

A FAITHFUL WORD

SERIES FOUR

“Who Concerning the Truth Have Misaimed”

**USING
WORLDLY
MEANS
TO GAIN
INCREASE**

Book

6

DEFENSE & CONFIRMATION PROJECT

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Phil. 1:7 – Even as it is right for me to think this concerning you all because you have me in your heart, since both in my bonds and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel you are all fellow partakers with me of grace.

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Unless otherwise indicated, the articles in this book are co-authored by Bill Buntain with Dan Sady and Dan Towle.

Boldface type has been used for emphasis in quoted passages and is not in the original quoted material unless otherwise noted.

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PREFACE

2 Tim. 2:18a – Who concerning the truth have misaimed...

A few dissenting brothers have published criticisms of the teachings of the ministry in the Lord's recovery on crucial matters related to the preservation of the proper oneness in the Body of Christ. This series of books contains extensive responses from the Bible and the ministry of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee to the issues raised in those criticisms. The dissenting ones have misaimed concerning the truth (2 Tim. 2:18a), as the divisive fruit of their misaimings increasingly manifests. We commit these articles to the saints' prayerful consideration before the Lord in the hope that they can instruct, heal and inoculate them and equip them to inoculate others (1 Tim. 1:3-4; 6:3-4; 2 Tim. 2:1-3, 14-15, 23-26; 3:16-17).

The books in this series address the following issues:

1. The practicality of the Body.
2. Authority in the Body of Christ and in the local churches.
3. The local church life for the Body of Christ.
4. The direction and leadership of the Lord's recovery.
5. Regions of the work and companies of workers.
6. Using worldly means to gain increase.
7. Properly discerning spiritual authority to rightly follow the Lord.

This book about *Using Worldly Means to Gain Increase* includes the following two articles:

- "An Appeal to the Young People in the Lord's Recovery—Do Not Be Cheated From Your Inheritance!" is an open letter calling on the young people to forsake gimmicks and pursue life and to be separated to God as Nazarites. This call is necessitated by the deviation of some workers who have embraced worldliness in their pursuit of "success" in their work. These works employ worldly means to attract young people and gain increase, encouraging ambition, and compromise the proper standing of the church on the ground of oneness.
- "The God-ordained Way to Gain the Increase for the Church vs. the Worldly Ways of Degraded Christianity" documents the proper way to gain increase for the church through prayer, the Spirit, and the Word in contrast with the use of rock bands,

dramas, and other gimmicks that deviate from the constricted way of life.

This book also includes a letter from a group of parents and young people's workers in Toronto expressing concern over the incursion of worldliness and gimmicks into some of the young people's work.

- 1 Tim. 1:3-4 – [3] Even as I exhorted you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things [4] nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
- 1 Tim. 6:3-4 – [3] If anyone teaches different things and does not consent to healthy words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the teaching which is according to godliness, [4] he is blinded with pride, understanding nothing, but is diseased with questionings and contentions of words, out of which come envy, strife, slanders, evil suspicions.
- 2 Tim. 2:1-3 – [1] You therefore, my child, be empowered in the grace which is in Christ Jesus; [2] and the things which you have heard from me through many witnesses, these commit to faithful men, who will be competent to teach others also. [3] Suffer evil with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.
- 2 Tim. 2:14-15 – [14] Remind them of these things, solemnly charging them before God not to have contentions of words, which is useful for nothing, to the ruin of those who hear. [15] Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, an unashamed workman, cutting straight the word of the truth.
- 2 Tim. 2:23-26 – [23] But foolish questionings and those arising from an untrained mind refuse, knowing that they beget contentions. [24] But a slave of the Lord ought not to contend but be gentle toward all, apt to teach, bearing with wrong; [25] in meekness correcting those who oppose, if perhaps God may give them repentance unto the full knowledge of the truth, [26] and they may return to soberness out of the snare of the devil, having been caught alive by him, unto His will.
- 2 Tim. 3:16-17 – [16] All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, [17] that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work.

