
On the Lee Road

What Watchman Nee and Witness Lee learned in China in their stand for Christ and the church, W. Lee brought to the US for spreading the church life. He had three decades of experience with *churches in the East* before moving to the US, Los Angeles, in **1962**. He said: “With any kind of practice there is the need for two things: the life and the way. We have seen the life needed for practicing the church life. This is the life of Christ. We have this life within us. Now we need the way to match this life. (*The Life and Way to Practice the Church Life*, ch 1, LA, **1963**)

Brother Lee was laying a good foundation with Christ as life for the building up of the church on a “proper ground”. And, he gave a strong forewarning in **1964** about the use and mis-use of a ministry: “All the local saints must realize that the local church is their church. If the local saints are not clear concerning this, **they will allow a gifted person to take the local churches into his own hands and treat it as his personal property. Then the entire church life will be finished. The local churches belong to the local saints. The gifted persons are just the means to perfect the saints to function; they are only the instruments used by the Lord to build up the churches. “The ministry should be for the church; the church should never be for the ministry. We must drop all wrong practices. We must be exceedingly clear concerning this principle. A gifted brother should keep his hands off the local church. This is a tremendously vital matter.”** (*The Vision of God’s Building*, **1964**)

Declaring the Man and Ministry Movement 1974

Don Rutledge, former Dallas elder explains: “The turn away from the vision by Witness Lee regarding the practice of the local church life began in **January 1974** at the very first special elders and co-workers conference. This is when the concept of the work began. Few of the saints realize the magnitude of effect this meeting had on the churches. With charts and statistics, Witness Lee and Max Rapoport came forth to launch the movement. It was boldly declared that the churches would use Witness Lee as the **exclusive source** of teaching, and Max would serve as the coordinator to bring the various churches, with their elders, into a unified movement. The life-study messages would be given in Anaheim, and **ministry stations** were set up in various cities to repeat the messages through designated brothers. Some smaller churches “consolidated” to the larger localities where there was a ministry station. The official list of the 12 designated brothers who would be speaking in the conferences was announced. Bi-annual trainings began. The messages became life-studies.

From that time on, the individual churches would be called to account if they were moving “independently.” In addition to coordinating the elders to act in a single direction, Max was charged to assist the various churches to be more effective with gospel preaching and outreach. He began to travel and, in particular, to meet with the elders. Those who would not be good movement men were pushed aside, if possible, or moved somewhere to be out of the way. On several occasions, Max told me that he was working to bring the elders and churches into one coordination for the purpose of carrying out the burden of Witness Lee. He told me several times that only he could put it all together. I am not attempting to call into question the motive of Witness Lee or Max. During this time, Witness Lee did some very good teaching and Max did some very good gospel work. But what did happen was that the **nature** of the various “local churches” changed from being local in administration and spontaneous in actions to being **directed from a center with clear administrative leaders and directors**. Things were definitely not the same. Some were saying **the time of blessing has passed, we changed our vision**; or the moving of the Spirit left the churches; or teaching, doctrine, and methods replaced life.

Another 12 years later, 1974-1986, (lawsuits slowed the 1974 movement), a letter of Agreement to follow Witness Lee, absolutely, was signed in the February 1986, elders conference. Benson and Ray had accelerated the Movement by visiting churches and encouraging them that we have an account and owe Witness Lee and his ministry office. And, they wrote this letter to Brother Lee, based on his messages.

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 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, the ministry office and the other churches. We hope that the church in our place will be identical with all the churches throughout the earth.

“We also agree to practice 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.” (There were 417 signatories).

Bill Mallon Sums up the Deviation 1962-1974

“You will never know how completely astonished, shocked, and unnerved we were when WL put more and more things under Philip Lee’s responsibility. It was incredible and unbelievable from the get-go! How could such a so-called man of the Spirit (WL) hand over a spiritual work to a man of the flesh (PL)?!?! It was repulsive, let alone depressive. It was once brought to my attention that Witness Lee appreciated Philip Lee because this son of his **turned Witness Lee’s ministry into a money-making business.**

“Witness Lee first got off-track when he deviated from his original principle. He said in the 1960s that the churches should not be for the ministry and should not build up the ministry, but that the ministry should be for the churches and build up the churches. This he **reversed dramatically in 1974 when he moved to Anaheim** for the purpose of centralizing his ministry and decentralizing his focus on the churches:

(1) Firstly, his ministry became the center and he expected all the churches to strengthen, support, and give allegiance to it.

(2) Later, WL himself became the center, and everyone and all the churches were judged according to their loyalty to the "minister."

(3) After this, WL expected everyone to give allegiance and financial support to the LSM bookroom, and whoever failed to acknowledge and support the bookroom fell from his favor and were judged disloyal.

(4) Finally, WL's ministry deteriorated to an all-time low, to a hole below the pit, when he gradually installed Philip Lee to be in charge of even the Taipei training, expecting all the churches to give their allegiance and loyalty to his son in (and of) the flesh. These were the heavy, unbearable feelings in our hearts. As time went by, we tried to do something about it. But characteristically, WL would burst into a 9-foot intimidating giant.” (Bill’s email letter to me outlining the history succinctly 2005)

The Lee Road would prove costly as Witness Lee was clearly in control of the churches, announcing in the February 1986 elders’ conference that anyone not there for his leadership 100% should leave the conference – by 10pm that night. Two brothers from the church in Moses Lake left, Ken Sandberg and Stan Lancaster. This brought in turmoil to the church in Moses Lake that led to division, and to broken hearts also. Brother Lee would later slow down, as he realized the need for him to re-assess. A conference was held, and some pacifying words were spoken. But it wasn’t enough.

Dick Taylor tried to encourage John Ingalls, saying, “I think this is all we can do (or expect)”, but, John said, his conscience was bothered, that “nothing major was addressed”. Ken Unger, a former LSM trainer, told me “it was a perfect *opportunity* and *setting*” for Brother Lee to gain the brothers by addressing their LSM-related concerns. They had appreciated his speaking to *minor concerns* previously; but he never got to the crux of the “Problems and Concerns”, the real factors of turmoil and division - omitted in Lee’s book; but not in John’s.

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Speaking the Truth in Love, by John Ingalls displaces *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* by W. Lee - by virtue of truth displacing fiction.

