What Deputy Authority is Not

Introduction

The purpose of this writing is to show what authentic spiritual authority is not, rather than to talk much about what it is. For, once we see what it is not; we are in a much better position to clearly understand, and appreciate, what genuine spiritual authority is.

Nearing the end of the late eighties turmoil in the local churches, Andrew Yu wrote a book to explain what deputy authority is. In its most basic definition, a deputy authority of God is one who represents God; and he exercises God’s authority among men, according to God’s own thought and by His own action. In the first two chapters of Yu’s book, he points to the Scriptures that reveal examples of deputy authority and teachings on the subject. Then in the third and final chapter, he ascribes blame in the most severe fashion on former leaders for their alleged rebellion against Witness Lee, long-recognized in the local churches as a deputy authority of God, and God’s oracle on the earth.

In an atmosphere of clouds and chaos in the mid to late eighties, Yu formed his opinions and came forward in 1989 to make his seismic judgments on men that he believed rebelled against God’s delegated authority, likening them to Old Testament leaders, Korah, Dathan, and Abihu, who were swallowed up by the earth and delivered into Sheol in God’s judgment upon them for rebelling against God’s deputy authority, Moses.

For full impact of Yu’s word, read www.twoturmoils.com/AndrewChapterThree.pdf, realizing that his references in 1989 to Jude and 2 Peter about men overthrowing God’s authority specifically targeted soon-to-be quarantined brothers, without naming them.

Andrew Yu, however, was wrong in his assessments. The men he judged had not rebelled against God’s authority. Rather, they had stood firm to represent it amid an aggressive movement to usurp it. Bill Mallon, John So, and John Ingalls all experienced the usurpation of their eldership prior to their quarantines in 1990. Their testimonies are told in detail in www.twoturmoils.com/DeviatingfromthePathintheLordsRecovery.pdf.

Signs of Not Having Spiritual Authority

The first problem in Andrew Yu’s charges of “rebellion” is that he showed no concern for the actual spiritual state of Witness Lee. However, others surely did and discerned, with good reason, that he had turned from the right path and that his spiritual authority had waned. In a book recently printed and fully endorsed by the blending brothers, called Properly Discerning Spiritual Authority To Rightly Follow The Lord, there is a list of the signs that describe a person who does not have spiritual authority.

They did not realize, apparently, that they were describing Witness Lee during the late eighties turmoil. The book says, “Just as there are signs that a person is an authority, there are signs that indicate that a person is not an authority”.


The first two signs mentioned are Asserting One’s Own Authority and Practicing Self-Vindication. Brother Lee was the personification of both these signs in the mid to late eighties; and, there were other signs as well that he manifested, so that conscientious ones became exercised to “properly discern spiritual authority to rightly follow the Lord,” many deciding they should no longer follow Witness Lee.

Ascribing blame on some of them as “rebellious” is untenable. Let us have an overview of the facts and discuss the points of concern about Witness Lee that turned many away from him in the local churches from 1985-1989, and then consider Yu’s book accordingly, with understanding, in the light of pertinent detail not given in Yu’s book.

1. **Asserting One’s Own Authority**

The blending brothers state in their book, “Whenever someone asserts his own authority that is a sign of a lack of genuine spiritual authority.”

Then they offer these strong quotes by Watchman Nee:

- It is a most ugly thing for anyone to speak for his authority in order to establish authority for himself. (p. 46)
- I dislike and abhor those who say, “I am God’s appointed authority.” (p. 46)
- I hope that no one stands up to claim that he is an authority. (p. 47)
- Nothing is more unsightly than a person who struggles to be an authority. It is the most ugly thing for a person to try to control others in an outward way.

At a conference in Pasadena, CA in 1988, the elders gathered for a meeting with Witness Lee. There he asserted, among other things, “You cannot deny the fact that the Lord’s oracle has been with me. I claim this at the face of Jesus Christ. The deputy authority of God is in His oracle; so whoever speaks for God has His deputy authority.”

2. **Practicing Self-Vindication**

In the same meeting,

He referred to the title he has used for the Holy Spirit – "the all-inclusive Spirit of Christ as the consummation of the processed Triune God" – and asked who made such a title. Webster? he asked. Then he answered his own question, "That Lee! Lee has to be famous! Lee! Lee! Lee must have the credit! And if you listen to me, you do not listen to Lee, you listen to the very God in His oracle spoken by me." A little later in his message he said, "Going with God’s oracle, surely there is the deputy authority of God in this oracle. Whoever speaks for God, he surely has certain divine authority. I’m claiming this for Lee!”

