

## **A Man, A Ministry**

### **and *Two Turmoils***

<http://www.twww.twoturmoils.com/>

In 1981, Benson Phillips and Ray Graver began a campaign to promote brother Witness Lee and his ministry, with the inciting word that “we owe him”. The campaign became intensified in February 1986 when the same two brothers drew up a letter of allegiance to Brother Lee that was signed by 400+ elders and co-workers during an international elders’ conference in Southern California. Becoming immersed in such fellowship at that time and in the ensuing years, the leaders in the Lord's recovery were galvanized into the same mindset and embarked upon a new way in the churches that featured oneness with a man, a ministry, and a ministry office, the Living Stream Ministry. Such a drive brought in confusion, chaos, and division in two turmoils in the last twenty years.

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....** [Letter of Allegiance](#)

A new mentality of expectation, cooperation, and oneness was being melded into the minds of elderships everywhere, the essence of which 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. That center would identify those who were of it, and those who were not. Those who were of it were in “the oneness”. When this “oneness” began to be vigorously promoted, a big turmoil came in to the recovery that led to division in the late eighties. [Kyle](#)

## Testimony

Today, the local churches are in another major turmoil for the same reason. This center has become officially endorsed by “the leadership” in the recovery through the issuing of the One Publication edict, which promotes the “new” center, and draws a line between all who are “of it” and those who are not. Only LSM-approved publications are to be acceptable in the churches for “a testimony of our oneness in the Body” and “a safeguard for the unique ministry in the Lord’s recovery”, and “to preserve the integrity of the Lord’s ministry among us, which is crucial to the practical oneness among the local churches”. [Testimonies](#)

In the Holy Word for Morning Revival beginning next week, May 14, 2007, some of the Whistler conference fellowship from 2006 is given that is intended to help the saints understand the disciplinary action taken against a fellow co-worker accused of causing division. On page 166 the brothers responsible for the disciplinary action give a final word on the subject of *Shepherding the Flock of God*, which is what they feel their current action against Titus Chu is and also what the action taken by Witness Lee in 1990 was following the late eighties turmoil. Titus now joins, as a quarantined one, the four brothers who were quarantined at that time in the Lord’s recovery - John Ingalls, Bill Mallon, John So, and Joseph Fung. The reasons for the quarantines? Essentially, the reasons these five brothers were quarantined were for not keeping the oneness of the “new center” that was being promoted in the recovery.

Three elders in Anaheim during the time of turmoil in the late eighties in fact resigned from the eldership primarily due to the “new center” promotions in their locality that they couldn’t conscientiously support, and also due to an [activist group for the new center](#) from within the church that usurped them. The following was shared at the time of two of the elders’ resignation.

### **Albert Knoch and John Ingalls Resign From Eldership**

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 17<sup>th</sup>, 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 19<sup>th</sup>, 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.

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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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup>. 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.

### **Titus Chu in the Late Eighties Turmoil**

**John Ingalls gave this fellowship about a conference in Atlanta, which Titus Chu attended and responded to.**

In September Brother Lee had a conference in Atlanta with two elders' meetings, one on Friday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, (1988) and the other on the Lord's Day, September 18<sup>th</sup>. 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" .

At that time Titus recognized there was a serious problem with Brother Lee and what was taking place in the recovery, but he chose to be very supportive of Brother Lee. In a visit to Anaheim during the turmoil he spent time in fellowship with John Ingalls.

### **Visits From Titus Chu**

September 29, 30, 1988

In December 1987, before we went to see Brother Lee on December 12<sup>th</sup>, Titus Chu was in Anaheim, and we had lunch together. At that time since I respected Titus as a senior

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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 28<sup>th</sup>. 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 29<sup>th</sup>, 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 reproved 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.

John Ingalls had concerns during the late eighties turmoil; Titus Chu also had concerns. So did Bill Mallon and John So. Bill shared in an eight-page letter to Brother Lee the major concerns that he had, as the following excerpts from that letter begin to speak of.

### **Excerpts from Bill Mallon's Letter**

1. 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.
2. 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.