Accusations Reasonably Addressed

“Fermentation” from Hong Kong

Witness Lee began *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* saying, “The present rebellion began to ferment first in Hong Kong as early as 1985 by Joseph Fung. I use the word ferment purposely because leaven existed there (1 Cor. 5:6-8; Matt. 13:33), and this leaven, this corruption, began to ferment from Hong Kong. Brother Lee reports, “Joseph Fung came to Anaheim and he had a confrontation with my ministry office. That caused much hardship between my office and the church in Hong Kong because of him.” (p.10, *FPR*).

Because of him!” He does not mention that the manager of Living Stream Ministry, Philip Lee, might have had some responsibility for that hardship between the LSM office and the church in Hong Kong. We are to take Brother Lee’s word that it was Joseph who “caused much hardship”. In *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*, page 10, the alleged ambition and temper of Joseph Fung was mentioned. The word ambition was used many times by Brother Lee to describe the character of some brothers who didn’t walk in lockstep with him. It was determined that “they must want something for themselves”. This was their alleged ambition.

Joseph Fung had spiritual measure, experience, and significance. **Philip Lee** did not. Overall, Philip had a sordid reputation and his temper was a part of it - and it was a part of the huge problem that he was in Anaheim, Taiwan, and other places, to many saints, elders, coworkers, and churches - not only as LSM bookroom manager but, lamentably,

as much more. Witness Lee continues, claiming that “the fermentation in Hong Kong had spread to Europe, specifically to John So in Stuttgart, Germany.”

"At the same time that Joseph Fung was working in Hong Kong and John So was working in Europe, the two began to have contacts with various saints in the United States in 1987. Joseph Fung made trips to the West Coast and contacted disgruntled or innocent saints here and there. On the other hand, John So began to have contact with some saints in the Southeast of the U. S. and to exert a negative influence upon them. At one time he spoke with a brother from four to six hours over the telephone, expressing to him the matters he was bothered with. **He also began to communicate with John Ingalls** and others in Southern California through the telephone. **By all this it is evident that the fermentation that was taking place** in Hong Kong and Europe began to work in the United States" (p. 42, FPR). After speaking in this way, Brother Lee alludes to his assumption that a *conspiracy* must have been taking place, saying, “During that entire period of time they kept these communications from me. I did not know then that they were **working actively behind my back**”. In relation to his assumption, Brother Lee once shared with the elders: “**It is when we are impure that we become suspicious.** We become detectives to spy out the meaning behind what others say. If we are pure in our motive, we do not have such a thought. We are on another globe, taking others’ words in a simple way.” (Practical Talks to the Elders, pp. 26-28, 1982)

On the claim “the fermentation in Hong Kong had spread to Europe, specifically to John So in Stuttgart”, we have to ask, where is the proof of this? No information is supplied by Brother Lee to substantiate his claim. He simply makes an assertion. Of course, whatever Brother Lee would say, many saints would accept as the truth. What may not be the truth becomes “truth” to people simply because he spoke it. Indeed, whatever he asserted about his conspiracy theory, and people believed, began without proof. It, therefore, began without a solid foundation to build upon. On the claim “John So began to have contact with some saints in the Southeast of the U. S. A. and to exert a negative influence upon them”, what was the negative influence? According to whose evaluation did John So exert a negative influence upon these saints? Brother Lee gives no details about this and leaves no impression that he knew these saints and what they could testify concerning John’s visit.

He also gave the reader no hint about what was going on in the recovery for two long-time co-workers to rise up and come to the U. S. to minister to others. Neither did Brother Lee offer any proof in his book to establish that John So and Joseph

Fung had worked together or that they were somehow conspiring or had any other motive in coming to the US than *to care for the saints and the recovery, according to the Lord's leading and the burden they had in their heart. Why would Brother Lee be suspicious?*

Claim that Brothers Were Involved in a Conspiracy

John Ingalls – “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 to 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 fellowshipped 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”. (*Speaking the Truth In Love conclusion, 1990*) **Al Knoch** – “Anyone who knows John Ingalls knows that he is not ambitious; he is not that way. Who would want that responsibility [of taking over the recovery]. There was no conspiracy” (my interview with Al in his home, Salem, Oregon, Nov 2000).

John So – In his Manila presentation, John So was stunned at the conspiracy charge. He shared, “I would like to just go through Brother Lee’s outline concerning “the rebellion”. It says the rebellion began to ferment from Stuttgart in 1986. What I would like to do is just give you the chronological events of what took place. I will only deal briefly with things that I personally know quite well, concerning myself, Stuttgart, and Europe. I don’t know and I am not thoroughly familiar with what went on in Hong Kong. I really do not know and I cannot say anything in detail. So, I cannot speak for brother Joseph Fung. And I didn’t know exactly what happened in Anaheim in the very beginning. So I cannot speak for brother John Ingalls. I really cannot. And when things happened in Rosemead, I really had no idea what was going on there until I read the literature that they had put out. I did not even know that we had ever formed an “international conspiracy ring” until Witness Lee said so. I am quite surprised. None of the places I’ve mentioned involved me. Okay, Witness Lee claims that rebellion and conspiracy started to ferment in Stuttgart in 1986. I’m going to start at

this point: (1990, John So's testimony in the church in Manila by their invitation. He used to live there; they knew him. They also respected John Ingalls, inviting him separately.)

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

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

“One of the brothers I sought to contact and confer with was Ray Graver, an elder in the church in Irving, Texas, and the manager of the LSM branch office there. I called him in Texas and proposed that I come to see him in Irving. It was thought, however, for us to meet in Irving would attract too much attention; so we settled on meeting midway in El Paso, Texas. This decision is being censured now as a plan for a secret meeting, as if that in itself is evil and a conspiracy. But I fail to see anything wrong with this. It was with a pure motive and desire and certainly was not a plot to draw him into a conspiracy to overthrow anyone’s ministry. Ray was quite willing to do this until Benson Phillips, another co-worker and elder in Irving, Texas, who was then in Taiwan, advised him against it. Had Benson been in Irving, I would have sought to speak with him also. I enjoyed a very good and close relationship with both Ray and Benson for many years.

John So - John So speaks straightforwardly to Brother Lee: Originally, I did plan to go to Anaheim to have some personal fellowship with you [Witness Lee] as you requested

by phone early December. (I must say at this time I was not too polite anymore. If you would consider that as maybe a rebellion, that's fine with me. Consider it as a rebellion. Conspiracy, that is also fine with me.) In my last page, I told him, please do not think that I'm against you or am opposing you because of my writing you this letter. I do not have the slightest intention to oppose your work or your ministry.

Neither do I have any desire to convince any brother. By the Lord's grace, I like to be straightforward and follow my conscience, not to hide anything and not play politics, not to please anyone, or to offend anyone. May the Lord have mercy on all His churches. (I ended the letter that way.)