**AN APPEAL TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE
IN THE LORD’S RECOVERY—
DO NOT BE CHEATED
FROM YOUR INHERITANCE!**

In recent years it has become increasingly evident that some of the young people in the Lord’s recovery are being cheated out of their proper inheritance (Acts 26:18; Col. 1:12; Josh. 14:1) through the improper teaching and leading of some older brothers. The ones bearing responsibility in the churches should be burdened to lead all of the young people to enter into and possess the all-inclusive Christ for the building up of the church and the ushering in of God’s kingdom. Those who are experienced in the Lord should lead the younger saints on the constricted way of life (Matt. 7:14), taking God’s divine nature as our unique way (Rev. 21:21, footnote 3). Sadly, however, some brothers have deviated from the constricted way of life to seek “success” by:

1. Employing worldly means to attract young people and gain the increase;
2. Encouraging ambition by stressing the development of natural abilities as “gifts”; and
3. Compromising the proper standing of the church on the ground of oneness.

The testimony of the Bible, of the teaching of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee, and of our entire history combine to show us that leaving the constricted way of life is fraught with perils and that all who participate in such deviation will be defrauded of Christ as their unique prize (Col. 2:18a; Phil. 3:14). We therefore call on the young people in the Lord’s recovery:

1. To forsake gimmicks and pursue life; and
2. To be separated to God as Nazarites.

By being such persons the young people can remain on the path of the Lord’s recovery to secure their rightful inheritance.

DEVIATIONS TO FORSAKE

Employing worldly means to attract young people and gain the increase

The book of Acts shows that the unique way to preach the gospel to gain the increase for the church is by prayer, the Spirit, and the Word through the exercise of faith (Acts 1:8; 4:31; 6:4, footnote 1; 8:4; cf., 2 Cor. 4:13). The Gospel of John tells us that the way to bear remaining fruit is to abide in Christ as the vine (John 15:1, 4-6, 8, 16). By being one with Christ and living Him, we overflow the riches of the divine life to others. Only by being such persons can we bring forth the proper fruit of life in others. The apostle Paul's ministry was carried out by a living under the killing of the cross of Christ (2 Cor. 4:10-12) for the manifestation of the truth (2 Cor. 4:2) so that the gospel might shine forth to others (2 Cor. 4:6). The apostles did not use any gimmicks to attract people. Such things only expose the shortages of those who use them. Rather, the apostles bore God's testimony in a transformed humanity through the exercise of faith in speaking the Word in spirit based upon much prayer.

To bring in any foreign elements, such as rock music and dramas, is to mar God's building and provoke God's destruction (1 Cor. 3:17, footnote 1). Such things are worldly and involve false displays of the flesh. They bring worldliness into the church and lead the young people who participate in such activities back into the world, fashioning them according to the present age, contrary to Paul's exhortation (Rom. 12:2). They are an evil mixture that stirs up a taste for worldly enjoyments, causing both the participants and their audience to be estranged from the love of the Father (1 John 2:15). Such things are impure and contain leaven that corrupts both the believers and the church (Matt. 13:33). Actually, the use of entertainment in the service of God is a form of idolatry (1 Cor. 10:7). Such methods do not match the divine nature of the Father, the redemptive work of Christ, and the transforming work of the Spirit as the unique materials for God's building and hence are wood, grass, and stubble, good only for God's judgment as wood, grass, and stubble (1 Cor. 3:12-15; see footnote 2 on verse 12).

