

Dear Sherman,

In your letters you stated that I need to retract things I said on the internet that were not true. I am prepared to do that, of course, if I have misrepresented anyone or anything in any way.

To bear false witness against another person is such a serious matter that it is one of the Ten Commandments God gave to His people in the Old Testament: “thou shalt not bear false witness against your neighbor”.

In my three and a half years in the Bellevue area, I could not establish the fellowship with you and the brothers, as I had desired. Early on I was taken out of ordinary fellowship before I began to meet in the church in Bellevue. I had just come from San Diego where an experienced brother said I was “a boon to the church life” there, referring mainly to my time spent with him and his wife to help them into the vital groups fellowship and way. We together then helped raise up a group meeting that was indeed vital. The brother and sister ordered vital groups books at that time for the bookroom to encourage others into this fellowship. The brother, his wife, and I have been in the recovery for over thirty years and care very much for the recovery. They both thanked me for my help and for my burden, since they had been dormant and without help for many years. They are currently very much involved in the campus work coordination, having saints in their home every week. I rejoiced with the brother when I heard this.

Coming to the Eastside I wanted to become involved in one or two group meetings and in the campus work and be fully in the church life. The only participation in the church life I have achieved has been a morning revival time with a brother where I receive the Word and the words of God’s economy through the ministry of Witness Lee, as has been my practice for over three decades. Following the receiving of the words of God’s economy into us, we pray often for the carrying out of God’s economy in the saints, with the elders, in all the churches, and in His move on the earth in different places. I had initiated corporate morning watch in three localities previously, caring for the enjoyment of the riches of Christ in this ministry - for myself, as well as for others, and for the church. In these last two paragraphs I have described for you three very important matters: 1) **That I am for the God-ordained way** and 2) **I am interested in God’s economy** and 3) **I am for the recovery**. In your two letters you claimed that I am not for these things.

I want to now mention and acknowledge the following solemn characterizations and charges at least implied in your two letters concerning me. You had this to say:

- 1) “You don’t belong in the Lord’s recovery”.
- 2) I don’t have a “special calling” to be in the Lord’s recovery
- 3) I am not willing to “pay the price to be in the Lord’s recovery.”
- 4) I am “not interested in God’s economy” to be carried out by “means of **the God-ordained way**”.
- 4) I don’t agree with “God’s way of carrying out the church life in the Bible, which is **the God-ordained way**”.
- 5) I want the recovery to conform to my own “thought and concept”.
- 6) I do not “make it in the recovery” because I do not “agree with what the recovery stands for, God’s economy carried out through and by **the God-ordained way**”.

- 7) I do not feel that the recovery “matches God’s direction for me”, so I am free to “meet with another group” or “start my own”.
- 8) “It is impossible to change an entire group to conform to how you feel”.
- 9) “Your statements of just wanting to enjoy the Lord and go on mean nothing to me. You have a HISTORY of damage”.
- 10) I am “not right with God or with the Body.”
- 11) I have “most certainly sinned against the entire recovery”.
- 12) “Your thought about the recovery being wrong is your major problem.”
- 13) “As long as you think you are right, you have no light on this matter”.
- 14) “Until you get light you have no way with the Lord”.
- 15) “Without light, you will never be able to come back to the Lord’s recovery.”
- 16) “Because you just don’t know how to handle this situation”.
- 17) “You are completely in the dark.”
- 18) “Repentance is a mercy that is granted to us only by the Lord. But repentance only comes when one realizes that he is altogether WRONG.”
- 19) “If you feel that there are so many things wrong in the Lord’s recovery today, it doesn’t make any sense that you would want to come back to a place that is so wrong”.
- 20) **“The God-ordained way** is most certainly the way the Lord’s recovery is rooted and grounded in and will be taking until the Lord returns. In this matter there is no turning back. Remember, the Lord’s recovery is not going to change, **NOT FOR YOU, NOT FOR ANYONE”**.

I acknowledge that these references are on record now concerning me and that the charges and implications are most serious. You, brother Sherman Robertson, elder, have written these words May 3rd and 4th, 2004 in two letters. In addition, in a phone conversation with you on April 11, 2004, you claimed not only that I was “divisive” but also that “we brothers feel you are **the embodiment of the Accuser of the brethren**”.

Sherman, I have learned that it is futile to talk to you or hope for any meaningful dialogue with you on matters you feel support these grave condemnations. You have not been open to the Lord or to me for genuine fellowship. This was made plain to me in our first encounter by your stern, inflexible attitude, and this unbecoming deportment has not changed since. Contrary to what you believe and assert, I am not against anything in the recovery but the misrepresentation of others, and your ongoing misrepresentation of me.