Long-time elder, John Ingalls, then posed the question, “Now I would ask, are these the words of a sober man, the words of a spiritual man, a man of God? To me it is shocking to hear him speak this way, for he has indeed been used of God in the past to speak His Word. But to vindicate oneself so blatantly and boastfully indicates to me a fall. May the Lord have mercy on us all.” - John Ingalls 1990, Speaking the Truth in Love
In their book, the blending brothers own statement reads, “Whenever a person vindicates himself, that one demonstrates he is not an authority.” (p. 48)

Again they provide strong Nee quotes:

- **We must never speak one word to vindicate our own authority.** (p. 48)
- **It is a most ugly thing for anyone to speak for his authority in order to establish authority for himself.** (p. 48)
- **Authority and vindication are incompatible…those who vindicate themselves have no authority whatsoever.** (p. 48)
- **Whenever a person vindicates himself, he loses his authority.** (p. 48)

We see, then, that “asserting one’s own authority” and “practicing self-vindication” is what deputy authority is NOT.

**The Footnote**

The blending brothers are quite aware of the assertions of authority and the self-vindication statements made by Witness Lee in the days of turmoil and, further, that such speaking and behavior contributed to the turmoil. Thus, they have provided a footnote in their book (p. 48) that refers to the apostle Paul’s vindicating word he made to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 12.) There, they say, Paul was not vindicating himself; rather, he was defending his ministry for the Corinthians sake, which would imply that Witness Lee did likewise. However, there is a marked distinction between the two leaders and their meaning of defending the ministry.

**The Major Difference**

Paul’s ministry was for the churches, without the churches needing to be for his ministry. Witness Lee’s ministry was for the churches, but with the expectation that the churches would be for his ministry. This major difference should not be underestimated; it led to monumental problems in the local churches. See www.twoturmoils.com for an overview of the cause of two turmoils.

**3. Bearing False Witness**

With the focus now on a man and a ministry, Witness Lee became a factor of oneness in the local churches; and, he became a factor of division, as well. Some who could no longer conscientiously follow Witness Lee were said to be in “rebellion” to the leadership of Lee, and therefore, in “rebellion” to God. This led to denunciations of these men, and to their “quarantines”. It also led to the bearing of false witness concerning them. (All this issued from the expectation that the churches would be for the ministry.)

There are over seventeen sources in Living Stream Ministry literature that refer to the “rebellion” and to the “rebellious” ones. Yet, these speakings are false. The chief source available is Witness Lee’s *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* that precipitated the “quarantines” of Bill Mallon, John So, and John Ingalls. In his book, Lee either withholds pertinent information or distorts the truth when he does speak, even appearing to outright lie. A prime example of his disingenuous reporting is concerning Bill Mallon.
Bill Mallon had shared his experiences with John Ingalls, as Ingalls records:

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

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

During that time Bill explained to me how he had suffered in various ways by events that had transpired in recent months in the churches and in the work in the Southeast. I came away from our talks with one deep impression: Philip Lee was becoming increasingly involved in spiritual things concerning the Lord’s work, the churches, the elders, and the co-workers. I had already noticed this in Irving, Texas the preceding month. This, I felt, was completely untenable, incompatible with his position and person, and intolerable. Philip Lee was employed by his father, Witness Lee, to be the business manager of his office and was reportedly instructed to deal only with business affairs. He was totally unqualified both in position and character to touch spiritual matters related to the work of the Lord and the churches. I became alarmed and began to fear for the Lord’s testimony. With this burden I determined upon my return to Anaheim to fellowship with Godfrey Otuteye, who then was involved in coordinating with Philip Lee in the Living Stream Office. I wanted to frankly ask him about Philip’s role, expressing my alarm and concern.


Assuredly, bearing false witness against brothers in Christ is what a genuine deputy authority of God is NOT.

4. Misrepresenting God

Once falsehoods are reported about God’s people, misrepresentations will follow ever-after, if not corrected. In such cases, not only are certain of God’s people being misrepresented, but God is also being misrepresented.