Encouraging ambition by stressing the development of natural abilities as “gifts”

Some brothers have encouraged the young people to “realize, develop, and use the gifts that God has given them for the building up of the churches.” Although such words are pleasing to the ear, they betray a basic misunderstanding of what gifts are, how the genuine gifts are developed, and how they relate to the building up of the church. What is needed for the building up of the church is not the development of natural abilities, such as musical or dramatic performance, but the ministry of life. Natural abilities belong to the old creation and have no value before God. The gifts that are useful for the building up of the church are the issue of growth in life; they are not developed apart from our pursuit of Christ and His dispensing of the divine life into us as we fellowship with Him. To emphasize the development of gifts or of “a ministry” is to promote ambition, which is ruinous both to the person who takes such a word and to the church. Ministry is developed not through the cultivation of ability, but through the unsearchable riches of Christ being constituted into our being as we live a life of being conformed to the death of Christ. To employ any natural ability is contrary to the fundamental nature of the Body of Christ, which is a constitution of divinity mingled with humanity and is absolutely in resurrection. The Lord did not carry out His ministry based on His own natural ability (John 5:19) and neither did Paul (2 Cor. 1:9; 3:5-6; 4:7).

Compromising the proper standing of the church on the ground of oneness

Some young people have also been deceived through perverted teachings on “the oneness of the Spirit” to join themselves to other Christian groups to practice a false oneness with them. This is a serious error. From the beginning of the Lord’s recovery our unwavering stand on the ground of oneness has been the source of great blessing in every aspect of the church life, including the unveiling of the riches in God’s Word, growth in life, increase in numbers, and the spread of the churches to the six continents. While it is true that all real believers are our brothers and sisters and we should receive them in fellowship, we would not go back to join them in building up their divisive work instead of the

unique work of the Lord's recovery, which is the building up of the Body of Christ. We are ever mindful of the great mercy of the Lord through which this work has been entrusted to us through the ministry of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee.

According to the type of the temple in the Old Testament and the pattern of the church life in the New Testament, there is a unique ground upon which God's building must take place (Deut. 12:5, 11; Acts 8:1, footnote 1; Rev. 1:11). When the Lord recovered His people from Babylon back to Jerusalem, it was to rebuild His unique testimony of the temple on the site chosen by God (Ezra 1:3). Today, for the sake of the Lord's recovery of the proper building up of the church as the Body of Christ in the present age, we stand outside of and apart from the degraded system of Christianity, which is filled with unscriptural teachings and practices. Just like the children of Israel, we would never go back to the land of our captivity out of which the Lord called us. It is poisonously wrong to say we should forsake our work of rebuilding the temple to join the people of the Lord in their dispersion in a false exercise of oneness. According to both the Old and New Testaments, there can be no genuine oneness without the proper ground. We have the full confidence that if we continue steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship and in the practice of the normal church life, the Lord Himself will add to the churches (Acts 2:46-47).

THE PERILS OF DEVIATION

This fellowship is presented with a heavy heart. We fear for those churches who have deviated from the New Testament ministry of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee in promoting such teachings and practices. The Lord's blessing has been manifestly on His recovery for the past eighty years. Those who choose to take a different way will surely lose that blessing. Without His blessing, they will soon have no way to go on. The result will be confusion, emptiness, and a loss of heart for the Lord and His way in His recovery. Eventually, such a path will lead to death, darkness, and division. Such has been the pattern of Christianity for the past twenty centuries and such has been the end throughout our own history

of those who have rejected the leading of the Lord's ministry in His recovery and the feeling of the Body as expressed in the churches.

A CALL TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE LORD'S RECOVERY

To forsake gimmicks and pursue life

We call on all of the young people in the Lord's recovery to come back to the narrow way of life. In particular, we urge them to forsake the way of gimmicks and to build up life practices such as having a daily time to open themselves for the infusion of the Lord's life in prayer and in the Word. We encourage them to enter into a life of bearing fruit through shepherding according to God by taking prayer, the Spirit, and the Word through the exercise of a living faith that joins them to the Triune God as the unique way to gain the increase for the church. We pray that they would be preserved in the practice of the genuine oneness of the Body of Christ on the proper ground in fellowship with all of the churches throughout the earth.