Bill Mallon - Bill was very concerned over serious developments in the Southeast churches, and of course, he opened to other brothers about his concerns, but he **spurns the idea that there was ever a conspiracy to overthrow someone. He said this "would be funny if it were not so tragic" to be charged in such a way.**

The brothers simply came together to discuss their serious concerns and desired to bring those concerns into fellowship with other brothers, including Brother Lee. John Ingalls approached Brother Lee 16 times (alone or w/others) on behalf of the feeling of many brothers and the burden that many of them had at that time. Ken Unger (told me he went to Brother Lee 20 times (alone or w/others) After a considerable amount of time had passed with little progress being made, certain brothers began to speak out according to their convictions, based on the Word of God, prior church ministry, and their conscience. This, however, was interpreted by some as speaking differently, and negatively, and being against the new way in the churches.

The Claim that Dissenting Brothers Were Rebellious

John Ingalls – The following word from John Ingalls is taken from the conclusion of his book, *Speaking the Truth in Love* (pp. 74-75, FPR).

We are also widely and vociferously accused of being rebellious and 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.

John So – John So describes the relationship that he was expected to have with LSM that he could not go along with. The course he then took was perceived as rebellion: “In my last page, I told Brother Lee, ‘Please do not think that I’m against you or am opposing you because of my writing you this letter. I do not have the slightest intention to oppose your work or your ministry’”. At that time, I really meant what I said according to my understanding of the function of the ministry office; and I fully agreed with Witness Lee that if the LSM is only operating on the business side to print books and to distribute tapes, then we brothers should accept this, and cooperate with them. Well, the question is this: I was accused here in Fermentation of pretending to be one with LSM, but that really I was against them.

Tonight let me say a word. I don’t want to vindicate, but I just like to share at least the way we look at it. Everything has two sides. I’m sorry to say, it is not that I am pretending. It is because the LSM office really has a double standard. There is a public declaration that the office is only for the business side to print books, to duplicate tapes, and to send them out to serve the churches.

But to my realization, there is another aspect expected of us. During the visit of these five brothers to Stuttgart, two of them stayed with me in my home—two of them. And these brothers began to 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 his son, Philip Lee, 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 was happening.

To the office! The report went to the office. I was, in short, expected to do the same. I told the brothers in a very good way—we were not fighting—I said, “Brothers, I’m sorry, in short, I just cannot do that. You have the grace to do it, that’s fine, but I just cannot do that.” I told the brothers maybe some other German brothers, like Jorn Urlenbac could do it. I was told, No, no, no, you are the right person to do it. I said,

Thank you, but I can't do it. This is what I realized later was the cause of many problems that we in Stuttgart began to experience with the LSM. Report had gone back to Philip Lee that I refused to do what the brothers were doing. Looking back, this is what caused a serious problem with him. In my view, however, what they were doing in reporting everything to the office had nothing to do with Witness Lee's public declaration of what the office is. I didn't feel there was a need for me to report to the office what we were doing. But these brothers who came to Stuttgart were telling me that Witness Lee's son is his closest and most intimate co-worker. I have to say I had never heard such a thing before. But these two brothers who stayed with me assured me that this was true though Brother Lee doesn't say this publicly. Well, I say, if I haven't heard of this, I just haven't heard of it. Anyway, a report went back to Anaheim, and somebody wasn't happy with me. I was happy with everybody, but somebody wasn't happy with me. I didn't realize it at first, but as time went by I could see that we had problems with "the office" because we lacked cooperation with the manager of the office.

It is not right, therefore, to say that on one hand I declare that I am for the ministry office, but on the other hand, I don't cooperate with it. I want to let you know something more was expected of us at LSM that we could not cooperate with. And, someone was not happy with us about that...Witness Lee should know about our fluctuation. Why? My goodness, if he knows about the consideration of the whole earth, this is a little matter. He should know why there was a fluctuation. The fluctuation was due to the new expectation "the office" had for us, which we did not cooperate with. Of course this made it difficult for us to work together in accord with LSM. (Manila, 1990)

Bill Mallon – In the Southeast, Bill Mallon endeavored eagerly to be one with Brother Lee, the co-workers, and the new way, but ran into serious problems with LSM representatives, who avoided fellowship with him, and other elders, in order to establish LSM influence in the Southeast churches. Bill's reaction to their usurpations and control of the churches was perceived as rebellion by brothers and sisters in the churches who didn't know his circumstances.

The Claim that Brothers Were Against the New Way

On page 51 in Fermentation is a claim indicating that the brothers were not for the new way to build up the churches. In reading the accounts of these consecrated brothers to the Lord's recovery, it is easy to understand why they became alarmed over serious developments in "the Lord's new move" and why they began to meet together to discuss those developments and, eventually, to speak out concerning them.

Their main concern was for the real situation and condition of the churches, and they endeavored to minister to the saints accordingly. It was said that they were not for the new way in the churches and that they were ambitious. Yet, their own accounts tell otherwise, that they were indeed for the new way and for the building up of the church and the churches. The following excerpts show their supportive position for the new way before the disturbing elements from LSM began to arise in the implementation process of the new way that forced them into a different position.

John Ingalls – “That afternoon I went to Brother Lee’s apartment according to our appointment. My desire was to assure him that I was not opposing his burden as set forth in the main points of the “new way” (as it was defined in those days). He had indicated that we were indeed opposing. I told him that I was absolutely not against the preaching of the gospel by door knocking or by any way; that I was absolutely not against the practice of home meetings; and that I was not against any other matter he emphasized. Rather, I was for these things. Brother Lee received my fellowship and remarked that he had never had any problem with me; he only felt that I should have stayed in Anaheim more and not traveled so much. Our talk ended peacefully, but I was not encouraged.”

Bill Mallon – Letter to Witness Lee, “You mentioned what Watchman Nee saw in 1937 and 1949, how he saw the new way of practice for the church life, and now is the time for us to fulfill his vision. I truly want to be a part of this also and give my absolute and overwhelming support. While we need to fulfill Watchman Nee’s and your burden, yet at the same time we must also beware of another side element subtly creeping in. Brother Lee I have drunk of your spirit, and I absolutely followed spiritual authority and the intrinsic element in the flow of the river, which brought in the mutual life and love of the local churches. But I fear that another thing is coming in. May it be exposed before there is a total collapse.”

“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?”

