

Recovering a Pure Testimony of Jesus

The Vision of the Apostles

In 1994 Brother Lee spoke of the need to have a new revival and that it would be a revival to end the age. And, for this revival to happen, he said we must have a vision, a vision of the age. To carry out the vision, he said we must have a minister who ministers according to *the vision*. “Since we have seen such a high peak of the divine revelation, we need to put into practice what we have seen. Our practice will have a success and that success will be a new revival - the highest revival, and probably the last revival before the Lord’s coming back.” (*Living a Life According to the High Peak of God’s Revelation* (p. 39)

So far, following the vision of the age set forth by Brother Lee long ago has not brought revival and actually distracts people from the vision of the New Testament age. Our vision is found in the gospels, the Acts and the teachings of the apostles – ministered chiefly by the Lord Jesus, Peter, Paul, and John – and that brothers Nee and Lee helped recover in the 20th century, which brought many seeking believers back to the vision. What vision? The vision of the apostles! They were all in one ministry to produce one thing.

None stood apart and above the others as exemplified in Paul’s attitude of inclusion in Corinth of fellow ministers of the New Testament vision. Rather than quadron off a section of overcomers in Corinth to follow him as the minister of the age, Paul wrote to the Corinthians and said, “Is Christ divided”, and pointed to Christ and to their calling to participate in Him, and thus avert confusion, exclusion, and division. In this way Paul blended in the Body, not only with the Corinthians, but also with his fellow ministers of Christ. He berated no one for their lack of vision. He also encouraged them in his letter to be blended together and to have the same care for one another that there may be no division in the Body. _This is to have the vision of the age.

It is the vision throughout this New Testament age to minister according to, if we are to be in the reality of the Body. If we follow the “vision of the age” speak, it is actually to produce overcomers within the churches – it is not like getting a letter from Paul to the Corinthians with a vision of the blending of the weak and the strong; the comely and the uncomely, where every member is important and included in God’s expression and a pure testimony of Jesus. Rather, following their vision is for those who are willing to submit to absolute authority – with their money, time, houses, jobs – forsaking all to gain “an invincible morale” to “march over all obstacles” and “conquer wherever we go.” _*Vision of the Age*

Brother Lee’s New Vision and the New Standard

Brother Lee knew these things I have mentioned. So does Bob Danker know and the blending brothers today. They just don’t maintain this vision, the vision of the New Testament age, and even created a new vision. It is actually the same but with bells and whistles and a new minister of the age, boldly claimed by him, and proclaimed by the blended brothers.

Concerning Watchman Nee and himself, Brother Lee submitted, “**I followed Brother Nee absolutely; yet I was not following the person, I was following the vision that he saw. If you remained in that vision, you were serving according to the vision. In that age, the vision that came up to God’s standard was the vision that Brother Nee saw. If you remained in that vision, you were serving according to the vision. If you did not remain in that vision, you were not serving according to the vision**”. He continues,

“Today, Brother Nee has passed away. I have no intention to make a new start, but the Lord has commissioned me with this ministry. I can only take the lead willingly and obediently. **The vision that I have brought to you today is God’s vision for this age.** If you remain in this vision, you are serving

according to the vision. If you do not remain in this vision, you should be aware of what your end will be.” (*Vision of the Age* p 52) This was one month after the pledge by 417 brothers to follow Bro. Lee absolutely.

1

A blending brother writes that “this and many other passages in Brother Lee’s writings indicate that he considered both Watchman Nee and himself to be the ones who passed on to God’s people the vision of the present age”. (Bob Danker, *Minister of the Age*, p. 12)

Yes, Brother Bob, you mean Nee in China, and Lee in the U.S., particularly with reference to his high peak teachings, which distinguished him from Watchman Nee, and made him the new minister of the age with the ministry of the age, engendering major attraction to him and his publications. This following of Brother Lee and his vision of the age led to confusion, exclusion, and division.

Bob Danker’s Commendation of the New Vision

Bob Danker writes, “Outside the vision Brother Lee brought us – God’s consummate vision, the completed vision of the age, the bountiful and all-sufficient vision of God’s eternal economy in the Bible – there is no other vision. The vision of the age has been passed on to us in the writings of Brother Nee and Brother Lee. Our unique responsibility today is to enter fully into this vision and to serve the Lord in His unique recovery under this unique vision.”