To be separated to God as Nazarites

Today there is a great need for some to be separated unto God as Nazarites for the accomplishment of His purpose. The Nazarite vow is a consecration of separation to God from four things—worldly enjoyment, self-glory, natural affection, and spiritual deadness (Num. 6:1-8). A Nazarite must be absolutely in subjection to the headship of Christ (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18) and to every deputy authority established by God (Rom. 13:1-2; Eph. 6:1; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:5). The Nazarite vow is a voluntary offering, meaning that a man has to take the initiative to consecrate himself to God to be a Nazarite. The prophet Samuel was such a Nazarite (1 Sam. 1:11). He lived to God purely and faithfully. He did not oppose those who were in authority over him, neither did he partake in the degradation of God's elect. Today the young people in the Lord's recovery should follow this pattern.

The Path Ahead

Today the Lord's recovery is a glorious consummation of over 80 years of ministry by Brother Nee and Brother Lee, based on the proper Christian teaching that has gone before. The practice of the church life has progressed by the Lord's mercy to be closer than we have ever been to the accomplishment of the building up of the Body of Christ by "each one part" (Eph. 4:16). The way of living a normal Christian life as a God-man is clearer than at any time in the history of the church. We believe the Lord's return is imminent. **To meet the Lord as the glorious inheritors of His recovery work in this age is the proper portion of the young people in the Lord's recovery. Do not let this inheritance be taken from you!** As Paul charged Timothy to closely follow the pattern Paul established in teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, and many other virtues (2 Tim. 3:10), we also remind you that the Lord raised up our Brothers Watchman Nee and Witness Lee as patterns for us to imitate in the present age. Having seen the overcoming life of Christ manifested in their living and in the issue of their manner of life, we should all imitate the pattern of their living in faith (Heb. 13:7; 1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Phil. 3:17; 1 Thes. 1:5-6; 2 Thes. 3:7).

Suggested Reading:

The following portions from the ministry of Brother Lee address many of the matters discussed in this article:

- Quotes from Brother Lee's ministry in "The God-ordained Way to Gain the Increase for the Church vs. the Worldly Ways of Degraded Christianity" in this book
- *The Principle of the Nazarite*
- *A Young Man in God's Plan*
- *Preaching the Gospel on the College Campuses*
- *Basic Principles for the Service in the Church Life*
- *How to Be Useful to the Lord*

Most of these materials are available online at <http://www.ministrybooks.com/witness-lee-books.cfm>.

THE GOD-ORDAINED WAY TO GAIN THE INCREASE FOR THE CHURCH VS. THE WORLDLY WAYS OF DEGRADED CHRISTIANITY

As branches of Christ, the universal vine tree in God's economy (John 15:1), every believer bears the responsibility to bear fruit (John 15:16, 4-6). Furthermore, it is the nature of the divine life within us to seek increase for the glorification of the Father (John 15:8). In the Lord's recovery we have long recognized that the most fruitful field is the young people, including college students and our own children.

John 15:1 – I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.

John 15:16 – You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and I set you that you should go forth and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give you.

John 15:4-6 – [4] Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. [5] I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing. [6] If one does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is dried up; and they gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

John 15:8 – In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and so you will become My disciples.

On the other hand we also bear the responsibility before the Lord to bear His testimony (Acts 1:8; 26:16; Rev. 1:2, 9). To do this, we must walk on the constricted way of life (Matt. 7:14), lest the Lord disapprove our works at His judgment seat (Matt. 7:21-23; 1 Cor. 3:12-15). This means that we are restricted in the means we employ to bear fruit. We cannot use worldly ways. Instead we are restricted to the God-ordained way revealed in the Bible of fruit-bearing as the overflow of the divine life by means of prayer, the Spirit, and the Word (Acts 1:18; 4:31; 6:4; 8:4).

Acts 1:8 – But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 26:16 – But rise up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a minister and a witness both of the things in which you have seen Me and of the things in which I will appear to you.

Rev. 1:2 – Who testified the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, even all that he saw.

Rev. 1:9 – I John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and endurance in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

Matt. 7:14 – Because narrow is the gate and constricted is the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it.