“I know that this is a big recovery, and I feel very happy that we are trying to return to the scriptural way, and God forbid that I should try to hinder what has been gained already. For me to take the attitude and action that I have taken, however, indicates that I am desperately concerned ...lest the subtle enemy sneaks some leavening corruption into the fine flour. We must be warned of certain danger-signs and beware of our vulnerability for being baited into a snare”.

John So – Letter from John So and 63 leading ones to Witness Lee ... “In these days through the fellowship of the brothers you have sent, the vision of God’s New Testament economy and the new move in His recovery has been renewed and strengthened in us. Furthermore, through the sweet fellowship with the brothers, a deep desire for fellowship with all the brothers in the Lord’s recovery has been awakened in our hearts.”

“We further agree to practice the church life in our locality absolutely in the new way: to build the church in, through, and based upon home meetings; to get every member used to functioning without any idea to depend on any giant speakers...”

John Ingalls – “On the weekend of January 27-29, 1989, Brother Lee had a conference in San Diego. He believed he had discerned the reason why some of the older elders and co-workers had some concerns regarding his work and the local churches, and he enunciated his feelings in one of the conference meetings. He spoke as follows. **Witness Lee:** “So today, let me tell you, the problem among us is this: there is a kind of consideration among the older co-workers, not all, but some. There was a kind of consideration -Where shall they be? Brother Lee was the one who brought the recovery to this country and was the one who through the Lord’s ministry brought many of the older co-workers into the recovery. But now this one who brought the recovery to this country is seemingly deviating. Deviating from what? Into what? That’s right, deviating from the old into the new. Now some of the co-workers have to consider where they should be. Shall they remain in the old, or shall they go forth into the new? Go forth? To say this is easy. You have to pay a price, especially the older ones. They have made a success in the recovery according to the old way, but now the old way was annulled. Then what shall we do? If you were them, surely you would consider. I must tell you, this is the root of all the troubles among us today. All the other things are on the surface; the root is here. Now you know.”

John Ingalls - “This analysis absolutely missed the mark. I was surprised when I read the transcript that he could judge so superficially by saying that the root of all the problems is that the older co-workers would not leave the old way and take the new. At the present time he has revised his explanation, yet still misjudges.”

The Claim Bill Mallon Convinced John Ingalls to Dissent

On pages 43-44 of FPR, Witness Lee says, “The fermentation eventually developed into a conspiracy in the fall of 1987. Brothers from different parts of the country began working together in an undermining way to exert influence on other leading ones. All this was done privately. Around that time, John Ingalls visited Bill Mallon in Atlanta. Bill brought him out to the countryside and spent a few days with him and eventually

convinced him of his dissenting views and thus gained him. Up until that time, according to my knowledge, John had not spoken anything negative or critical about me. However, when John Ingalls came back to Orange County from Atlanta, there was a definite change in his attitude. He began to play an active role in this conspiracy.”

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

At that time I was entirely supportive of 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”. **John’s alarm and concern was for the moral misconduct reports of Philip Lee and, even more so, about his father’s reluctance to deal with him.** These two factors were the incendiary elements that brought brothers together to pray and fellowship about going to Brother Lee to express this real issue. It was definitely not John Ingalls who started the turmoil. He was among the sober-minded who appropriately rose up, and came together for ultra-sensitive discussion and fellowship for going to W. Lee. And others were doing the same. (John would go 16 times, till 1989, alone or not. Ken Unger went 20 times alone or not.)

The Claim that it was said the Taipei Training Should be Stopped

Brother Lee stated on page 51 of Fermentation that John Ingalls said the Taipei Training should be shut down. Whether John said so or not, the training had brought much concern to others also, beginning with the problem of Philip Lee being in charge of the trainers. This was not a trivial matter, as Philip was a person reportedly found drunk several times in Taiwan, and, as the story goes, the brothers sometimes had to try to get him sobered up when it was time for him to address the trainers or the trainees. In addition to this, his former secretary reported to others that she had to clean up pornographic literature and whiskey bottles for Philip in his office. This was the person in charge of the training when Brother Lee was not available, which was most of the time due to Brother Lee's sickness and time spent on the Chinese translation of the New Testament. John, incidentally, did not think he said the training should be shut down. That he, and others, had serious concerns, though, was very true, as well as justifiable.

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

- There is no need to pray about what to do; just follow the ministry.
- We don't even need to think; we just do what we are told.
- Follow Witness Lee blindly. Even if he's wrong, he's right. - If you leave the training, you'll miss the kingdom.
- Our burden is to pick up Brother Lee's teaching and way to make us all Witness Lees, **like a Witness Lee duplication center.**
- To be one with the ministry is to be one with B. Lee, **and his office, Philip Lee.** Since Christianity is in ruins, the Lord raised up the recovery; since the recovery is in ruins, the Lord raised up the FTTT.
- An account of Brother Lee's position was given by one of the leading trainers (Paul Hon) of the FTTT to a group of brothers in Dallas, Texas, in the summer of 1986, in the context of how to be one with the ministry. There are witnesses to confirm (including Don Rutledge). It goes as follows: “The Father is number one, the Son is

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

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

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

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

Video tapes of the FTTT convention on Nov. 23, 1986, and the FTTT graduation ceremony on June 1, 1987, surprised us with the mixture of worldly ways and

gimmicks that were practiced and hitherto strongly condemned among us. / I have no relish in mentioning these things. My object is to record and inform the readers of the matters that burdened and concerned us in the fall of 1987”.

The Claim that it was said the Manager of LSM Should Be Fired

On page 51, FPR, John Ingalls is charged with suggesting that the manager of Living Stream should be fired, as if this was an attack and not a legitimate suggestion. The LSM manager was responsible for immoral behavior and for his part in the division in the churches, which Brother Lee was well aware of before he released *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*. Yet he speaks of John Ingalls’ suggesting that his son, Philip Lee, should be fired! As was shared earlier, Paul Kerr, a brother in Anaheim during the turmoil, wrote: “In the real business world, where I operate, Philip Lee would have been fired, legally charged by the abused plaintiff, forced to settle for millions of dollars and he and the LSM would have been reported to the California labor board”.

The Criticism the Churches had to be for the Ministry

On page 51 of FPR, **John Ingalls was criticized for saying that the churches 16 were now expected to be *for* the ministry:** “In those days I had further fellowship with Godfred and with some of the brothers we had contacted, with whom we had intimate fellowship through the years concerning the Lord’s work. We realized that the spiritual condition of the churches throughout the United States and in other places, generally speaking, was very poor, very low. We searched for the reason. Something was radically wrong.