Actually, “our unique responsibility” is to make things right with God and man and build up the Body of Christ in love. If you know all mysteries but have not love, you are as a clanging cymbal, lifting up men and also a vision that nobody can keep.

I think if people in the Local Churches really want a revival they need to see a different vision, that of our church history and the huge need of repentance in the Lord’s recovery there has been for several decades. If we don’t understand the history; we don’t understand this imperative need in the Body. More and more messages and a busy church life schedule cannot hold down the truth, ultimately.

Watchman Nee and Witness Lee are lifted up as ministers of the age and full attention is given to their ministries. But attention is not given to understand their failures, which keeps the attention on their ministries only. This is not to love the Lord and His Body. Many matters need to be cleared up and dealt with to gain a pure testimony of Jesus in the churches.

Both ministers of the age failed (according to Brother Lee’s word) to bring the churches into the reality of the vision they saw; but that may be okay. We might say Paul, Peter, James, and John failed also, and many through the centuries. But to continue for decades denying obvious corruption and damage in the Body under Local Church jurisdiction in Shanghai, Taipei, and Anaheim - beachheads of the ministers of the age - is totally irresponsible of Local Church leadership.

Ones who would address the abhorrent condition in Anaheim during the fateful reign of Philip Lee were quarantined. Ones who were in Shanghai have written a book in their eighties to point to the corrupting elements of their time that many years since could not erase from their memory. There were many tears of anguish, despair and disillusionment in Shanghai, and also in Taipei where a grievous detailed report of their history was made, including unethical and illegal handling of money in the “deacon office”, a practice transported from the Anaheim “deacon office”, where such corruption began.

Concerning the Lord's Recovery

In 1983 Brother Lee shared in Concerning the Lord's Recovery that the Bible was a book of recovery.

Foreword by Benson Phillips: "In both the Old Testament and the New Testament God's purpose, intention, and goal to have man as His expression is clearly revealed. Also, His accomplishments

2

according to that intention can be clearly seen. Furthermore, both Testaments give a clear record of how Satan, God's enemy, works to corrupt and destroy what God has accomplished. Finally, the two Testaments reveal how God comes in after Satan's destruction to regain His expression. **This regaining of His expression is the basic matter of the Lord's recovery.** God plans and God accomplishes; then Satan destroys and God recovers."

Witness Lee shares in his book on "the basic matter" of recovery – **regaining God's expression.** "The complete model of the church in the Old Testament was the temple. When the temple was fully built up, the glory of God came down. This means that God Himself came down as the glory to cover the temple and to fill the temple up. That was the picture of the full accomplishment of God's purpose.

Lost

"But then Satan came in first to ruin and corrupt the people. The temple was built up during the glorious reign of Solomon the king. But **Solomon himself took the lead to become rotten and corrupt.** He was corrupted by the pagan concubines. The concubines brought in the idols, and this ruined the people. The entire nation of Israel was ruined, so God had no way to dwell among them. He had to give them up. Then the Babylonian army came to destroy the temple and the Holy City and to capture the people away to Babylon. The first forefather of the children of Israel was Abraham, who was called out of Babel. Satan came in to bring all of Abraham's descendants back to the very place Abraham was called out of. **So whatever God accomplished was gone.**" (*Concerning the Lord's Recovery*, online, ch 1, sect 2, 1983, W. Lee)

Regained

"But after seventy years God came in to do a recovery work. God came in to recover the thing that was lost. In the recovery of God's expression the scale was not so big as the original, but the quality was higher. **By reading Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah you could see that the returned people were deeply dealt with by God.** Their spiritual morality and character were higher than those of the children of Israel before the temple was built. In a sense Solomon was not that moral; he had many concubines. That is terrible! That is a kind of unveiling of the rottenness of that king of wisdom. He was wise, but he was rotten. His morality was too low! But after the captivity, in the recovery, the character of God's people was very much uplifted. If you considered Ezra and Nehemiah, you would have to admit that these leaders were pure and moral. Their character had a high standard. So as to quality the Lord's recovery was higher than what had been there previously." (chapter 1, section 3, 1983)