Matt. 7:21-23 – [21] Not every one who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who does the will of My Father who is in the heavens. [22] Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, was it not in Your name that we prophesied, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name did many works of power? [23] And then I will declare to them: I never ¹knew you. Depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness.

fn. 7:23¹ – *Knew* here means *approved*. The same word in Rom. 7:15 is translated *acknowledge*. The Lord never approved those who, in His name, prophesied, cast out demons, and did many works of power (v. 22), but did those things not according to the will of the heavenly Father (v. 21). The Lord did not deny that they did those things, but He considered those things lawlessness because they were not done according to the will of the heavenly Father; they were not done in line with the divine will. Thus, those who do such things, even in the Lord's name, will not enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but will depart from the Lord, that is, be excluded from the manifestation of the kingdom in the coming age.

1 Cor. 3:12-15 – [12] But if anyone builds upon the foundation² gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble, [13] The work of each will become manifest; for the day will declare it, because it is revealed by² fire, and the fire itself will prove each one's work, of what sort it is. [14] If anyone's work which he has built upon the foundation remains, he will receive a reward; [15] if anyone's work is consumed, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

fn. 3:12² – Gold, silver, and precious stones signify the various experiences of Christ in the virtues and attributes of the Triune God. It is with these that the apostles and all spiritual believers build the church on the unique foundation of Christ. Gold may signify the divine nature of the Father with all its attributes, silver may signify the redeeming Christ with all the virtues and attributes of His person and work, and precious stones may signify the transforming work of the Spirit with all its attributes. All these precious materials are the products of our participation in and enjoyment of Christ in our spirit through the Holy Spirit. Only these are good for God's building....

fn. 3:13² – The fire of the Lord's judgment (Mal. 3:2; 4:1; 2 Thes. 1:7b-8; Heb. 6:8), which will cause each believer's work to be manifest and will try and test his work. All the work of wood, grass, and stubble will be unable to stand that test and will be burned.

Acts 1:8 – But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 4:31 – And when they had so besought, the place in which they were gathered was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.

Acts 6:4 – But we will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word.

Acts 8:4 – Those therefore who were scattered went throughout the land announcing the word as the gospel.

Brother Lee made this very clear:

What is our burden? What is our responsibility? We must not just preach the gospel. We must bear the testimony of Jesus, as Revelation says (1:2, 9). We must be witnesses to Him, as Acts 1:8 tells us. We must bring forth fruit by abiding in Him, as John 15:5 and 16 tell us. This is the proper preaching of the gospel. There is no need to use any gimmicks. We must lay our gimmicks aside, just as Paul determined not to use excellence of speech. Our responsibility is to live Christ, to bear a living witness to Him in our daily life, to know nothing but Christ, the all-inclusive One revealed in the completing ministry of Paul and the mending ministry of John. (*The World Situation and God's Move*, p. 82)

Our gospel ministry is governed by the pattern established in the New Testament, particularly by the apostle Paul. In 2 Corinthians 4 Paul testified that he and his co-workers conducted themselves so that the gospel of the glory of Christ would shine out through them (2 Cor. 4:6) by the manifestation of the truth (2 Cor. 4:2), which is simply the very Christ as the embodiment of the Triune God who had been wrought into them. In doing so, they lived a life under the termination of the cross of Christ for the manifestation of resurrection life (2 Cor. 4:10-12).

2 Cor. 4:6 – Because the God who said, Out of darkness light shall shine, is the One who shined in our hearts to ⁴illuminate the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

fn. 4:6⁴ – The illumination here, which refers to the shining of God's light on others out from those whose hearts have been enlightened by God, corresponds with the manifestation in v. 2 and is the same as the shining in Matt. 5:16 and Phil. 2:15. God shines in our hearts that we may shine on others so that they may have the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, that is, the knowledge of Christ, who expresses and declares God (John 1:18).

2 Cor. 4:2 – But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of the ²truth commending ourselves to every conscience of men before God.