Moses misrepresented God when he called His people “rebels”. For many years, a similar refrain has been heard in the local churches. It is quite astounding that a church leader would refer to believers as “rebellious ones”, and do so continuously over a several year period. Yet, this is what Witness Lee did, and often in anger. This spirit of condemnation permeated the leadership in the local churches and prevails still today, even though the spirit is wrong, the assessment is wrong, and the impression given the churches is wrong that God agrees with all this.
Moses' Wrong Spirit

- Spiritual Authority, Watchman Nee, p.148-150

"And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said unto them, hear now, ye rebels; shall we bring you forth water out of this rock?" (Num. 20:2-3, 7-13)

Delegated Authority Ought to Sanctify God

After over thirty years of wandering in the wilderness, the people again forgot the lessons they had learned through their rebellion. When they came to the wilderness of Zin and found no water, they once again contended with Moses and Aaron, uttering many unpleasant words. God, nevertheless, was not angry with them. He merely commanded to take the rod and speak to the rock that it might give water. Moses took the rod, a symbol of God's authority, in his hands. However, he was so provoked by anger that he called the people rebels and then, ignoring God's command, he smote the rock twice with the rod. He erred, yet water still flowed out of the rock.

Because of this, God reprimanded His servant, saying, "You did not believe in me, to sanctify me in the eyes of the people of Israel." It meant that Moses had not set God apart from himself and Aaron. He had misrepresented God, for it was of himself that he had a wrong spirit and had thus spoken wrongly and smote wrongly. God seemingly remonstrated with Moses on this wise: "I saw my people and was willing to give them to drink, so why did you scold them?" God did not reprove the people but Moses did. And so he gave the people of Israel a wrong impression about God, as though God was fierce, reviling, and lacking in grace.

To be an authority is to represent God. Whether it be wrath or mercy, an authority must always be like God. If, in such a position, we do anything wrong, we should acknowledge it as our own doing. We ought never to draw God into our own fault. Because Moses misrepresented God, he had to be judged. If anyone in authority misrepresents God and does not confess it, God will have to vindicate Himself.

Thus, he showed the children of Israel that this was Moses' doing, not His. True, the people had murmured and perhaps they had been rebellious, nevertheless, God had not judged them. How could Moses be so impatient as to judge them before God did, and to speak angrily without restraint? It was his attitude and his wrath, but most likely the people of Israel got the impression that it was God's attitude and God's wrath. Hence, God had to acquit Himself by separating Himself from Moses and Aaron.

Let us be careful that we never draw God into human failure by giving the wrong impression that He is expressing His attitude through us. In case such a wrong impression is made, God will have to absolve Himself. A delegated authority is supposed to manage affairs for God. If we should become angry, let us confess that this anger
comes from us and not from God. The two must be separated. It is a dreadful thing to mix up one's own doing with God's.

We are too prone to err. Accordingly, whenever we do err, let us immediately acknowledge that it is our own error. Then we will not misrepresent God and give the evil one any ground, nor will we fall into darkness. If we confess first, then God will not need to defend Himself and we shall be delivered from falling into His governmental hand.

Nee continues: To Be a Delegated Authority is a Serious Matter

As a consequence of the above incident, God announced that both Moses and Aaron were not to be allowed to enter Canaan. If a person should speak carelessly and do something in a way which does not sanctify God, then, from the moment God has to step in to justify Himself there is no way left to ask for forgiveness. We must fear and tremble when we are managing the affairs of God. Let us beware lest we grow careless and reckless as we become older.

A leader misrepresenting God and His thought is what a deputy authority is NOT

5. Mishandling Financial Matters

Watchman Nee stated in The Normal Christian Church Life, "To test who is a false apostle, money is the biggest trial. Whoever is not clear regarding money or shows greediness, must be a false apostle. The Apostle Paul in helping saints in Jerusalem sent two saints with money. How honest and upright he is! Whenever money touches us and our work is influenced by money, then we have the possibility of becoming a false apostle, even though we started out as a true apostle".

The late James Barber was one of the most prominent elders in the Lord’s recovery, and was originally one of the elders in Los Angeles with John Ingalls, Bill Mallon, Samuel Chang, Francis Ball, and Don Hardy. His son, Brent Barber, gives insight into the problem of Witness Lee, his money-making schemes, and his duplicity that caused great suffering to churches and saints.