3. Although the brothers in the South are not perfect, having many weaknesses, they nevertheless attempt to run backwards in order to be in one accord, but the office fails to give them the opportunity of fellowship to demonstrate their oneness. The principals from the office who are involved in these affairs are Philip, Benson, and Ray (I hesitate to mention these dear ones by name, but please allow me this liberty for the sake of honesty). Much embarrassment, confusion, harassment, and demoralization resulted from their attitude and behavior. On June 11, 1986, during the time in your home when you fellowshiped with me, you identified the problem in every region as having the deficiency of the intrinsic fellowship of the one accord, but in this case, it is not the region, but the office who violates this principle and practice. It takes both the giving and receiving sides to release the intrinsic flow of mutual fellowship.

4. 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? 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, but why this harangue?

### **Excerpts from John So Account**

#### **Five Brothers Come to Stuttgart**

1. 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**

2. 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"**

3. 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.

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 what we were doing to the office. 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 the manager of LSM was not happy with me.

### **England in Upheaval 1986**

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. 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".

7. Bill wrote five pages to Brother Lee. The second point in the letter is about all the lies spread against me, against the church in Stuttgart, and about the German publishers. In the third point of Bill's letter, Bill Kirkham states 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."

8. I'm not sure whether or not I should mention the fourth category because it concerns brother Philip Lee. Bill Kirkham writes... "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 added, "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."

### **Disassociating with LSM**

9. The *Fermentation* book said Brother Lee 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.

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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.)

### **Quarantined Brothers of 1990**

The following is taken from the conclusion in John Ingalls' book, written in 1990 just after the publishing of *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* was released to the churches. This book, *FPR*, was used as an official denouncement of former co-workers in the churches, who were charged with “rebellion” and “starting division” in the local churches. In this little section,

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John Ingalls, Bill Mallon, and John So give their response to the publication of *"Fermentation"*.

John Ingalls shares,

We have been deeply burdened that many saints who have been associated with the local churches may know the facts concerning events that transpired in these recent years and have a clear view of the whole situation. To facilitate this we have recorded and published for the sake of history and for the readers' benefit this somewhat detailed but accurate account of what actually happened during the two years, 1987 to 1989, when our conscience was much exercised over the present situation, and we responded as we felt appropriate and necessary. We cannot agree that the Lord's people should only hear from one source and be given, to say the least, a distorted and, in many particulars, an untrue account of our history and intentions, as has been done recently. Therefore, with much consideration and heart searching and with many prayers we have published this account that the reader himself may judge from the facts and our intentions and come to a settled conviction before the Lord.

It is not our desire, nor has it ever been, to overthrow anyone's work or ministry, neither have we desired to put anyone's ministry aside, but rather to bring everything into the light and put everything in the proper context. A report has been circulated that we would not be satisfied until we brought a certain person down; this report was erroneously applied to us. We never had any such intention, nor have we ever conspired against anyone – the Lord knows this and can testify for us. The accusation of conspiracy made against us is an utter falsehood – our testimony as recorded in this account bears this out. Rather we have grieved over those in leadership who have swerved from the path they once proclaimed and espoused. We desperately hoped there would be some change to resolve the serious problems that had emerged, and we fellowshiped earnestly with Brother Lee to this end. We have lamented the damage inflicted and suffered by many saints through practices and attitudes that we too in some measure participated in... For my part, I humbly repent of this.

We are also widely and vociferously accused of being rebellious and of fermenting and fomenting rebellion. This also is an extremely serious charge, and one which I feel obliged to respond to and deny. Against whom, I would ask, are we rebelling? And what was our act of rebellion? For my part I have always sought to have a good conscience before God and man. To remain silent in a situation of departure and degradation, or to withdraw into "judicious obscurity", as some have done, would have

been for me unconscionable. Not to speak out or to refrain from warranted action would have been for me a form of rebellion against the Lord's inner speaking and urging. My object was to follow the Lord, obey His Word, and practice the truth, fearing only Him. Perhaps I fell short in some particulars. Apart from that, however, "I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord" (I Cor. 4:4). I therefore consider the charge of rebellion to be totally inappropriate and unfounded. Is it rebellious to voice one's concerns, care for one's conscience, obey the Lord's Word, and follow the inner anointing? This is what I did and sought to do, as this account testifies. Was I ambitious for position or did I seek to raise a following for myself, as some say? The Lord knows that this is far from the truth. I can only consider the charges of rebellion and conspiracy to be a form of character assassination, and a means to cover one's own track.