- fn. 4:2²– The truth is another expression for the word of God (John 17:17 and notes). It means the reality, denoting all the real things revealed in God's word, which are mainly Christ as the reality of all the things of God. The manifestation of the truth refers to the apostles' living of Christ. When they lived Christ, who is the truth (John 14:6), they manifested the truth. As Christ was lived out of them, the truth was manifested in them. By this, they commended themselves to every conscience of men before God. The apostles behaved themselves not in the way of adulterating the word of God but in the way of manifesting the truth for the shining of the gospel of the glory of Christ, by the excellent power of the priceless treasure, the very Christ who entered into them and became their content (v. 7) through the enlightenment of God's shining (v. 6).
- 2 Cor. 4:10-12 – [10] Always bearing about in the body the putting to death of Jesus that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. [11] For we who are alive are always being delivered unto death for Jesus' sake that the life of ¹Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. [12] So then death operates in us, but ¹life in you.
- fn. 4:11¹ – The title Jesus in these two verses implies that the apostles lived a life like the one the Lord Jesus lived on earth. The Lord's life was a life under the killing of the cross for the manifestation of the resurrection life, a life lived in such a way that His person was one with His ministry and His life was His ministry (John 6:14-15; 12:13, 19, 23-24).
- fn. 4:12¹ – When we are under the killing of the Lord's death, His resurrection life is imparted through us into others. The impartation of life into others is always the issue of our suffering the killing of the cross.

Recently some among the churches have been promoting a very different way. Instead of relying simply and purely on the Lord by cooperating with Him to be constituted with the Word of God and by praying to be filled with the Spirit essentially and economically, they have resorted to worldly gimmicks to attract the young people, gimmicks that include the use of rock bands, dramas,

celebrity speakers, and other forms of entertainment. This mixture is absolutely contrary to the pattern of how the apostles labored to spread the gospel in the New Testament and the pattern presented to us through the ministry and work of Brothers Watchman Nee and Witness Lee. As such, it is absolutely foreign to the Lord's recovery. Even more seriously, by bringing worldliness into the church, it offends the holy nature of our Father (1 John 2:15) and leads the young people away from the intrinsic nature of the Lord's recovery. In doing so it threatens to change the nature of the churches that practice these things into just another work of Christianity. It is also immensely damaging to the young people of the saints in the Lord's recovery who are being polluted with such things. (See also, "An Appeal to the Young People in the Lord's Recovery—Do Not Be Cheated From Your Inheritance!" in the book *Using Worldly Means to Gain Increase*.)

1 John 2:15 – Do not love the world nor the things in the world.
If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him.

There is not much need for us to write more on this subject, since both the biblical, God-ordained way to preach the gospel and the damage caused by using gimmicks such as rock music and dramas to carry out the church's gospel service have been thoroughly presented in Brother Lee's speaking. For that reason, we present the following excerpts for your consideration:

Prayer, the Spirit, and the Word Are the Unique Way to Preach the Gospel

In Acts the three main factors for the spreading of the gospel as an impact were prayer, the Spirit, and the Word. According to the Bible and according to history these three items are the only way for the gospel to be prevailing. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, p. 11)

The book of Acts begins with the one accord and stresses the one accord. The early disciples could not have maintained or kept this one accord, however, if they had had different ways, means, agents, or substances for them to carry out the Lord's move on this earth. If we read through the entire book of Acts, we can see that the way they took to carry out God's move on this earth to

fulfill His New Testament economy was entirely by three main substances—prayer, the Spirit, and the Word. Not only in Acts but also throughout the entire New Testament, prayer, the Spirit, and the Word were used for the carrying out of God’s economy.... If we have different ways to do things, it is hard to keep the one accord. In order to maintain the unique one accord we all have to learn to do the same thing by the same way. The substances which constitute the unique way for the Lord’s move are prayer and the Spirit, which result in the Word. (*Elders’ Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord’s Move*, p. 21)

We should not trust in anything other than prayer, the Word, and the Spirit. Perhaps a certain professor will be able to give a message concerning science in order to convince students of science to believe in God. Although there is nothing wrong with this, we should not put our trust in it. On the contrary, we should put our trust wholly and absolutely in prayer, in the Word, and in the anointing, which is the Triune God Himself.

