings in Rosemead. With charts of statistics, maps, and "The Mystery of Human Life", etc. By canceling the Lord's Day morning meetings, everyone was forced to go door knocking. After protests from some saints, those who did not participate in door knocking were allowed to remain in the meeting hall. They would pray-read the scripture verses used for the door knocking gatherings and home meetings. After several months, saints were murmuring everywhere. And meeting attendance decreased gradually. This was contrary to reports I heard that the English-speaking meeting in Rosemead was very successful in the door knocking and became a "model" for every church in the states. On one occasion, Witness Lee praised John Kwan in an elders meeting. That praise ruined him and caused him to strive for even more recognition. He was numb to the feeling of the wounded saints. The attendance in the English-speaking meeting that had been over one hundred decreased to thirty or forty. There were no new ones brought in. The damage to the Church in Rosemead became worse.
3. Being an elder in our locality, it should have been John Kwan's duty to feed the local flock. He should have considered the real situation and the need of the saints and to go on in the fellowship of the saints. He could have endeavored to keep the unity of the Spirit and to build up the church in peace. He could have ceased to jump into the "New Way". John Kwan also had the responsibility to advise Francis Ball who, after arriving in Rosemead, took the risk and tyrannically carried out his mission without a clear understanding of the situation in our locality. This was opposite to what we had expected. John Kwan has no intention to repent for the damage caused to the Church in Rosemead by the dismissal of Don Hardy and the door knocking movement. Because of his lack of repentance, there is no chance for the brothers to forgive him. Furthermore, he has fully cooperated with Francis Ball and pressed on all the way. Before sending the two letters from the board of trustees, brother Abel Chu begged the brothers to give him one last chance to urge John Kwan to repent. One day Abel Chu spent about an hour during a lunch break to fellowship with John Kwan at a place near John Kwan's office in Pasadena. Abel Chu's exhortation had no effect. Finally, we decided that he would not repent and he has allowed the situation to drag on. To halt the departure of the saints and damage of the church, we had no choice except to send out the two letters that expelled John Kwan and Francis Ball.

Witness Lee: In March 1988 I called Joseph Chu and David Wang at the same time and asked to have fellowship with them concerning the church in Rosemead...On May 8, 1988, the Board of Directors of the church in Rosemead sent a letter to Francis Ball and another to John Kwan, the two elders, telling them that "commencing May 21, 1988, you may no longer set foot on the premises of the church in Rosemead," and that "should you [Francis Ball and John Kwan] not comply with the directive, we [the Board of Directors] will take any and all appropriate measures to have you forcefully evicted." In their letter to Francis, they charged that the autonomy of the church in Rosemead "has been "damaged," and they labeled my ministry as "the ministry of another extra-local individual which has lately been nothing but dreams, human ideas, reports, numbers, statistics, propaganda, and lies." Among them I was condemned as a pope, and

some of them said that they received much help from me in life but that they would not be in the “system” of Witness Lee. This was the rebellion of the church in Rosemead (p. 55, *FPR*).

Testimony of Brother Minoru Chen From Anaheim, California

Concerning the Rebellion of Rosemead (*FPR*, p. 111)

I would like to talk about the case related to Rosemead. In the summer training of 1987 we baptized about 3700. If it was not for these brothers instigating this turmoil to cause the saints to lose heart, I believe that many of these ones would have come into the church life. This is the enemy’s work to undermine the new way.

Minoru should have known what initially caused the saints to lose heart; it began with Minoru’s leading a committee of brothers to unrighteously remove their leading elder, Don Hardy, from his eldership in Rosemead. Witness Lee told Don Hardy in a personal conversation that it was wrong of those brothers to set up a committee to remove him. Brother Lee added that he never heard of such a thing being done in all his years in the recovery. This was the undermining of the headship of Christ in Rosemead. Francis Ball, who was also present at Don Hardy’s removal, took Don’s place in the eldership and continued the undermining work of the Lord’s headship of the local church in Rosemead. The saints, however, rejected what Minoru and Francis had done and that Francis was doing, which was basically to push the new way forcefully upon the elders and saints, thus upsetting the whole church and fueling a turmoil among them. The church in Rosemead showed their displeasure by expelling Francis from Rosemead.

Minoru Chen shared also,

I took the lead to propose that we have a gospel-preaching festival in the San Gabriel Valley where many Chinese-speaking people reside. We fellowshiped with Brother Lee, with the co-workers, and with the church in Rosemead about this. In particular, we fellowshiped with one of the main elders, David Wang, in the church in Rosemead. He was actually the one who strongly agreed that we should have this festival in the San Gabriel valley. He wanted us to work there and to help gain a breakthrough in the gospel among the Chinese. The facilities of the church in Rosemead were opened up for the use of that festival. Later there were accusations that the ministry went there to take over the church and do things there. This is absolutely a lie. We were in fellowship with the church there. David Wang was in full coordination with us on a weekly basis. In fact, he was one of the ones who handled the financial matters related to that festival.