A state of enormous confusion and misunderstanding exists at the present time due to the widespread distortion of the facts and our intentions. Therefore in publishing this record we have felt constrained to chronicle the events just as the Bible chronicles events, recounting both the good and the bad. When this is done everyone is inevitably exposed. The Lord does not let anyone off the hook. How good it is to be exposed that we may repent and not live the rest of our lives in darkness or error! We are very thankful to the Lord for His abundant mercy in enlightening our inner being, in disclosing our failures and errors of the past, and in giving us a new beginning. May He do the same for every reader. We pray that He will use this account to that end. (See appendix 9 for John's account)

In a recent word from **Bill Mallon** (2005), he shared concerning the turmoil: "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."

**John So** finished his talk in Manila by saying,

This is what is 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 in Manila I don't want to defend myself. You forced me to speak and give my testimony in your locality, but I really did not want to do it.

And let me say, 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.

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. 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.

### **Leprosy Diagnosed and Quarantine Ordered**

Brother Lee was still speaking negatively about his former co-workers three years after the printing of *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*. In fact, his criticisms were inordinately



abundant and severe, and often done in anger, as he continued this disparaging discourse over a seven-year period till his death. Referring to these brothers, Witness Lee stated in 1993,

Following the publication of my book on the present rebellion, the Californian churches published an open letter to tell the people that they had suffered much loss in the United States because of the divisions these ones made. These divisive ones conducted a conference in Buena Park, next to Anaheim, without fellowshiping with the churches in the area and set up a divisive table in Anaheim. For the sake of the churches, I was forced to publish *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*, and the elders in the Californian churches were also forced to tell the churches on this globe what these people did in Southern California...

In the Old Testament there is the type of leprosy...For the priest to discern whether or not someone had leprosy was not an easy thing. Someone may have leprosy and others cannot discern it. Another one may have what looks like leprosy, when actually it is not. The proper one who has the written word and the living word [Urim and Thummim] has the discernment to judge whether or not someone has leprosy.

In *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* I mentioned only four names of ones who should be quarantined [Joseph Fung included - ED]. The churches in California, West Malaysia, and Taiwan also sent out an open letter to quarantine these ones. In these matters we are touching a great truth, the truth of the Body. Do we honor the Body? The churches in California, West Malaysia, and Taiwan are parts of the Body. Should we not honor them and respect their feeling? But some were not clear and strong to keep the truth to maintain the feeling of the Body, which comprises all the churches...We must be the overcomers, the ones who overcome all these situations. We must come back to the truth to practice the recovery in the way of the recovery according to the Lord's word, not according to what we think or how we feel." (*The Problems Causing the Turmoils in the Church Life*, p. 11, 18-19)

Actually, for the Urim and Thummim to work, full knowledge of persons must be understood before proper discernment can be obtained and judgments made. We must "*read in love the circumstances*" (*W. L., The All-Inclusive Christ*, p. 125-126). The churches issuing their letters of quarantine had a limited and skewed understanding of the brothers they condemned. Should we "honor them" for this and "respect their feeling" in the Body, as Witness Lee suggests in the above paragraph?

Or, should the judging brothers be open to receive help from the Body to learn that they have been wrong? God does make such a provision for the leaders among His people when they have erred. It is up to those leaders to honor these members and respect *their* feeling and function in the Body.

Nevertheless, the [Quarantine letter 1990](#) went forth and has stood now for 17 years, unchecked.