PAUL’S DIRECT SPEAKING OF THE WORD

In the book of Acts we see that the Apostle Paul did not use gimmicks in preaching the gospel. Rather, “he proclaimed Jesus, that this One is the Son of God” (9:20). When Saul was in Damascus, he was “empowered and confounded the Jews dwelling in Damascus, proving that this One is the Christ” (9:22). In a foregoing message we emphasized the fact that in Thessalonica Paul reasoned with those in the synagogue from the Scriptures concerning Christ and saying, “This is the Christ, Jesus, whom I announce to you” (17:2-3). Likewise, we have seen that in Corinth Paul solemnly testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ (18:5). Therefore, instead of using gimmicks, Paul always spoke the word directly.

YOUNG SAINTS PREACHING WITH POWER

Perhaps you would say, “Brother Lee, you have been in the Word for over fifty years. How can we be powerful in preaching the gospel if we are still young in the Lord?” Let me testify to you that even when I was young my speaking was powerful because of these three matters of prayer, the Word, and the Spirit, the anointing. This indicates that even the young saints can preach the gospel with power and impact if they trust in prayer, the Word, and the Spirit. (*Life-study of Acts*, pp. 430-431)

...As we seek to have power and impact in our gospel preaching, we should not follow any strange or peculiar way. Let us take the way of prayer, the way of the Word, and the way of the Spirit.

We believe that today the Lord is the processed Spirit who dwells in us and also upon us. It does not matter whether this Spirit is sensed by us. We believe that while we are serving Him and speaking for Him, especially as we are speaking Him forth, He is with us. We have the Lord's presence within us as the anointing. Through prayer, the Word, and the Spirit, we can have true power and impact. (*Life-study of Acts*, p. 428)

If the scriptural way to meet and the sound teaching of the Bible have been neglected, what is left? Only gospel preaching. Yet much of today's preaching of the gospel is of the lowest standard. No doubt many of you have read the biographies of the great evangelists of the past. There were C. H. Spurgeon, D. L. Moody, Charles Finney, and George Whitefield. They used no gimmicks in their preaching. Their way was to pray. I read that once Charles Finney went into a factory and looked at the workers there. Just by his looking at them, a number of the workers wept and repented. What was the power behind these preachers? It was prayer. It was the spending of time in the Word of God, learning the Scriptures, and then selecting a subject from which to preach the gospel. This is the proper way.

Even those who play guitars in the meetings must be careful lest they offend the Lord. The Lord Jesus did not promise that if we play the guitar well, people would be saved. He said that we would be clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:49). The proper preaching comes from this power. Those who are concerned about the gospel need to fast and to pray desperately. (*The World Situation and God's Move*, p. 36)

We Should Preach the Gospel in Spirit, by Prayer, and with Eagerness

Preaching the gospel depends on our spirit. Paul said that he served God in the spirit in the gospel of His Son. When we preach the gospel, we should not employ any gimmicks; we should exercise our spirit. (*Life-study of Romans*, p. 23)

If we mean business with the Lord in this matter of gospel preaching, we must exercise these three things: in spirit, by prayer, and with eagerness. Gimmicks and techniques will not be effective. We all need to exercise our spirit to touch people, to pray, and to be ready with eagerness. If the gospel does not inspire you, it will never inspire others. If the gospel cannot convince you, it will never convince others. If you yourself do not weep with the gospel, no one else will repent. If you weep, others will weep in repentance. (*Life-study of Romans*, p. 24)

Fruitfulness on the Campuses Requires Prayer, the Word, and Our Homes

If we have a burden for preaching the gospel, we must take care of three things. First, we have to pray; second, we have to speak the word; and third, we have to use our homes. We should be aggressive and active in the Spirit for the spread of the gospel. We can fill each city with our gospel tracts and speaking. We can also fill our homes up with young people. We do not need any gimmicks, but we must have two basic things—prayer and the word—with the additional help of our homes. We must follow the early apostles and disciples by taking the way of prayer, the word, and the homes for the preaching of the gospel. (*Preaching the Gospel on the College Campuses*, p. 28)

Power in Preaching the Gospel Depends on the Exercise of Faith

Some of you may have been saved for less than a year. You may think that you are too young, that you do not know very much, and that you do not have much experience in life. Do not listen to these thoughts. You have to reject them. I have seen many newly saved ones who were bold, strong, and powerful in the preaching of the gospel. I have also seen ones who became old in their experience of the Lord. When they preached the gospel, they did not have any power. Then they turned to gimmicks and exercised their cleverness to convince people. You do not need to use crafty words. As long as you are in the Spirit, you should be frank and strict with your words.