David Wang: True, it was agreed upon by John Kwan, Joseph Chu, and myself. But, during the ten days or so that followed, in dozens of big and small meetings, the brothers responsible for the door knocking training used many inflammatory remarks, revolutionary terms, and uttered nonsense. The damage they brought to the church was beyond our wildest dreams. Some of the trainers’ remarks were as follows:

- “Success of revolution depends on propaganda. To take the New Way we need to learn from the Communists in their propaganda techniques. The way of propaganda is through the clever use of our tongues.”
- “We need to learn from the Red Guards. Even, “we need to learn from Satan, for whenever God wants to do a work, Satan is always one step ahead.”

- “The New Way requires no prayers. The more you pray, the more confused you are. Just follow the instructions and do it. You’ll be all right.”
- “At the end of 1987, we’ll have ten new churches set up in the San Gabriel Valley to present to Brother Lee as a present to please him.”
“Even though he says he does not want people to elevate him, actually in his heart he likes us to do it. Therefore, just go ahead and do it. This is the secret I have learned in the past years.”
- “We need to squeeze money out of brothers and sisters. For where their treasure is, there will their heart be also.”

David Wang: Several saints who were originally from mainland China privately expressed that this kind of “leading” resembled the “Communists”. It brought them back to nightmare scenes of the past. One Lord’s Day morning after ten days of gospel “blitz” (a Nazi term commonly used for door knocking), two men came to the meeting hall. They wanted to see the person in charge. First, they wanted to ascertain if there was indeed a church. Second, they wished to protest the disturbance the door knockers brought to their community. After I explained and apologized, they left. Later, I found out that one of the men had pulled out a gun and chased the door knockers from his home.

It is true, we opened the door and willingly let brothers use the meeting hall. Our initial intention was pure and simple: to spread the Gospel and lead people to salvation. But today after almost two years, my personal feeling is that we have let in the wolves, causing great damage to the church!

Minoru: The first anonymous, defaming flyer that was printed and distributed toward the end of 1987 was in Chinese. That flyer said that we needed to wake up and not follow Brother Lee. It talked about so-called improprieties related to handling of money, saying that Brother Lee is out to make a gain for himself and that he is exercising control over the churches...Another rebellious one (Joseph Fung) from Hong Kong said that now on the earth there are two kinds of churches: local churches, of which there are about 100, and “ministry churches,” of which there are about 1000. To him Rosemead was a local church and Monterey Park a “ministry church”. In other words, to him those who do not take this ministry or follow Brother Lee are the real local churches. They say that they do not exalt a man or follow a man, and that they receive all ministries. The churches who follow the leading of Brother Lee’s ministry are referred to as “ministry churches.”

Before the strong promotions, everyone was glad to take the ministry of Brother Lee. When the inordinate campaigning went on for Brother Lee, his ministry, and his ministry office that all were to be one, some people began to wake up. And, some brothers spoke out.

Minoru: ...the church in Rosemead...came out of Elden Hall in Los Angeles...Part of the money used for the purchase of the land [in Rosemead for the meeting hall] was from the proceeds of the sale of Elden Hall and Elden House...Furthermore, \$100,000 was given by the LSM for the purchase of the land and construction of the hall in Rosemead.

What purpose is served by mentioning how the land and hall were obtained in Rosemead? Does this somehow offset the usurpations and the great disturbance brought to that local church by LSM?

Testimony of Brother Jacob Ho **From Cleveland, Ohio** (p. 114, *FPR*)

Concerning Rosemead

During the last two years while the fermenting events of the current rebellion were taking place, I have really appreciated how Brother Lee has supplied and nourished the churches, especially in the trainings on Leviticus and Numbers. I also appreciate Brother Lee opening up the fermenting events of the present rebellion and the way to deal with the rebellion. He has opened these things to us for our purification and for our learning.

Should there be appreciation for the inaccurate and unrighteous accounts of the “fermenting events of the present rebellion”? Truly, there was no “purification” and there was no “learning” of the truth of the late eighties turmoil, for the truth was never taught. Therefore, there was no benefit to such “learning” then, or for the future.

I have grown up in the recovery from children’s meetings. My parents were already in the recovery when I was a child. To me, the recovery was always very pure. But all of a sudden some brothers began to be double-tongued. For a while I did not know what was going on. One day when I was in Rosemead almost two years ago, I fellowshipped with Joseph Chu. Brother Lee mentioned that talk already in a general way already. But I could never forget the way Joseph Chu talked about Brother Lee that day. He was jumping and shouting. He told me that he had an old father, and that his father was very sick and had lost his memory, that when he went out for a walk in the streets of Taipei, he did not know how to come back. Then I realized he was talking about Brother Lee. Brother Lee was his spiritual father. But he was talking about his father in such a mocking way. I could not take this. Brother Lee is our spiritual father. I even feel that, spiritually speaking, Brother Lee is my great-grandfather. Even humanly speaking we should not joke in such a way. At that time I did not know what was going on. All of a sudden, people’s attitude changed. But today it is so clear.

What is so clear? Why did people’s attitude change? What brought Joseph Chu to this point of behaving in such a way? Jacob Ho said, “the recovery was always very pure”. What happened to the pureness? Who is honest about the source of impurity in the recovery and who was really responsible for the corruption that entered into it?