## Quarantine of Titus Chu 2006

In the current turmoil, due to use of the internet, there has been a tremendous amount of communication, but the letters from Titus Chu were not included on the main website of those who opposed him and initiated his quarantine in the churches. That is unfortunate and unfair because his letters are quite valuable and weighty, yet unavailable for the LSM audience to consider for themselves before the Lord. He has simply been denounced publicly without being heard, save a few interpretations of points he made, often misconstrued and incomplete. [Titus Chu Final Letter](#)

Titus Chu's last letter, his fourth to the blending brothers should be considered carefully by all who have so easily accepted the judgments against him. Also, many saints who have spoken on his behalf merit our reading and acknowledgment of the many sound arguments they make in defense of Titus and the position of many elderships and saints in the recovery about the pivotal One Publication Proclamation. Pivotal, that is, for the choice now set before us of what path should be taken in the post-Proclamation period - whether broad or narrow; inclusive or exclusive; local church or sectarian. [Other brothers speak](#)

Determining the path to take should be acquired through open fellowship, not dictatorship, from many brothers who have gained a rich deposit over the years, including those whose portion and function are most-needed now in the Body for balanced spiritual perspective and valuable insight garnered from God's word and the ministries of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee. Our endeavor should be to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the Body with all the members according to Christ, our common center; not to preserve the oneness of a special center, that does not and cannot include

all the saints. Watchman Nee gave a serious word about this.

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). [Senior co-workers from Taiwan on the change of nature in the recovery due to the new center.](#)

There is a stark contrast between the teaching of the blending brothers and that of the church in Shanghai, of which both Witness Lee and Watchman Nee were members and signatories of the following letter to the Closed Brethren. There were no inordinate promotions for oneness with a man and a ministry at that time, while the oneness with all the members, including those who "do not think like us", was encouraged for the building up of the Body in love on a proper ground of oneness. [The church in Shanghai](#)

## Conclusion

During both turmoils that consummated in major division, the promoters of the new center in the

re**A Man, A Ministry**

## ***and Two Turmoils***

In 1981, Benson Phillips and Ray Graver began a campaign to promote brother Witness Lee and his ministry, with the inciting word that “we owe him”. The campaign became intensified in February 1986 when the same two brothers drew up a letter of allegiance to Brother Lee that was signed by 400+ elders and co-workers during an international elders’ conference in Southern California. Becoming immersed in such fellowship at that time and in the ensuing years, the leaders in the Lord's recovery were galvanized into the same mindset and embarked upon a new way in the churches that featured oneness with a man, a ministry, and a ministry office, the Living Stream Ministry. Such a drive brought in confusion, chaos, and division in two turmoils in the last twenty years.

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....** [Letter of Allegiance](#)

A new mentality of expectation, cooperation, and oneness was being melded into the minds of elderships everywhere, the essence of which 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. That center would identify those who were of it, and those who were not. Those who were of it were in “the oneness”. When this “oneness” began to be vigorously promoted, a big turmoil came in to the recovery that led to division in the late eighties. [Kyle Testimony](#)

Today, the local churches are in another major turmoil for the same reason. This center has

become officially endorsed by “the leadership” in the recovery through the issuing of the One Publication edict, which promotes the “new” center, and draws a line between all who are “of it” and those who are not. Only LSM-approved publications are to be acceptable in the churches for “a testimony of our oneness in the Body” and “a safeguard for the unique ministry in the Lord’s recovery”, and “to preserve the integrity of the Lord’s ministry among us, which is crucial to the practical oneness among the local churches”. [Testimonies](#)

In the Holy Word for Morning Revival beginning next week, May 14, 2007, some of the Whistler conference fellowship from 2006 is given that is intended to help the saints understand the disciplinary action taken against a fellow co-worker accused of causing division. On page 166 the brothers responsible for the disciplinary action give a final word on the subject of *Shepherding the Flock of God*, which is what they feel their current action against Titus Chu is and also what the action taken by Witness Lee in 1990 was following the late eighties turmoil. Titus now joins, as a quarantined one, the four brothers who were quarantined at that time in the Lord’s recovery - John Ingalls, Bill Mallon, John So, and Joseph Fung. The reasons for the quarantines? Essentially, the reasons these five brothers were quarantined were for not keeping the oneness of the “new center” that was being promoted in the recovery.

Three elders in Anaheim during the time of turmoil in the late eighties in fact resigned from the eldership primarily due to the “new center” promotions in their locality that they couldn’t conscientiously support, and also due to an [activist group for the new center](#) from within the church that usurped them. The following was shared at the time of two of the elders’ resignation.