In the booklet, In the Wake of the New Way, you thought I was attacking Brother Lee, the ministry, and the new way. I gave you the wrong impression. I had no intention to attack but to fellowship over points that I made. My request for fellowship was denied and I was set aside. I then put the “book” aside and apologized for upsetting the brothers, seeing that there was no climate for discussion. That should have ended the problem with you but later I was told by you, *“It’s your concepts we can’t handle, they have to go, and, if you want to go with them, that’s up to you.”* **My concepts!** *“The Body will reject what you’re thinking between your ears”*.

Witness Lee ~ **“When a person speaks negatively about the ministry you should not consider that as an attack. We must give people the liberty to express what they feel and think...To criticize the ministry, to say something bad about the ministry, and even to oppose the ministry should not be considered as the type of attacking that was done by Alexander the coppersmith.”** - Book 4, Elders’ Training, The Practice of the Lord’s Recovery, pp 81-82

Writing ~ You considered it an issue that my thoughts were put into writing. Yet, I stated at the outset that my writing was to be confined for use in **fellowship, mainly with leading ones**. I made an appeal to Dan Towle about my burden, saying, *“I have written a little book for the sake of **fellowship**, mainly with leading ones, concerning our past sixteen-year history of the new way. I think this period of time in the Lord’s recovery warrants our careful study of both the benefits and the costs to the church in what was such a highly controversial move among us in those beginning years.*

*“I wanted to come to you because I feel it is **safe** to do so. If I am **inaccurate or unfair** in some way, perhaps you are the most qualified one to **catch** me that I could either make an **adjustment or terminate** the proposed fellowship.”*

I went on, *“I hope we can have a **good, thorough, and upright fellowship** over this booklet called In the Wake of the New Way, while remembering the Lord’s prayer ‘that they all may be one’ and the repeated petitions from our brother Lee, not only to heed the trumpet call for the Lord’s new move, but also to respond to the call for the rendering of care to every member for the building up of the Body in love...”*

*I would welcome your phone call or e-mail message at 425-445-1732 and sisitt@msn.com. I don’t intend for this booklet to be **widespread**; rather, I hope that ones who do receive it could do so in the Lord, with a holy regard and respect given to those who left the recovery, and a godly consideration rendered to those who remain, but who are in need of more significant care.”*

My intention was not to attack anyone or anything. Neither did I write something to **promote** division, and I was **not aggressive** to gain a following by distributing material.

Witness Lee ~ “If any believer who is meeting with any of these sectarian divisions would attend the meetings of the local churches, or contact the believers meeting in the local churches, he should not be rejected, as long as he does not **promote** anything divisive. However, anyone who is **aggressive** for and **promotes** the sectarian divisions should be considered divisive and should be rejected after a first and second admonition.” Bk 10

Again, I wasn’t aggressive to promote anything except fellowship.

Internet ~ It wasn’t till much later that I tried to bring the brothers’ attention to meaningful discrepancies in testimony of what happened in the late eighties upheaval. The difference in testimony is so striking that I was convinced of our need to examine our history carefully using all the available information necessary, which I had full access to. The obvious impression I received from my reading of former leading one’s writings is that we have been bearing false witness in the local churches. Does that mean I’m against the recovery? Or, does that mean that I am careful concerning the testimony we bear before God and man? If I said something opposite to what Brother Lee said, does that mean 1) I am attacking him 2) I am *not* supportive of his ministry 3) I am violating God’s authority? No. It means I think we need to examine ourselves. It does not mean that I think the “recovery is so wrong” that I need to “meet somewhere else”. I have a strong vision and a good appetite. I am happy to stay right here in this ministry with those who will let me keep the oneness, and the feast with them. I hope you will be one.

Brother Lee once said, “If you don’t think I can make mistakes, you will do damage to me, and you will do damage to yourself”. In the Ephesians Life-study he said, “I have nevertheless made many mistakes; even some big mistakes.” (P. 279) Therefore, it was not that Brother Lee was not capable of making mistakes. He surely was capable.

I felt it was critical for us to address the discrepancies I found in reports, so I encouraged Dan Towle and Francis Ball to have contact with John Ingalls, Bill Mallon and Ken Unger in the Anaheim area. *There was no response from Dan or Francis to my appeal, though the other three brothers were quite favorable for steps to be taken unto reconciliation, as brothers.*

Both the idea and I were rejected, even as we were headed toward the courtroom to deal with what I determined was a comparatively small matter of defamation *against us*.