Testimony of Brother John Kwan **From San Gabriel City, California**

Concerning Rosemead (p. 16, *FPR*)

I was in Rosemead from the beginning of the church life there. My conclusion is that the present rebellion, which includes the rebellion in Rosemead, was designed by Satan and carried out by the evil spirits and demons. We are in a spiritual warfare...We brothers are the shepherds of the local churches. We need to take the new way. What is wrong with getting people saved and baptized? The opposition toward the new way shows that we are involved in spiritual warfare...

John Kwan and Francis Ball had a good heart for Brother Lee and the new way, and they desired to be faithful to “the cause”. Their record shows, however, that they cared much more for “the cause” than for the church, the saints, and for ministering Christ. They became, therefore, themselves the instruments through which Rosemead was damaged and the testimony of Christ was lost in that local church. Don Hardy saw

the change and the demise and attributes what happened to “the design of Satan carried out by the evil spirits and demons” through the *LSM influence* in that locality.

Appendix 15

Daystar Enterprise

Doug Krieger Testimony

I think that the summer of 1970 and 1971 marked the high-water mark of "The Lord's Recovery" - but the seeds of disintegration were already growing in its midst...

The seeds of disintegration to which I allude stemmed from a little known meeting held among W.L., myself and Frank DeLuna outside of Eldon Hall--here, Frank shared with W.L. that his family (I will not disclose who) had received a significant inheritance and Frank asked Lee what to do with it. W.L. immediately seized upon the opportunity so extended and suggested that it could be "invested" and thereby spread the work and secure meeting halls, etc.- thus began the debacle known as the Daystar Enterprise and its spurious connection with a little known sister enterprise in the Far East known as "Overseas Christian Stewards" - an enterprise which Sal Benoit later exposed in the infamous "secret tape" heard around the world--a tape later carried into the presence of the IRS to launch an investigation of the enterprise.

Little did Frank and I know that Lee would take Frank's money and the investments of scores of saints and catapult these investments into Lee's own private financial empire which later grew into the tens of millions of dollars. Thus, when W. L. and son Timothy were "forced to come to America" in the early '60s at the Seattle World's Fair selling Hong Kong suits to pay off growing debts in the Far East--and later encouraged the likes of Paul Border, Billy Moore and myself to sell those crazy suits (which if you pulled on a string sticking out of one, the entire thing came apart--time to laugh here, sad but true)--Lee's "dirty little capitalist secret" would remain an on-going enterprise that some day fabricated not only Daystars but tennis rackets and the most bizarre items--whatever the dumb Americans would buy.

I know I digress here - but one Samuel Chang in 1963 informed me that Lee was the spiritual side of Watchman Nee and that he was the "financial side." During Lee's Daystar enterprise and the stupidity of the "native way" of selling these exceedingly expensive dinosaurs "door to door in rich American neighborhoods" (in order to cut marketing costs) Chang came up with the bizarre idea of natural vitamins and minerals. The Churches, like Boston, were given a front row marketing presentation by Chang himself who set out hundreds of little cups full of this snake oil and attempted both to sell it to the saints and to have the saints market it--man, talk about Kool Aide!

All this is so sad--but I share this to clearly let you know that "mingling" capitalism with Christianity - God with mammon - was at the heart and soul of the L.C. from its commencement--concealed until Lee saw an opportunity to advance his cause and a way to fund his empire and to secure a massive financial base for his family members--even his "charging for the ministry" and the "trainings" was an idea concocted by him and shared with the elders in Washington, D.C. and me in a car on the way to the meeting hall in D.C. - Lee said that smart Christians like so-and-so were doing it and "so should we!" Thus, charging for the ministry became the way of the Local Church of Witness Lee--whereas

prior to this time during the early days of the 1970s such a practice was non-existent--but Lee decided to follow the way of Christianity, a Christianity he resented and blamed as the Great Babylon!

A Pamphlet About Daystar Distributed

The saints in Anaheim and elsewhere began receiving a pamphlet in 1988 that included a report about the Daystar case that had occurred years before. Brother Lee was angry about this, but still didn't use the opportunity to admit any wrongs, let alone repent for Daystar being "a cancer to the Body". This portion of the pamphlet, *Reconsideration of the Vision*, is kept in its original format. Mr. X is Witness Lee. Mr. M is Max Rappoport.

I. THE DAYSTAR CASE

We will refer to the most questionable person in this writing as Mr. X. This Mr. X in his messages hints that he is as the Apostle Paul in this age and the only successor to Watchman Nee. However, his practice contradicts his message and does not match what he states. Daystar is a conspicuous example.

A. THE FACT OF THE PRACTICE OF MR. X

1. To finance his oldest son's business ventures, he utilized the contributions of God's people to invest their money under the guise of the need of the work of the Lord. This was not supported in the Far East because they knew of the unstable and unreliable character of Mr. X's son [First son, Timothy. They also knew of the previous business failures involving him and Witness Lee--ED]. Also this would bring the local churches there into financial chaos. To our amazement, the elders of the churches in the United States openly persuaded the believers there to invest and told them they would be "killing two birds with one stone" - giving to the Lord and gaining financially. Even at the Lord's table, announcements and requests were made for this business. Mr. X had special meetings where he used the blackboard to point out the figures of halls to be built and moneys gained by investing in this business.