Brent Barber: ‘Lee was guilty of many botched financial schemes that went sour. They were promoted in meetings. The "church" always strongly suggested that no one should seek any reimbursement. Some were incensed enough to get receipts. Most were intimidated into taking a big bath. There were several who lost everything in these deals that were sold in the meetings. Anyone remember the tennis racket factory? That one is hilarious. I think it was called ‘Delta. Get this. A hurricane destroyed the factory after Lee had gotten everyone to shell out hundreds of thousands of dollars. I remember this one well because we had to cart around dozens of boxes of unsellable tennis rackets every time we moved...
On a strictly business level, they were simply bad investments. You play, you pay. But there was a whole different dimension to these investments in that they were being personally pitched by Lee and there was a suggestion this was for the Lord's way. One "elder" in OKC was still paying for his investment in Daystar in the late 80's, about 15 years after it quickly went belly up. He took out a big loan and was in hock ever since. Despite being an ‘elder,’ whenever he talked about that episode, he got red under the collar. A lot of people got burned.

My mom has told me about suits, jewelry, tons of import stuff. One time when she was washing the cup for the Lord’s Table she happened to walk into the kitchen where Lee was all wound up in a sales pitch to someone. She was shocked because he was a totally different person. According to her, he was unrecognizable and had a different personality when he was discussing money. When Lee saw her, he jumped a foot into the air and shut up.”

Daystar Enterprise

Doug Krieger Testimony

I think that the summer of 1970 and 1971 marked the high-water mark of "The Lord's Recovery" - but the seeds of disintegration were already growing in its midst…

The seeds of disintegration to which I allude stemmed from a little known meeting held among W.L., myself and Frank DeLuna outside of Eldon Hall--here, Frank shared with W.L. that his family (I will not disclose who) had received a significant inheritance and Frank asked Lee what to do with it. W.L. immediately seized upon the opportunity so extended and suggested that it could be "invested" and thereby spread the work and secure meeting halls, etc.- thus began the debacle known as the Daystar Enterprise and its spurious connection with a little known sister enterprise in the Far East known as "Overseas Christian Stewards" - an enterprise which Sal Benoit later exposed in the infamous "secret tape" heard around the world--a tape later carried into the presence of the IRS to launch an investigation of the enterprise.

Little did Frank and I know that Lee would take Frank's money and the investments of scores of saints and catapult these investments into Lee's own private financial empire which later grew into the tens of millions of dollars. Thus, when W. L. and son Timothy were "forced to come to America" in the early '60s at the Seattle World's Fair selling Hong Kong suits to pay off growing debts in the Far East--and later encouraged the likes of Paul Border, Billy Moore and myself to sell those crazy suits (which if you pulled on a string sticking out of one, the entire thing came apart--time to laugh here, sad but true)--Lee's "dirty little capitalist secret" would remain an on-going enterprise that some day fabricated not only Daystars but tennis rackets and the most bizarre items--whatever the dumb Americans would buy.

I know I digress here - but one Samuel Chang in 1963 informed me that Lee was the spiritual side of Watchman Nee and that he was the "financial side." During Lee's Daystar enterprise and the stupidity of the "native way" of selling these exceedingly
expensive dinosaurs "door to door in rich American neighborhoods" (in order to cut marketing costs) Chang came up with the bizarre idea of natural vitamins and minerals. The Churches, like Boston, were given a front row marketing presentation by Chang himself who set out hundreds of little cups full of this snake oil and attempted both to sell it to the saints and to have the saints market it--man, talk about Kool Aide! All this is so sad--but I share this to clearly let you know that "mingling" capitalism with Christianity - God with mammon - was at the heart and soul of the L.C. from its commencement--concealed until Lee saw an opportunity to advance his cause and a way to fund his empire and to secure a massive financial base for his family members--even his "charging for the ministry" and the "trainings" was an idea concocted by him and shared with the elders in Washington, D.C. and me in a car on the way to the meeting hall in D.C. - Lee said that smart Christians like so-and-so were doing it and "so should we!" Thus, charging for the ministry became the way of the Local Church of Witness Lee--whereas prior to this time during the early days of the 1970s such a practice was non-existent--but Lee decided to follow the way of Christianity, a Christianity he resented and blamed as the Great Babylon!

A Pamphlet about Daystar Distributed

The saints in Anaheim and elsewhere began receiving a pamphlet in 1988 that included a report about the Daystar case that had occurred years before. Brother Lee was angry about this, but still didn't use the opportunity to admit any wrongs, let alone repent for Daystar being "a cancer to the Body", which he admitted to at least two brothers on separate occasions. This portion of the pamphlet, Reconsideration of the Vision, is kept in its original format. Mr. X is Witness Lee. Mr. M is Max Rapoport.