### **Albert Knoch and John Ingalls Resign From Eldership**

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

## A Testimony on the Two Turmoils through 1981 to 2006

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 17<sup>th</sup>, 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 19<sup>th</sup>, 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.

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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 fellowshipping with a number of churches. Upon returning to Anaheim on May 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup>. 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.

### **Titus Chu in the Late Eighties Turmoil**



**John Ingalls gave this fellowship about a conference in Atlanta, which Titus Chu attended and responded to.**

In September Brother Lee had a conference in Atlanta with two elders' meetings, one on Friday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, (1988) and the other on the Lord's Day, September 18<sup>th</sup>. 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" .

At that time Titus recognized there was a serious problem with Brother Lee and what was taking place in the recovery, but he chose to be very supportive of Brother Lee. In a visit to Anaheim during the turmoil he spent time in fellowship with John Ingalls.

**Visits From Titus Chu**

September 29, 30, 1988

In December 1987, before we went to see Brother Lee on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 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.

## A Testimony on the Two Turmoils through 1981 to 2006

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 28<sup>th</sup>. 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 29<sup>th</sup>, 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.

## A Testimony on the Two Turmoils through 1981 to 2006

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 reproved 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.

John Ingalls had concerns during the late eighties turmoil; Titus Chu also had concerns. So did Bill Mallon and John So. Bill shared in an eight-page letter to Brother Lee the major concerns that he had, as the following excerpts from that letter begin to speak of.

### **Excerpts from Bill Mallon's Letter**

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. Although the brothers in the South are not perfect, having many weaknesses, they nevertheless attempt to run backwards in order to be in one accord, but the office fails to give them the opportunity of fellowship to demonstrate their oneness. The principals from the office who are involved in these affairs are Philip, Benson, and Ray (I hesitate to

mention these dear ones by name, but please allow me this liberty for the sake of honesty). Much embarrassment, confusion, harassment, and demoralization resulted from their attitude and behavior. On June 11, 1986, during the time in your home when you fellowshiped with me, you identified the problem in every region as having the deficiency of the intrinsic fellowship of the one accord, but in this case, it is not the region, but the office who violates this principle and practice. It takes both the giving and receiving sides to release the intrinsic flow of mutual fellowship.

4. 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? 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, but why this harangue?

### **Excerpts from John So Account**

#### **Five Brothers Come to Stuttgart**

1. 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**

2. 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”**

3. 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.

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 what we were doing to the office. 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 the manager of LSM was not happy with me.

### **England in Upheaval 1986**

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4. 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.

5. 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.

6. 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".

7. Bill wrote five pages to Brother Lee. The second point in the letter is about all the lies spread against me, against the church in Stuttgart, and about the German publishers. In the third point of Bill's letter, Bill Kirkham states 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.”

8. I’m not sure whether or not I should mention the fourth category because it concerns brother Philip Lee. Bill Kirkham writes... “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 added, "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.”

### **Disassociating with LSM**

9. The *Fermentation* book said Brother Lee 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.

“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.)

## **Quarantined Brothers of 1990**

The following is taken from the conclusion in John Ingalls' book, written in 1990 just after the publishing of *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* was released to the churches. This book, *FPR*, was used as an official denouncement of former co-workers in the churches, who were charged with “rebellion” and “starting division” in the local churches. In this little section, John Ingalls, Bill Mallon, and John So give their response to the publication of *"Fermentation"*. John Ingalls shares,

We have been deeply burdened that many saints who have been associated with the



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local churches may know the facts concerning events that transpired in these recent years and have a clear view of the whole situation. To facilitate this we have recorded and published for the sake of history and for the readers' benefit this somewhat detailed but accurate account of what actually happened during the two years, 1987 to 1989, when our conscience was much exercised over the present situation, and we responded as we felt appropriate and necessary. We cannot agree that the Lord's people should only hear from one source and be given, to say the least, a distorted and, in many particulars, an untrue account of our history and intentions, as has been done recently. Therefore, with much consideration and heart searching and with many prayers we have published this account that the reader himself may judge from the facts and our intentions and come to a settled conviction before the Lord.