2. Mr. X arranged to have his eldest son as president of this company. Later the son mentioned to some saints that 2.5 million U. S. dollars disappeared from his hands.

3. Many saints were pressured to give their life savings to this business.

4. At that time the Lord sovereignly intervened in causing an oil crisis which forced large vehicles as motor homes to be unwanted in the market and this forced the business to go bankrupt.

5. Mr. X then asked one of his co-workers, a Mr. M, to persuade the saints, who invested their money to consider the investment as a donation and not seek to be reimbursed. Many were stumbled at this and left the churches, and others who continued to demand reimbursement were ignored by Mr. X.

6. This hindered the expansion of the Lord's Recovery in the States and caused Mr. M to rise to the "top" position among the churches. [Migrations never did pick up after that; they are hindered still today. The spirit and atmosphere of migration disappeared--ED.]

B. THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE

1. Although Acts 18 tells us that Paul, Aquilla and Priscilla engaged in tent making for a living, this was a personal matter and they did not involve or

pressure the churches to participate. In the entire Bible there is no instance of any apostle engaging in any business venture with churches or saints.

2. On the contrary, Nehemiah 13:8-9 tells us that Nehemiah cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber and commanded that the house of God be cleansed.

3. Matt. 21 shows us how the Lord cast out all those who were selling and buying in the temple, and He overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who were selling.

C. BROTHER NEE'S VISION IN RECONSIDERATION OF THE WORK.

1. Since Brother Nee does not approve of so-called "Faith Mission", he would never involve saints in any business venture to raise funds for the work. He states, "Although the 'Faith Mission' is a corporate way to trust in God, it is better to trust Him as an individual than corporately. In Scripture we see individual faith, but we see no such thing as corporate faith" (Chapter 9). The "Faith Mission" could only affect a coworker's individual faith, but "Daystar" damaged churches and brought saints into serving mammon.

2. "To test who is a false apostle, money is the biggest trial. Whoever is not clear regarding money or shows greediness, must be a false apostle. The Apostle Paul in helping saints in Jerusalem sent two saints with money. How honest and upright he is! Whenever money touches us and our work is influenced by money, then we have the possibility of becoming a false apostle, even though we started out as a true apostle". (Chapter 2) Compare this upright attitude with Mr. X's appointment of his own son as president of the Company. This puts him in a position that invites suspicion.

II. MR. M'S CASE

A. BEHIND THE SCENES OF MR. M'S RISING UP

1. Because Mr. M was able to persuade the saints to forget the loans they made to the Company, thus relieving Mr. X. of reimbursing large sums of borrowed amounts, he was elevated to the high position of what seemed to be Mr. X's successor. On many occasions and meetings, the choice seat next to Mr. X was reserved for Mr. M. It was obvious to all at this time that Mr. M was the intimate companion and comrade of Mr. X.

Terry Risenhoover

Terry Risenhoover, the tax accountant for Daystar, said in a phone conversation that the local churches began to "go down" due to the corruption of Daystar. His timeframe in the seventies is the same as Brother Lee's concerning the time period the church began to decline. But Brother Lee did not publicly point to Daystar as the reason. However, that which he admitted was "a cancer to the Body", which went untreated, certainly would corrupt and cause decline. The parallel failed business experiences of saints in the Far East and in the United States are hidden matters; they are also corrupting matters that were never honorably dealt with before the saints in the local churches.

Letters

From: JIngalls2@aol.com

Sent: Wednesday, March 21, 2001 11:59 AM

Dear Brother Steve,

Thank you for sending all the correspondence you have had with other brothers. Though I have not replied for some time, I want you to know that I am still very interested in your burden. There are many dear brothers in the LSM that I would love to have restored fellowship. Certainly two of them are Sherman and Dave Higgins. I met a brother the other day coming out of a store into which I was entering. I recognized him as one I had seen at times in the past, and then suddenly I knew his name, Rick Scatterday. We greeted one another and had most cordial and happy fellowship for a few minutes, with no mention whatever of any problems in the past or any special relationships to cloud us. It was most encouraging. Rick is traveling and ministering in various places.

May the Lord continue to bring His people together with Himself as the Head and center and the only focus. That is His house.

In His name, John.

From: JIngalls2@aol.com

Sent: Friday, March 30, 2001 12:00 PM

Dear Brother Steve,

I appreciate your sending me your letter to other brothers regarding your book and your letter to me. I am sorry you have to go through this turmoil and, as you say, a "disappointing and confounding experience." I can fully understand this. May the Lord take you through it with Himself.

...We should be discerning with all and in all. Only the Lord Jesus is spotless and peerless. I totally agree with you that we should address the real situation and listen to the Lord's voice concerning it. That is what we attempted to do in 1987 to 1989.