I. THE DAYSTAR CASE

We will refer to the most questionable person in this writing as Mr. X. This Mr. X in his messages hints that he is as the Apostle Paul in this age and the only successor to Watchman Nee. However, his practice contradicts his message and does not match what he states. Daystar is a conspicuous example.

A. THE FACT OF THE PRACTICE OF MR. X

1. To finance his oldest son's business ventures, he utilized the contributions of God's people to invest their money under the guise of the need of the work of the Lord. This was not supported in the Far East because they knew of the unstable and unreliable character of Mr. X's son [First son, Timothy. They also knew of the previous business failures involving Timothy and Witness Lee--ED]. Also this would bring the local churches there into financial chaos. To our amazement, the elders of the churches in the United States openly persuaded the believers there to invest and told them they would be "killing two birds with one stone" - giving to the Lord and gaining financially. Even at the Lord's table, announcements and requests were made for this business. Mr. X had special meetings where he used the blackboard to point out the figures of halls to be built and moneys gained by investing in this business.
2. Mr. X arranged to have his eldest son as president of this company. Later the son mentioned to some saints that 2.5 million U. S. dollars disappeared from his hands.

3. Many saints were pressured to give their life savings to this business.

4. At that time the Lord sovereignly intervened in causing an oil crisis which forced large vehicles as motor homes to be unwanted in the market and this forced the business to go bankrupt.

5. Mr. X then asked one of his co-workers, a Mr. M, to persuade the saints, who invested their money to consider the investment as a donation and not seek to be reimbursed. Many were stumbled at this and left the churches, and others who continued to demand reimbursement were ignored by Mr. X.

6. This hindered the expansion of the Lord's Recovery in the States and caused Mr. M to rise to the "top" position among the churches. [Migrations never did pick up after that; they are hindered still today. The spirit and atmosphere of migration disappeared--ed.]

B. THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE

1. Although Acts 18 tells us that Paul, Aquila and Priscilla engaged in tent making for a living, this was a personal matter and they did not involve or pressure the churches to participate. In the entire Bible there is no instance of any apostle engaging in any business venture with churches or saints.

2. On the contrary, Nehemiah 13:8-9 tells us that Nehemiah cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber and commanded that the house of God be cleansed.

3. Matt. 21 shows us how the Lord cast out all those who were selling and buying in the temple, and He overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who were selling.

C. BROTHER NEE'S VISION IN RECONSIDERATION OF THE WORK

1. Since Brother Nee does not approve of so-called "Faith Mission", he would never involve saints in any business venture to raise funds for the work. He states, "Although the 'Faith Mission' is a corporate way to trust in God, it is better to trust Him as an individual than corporately. In Scripture we see individual faith, but we see no such thing as corporate faith" (Chapter 9). The "Faith Mission" could only affect a coworker's individual faith, but "Daystar" damaged churches and brought saints into serving mammon.

2. "To test who is a false apostle, money is the biggest trial. Whoever is not clear regarding money or shows greediness, must be a false apostle. The Apostle Paul in helping saints in Jerusalem sent two saints with money. How honest and upright he is! Whenever money touches us and our work is influenced by money, then we have the possibility of becoming a false apostle, even though we started out as a true apostle". (Chapter 2) Compare this upright attitude with Mr. X's appointment of his own son as president of the Company. This puts him in a position that invites suspicion.

A leader who mishandles money is what a proper deputy authority of God is NOT.
6. Father/Son Tandem Leadership

In Eph. 4:4-6 we can see that our practice of oneness is based upon the attribute of oneness of the church: one Spirit, one Lord, one God, one Body, one faith, one baptism, one hope. —Witness Lee, 1988.

The apostle Paul lists seven ones.

In Ephesians 4 there are seven factors of our oneness and only seven. But today other factors, at least in practice, have been added, such as, one ministry, one leadership, one deputy authority, and one divine oracle. These have been made factors of our oneness, so that if any individuals or churches do not adhere to the "one ministry", or the "one leadership", etc., they are cut off or labeled negatively. Now, is this not true? We have many examples to substantiate it. John Ingalls, 1990

An added factor of oneness for the leaders was to be one with the ministry office, that is, with Philip Lee. The expectation that the churches would be for the ministry created turmoil, and turmoil brought in division.