Gaining A Pure Testimony of Jesus - Witness Lee, 1983

"The Lord's recovery is really among us, and, although the scale is quite small, the standard of the character is higher than Christianity. In the Lord's recovery the high standard of the character must be kept and maintained. Some have checked with me asking, Do you mean that all the other Christians are rotten and that only the local church people are not rotten? I don't mean that. If any people have become rotten, they are no more in the reality of the Lord's recovery. Whatever and whoever is rotten is not in the recovery. The local churches are people who have been recovered out of their rottenness back to the pure

church life. The local church is not a kind of organization or religious group. The local church is the pure church life as a pure testimony of Jesus. **If we become rotten, we are no longer in the reality of the Lord's recovery.** (Witness Lee, chap. 1 section 4, 1983)

“This is why in the New Testament the Apostle Paul would not tolerate any kind of immorality. In 1 Corinthians 5 Paul charged the church not to associate with that immoral person. The church as a pure testimony of Christ would not tolerate any impurity, any immorality. The church has to be pure. **Once the church becomes rotten, it loses its nature** and standing as the Lord's testimony....” (ch 1, section 4)

3

On Not Reaching the Standard of our Vision - 1994

Eleven years later Witness Lee shares about not succeeding to reach the standard over a 72 year period. “From Brother Nee’s time until today, for seventy-two years, our practice has never come up to the standard of our vision that we have received of the Lord. **Brother Nee stressed two things:** Christ as life to produce the church and the church as the Body of Christ to express Christ. But, sorry to say, it was not only the outsiders who did not know these things; even among Brother Nee’s co-workers, who were my contemporaries, very few have fully entered into the realization of these two matters. **Not to mention the matter of the Body of Christ, they did not even see the matter of Christ as life to us.**”

“In 1934 a letter came to me from Watchman Nee saying...that the vision we had received from the Lord concerned Christ as our life to produce the church, not as an organization but as a Body, an organism, to express Christ. This, he said, is what we have seen, and this is what we should preach and teach. Brother Nee wrote these words twelve years after the beginning of the recovery in China in 1922.

“From the time that I began my ministry until today I have put out many books concerning the vision that we have seen. Through all the years, in mainland China, in Taiwan, in southeast Asia, and in the West today, **in our practice we have never come up to the standard of what we have seen.**” (Living a Life According to the High Peak of God’s Revelation, p. 38, W. L.)

The Vision Climbs but not the Practice 1984-1994

Brother Lee refers to receiving more revelation, as the vision climbed, and so did the sale of books, but not the practice of the vision. It did distinguish him from Watchman Nee and made him now one who had developed an utterance of God’s economy like no one before him:

“In the **past ten years** the Lord has shown us His economy. According to my study of church history and the biographies of many saints, I would say that before 1984 God’s eternal economy as the very reality and the center of the Bible was never seen by God’s people so fully as today among us. To my knowledge, no other book has pointed out that God’s eternal economy has Christ as its center and reality, with His Body, the organic Body of Christ, as the organism to the Triune God. Today we have come to this high peak of God’s divine revelation. I would even say that we have probably reached the highest peak of the divine revelation in the entire Bible. This is the divine revelation discovered by the believers through the past twenty centuries. (Living a Life According to the High Peak of God’s Revelation, p. 38, W. L.)

He then explained the history of the teaching of the triune God and then expounded on living the life of a

God-man before ending this final chapter of the book with the emphatic message that “the goal of our practice should be to live the life of a God-man. “This is the goal we should reach. Since we have seen such a high peak of the divine revelation we need to put into practice what we have seen. Our practice will have a success and that success will be a new revival...” Not yet, though the utterance is impressive.

It is much better to see the vision of our failure; be abhorred by it; and pursue determinedly a good conscience before God and man - and a pure testimony of Jesus.

Shanghai - www.twoturmoils.com/LilyHsuBook.pdf

Taipei - www.twoturmoils.com/TaipeiHistory.pdf

Anaheim - www.twoturmoils.com/TimelineofWitnessLeeEraUS.pdf Will be adding 20 essential

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