You mentioned Doug Higgins... I knew him very well when he lived in Spokane and was close to him. I didn't know that he was in Seattle. I haven't had any contact with him in 15 years. Oh, that the Lord would do something to break down these barriers, these walls! Oh, that we could all be together under His headship with His centrality!

Your brother, John.

From: Dave Matteson

Sent: Monday, May 21, 2001 9:02 AM

To: Steve Isitt

Subject: Re: book

Thanks for sending the book. I look forward to reading it. I too think it's amazing that the brothers in the local churches who profess to be one with all the saints refuse to attempt reconciliation with those who left. For myself, I long to have fellowship with the ones still there. It seems their strong perverted concept of "the ground" causes them to be so exclusive that they even can't talk to those they consider not on "the ground". It boggles the mind! So much for doctrine that is not based in the reality of Christ's life. Dave

From: Steve Isitt

Sent: Sunday, January 06,

Subject: Ken Unger hopes for fellowship 2002 11:16 PM

To: Ed Marks

This letter was not from a former co-worker, but it is concerning one. Ken Unger had been trying to hold two sides together during the new way transition in his locality. His desire and endeavor was surely to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace, but eventually, he received a letter from his fellow elders, asking him to leave the eldership. Keeping the oneness of the Body had apparently been hindering the progress of the one accord in his locality for the Lord's new move in the churches. A brother told me that brother Lee wanted Ken to "get off the fence". He had stayed longer than other brothers who had left the recovery, trying to find a way for the church in Huntington Beach.

I thought I should let brothers in Anaheim know that I had had an encouraging contact with Ken, and that he was interested in having fellowship with them. So I wrote to Ed Marks, hoping he could visit Ken.

Hi Brother Ed,

In a visit to Southern California last month, Dec. 3-10, I felt to visit different ones who were once among us in the recovery. It was quite an exercise and profitable to be with

them. The exercise was in having a right spirit and an accommodating heart. What was consistent with them all was their love for the Lord and their considerable interest in the church and in the recovery...

Brother Ed, they were also alike in their very painful and perplexing experience in the church life that eventually led to their leaving. None imagined they would ever leave, but now they have left and the deep wounds are there. I was impressed with their willingness to forgive and to believe in the Lord's sovereignty, but they, nevertheless, are still hurt.

Praise the Lord! It was good to go to them, to consider their experience, and to pray with them. In the prayer, in each visit, we were raised up to the throne and received some sweet dispensing and some comfort as members of God's universal household meeting in a home.

Again I say, Praise the Lord! ...past their wounds is their spirit that matches God... Brother, just the love and understanding shown them by us will please God...Who knows what love and understanding could bring in to the recovery concerning those of our family who have become estranged....

There is one brother that stood apart from others ... Ken Unger. He said he never left. He has quite a story to tell in this regard. He said that if I were to talk to him seven years ago he would have broken down crying. In his last contact with Brother Lee, after twenty meetings with him, they embraced in a very emotional scene. He said he has never had such a sense of glory with a brother.

I asked him if he would like to meet with one of the brothers and I mentioned your name. He said, "sure, I would like to meet with Ed, I know him." His attitude toward the brothers in Anaheim and concerning the recovery was one of understanding and respect. I was surprised by this and refreshed.

He is not wholehearted where he meets, but it is where he can get some fellowship and relatedness at this time. He said, "I have to meet", indicating that he meets there because of lack of having much choice. He asked me to arrange a time with you, saying that he could not do it. Will you meet with him, Ed? His wife, too, desperately needs to know our love.

The hardest field is here, with "former members". It requires the most Christ to go to them. They are in great need of our love, and if they receive our love, this will revive them - and us. Over a year's time, perhaps a revival would be brought in! Some would return, and some would become useful, very useful and productive in the Lord's hand.

It is a joyous labor and according to the Lord's heart to go after the one that was lost and bring him back home. What a glory if our hearts could be so accommodating and enlarged for this! Praise the Lord!

Steve I. (I did not hear from Ed Marks; neither did Ken.) They had lunch once before.

Sent: Tuesday, May 01, 2001 10:37 PM

From: a former elder, Midwest, Southwest, asked not to be identified

Hi Steve

Regarding Bill's [Mallon] letter to W.Lee. A tragic story. What kept going through my mind was W. Lee's word of fellowship (I was there), You brothers have never learned how to fellowship (with me). To understand this whole mess, you have to try and understand the Chinese mentality, their cultural background, ie, the way they think. And don't tell me that we are in Christ, the new man, and culture has nothing to do with it. Well I'm afraid in **reality**, it has everything to do with most of the frustration you are dealing with.

I remember many times listening to Bro. Lee say never touch the Chinese mentality. I never quite understood what he meant. In secular language, the word inscrutable is used to describe the Chinese. To me this means, you can never pin them down or get them to admit error. You can never figure them out, and they seem sooo humble.

If you have been following the negotiations with the US and China over the downed plane, you will get a clue about them; wanting the US to apologize for their errors. Against all truth, facts, reasonableness, logic, whatever... they want us to kowtow, bend our knee, save their face, their honor, etc. etc. It is crazy!! And yet to get our men and women back we had to say some kind of politicalWe're very sorry.... to make a deal.