“The Lord’s blessing was not among us. Life was at a very low ebb. In a number of places there was considerable discord and dissension, and instead of a steady increase in numbers, there was a steady decrease. We began to realize then that there were practices and tendencies among us that we had never considered before. And, we ourselves, as well as others, were responsible, having participated in these. But we had not seen clearly or realized previously what was being done. Thus we began to come to some conclusions. “I believe that the first was that the ministry was being given a place above the churches and was being too highly exalted and emphasized, so that it became imperative for every church now to manifest that they were “for the ministry” and to “serve the ministry”. It was no longer, as we were often told, that the ministry was for the churches and that only

the churches should be built up; rather, the churches now should be for the ministry, and the ministry was being built up. We felt that we should voice such a concern to Brother Lee.

Change after Remarkable Commendations of Lee

On page 43 of *Fermentation*, Witness Lee says, “Bill Mallon brought John Ingalls out to the countryside and spent a few days with him and eventually convinced him of his dissenting views and thus gained him. Up until that time, according to my knowledge, John had not spoken anything negative or critical about me. Rather, early in 1981, he gave messages in New Zealand in which he compared Brother Nee and myself to the two sons of oil in Zechariah, where there is a point likening Watchman Nee to Moses and me to Joshua, who brought the people into the good land.”

John Ingalls Commendation

John Ingalls gave the highest endorsement imaginable of Brother Lee’s ministry, which is recorded in seven pages of *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*, p. 44-51. Brother Lee shares, “As late as March 1986, John spoke strongly for the one accord and the ministry in a conference in Mexico City, saying that ‘when you leave the ministry you leave your first love’; that ‘when we leave the ministry we have fallen’; that ‘the ministry brings us the tree of life’; that ‘the ministry prepares us in such a way to be faithful unto death’; that ‘when we take this ministry...we get the hidden manna’; that ‘the ministry is like the morning star to us’; that ‘the Lord is coming through the ministry’; that ‘the ministry brings us the seven Spirits’; and that ‘by keeping the ministry we become Philadelphia’. This message was given only one month after I gave the messages on one accord in the elders’ training in February 1986. Surely it was a strong confirmation of my messages, showing that the speaker was more than positive toward my ministry”.

“Could anyone be more positive toward my ministry than he? Yet, only one and a half years after the giving of this message, he became one of the leaders in the present rebellion and took part in the conspiracy against my ministry. He had a radical change! This is incredible and illogical.”

John So Commendation

In May 1986 John So spoke strongly and lovingly of Brother Lee, the ministry, and a

sweet and practical coordination with the office (pages 21-25 of FPR). He went on for four plus pages this way, exhibiting the highest regard for the recovery and cooperation with the leadership of “the apostle and the ministry office.” These two very high commendations of Brother Lee given by John Ingalls and John So showed that their respect for Brother Lee and regard for his ministry was at the top level. Bill Mallon, in his letters to Brother Lee, was also very high in his regard for Brother Lee and his ministry. These brothers were all very happy to be under Brother Lee’s ministry. Although Brother Lee said he could not understand their change in attitude toward him, their change was both logical and reasonable.

What was truly “incredible and illogical” was Brother Lee’s change, and bizarre, costly actions:

- 1) the hiring of a sinful, unspiritual son
- 2) not firing his sinful son after hearing reports that warranted his dismissal
- 3) lifting up his son for others to follow or allowing him to be *lifted up, recognized, and followed* by others
- 4) covering over the sins of his son in the office of LSM
- 5) covering over his son’s divisive work elsewhere, and that of other LSM coworkers.
- 6) not acknowledging publicly the corrupting elements his son brought into the recovery
- 7) not repenting for anything including
- 8) publicly displacing all blame onto others, “the brothers who have caused the present turmoil”.

The contrast is indeed striking between the *established love* of these three brothers for Brother Lee, his ministry, and the Lord’s recovery, and their *change in attitude* toward him, his ministry, and the recovery. Brother Lee attributed the brothers’ change to an attack of the enemy, stating that these brothers became **“agents of Satan”** to make division among the churches. / He seemed to be unaware of his own susceptibility to the wiles of the enemy. In reading the testimonies of these three

eventually-quarantined brothers, and realizing their desire for the things of the Lord in the recovery, one has to wonder how they could have experienced such a shift in their position without drastic factors being present to cause the change.

Those factors were indeed present, and were as “incredible and illogical” to John Ingalls and John So as their change was to Brother Lee.

Agents of Satan?

This stunning attribution by Brother Lee about three of his longtime co-workers was followed by words of further dishonor in the closing words of his speaking.

Lee’s Concluding word. “Since the dissenting ones have made their rebellion so obvious, so public, even by their publications, I feel obliged to present to you all the fermenting events of the present rebellion in the Lord’s recovery that you may be clear about the intrinsic reasons and causes of all the fermentations. In the church, as a corporate body composed of many different persons with their many different realizations and views, problems are sometimes unavoidable in the long run. According to the New Testament teaching, such problems should be properly taken care of in the divine love by genuine and thorough fellowship in the Spirit, with constant forgiveness, all-caring forbearance, self-depreciating humility, merciful sympathy, and gracious help in mutuality. **Instead of these excellent Christian virtues, what we see in the present rebellion are exaggerated criticisms, cruel backbitings, unreasonable opposing, subtle undermining, wicked defamations, vicious slanders, unethical anonymous letters, ill-intentioned conspiracies, crafty innuendos, double-tongued pretenses, fabricated lies, reckless devastations, and unbridled destructions, with unimaginable hatred, fleshly jealousies, and unChristian avengings.** These criticisms are not the fruit of enjoying Christ. Neither are they good for the building up of the saints and the building of the churches. Even to make such a presentation of the facts is not pleasant to me. For quite a long time I have been hesitating before the Lord as to whether I should do this or not, and I have consulted with the brothers about this. / **I dare say, W. Lee and the brothers he consulted with did not reach the Throne of grace for Counsel, in an unbelievable display of Christless rhetoric, mis-representing both God and man, brothers who God views altogether differently - in honor, not in disgrace.**

WL: “They all encouraged me to do it for the preservation of the uninformed ones, for the recovery of the deceived ones, for the establishing of the wavering and bothered ones, and for history. Thus I feel obligated to do so, after

considering what Paul eventually did in 2 Tim 2:17-18 and 4:14-15 concerning this kind of thing, and even more that Moses kept a full record of the rebellions in the book of Numbers. I do look to the Lord that he would have mercy on all of us, that He would grant us His sufficient grace that we would be able to keep the oneness of His Body at any cost. And I also expect that the brothers who caused the present turmoil and those who are involved with such an illogical and unjustifiable action to consider this matter before the Lord to answer this question, which is the question of so many saints who are concerned with the oneness of the Body of Christ: “Is not what you are engaging in divisive or already a division?”