The brothers had not been moved by my *direct* appeal to them for fellowship, but since there was an atmosphere in the church about dealing with the matter of defamation, I took the opportunity and the risk to go onto the internet. Dealing with defamation of character and misrepresentation was on the minds of the brothers, and it was on my mind also. The brothers made their appeals to Harvest House and the authors in the same way that I made my appeal to the brothers. They did not get the response they wanted, that is, to meet and reason together, as brothers in Christ, over defamatory portions of a book. And, I did not get cooperation from the brothers to meet and reason together to consider defamatory portions in our LSM/DCP publications.. The brothers made several attempts with Harvest House; and I made several attempts with the Northwest brothers to meet and to reason together. Their proposal was rejected by Harvest House, and so were they themselves rejected. Likewise, my proposal to the brothers was rejected, and so did the brothers reject me. Harvest House initiated taking matters into the legal realm by hiring an attorney. The brothers had taken my matter into the “legal” realm, restricting me from normal church relationship. The brothers also matched HH in getting legal representation, and they filed a lawsuit to deal with defamation against the recovery; I decided to go onto the internet to bring our own possible defamation matter to a head, before God and current and former local church members, as well as the Christian public. The HH president was not moved by the brothers’ decision to litigate. The brothers were not moved by me or by my material on the internet. Since our leaders had no interest to respond to me on this important matter, I stopped and closed the website. Was I aggressive for and promoting divisions? No. I was making an appeal to the brothers, based on my sober study, to consider the defamation of character in our own writings and speakings.

My problem is not that I am against the recovery, but that I am for it to the extent of wanting us to consider any misrepresentations of God and man among us. My desire was to present substantial information for fellowship. You refute me before you know the facts. You judge me severely before you read the material. You will not even have fellowship with me in a thoughtful, careful way on the matters.

Conclusion ~ In conclusion, you have given me no liberty whatsoever to express myself. My writing initially was confined to a few brothers (6) and a few saints (6) for their input and fellowship and a big case resulted. Brother Lee spoke of the elders’ tendency to build “*a small issue into a major case in the church like a small hill becoming a great mountain.*” (Book 11, p. 31) I feel this is exactly what has been done with me, beginning with Dan Towle and spreading to you and to Joel Kennon. My little “book” was primarily meant to be a tool to help build a bridge of communication to those who were lost among us.

Instead, it became a *tool* to convict me of wrongs against God’s government, and separate me from the church. The isolation mode I came into set the stage for committing further “offenses” in the eyes of leaders and to separate me further from them and from the saints to the point that it would nearly be impossible for me to be restored, from what I’m told.

You have indeed placed yourself in quite a position before God. Without reading the writings, you still speak. Without knowing me, personally, you still condemn. I feel that you assume much and that you imagine much, due to a lack of interest in the subject and in me. It appears, your time spent on the subject is about as much as your time spent on me, which has been no time at all. With this fact in mind, how can I respect you and what you say regarding me, when you have no respect for me and the matters I presented you?

Steve Isitt 9-12-04 (date written)

I hope you will read on my current website that I strongly promote the God-ordained way revealed in the Bible. I wish that every believer everywhere on the entire earth could meet in the homes under this ministry and care for one another and new ones for the practical building up of the Body in love.

I would never have developed this website if I had been brought back into fellowship. I *would have been* in the church life, with much interest in the 3-strong cord fellowship and the vital groups. I made a trip to Austin in '99 and prayed and fellowshiped with Gary Evans and spent four hours with Mike Lynch on a Saturday morning. I asked to meet with the couple most involved. I stayed in the home of an elder, Doug Stovall, and he got me in contact with that very couple, Bill and Linda Dieball, who had me to dinner. They gave me their testimony and showed me pictures of the 23 brothers around the table in their home. It was quite a time. I was in a young people's meeting with Bill and a prayer meeting with Doug and the adults in Mike's home. I talked with full-timers on Saturday morning and heard testimonies of "the open heart" and "open home" being the key to gaining new ones, as they themselves were gained as students in Austin. I saw the simplicity and the oneness in Austin and came back desiring to be a part of this in Seattle.

I hope you read my writings that you condemn, and read my positive website too, spend time with those who know me, and visit me to pray and fellowship in a spirit of love. After making such an effort to understand me and what I have written and why, I think you will have a change of mind about the subject of "HISTORY of damage" in the recovery, and begin also to consider your own against me.

www.thelordsrecovery.us/ShermanJan05.pdf

Steve Isitt