Now transfer all this and more to the way they dealt with Bill and others and then you will know *why you will go crazy* trying to bring them to some kind of accountability.

When we attended the memorial service for W. L., we were amazed at the pomp, the exaltation. It was like attending a funeral for a head of state, or an emperor, or a king, Not a humble servant of the Lord!! Did Jesus have such a regal ending? Did any of the Apostles? No, all died just like their master and Lord. When we brought this up [with others], they said it was cultural and his family's wishes.

When I was reading Bill's accusations of the way the office and Phillip handled things in the S.E., I was shocked at his frankness. I said to myself, you never, never talk to Bro. Lee like that, in that tone. I surmised that Bill was thinking that surely B. Lee was not aware of all these under handed dealings and if he only knew he would take steps to clear everything up and possibly restore his standing in the S.E. NOT SO. It doesn't work that way in the Chinese culture. The one at the top is Lord. You do not question, or criticize, never, ever!! or you are through, finished. All those elders mentioned by W.L. became a threat to his controlling and they had to be subdued or removed. I think you had a little taste of this recently with the brothers in

The Texas brothers learned this early on and became the inner circle around Bro. Lee to defend him and explain how things work to the rest of the elders. You mentioned Ray Graver. Have you had any dealings with Ray? Do you know him? I would consider him the hardest of all the Texas bros. to touch. He has been loyal to the death from day one. He has been loyal without question to Bro. Lee and LSM for thirty-five years. What makes you think he is going to change now? Maybe you know something I don't.

Their concept of the kingdom is.....Me King,,,you dumb!.....And this attitude is passed down the rank and file. The smallest elder acts the same way. Those who had a mind of their own have left. Those who stayed have given up their own integrity and surrendered their person to Bro. Lee and the system. This system has permeated the LC leadership. Can you change it? Can the Lord

change it? Of course He will change it in HIS TIME. Judgment must first begin at the House of the Lord.

I understand about blowing the trumpet and pushing buttons; but are their ears open? Jesus said to each church in Rev.....he that has an ear let him hear! Ephesus did not repent, did not hear and lost their lampstand. Did any of the churches hear? The Catholic Ch. is still here today. Sardis is still lukewarm, and the Lord is still on the outside of Laodicea knocking **to stopped up ears!** Only Philadelphia heard the Lord's word and let the Lord in.

My friendly and brotherly suggestion to you. Seek out the wounded, the oppressed, the downcast, the discouraged in your area. There must be hundreds of castaways, lost sheep needing a shepherd. Jesus left the ninety-nine and went out seeking the lost sheep. He did not convert too many Pharisees! They had **no heart nor ear to listen to him!**

You have a soft shepherd's heart. Bro. Steve. I assure you these bleeding sheep will have an ear to hear you and respond to your care. Perhaps you and your wife could be a team

The verse in John 10:9...and will go in and go out and find pasture...has been our experience. The Lord led us in and the Lord led us out...into the pasture where the Chief Shepherd of the flock is taking care of so many who have been rejected.

Please read Ezk. 34 and Jeremiah 23:1-4, Isa. 35:3-7, 40:11, 42:1-4, 58:6-12.....for reference.

From: Tom Saulino

Sent: Wednesday, June 04, 2003 4:25 PM

Steve:

I got saved into the church in Atlanta in February of 1974. I moved to Boston area from 1977 thru 1979 with the young people from the southeast and all over the country. I married a sister from Atlanta who also moved to Massachusetts from Georgia. We got married in May 1979 and shortly after moved back to Atlanta to be in the church there.

We moved to Knoxville TN in 1984 as did other saints to start up a church life there. In early 1985 the gospel team visited Knoxville. While they were there I got the burden to join them. My wife is a nurse and worked full time so that I could do it. In February of 1987 my wife and I both participated in the full time training in Taipei. We left in August of 1987 to help with new ones in Orange County that got saved during the door knocking training in summer of '87. After taking care of personal matters we came back to Orange County in Early September of 1987. We visited the new ones at night and took part in the training during the day. The problem was that it only lasted for a couple of weeks. After that we were doing full time day labor for Philip and the ministry office during the day and most of the evenings. Some evenings were open to visit the new ones.

My wife's and my experience in Taipei was glorious. But our experience in Orange County was far from that. We got to see Phillip in action and how people listened to him and followed him around much the same as teeny boppers followed rock stars. My wife and I would ask each other what and the heck is this? In November we decided we had to go back to work and not be full time any more. A couple in Irvine was gracious enough to let us live at their house while we were searching for work. We wanted to stay in the area, so that we could still help with the new ones.

