

A PUBLIC STATEMENT
made on May 19, 1963

As we realized the need of a proper expression of the Body of Christ, we started to meet together to fulfill this purpose in the Spring of 1962. For an enlarged realization of our vision of the oneness of Christ's Body, more of us came to meet together on the Church ground in Los Angeles in the beginning of March, 1963.

We do not intend to be any kind of new "movement," but to practice the unity of the Spirit, a unity with variety, and the variety versus uniformity, in the way of a local church.

We are not centered around certain truths, but make Christ, the all-inclusive Head, Himself to be life and everything to us. We are willing and ready to take in all the good, sound, scriptural, and spiritual things which the Lord has given through all generations and is still giving today to His Body through whatever channel of different types of His saints; but we would not practice them in the improper way taken by certain groups, nor would we identify ourselves with any denomination, sect, or any sort of Christian movement. We are not exclusive. We receive all of God's children as fellow-members of Christ's Body, regardless of their Christian background; however, we have no organizational connections with any of their particular associations, works, activities, etc.

May the Lord's way be prosperous among His people in His increase that His testimony through the local expressions of His Church may be established and strengthened throughout the whole world in these last days to the full extent of His recovery in the building up of His Body to the measure of the stature of His fullness by more and more brothers and sisters being brought into the stream of His life in the fellowship of the Spirit while He is moving on toward His coming back by having a remnant as a response to His call for the fulfilling of God's eternal purpose.

The Responsible brothers of the Church in Los Angeles

"Follow the Vision" – Don Rutledge with Brother Lee - 1975

One evening I was walking with Brother Lee. He stopped, turned to me, then put his arm around my shoulder. I realized that he was about to tell me something

very serious. He told me that he made a terrible mistake with Daystar (luxury motor home business he introduced to the churches that failed the year before). He said that if he saw Brother Nee he would not know what to say since Brother Nee had warned him not to mix the church with financial matters or business. "He then told me that he had once told Watchman Nee that he was not following him, but rather was following the truth and vision that Brother Nee taught.

Furthermore, that he would not follow Watchman Nee if Watchman Nee left the vision, but that he, Brother Lee, would continue to follow the vision. He then looked me straight in the eye and charged me, "Brother Don, if I leave the vision, do not follow me but follow the vision." I was a little speechless, but I did manage to return the embrace and assure Brother Lee that I would remain true to the vision and the truth." _DFR

FINAL MESSAGE

When Witness Lee gave his Final Message he reflected on the past and mistakes that were made. Although he would not be specific, he charged others to come together to learn from our past. "This is a lesson for us all. The co-workers in different places need to learn; all responsible brothers in all localities need to learn. The eyes of the brothers and sisters all need to be opened. Too many things we need to learn. We have acted wrongly in the past, including me, I have to admit. I have had very painful repentance before the Lord. I am very sorry! I am sorry for the Body of Christ - not only for the brothers and sisters 14 Page14 among us, but also for the ones in the denominations. You have to bring this message back and read it over and over again in mutual fellowship. Then you will see we were wrong before. To understand and analyze this needs a fair bit of effort. Again I say, a few of you must come together through pray-reading, studying, reciting, and prophesying. We must learn from our past mistakes to receive people according to God's Son...undeviating... not deviating a bit from the path." (Chinese New Year Conference, 1997, W. Lee)