It is not our desire, nor has it ever been, to overthrow anyone's work or ministry, neither have we desired to put anyone's ministry aside, but rather to bring everything into the light and put everything in the proper context. A report has been circulated that we would not be satisfied until we brought a certain person down; this report was erroneously applied to us. We never had any such intention, nor have we ever conspired against anyone – the Lord knows this and can testify for us. The accusation of conspiracy made against us is an utter falsehood – our testimony as recorded in this account bears this out. Rather we have grieved over those in leadership who have swerved from the path they once proclaimed and espoused. We desperately hoped there would be some change to resolve the serious problems that had emerged, and we fellowshiped earnestly with Brother Lee to this end. We have lamented the damage inflicted and suffered by many saints through practices and attitudes that we too in some measure participated in... For my part, I humbly repent of this.

We are also widely and vociferously accused of being rebellious and of fermenting and fomenting rebellion. This also is an extremely serious charge, and one which I feel obliged to respond to and deny. Against whom, I would ask, are we rebelling? And what was our act of rebellion? For my part I have always sought to have a good conscience before God and man. To remain silent in a situation of departure and degradation, or to withdraw into "judicious obscurity", as some have done, would have been for me unconscionable. Not to speak out or to refrain from warranted action would have been for me a form of rebellion against the Lord's inner speaking and urging. My object was to follow the Lord, obey His Word, and practice the truth, fearing only Him. Perhaps I fell short in some particulars. Apart from that, however, "I am conscious of

nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord” (I Cor. 4:4). I therefore consider the charge of rebellion to be totally inappropriate and unfounded. Is it rebellious to voice one’s concerns, care for one’s conscience, obey the Lord’s Word, and follow the inner anointing? This is what I did and sought to do, as this account testifies. Was I ambitious for position or did I seek to raise a following for myself, as some say? The Lord knows that this is far from the truth. I can only consider the charges of rebellion and conspiracy to be a form of character assassination, and a means to cover one’s own track.

A state of enormous confusion and misunderstanding exists at the present time due to the widespread distortion of the facts and our intentions. Therefore in publishing this record we have felt constrained to chronicle the events just as the Bible chronicles events, recounting both the good and the bad. When this is done everyone is inevitably exposed. The Lord does not let anyone off the hook. How good it is to be exposed that we may repent and not live the rest of our lives in darkness or error! We are very thankful to the Lord for His abundant mercy in enlightening our inner being, in disclosing our failures and errors of the past, and in giving us a new beginning. May He do the same for every reader. We pray that He will use this account to that end. (See appendix 9 for John’s account)

In a recent word from **Bill Mallon** (2005), he shared concerning the turmoil: "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."

**John So** finished his talk in Manila by saying,

This is what is 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 in Manila I don't want to defend myself. You forced me to speak and give my testimony in your locality, but I really did not want to do it.

And let me say, 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.

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. 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.

## **Leprosy Diagnosed and Quarantine Ordered**

Brother Lee was still speaking negatively about his former co-workers three years after the printing of *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*. In fact, his criticisms were inordinately abundant and severe, and often done in anger, as he continued this disparaging discourse over a seven-year period till his death. Referring to these brothers, Witness Lee stated in 1993,

Following the publication of my book on the present rebellion, the Californian

churches published an open letter to tell the people that they had suffered much loss in the United States because of the divisions these ones made. These divisive ones conducted a conference in Buena Park, next to Anaheim, without fellowshiping with the churches in the area and set up a divisive table in Anaheim. For the sake of the churches, I was forced to publish *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*, and the elders in the Californian churches were also forced to tell the churches on this globe what these people did in Southern California...

In the Old Testament there is the type of leprosy...For the priest to discern whether or not someone had leprosy was not an easy thing. Someone may have leprosy and others cannot discern it. Another one may have what looks like leprosy, when actually it is not. The proper one who has the written word and the living word [Urim and Thummim] has the discernment to judge whether or not someone has leprosy.