We lived in the Southeast when most things happened there, and we lived in Orange County when things were happening there. It was about the same time the Jim and Tammy Bakker thing was going down. I remember telling my wife here we are in the middle of something (working with the full-timers in Taipei and also with the ones in Orange County) and look how pure it is. That was in September when we first came to Orange County. Little did we know we'd soon learn it was just as corrupt if not more corrupt than the Jim and Tammy scandal. By late October we knew something was "wicked wrong" as they'd say in the Northeast. The things that bothered us were many but for time sake I'll mention just the ones that stand out in no specific order:

1. Philip's meeting with the fulltimers regarding the upcoming Thanksgiving conference planned by the elders from the various churches.
2. Titus Chu's repentance to the fulltimers to show his support for the office and Philip just before Witness Lee came back from Taipei.
3. Benson Phillips meeting with the fulltimers for the purpose of open fellowship.
4. Remodeling a large room of the LSM to do the translation work for the recovery version of the New Testament.
5. Seeing Philip in action.
6. Witness Lee's inaction when it came to addressing the problems.
7. Vindication with a capital "V".
8. The tearing down of the character of brothers publically that had true concerns similar to yours.
9. The analyzation of every item said or written by ones with concerns, problems or genuinely different opinions.
10. The we are always right in every case attitude.

There are so many it would take hours or days to list them all. I'll briefly cover these ten points as succinctly as I can.

1. We, the fulltimers, were doing manual labor for Philip for at least 30 days. During this time some of us had minimal time if any to spend with the new believers. Yet Philip ranted and raved in the meeting that the new ones would die if we didn't spend that weekend with them [and not attend the conference__ED] They're not going to die while we're doing his labor, yet they will die if we invite them to a conference with lots of other believers and new ones. Give me a break. You don't have to get rid of all common sense to be one with the ministry or ministry office. That's absurd to think you have to do that. For some reason Philip didn't want the conference to happen.

The Thanksgiving weekend was coming up, and there was to be a young people's conference in the mountains. This was brought up for fellowship, and the question arose concerning who should go to lead the young people.

We learned then that one of the trainers from Taiwan had already been encouraged through those serving in the LSM office to come, and in fact he was preparing to come. Most all of the brothers felt strongly and expressed clearly their disagreement with that arrangement, based upon the damage wrought by the high school training in Irving, Texas, in which this particular trainer had a prominent role. The elders asked two brothers among them to telephone this trainer in Taiwan to inform him of the brothers' feeling that someone else should lead the young people in the coming conference. They did so immediately. It was indeed a shock to the brother in Taiwan. It also was a blow to Philip Lee, who presumed to be directing these affairs.

2. I saw Titus Chu in Taipei walking down the street. When I first saw him I did a double take because I couldn't remember who he was. I knew he was. He also did a double take acting like a kid with his hand caught in the cookie jar. When I did remember that it was Titus I took a mental note of his reaction because I thought that it was peculiar. Later I found out that he was conducting some kind of training for young ones in the church in Taipei without Philip's or Witness Lee's knowledge. He was a brother who would play both ends against the middle. He would tell John Ingalls he stands with him and tell Witness Lee that he stands with him. He once told some of his fulltimers that he sends ones to the training in Anaheim as a token to show his support for Witness Lee. He would say that WL is getting old and there's no need to give him extra worries. He knows exactly what Philip's like and would no more follow him than the man in the moon. Notice that they (churches under Titus's leadership) don't and won't support the latest law suit.

3. Coming back to the Philip's meeting with the fulltimers, Benson was sitting right next to Philip while he was basically going ballistic. He did nothing to stop him and not only so, he supported him. I have no more respect for this man. He has given up every ounce of integrity that he has to follow a man.... Back when he met with the couples at a restaurant on Ball Road nobody brought up this meeting or what went on with Philip. While walking back to the meeting hall my wife and I made it a point to confront Benson about this meeting. My wife said, "when do you say enough is enough as far as the oneness goes", in other words how much can one take and follow blindly before common sense takes over? He couldn't come up with an answer. I said "let me get this right. When it comes to the ministry the spiritual side, that's Witness Lee. When it comes to the practical side, the business side of it that's Philip Lee. Am I being too narrow to say that Philip had no business sharing anything let alone what he shared and the manner in which he did it?" Benson's response was a question. Did you get any life or light in anything that he shared? He couldn't give my wife or me an answer when it was going on yet he had all of the answers by the time of "The Fermentation of The Present Rebellion" book. To me this is terrible. Today I would ask him to his face how he could say things about John and his motives and not look at himself. He knew and still knows what type of person Philip was and still is. What it boils down to is Benson thinks it's more important to follow a man than it is to follow God.

4. Brothers from the Bay area came down on several weekends to remodel a portion of the LSM for the translation work. Some fulltimers including me also helped. I laid the carpet for the room. When it was barely finished

Philip told his dad some lies about John Ingalls and the work was moved to Irving, Texas. All of the work for naught. The room was given to Dan Towle for the fulltimers.

5. Seeing Philip in action. From my few encounters with the man I can tell he doesn't have a spiritual bone in his body. If he was a manager of any real company he would have been sued for harassment and/embezzling and would probably be doing some hard time in jail. And to think his holy dad cared more about this son than he did for the church.

6. 7. and 8. I called Witness Lee brother V for vindication. I called Philip brother F. Anyone who has a contrary opinion to his is the devil and Lee would cut down and tell lies about their very character. What about him? How could he let his sons do so many terrible things to the churches and the work for decades. How could he tear down honest sincere people like John Ingalls and say or do nothing about Philip. If he lived his man becoming God teaching, why is God condoning evil acts and people and being slanderous towards genuine Christian brothers and sisters? Jesus never vindicated himself while he was on the earth. Rather, He died on the cross.