The five brothers who came to Stuttgart themselves proclaimed that their burden was for the afternoon fellowship with the leading brothers, 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. John So 1990

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. John So 1990

Benson and Ray, as well as others, promoted Philip Lee, proclaiming everywhere that Philip is Witness Lee's closest co-worker, that Brother Lee has no one with as much wisdom, energy, and insight as Philip Lee, that Philip is Witness Lee's choice regardless of his anger and abuse of the saints, that everyone must submit and contact Philip Lee and/or the office--such audacious promotions are obviously symptoms of a disease. Bill Mallon, resignation letter to Brother Lee.

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

Bill Mallon, Atlanta, resignation from the work letter to Witness Lee, 1987

www.twoturmoils.com/AvoidingFamilyEntanglements.pdf

A leader who brings such “a cook into the kitchen” is held suspect as an authority of God.
7. Son’s Immorality and Cover-up

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

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

...The grievous conduct reported by the sister from the LSM office had a precedent that we were well aware of. Ten years previously there had been reports of similar incidents in the LSM office confirmed by several eye-witnesses. This compounded the serious nature of the case. I felt that it was more than a local matter, since the LSM was part of the work of Brother Lee, and the ministry of the office effected churches everywhere. Therefore, I believed it to be reasonable and advisable for a few prominent co-workers who were aware of the history of the case and who were respected by Brother Lee to approach him and inform him of the matter. ____John Ingalls

John So Letter of Disassociation

Dear brother Witness Lee,

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

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

and elders of nine churches in Europe

www.twoturmoils.com/NobodyisPerfect.pdf
Conclusion

The Judgment of Sin is the Basis of Oneness

_Love One Another_, W. Nee, (pp. 148-151)

Finally, let brothers and sisters remember one thing: the oneness of the Body is not only a oneness of Christians but it is also a oneness with God. In the Old Testament, we can see that each time God is present there will be judgment. If he were not present, judgment would not be brought in. But to keep the oneness of Christians, we must keep the presence of God. God’s presence brings in law and judgment. Without God’s judgment, everything can be tolerated; with God’s presence, no sin can be left unjudged. If a church tolerates sin, it can never keep the oneness.

May brothers and sisters see what the basis of oneness is. It is very elementary: oneness is based on the forsaking of sin. Where there is sin and evil, there is bound to be separation. It is a fundamental mistake to assume that patience or forbearance is the basis of oneness. No, the Bible never advocates either patience or forbearance as the basis of oneness. It rather affirms that oneness is based on the forsaking of sin.

If anyone wishes to fellowship with God, he needs to walk in the light. If we walk in the light as God is in the light, we have fellowship with one another (1 John 1:7). So we may say that fellowship is the basis of oneness, and fellowship is based on dealing with and forsaking sin. If we are all in God’s light, we have fellowship one with another; otherwise, we have no way to fellowship.

…So, the basis of oneness is not in tolerating sin but in judging sin. There is no possibility of oneness between those who judge and those who do not judge. If anyone desires to seek oneness with God’s children, he must judge sin with all the children of God. If some judge sin and others do not, can there be oneness? But it is right to judge sin. He who judges sin is one with all who judge sin. May God be merciful to him who does not judge sin that he too may rise up and judge.

Given the record of sin and unrighteousness related to Witness Lee and his work, what ground does Andrew Yu have to judge those men who could no longer work in good conscience with Lee. If Andrew Yu wants to weigh the so-called “rebellious ones” on one scale, but weigh Witness Lee on another scale, he has lost credibility.

In the church life today, we may have differing scales—one scale for measuring others and a different scale for measuring ourselves…In the house of God, the church, there should be only one scale. This means that the same scale should be used to weigh everyone. If we have only one scale, we will be fair, righteous, and just…Because God is fair, righteous, and just, He measures everyone according to the same scale.

(L.S. Deut., pp 134-136)

May fair and righteous men rise up in the local churches to judge sin and unrighteous matters on the same scale God uses to weigh everyone.

Note: In Watchman Nee’s word on judging sin, he was referring to the sins of division and denominationalism, but sins of moral conduct also must be judged, as does the sin of bearing false witness a and misrepresenting God in the process.

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Steve Isitt  2009