Brothers, the truth is easy. What you have offered is unbearable. The truth is available, and quite rewarding. Have you read? www.JohnIngalls.com

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More from “Fermentation” p. 20 -30
Appendices p. 26

John So’s “Pretense Behind a Mask”?

On page 25, *FPR*, Brother Lee remarked, “Was this fellowship by John So, given in May 1986 a genuine and honest word? Or was it a systematic lie spoken in pretense behind a mask? This was not one comment spoken in haste, but a consistent attitude expressed over a week’s meetings. Based on the fact that *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* began in Stuttgart in October of the same year, with the giver of the fellowship playing an active role, it is difficult to believe that his fellowship was genuine and honest. If it were genuine and honest, yet he could become a top leader of the present rebellion, it would be difficult, with this kind of fluctuation, for anyone to have mutual trust in him for the Lord’s interest and would be impossible for anyone to work together with him in the Lord’s work for the long run.

On page 26, *FPR*, Brother Lee continued, “John So signed a corporate letter that spoke of the “sweet fellowship” he had with the five brothers who came to Stuttgart, and that through them “the vision of God’s New Testament economy and the new move in his recovery has been renewed and strengthened in us” and “a deep desire for fellowship with all the churches in the Lord’s recovery has been awakened in our hearts.” The letter ended with the words, “Brother Lee, we love you.”

It is too bad that Brother Lee did not offer the whole story. He did not speak the truth about John So, and, thereby, misrepresented him. We have to consider: What would make a brother like John So change? The same thing that makes a husband and wife change when corruption enters into the relationship. That relationship could quickly change, and end in divorce.

Without repentance and purging away of the corrupting elements, there cannot be a genuine relationship between the couple. Before the corruption was realized, the relationship was harmonious and the couple could have “sweet fellowship”.

So it was with John So. He was married to the recovery, until the leaven came in to corrupt, affecting a change in him to the point of severing his relationship with Living Stream. Brother Lee knew the whole story of John’s struggle with Philip Lee, and he knew of LSM’s divisive activity in Europe. He also understood that John So became aware of his son's moral misconduct in the office of Living Stream. Further, Brother Lee knew that he himself did not respond to requests from John to deal with the problems in Europe caused by LSM. Yet, Brother Lee did not share these things with the leaders of the churches and gave them a very unfair view of him.

Where is there “a Hint of Control, even a little Hint?” On page 33 of *Fermentation*, Brother Lee asks, “Where is the hint, even a little hint, that Witness Lee or Philip Lee or anyone of my office in the past did something to exercise their power over any church?” At the time Brother Lee asked this question in *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* numerous reports had come to him from all over the world that were more than mere hints of control. He knew the stories of LSM control beginning with complaints from Hong Kong in 1985; Stuttgart in 1986; Rosemead 1986; the Southeast 1987; England 1987; Anaheim 1988, to name notable examples. He also knew that a sister who worked at LSM wanted to give him a comprehensive report on “hints of control”, but he wouldn’t listen to her 11-page report (Pat Unger, p. 28)

He also didn’t listen to Bill Mallon, John Ingalls, Joseph Fung and John So, about LSM domination, usurpation, and control in their localities and region. **Lee’s support, overtly or covertly, was with his son and LSM’s aggressions and manipulations for accomplishing his goals, which were more than spiritual objectives.** The four aforementioned brothers were later quarantined according to Lee’s “recommendations” for elders to do in cooperation with him in their localities and regions.

The dismissal of complaints of interferences and control by LSM are common in *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*, Witness Lee consistently choosing to look past reports and act as if they didn't exist. What prominent elders and the LSM sister referred to as interferences and violations of the oneness in the Body and the bypassing of fellowship with elders, Brother Lee described as expediting the Lord's recovery. The control was to such an extent that Brother Lee was forced to speak to the problem in an international elders' training (ET, Book 9, pp 61-63), saying, "Our going on should be according to what we have seen from the Word. There should not be any control, and the leadership is not in one controlling person." He added, "I do not control; and the Living Stream office would not control". Using the words "would not control" means that they certainly did control, but he did not expound on that, saying only, "mistakes may have been made in the past", which he also didn't explain, or atone for. But testimonies do explain and answer the inane question, "Where is the hint, even little hint, that Witness Lee or Philip Lee or anyone of my office in the past did something to exercise their power over any church?"

Of course, Bill Mallon enumerated the incidences of manipulation and control by Living Stream in his letter to Witness Lee. John So did the same in his Manila report and disassociation open letter. David Wang gave his full report of LSM control in Rosemead. And, John Ingalls relates the events and concerns in Southern California during the tandem leadership era of Witness Lee and Philip Lee, HIS SON. There were many other people and places who could give reports on "hints of control".

One matter that the LSM sister must have tried to relate to Brother Lee was that the LSM office, Philip Lee, cut off the supply of literature to churches that offended him in some way, and their elders were forced to come to him and apologize. Representative examples of this follow.

From: Eugene, OR "There was a time when the church in Eugene Oregon was cut off from receiving life studies at all because we returned some that went unpurchased by saints. LSM would send up enough life studies for all in attendance and expected all to purchase, which not all did... It was resolved by the elder recruiting skilled brothers to write letters of praise and even a new hymn to Witness Lee, and it worked." (from Kirk, a conscientious brother who was involved) **Flagstaff, AZ** "Elders were stunned when literature stopped being sent to the church in Flagstaff due to the Chinese-speaking side having a surplus of unsold life-studies that the bookroom returned. The whole church was punished as a result, and many saints were demoralized by the act." (Don Bowen, former elder)

Bill Mallon “If a brother was thought to be in rivalry with LSM, even in some small way, he was dealt with and must apologize.” _Bill Mallon . Bill was a prominent elder in the recovery and was himself forced to kowtow to Philip Lee: **In 1985, after the training, I felt unable to type out the notes I took. I sent them to several brothers to share with them the fellowship of the Spirit, one of which was located in London. (Barbara and I during the winter of early '85 were graciously hosted by one couple in the London area, so I sent them my notes as a gesture of my appreciation.) Philip Lee claimed he consulted with WL and that I should never have done it. He reprimanded me, implying it was in rivalry with their printing department, and said these notes should never be sent before the book was published. He demanded that I retrieve all notes sent, and that I come to Anaheim and apologize to him. I went to Anaheim and apologized, stating that it was totally unintentional. He fell asleep in front of me, and I had to wait for him to wake up.** (my email, Dec 2006)

These matters of control and many other stories like them were reported to Brother Lee, but he had no ear to hear and no heart to know. Brother Lee said, “We only knew to help and to do everything to expedite the Lord’s recovery in so many countries and to help the churches. That is all we knew.” Yet, that was not all he knew. Such dupery as this prevails in *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* from W. Lee and co-workers in their quest to quarantine their fellow co-workers.