In *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* I mentioned only four names of ones who should be quarantined [Joseph Fung included - ED]. The churches in California, West Malaysia, and Taiwan also sent out an open letter to quarantine these ones. In these matters we are touching a great truth, the truth of the Body. Do we honor the Body? The churches in California, West Malaysia, and Taiwan are parts of the Body. Should we not honor them and respect their feeling? But some were not clear and strong to keep the truth to maintain the feeling of the Body, which comprises all the churches...We must be the overcomers, the ones who overcome all these situations. We must come back to the truth to practice the recovery in the way of the recovery according to the Lord's word, not according to what we think or how we feel." (*The Problems Causing the Turmoils in the Church Life*, p. 11, 18-19)

Actually, for the Urim and Thummim to work, full knowledge of persons must be understood before proper discernment can be obtained and judgments made. We must "*read in love the circumstances*" (*W. L., The All-Inclusive Christ*, p. 125-126). The churches issuing their letters of quarantine had a limited and skewed understanding of the brothers they condemned. Should we "honor them" for this and "respect their feeling" in the Body, as Witness Lee suggests in the above paragraph?

Or, should the judging brothers be open to receive help from the Body to learn that they have been wrong? God does make such a provision for the leaders among His people when they have erred. It is up to those leaders to honor these members and respect *their* feeling and

function in the Body.

Nevertheless, the [Quarantine letter 1990](#) went forth and has stood now for 17 years, unchecked.

## Quarantine of Titus Chu 2006

In the current turmoil, due to use of the internet, there has been a tremendous amount of communication, but the letters from Titus Chu were not included on the main website of those who opposed him and initiated his quarantine in the churches. That is unfortunate and unfair because his letters are quite valuable and weighty, yet unavailable for the LSM audience to consider for themselves before the Lord. He has simply been denounced publicly without being heard, save a few interpretations of points he made, often misconstrued and incomplete. [Titus Chu Final Letter](#)

Titus Chu's last letter, his fourth to the blending brothers should be considered carefully by all who have so easily accepted the judgments against him. Also, many saints who have spoken on his behalf merit our reading and acknowledgment of the many sound arguments they make in defense of Titus and the position of many elderships and saints in the recovery about the pivotal One Publication Proclamation. Pivotal, that is, for the choice now set before us of what path should be taken in the post-Proclamation period - whether broad or narrow; inclusive or exclusive; local church or sectarian. [Other brothers speak](#)

Determining the path to take should be acquired through open fellowship, not dictatorship, from many brothers who have gained a rich deposit over the years, including those whose portion and function are most-needed now in the Body for balanced spiritual perspective and valuable insight garnered from God's word and the ministries of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee. Our endeavor should be to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the Body with all the members according to Christ, our common center; not to preserve the oneness of a special center, that does not and cannot include all the saints. Watchman Nee gave a serious word about this.

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). [Senior co-workers from Taiwan on the change of nature in the recovery due to the new center.](#)

There is a stark contrast between the teaching of the blending brothers and that of the church in Shanghai, of which both Witness Lee and Watchman Nee were members and signatories of the following letter to the Closed Brethren. There were no inordinate promotions for oneness with a man and a ministry at that time, while the oneness with all the members, including those who "do not think like us", was encouraged for the building up of the Body in love on a proper ground of oneness. [The church in Shanghai](#)

## Conclusion

During both turmoils that consummated in major division, the promoters of the new center in the recovery did not keep the oneness of the Spirit, as the one trumpet *for the Lord's ministry* became the one trumpet *for the Lord's recovery*, narrowing the scope of oneness kept in the churches to a man, a ministry, and the LSM office. The promotions (essentially of a new center) featured in each turmoil were the driving wedge of division in the recovery. Graphic illustrations of this driving wedge in the late eighties are found in the book *Deviating from the Path in the Lord's*

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*Recovery.* Seeing the history of this driving wedge will help those in the current turmoil to understand the real factors of division that took place in each turmoil and the sectarian mentality that our leadership in the recovery succumbed to in the first and continue to subject themselves to in the second. I speak of the reality of the behavior of our leadership, not its benign appearance and apparent innocence. For those that want to know what our actual history is and how it effects us today, our concepts of the benign and innocent have to be dropped in favor of the truth. The kingdom of God and His righteousness are at stake and will be our reward. Praise the Lord! brothers and sisters.

I encourage your emails for fellowship at [sisitt@msn.com](mailto:sisitt@msn.com). - Steve Isitt

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