Lee says he was continuing in the steps of Watchman Nee and that he was so one with this brother. Yet Watchman being accused of living with a woman out of wedlock let the brothers excommunicate him from the church without trying to vindicate himself. The woman turned out to be his mother. Lee on the other hand vindicated himself by tearing down the brothers that had true genuine concerns by saying half truths, exaggerations and outright lies about brothers in public. Not only that he held elders meetings where ones would stand up publicly and tell gross lies about brothers like Bill Mallon, John So, Joseph Fung and John Ingalls. Whosoever could tell the tallest tale would have his ear. The elders in Anaheim through much prayer, much waiting and much discernment excommunicated Philip. To say it wasn't done hastily is a gross understatement. A brother was so mad at Philip for what he did to his wife that he got a gun and was making plans to kill Philip. It went to that extreme before something was done. Then several years after the elders resigned, Lee strong-arms the elders from the church in Anaheim and tells them to write a letter to Philip, and they did write a letter, welcoming him back. More than a year later Philip complained that the letter wasn't signed so all of the brothers signed it and sent it to Philip, apologizing to him for not signing it. This is God's will. This is a man that is 99% transformed. (WL) This is disgusting is what it is.

9. In the Fermentation book, the writers went through John's 16 Points analyzing point by point John's motives as well as every word to find fault or error. If they took a look in the mirror and did the same to themselves they wouldn't be able to write anything if they had a conscience.

10. You are not going to get an honest answer from people like this. Why do you even bother? Do you really think they care? If they did care or do care now why haven't they apologized long ago? They can't and don't because they are always right. They believe if WL said it that's as good as God saying it. They are infallible like the Pope when it comes to matters such as these....

Tom Saulino

From: "Albert Zehr" <ajzehr@uniserve.com>
Sent: Saturday, August 25, 2001 11:08 AM

Dear Brother Steve, Greetings and thank-you for the copy of your letter. Once again I am moved by your desire to facilitate reconciliation. Although I am quite busy, I felt compelled to share with you some points I felt the Lord brought to me after reading the letter. Sorry that these are not highly developed or polished, but they do come from the heart.

In their hearts these dear ones have elevated the teachings of Witness Lee and the doctrines of the recovery to be commensurate with the WORD. They perceive these to be God's "present day speaking." Unconsciously, this makes them infallible and unquestionable. They become part of one's very faith and foundation. This stance requires total subjective loyalty and acceptance and makes an objective review impossible if not blasphemous. The longer one is in this mode the more of the lifetime that has been built on it the more inconceivable it becomes that it might be a deception. Everything else is measured by this "vision" and nothing can measure it. Perhaps you have never personally sold yourself to this extent. If so, then the above sounds extreme to you, at the same time others may also have sensed that you were never really clear about the "vision."

When the Lord began to expose this "spell" in my life I was left in a place of confusion and despair. In this state the Lord brought me to the song, "On Christ the solid rock I stand, ALL other ground is sinking sand." I cried out, "Oh Lord, You and You alone are the only true and unquestionable reality in my life. I am willing to subject everything else to objective and sober discernment. Only after this could I love and appreciate Witness Lee and his teachings while objectively discerning his strengths and weaknesses and allowing them to be balanced by the Word and the teachings of other Godly leaders.

Dear brother Steve, I admire your sincerity and desperate plea to, "come let us reason together." But, sorry, my brother, this is impossible while one is subjectively committed in unquestioned loyalty to a cause. Their reactions will always be the same as yours would be if I would come to you and say, come let us question the authenticity of the Bible. I commend you for your diligence and willingness to make yourself vulnerable to misunderstanding and alienation. I pray that the Lord will strengthen you with much grace and divine encouragement in your spirit.

Your booklet may bring some light and understanding to some hearts. But, I believe something else must happen first. Each individual heart must receive a fresh revelation of the total, exclusive all sufficiency of Jesus Christ alone. Everything else, can and must from time to time be re-examined. Our security and foundation must rest on Him alone. If we are threatened and made defensive by questions it suggests that we have been adding to that foundation.

Another consideration I submit to you. It is very easy to bring a battle into the realm of flesh and blood. In this realm it becomes a matter of being for or against persons. Actually, the dear ones do not want to be obstinate, unreasonable and defensive. This is the realm into which they have unwittingly succumbed to and are now entrapped by. This battle can only be successfully fought in the realm of the spirit. Our most effective strategy at this time is to war in the spirit through prayer and fasting. Only as this power of darkness is broken can the light break through. Only as the captives are set free can they rise up afresh to regain their freedom in Christ. Here I believe is the most effective front to do battle for the most dramatic results. If you could find two or three others who would agree to prevailing prayer in this realm, we might be amazed what might happen.

I recognize this is a bit of an abrupt end, but it seems to be all that I feel led to write at this moment. / Much love and grace, in Christ, Albert Z