Gene Gruhler Mistakes

Gene Gruhler made several mistakes in his testimony in *Fermentation*. His disadvantage in seeing and knowing matters clearly was that he was not in the church in Anaheim. He supposed that he knew what he was talking about even though he was not standing where John Ingalls, Al Knoch, and Godfred Otuteye were standing, so he wasn’t in their shoes. Therefore, his paradigm was off when he spoke, as were all those outside the locality of Anaheim, including those brothers who are recorded at the end of *FPR* who had sent letters to the Anaheim elders to condemn their handling of the chaotic meetings and situation in Anaheim that they had heard about. The brothers simply didn’t know the situation or what they were talking about. The whole book, in fact, is based on a wrong paradigm and superficial observation, which is why it careens off course early and follows an imaginary track of building a case about a conspiracy and its ringleaders.

Sixteen Points “Attack”

Facts are needed. On page 81, *FPR*, Gene referred to “The Standing of the Church in Anaheim” meeting, saying that the sixteen points given by Godfred and John Ingalls “was absolutely an attack on Brother Lee and also an attempt to cut off the church from the Living Stream Ministry.” Gene was mistaken. John Ingalls and others explain in a reasonable way the situation they faced and what their feeling was in presenting the sixteen points fellowship.

Dan Towle Testimony

Dan Towle shares, “in the fall of 1987, John Ingalls and I were talking about some mutual concerns we had for what we perceived as problems in the recovery. Based upon this conversation, I agreed to come to his house to talk about these concerns. In my heart, I didn’t consider what we talked about as a conspiracy.” (p. 99, *FPR*) Dan didn’t consider what they talked about as a conspiracy. And John Ingalls never did consider what he talked about with anyone, as a conspiracy. This is because there were just brothers addressing their mutual concerns in a time of upheaval. Dan Towle thought John’s concerns were going further than necessary. John Ingalls did not feel that way, but began to meet with others in the same way he met with Dan, to discuss genuine concerns that were on a broader scale than Dan’s.

The Charge of Not Covering Noah

John Little says, On p. 129 of *FPR*, “Concerning the accusations that were made, I told John Ingalls and Bill Mallon that I didn’t know whether or not they were true, but that the Lord had reminded me of the case with Noah and his sons and the case of Moses and the criticism of Miriam and Aaron. I shared with the brothers what had impressed me with these two instances. Finally, Brother John Ingalls spoke up and told me that he did not believe that the case concerning Noah applied. **I responded that surely Ham sinned but why was he cursed for generations? It was because he touched God’s government. There is the side of personal sin and the side of God’s government. Nothing was said in response to this. I told them that the issue and result would be division. They had nothing to say.** / What could they say to John Little’s speaking? His interest was in covering Noah. Ultimately though, John Ingalls gives us his true and enlightening responses to all the misguided charges against him, in Speaking the Truth in Love. JohnIngalls.com

Gene Gruhler and Dan Towle Offer Final Word

The long line of speakers finished with Gene Gruhler and Dan Towle, the two who began the procession of “witnesses” to the stand. They spoke very strongly against their former fellow co-workers as “key” spokesmen of the tribunal. Strangely, they both spoke of learning from history, albeit, the one-sided version of it for the saints “to learn”. Gene’s word on page 143 in *FPR* says, “The Lord’s recovery has passed through some things, and the things we have been fellowshipping with are not with the purpose of exposing anyone in a personal way. But those who don’t learn from history are doomed to repeat history. We want to learn.” Gene declares to all the leading ones that we want to learn”.

Dan Towle said on page 148 of *FPR*, “*We all have a lot we can learn. I think we have to take Brother Lee’s fellowship concerning the present rebellion in a learning spirit. We should receive this fellowship not to criticize people or hold them up to ridicule, but in an atmosphere of analysis of how we can learn and profit, so that somehow the Lord could have mercy on us, and we can avoid repeating history.*” Dan wants to avoid repeating history. Dan says on page 149 of *FPR*, “Some may wonder why we need to come together to hear all the events of the present rebellion. We have to hear them until we are really clear. Brother Lee said that even we brothers who have been studying this present rebellion were not really clear in the way that he was clear concerning what has happened in the last number of years. This presents an inherent danger. At some point we may forget history and forget what really happened. Then we will repeat it.” **What really happened?** is the question. In 1995 I read John Ingalls’ book. All I learned prior was LSM-related. John Ingalls spoke in a spirit of love and he was well-positioned in leadership to give veritable information that was invaluable for our learning of actual church history. **A prime example is that Philip Lee’s major role in causing turmoil and division was omitted by LSM completely!!!** Missing in LSM’s unmeritorious Fermentation book, but “underscored” heavily in John Ingalls’ account for its vital importance; and featured in John So’s disassociation letter backed by nine European churches. All four of those quarantined brothers suffered the presence of Philip Lee in their lives and church experience. These were righteous men and brothers standing up to W. Lee and his son, Philip, and his part in spreading corruption amongst the called saints.

This website is a review of our church history.

www.ReviewingChurchHistory.com

Appendices pages 26-30

Brother Lee not open to fellowship

Atlanta Elders Conference

John Ingalls relates an elders' meeting in which Brother Lee told the brothers how he felt about them and their inability to fellowship with him. He essentially informed them that they were not *qualified* to raise questions with him or to criticize anything he did. **John Ingalls** In September Brother Lee had a conference in Atlanta with two elders' meetings, one on Friday, September 16th, (1988) and the other on the Lord's Day, September 18th. The second meeting was exceptional with brothers from all over the country attending. I would like to briefly describe it, noting a few significant things that were said, (I myself was not present but I received reports from a number of brothers concerning it.) Brother Lee strongly vindicated the way he had taken against all criticisms. He drew a line; any who would not take this way, he said, are "dropouts", and the Lord will have no mercy. Addressing the brothers, he said that none of them understood what he was doing. None knew what he was doing in Taipei; hence there was no one that he could fellowship with. When I went to Taipei, he said, "I did not fellowship with one person concerning what I was going to do." He continued: "None of you is perfected. Who can say that he is perfected? So you are not qualified to criticize what I am doing. I didn't include you in my fellowship – how can I? So let there be no more talk about anything I do. You criticize my young trainers in Taipei, telling me their mistakes, but I was doing everything; what they did was to carry out my burden.

Don Rutledge, an elder in Dallas before moving to North Carolina, told me, "That meeting was the most devastating and discouraging experience of all my time in the church." What particularly bothered him was Brother Lee's attitude toward the brothers. The atmosphere, he said, was heavy, oppressive, and abusive. (Reports came to my ears from a number of brothers who attended that meeting; all indicated something similar.)

Brother Lee had wanted to have a time of fellowship with Don immediately following the session, but Don was so troubled and depressed that he told

Brother Lee he had to go home. As he walked out the door, Titus Chu came up and said to Don, "I'm afraid this will make our situation worse. I hope not".

Elders From Raleigh Visit Brother Lee

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

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

The Raleigh brothers...agreed to come to Anaheim the week after the training to meet with Brother Lee. He said he would answer their questions. They arrived on Saturday, January 7, and met with Brother Lee that night. They met also on the Lord's Day morning, afternoon, and evening, and again on Monday morning – **a total of approximately ten hours.** The first evening Brother Lee did most of the speaking, **giving them a history of the "conspiracy and rebellion."** However, the brothers were able to say a few things. Tom pointed out how the church life was going down, and they were looking for answers. He said they had no problem with the matters of the new way, but how it was carried out was a problem. They were not concerned for right and wrong, but for God's righteousness. They read some verses to him and quoted from the *Normal Christian Church Life* by W. Nee, but Brother Lee did not want to hear it. He said that he knew what Watchman Nee meant in that book, and what Watchman Nee meant then does not apply to today's situation. He said, moreover, that there is no basic problem among us, but only a storm in Germany and Anaheim. **John So, he said, exercises a strong control over Stuttgart, and just like Bill Freeman (a former elder of the church in Seattle) he is trying to set up**

another ministry. One of the Raleigh brothers then asked how you can identify another ministry. Brother Lee replied that it is very difficult. **The brothers said that Brother Lee was very defensive at times and was like a ball bouncing from one matter to another.** Tom Cesar asked, "Why can't brothers come together to discuss their concerns without being considered to be conspiring?" But Brother Lee, they said, had no ear to hear them. It was as if they were talking to the wall. He didn't want to clear up their points; he hadn't even read the outline they had presented to him the previous summer. He would not answer their questions directly. They were impressed that he never asked how the saints in the church in Raleigh were doing, as if he was not concerned for them. The brothers were very disappointed.

LSM Sister's Report

As a sister working in the office of the Living Stream Ministry, a former elder's wife had day-to-day exposure to the interferences that were being encountered by dear saints, elders, co-workers, and churches - in places around the recovery both far and near. She had been troubled to the extent of writing to Brother Lee an eleven-page letter expressing her concerns of the ill-treatment of the saints in different places at the hands of the LSM. She and her husband, an elder in Southern California, went to Brother Lee to read him the letter, and as she began to read Brother Lee cut her off soon after she started, and he took over and dominated the time, sharing his own burden about "the Lord's move." She was very discouraged, but Brother Lee granted her another visit to him with her husband at her husband's request, and again as she began to read, Brother Lee stopped her, before she could get through half a page. He then dominated the remainder of the time with his own burden concerning "the Lord's move" on the earth, not showing interest in her fellowship. (Ken Unger shared this with me concerning his wife's experience in the turmoil.) Brother Lee could not listen to what the husband considered a mild part of the letter compared to the more serious matters the letter addressed. His wife, thoroughly despondent over her experience, never tried again and never recovered from her experience and disillusionment with the church and the recovery. / She and her husband had experienced the same attitude in Brother Lee that was encountered by John So, Bill Mallon, John Ingalls, the Raleigh brothers, and many more. Brother Lee was not interested in the interferences - they were just "misunderstandings" of the "help" the LSM was trying to render.

Churches in Southern CA - John Ingalls

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

John Ingalls shares, “Dick Taylor, an elder in Long Beach, started [the sharing] with a lively, full-of enjoyment kind of testimony, such as Dick is well-known for, thanking the Lord for the door-knocking and the Gospel preaching in Long Beach, but ending with an honest word about the depression and the discouragement among some of the saints. This was unusual for Dick but he was telling it like it was. Other brothers followed who also spoke very honestly about dissensions concerning the new way and discouragement among the saints in their localities, for which they were very concerned. In some places divisions had arisen over the new way. John Smith, an elder in San Diego, ended the time of sharing with an honest account of his concerns for the saints in his church, mentioning how he feared that with the overemphasis on methods, numbers, and increase, the saints would become activity-centered instead of Christ-centered. “What was extraordinary was the elders speaking up in such an honest and forthright way, knowing that such reports were not what Brother Lee liked or wanted to hear. We were not accustomed to doing this due partly to a sense of intimidation. To my knowledge this was the first time that had been done. This was encouraging. But Brother Lee was visibly bothered, and later reacted strongly to the brothers’ speaking, saying of one brother’s sharing (John Smith, San Diego), that it was like pouring iced water on him.”

Steve,

I really appreciate the calm, courteous, respectful manner in which you treat others on this forum (I smell Christ!), and the fact that you have not in your heart separated yourself from, nor do you express anger towards those brothers & sisters who have chosen to misinterpret and reject your fellowship. (I read "In the Wake of the New Way" after I first came across this forum - it is incredible that your humble, heartfelt and loving fellowship was considered "opposing" the recovery! That's just ludicrous!! These brothers so need our prayers.)

I feel so strongly to encourage you to continue this investigative / informative work, and do not doubt that it is of the Lord. We have no way of knowing who is reading these posts, and who might be having the scales fall from their eyes as a result - perhaps even a Blinded Brother or two! I, for one, have been greatly helped by your thoroughly balanced and objective presentation of (yes, bizzare!) events.

I am certain that our Lord is the source of the desire that "we return to the right path of receiving people", and also that He is the supply enabling you to accomplish what I'm sure is a huge job. I thank Him for what He has put in your heart! (from 2003)

Stay on the TRACK!

Steve I. Feb 18, 2025