Once in my hometown, someone came to me and said, “Brother Lee, your gospel preaching is very good, but you should not be so frank and strict in your speaking.” I told him that although he was nice in his gospel preaching, he had not brought many people to the Lord. Should I have learned from him? I may not have seemed nice in my gospel preaching, but I brought many people to the Lord. The effectiveness of the gospel is not a matter of being nice and crafty or even frank and bold. It is a matter of power. Those who exercise their faith to preach the gospel in the baptism in the Spirit have power. Today the power is in your faith and your faith has a base, a ground, and a standing. The base is the Bible. First Corinthians 12:13 says, “In one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.” We do not need to use any gimmicks when we preach the gospel. We should just exercise our faith to apply the word of the truth which says that we have been baptized in the Spirit. (*Preaching the Gospel on the College Campuses*, pp. 12-13)

We all have to be rescued from the concept that we need gimmicks. This thought has to go. We do not need any gimmicks like rock music, movies, or dramas. The demons are not afraid of gimmicks. The demons are afraid of our faith. If we exercise our faith, we will have the power to preach the gospel. (*Preaching the Gospel on the College Campuses*, p. 13)

The Lord’s Testimony Is Borne by a Transformed Humanity

Today for the testimony of Christ we also need poles made of acacia wood. Some Christians, however, resort to the use of rock music and dramas for preaching the gospel. But the Lord’s testimony is not carried by such a means. Rather, it is borne by our transformed humanity with its high character and standard. This humanity is the strength for the move of Christ as the embodiment of God’s testimony. (*Life-study of Exodus*, p. 1004)

We must be careful to use only the proper means to carry the Lord’s testimony today. If you look at certain popular Christian publications, you will see that “carts” drawn by “cattle” are still being used to carry the Lord’s testimony. In fact, even worse means are used. Is the Lord’s recovery to be carried on by such

things? Certainly not! The proper way is to have a direct connection with the Lord Jesus. We must bear Christ upon our shoulders. This means that there should not be any distance between us and Him. If we would bear Him as God's testimony, we should be one with Him.

Paul spread the testimony of Jesus by speaking and by writing. He did not use any gimmicks. He carried the testimony by his living. Likewise, the testimony of the Lord must be one with us today. This means that our living should be the carrying of the testimony. As we live Christ, we bear Him wherever we go. (*Life-study of Exodus*, pp. 1005-1006)

Using Different Methods Causes Damage to the One Accord

To maintain the one accord we must take one way for our driving. If we have different ways to drive surely our one accord will be somewhat damaged. In the New Testament there is only this one unique way constituted with these three substances—prayer, the Spirit, and the Word. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, p. 27)

Suppose a brother would propose that we use a certain kind of music to preach the gospel. Some may feel good about this but others may not. No one, however, would have different opinions concerning prayer, concerning the Spirit, and concerning taking the Word and preaching the Word. This is the unique way everybody knows because this is God's ordained way. This is not the way I invented or taught, but the way God invented and ordained in the Bible. We need to take this principle in all our practices. Try the best to always limit and restrict your practice by the Word. Whatever the Word does not say, it is better not to take. To preach the gospel by any way other than prayer, the Spirit, and the Word may cause some different thinking.

People would take another way because they do not want to spend that much time in the Word. To take other ways besides prayer, the Word, and the Spirit are short-cut ways for the sake of convenience. We cannot be entirely successful by taking a short-cut way. The genuine way, the proper way, the most profitable way to take is the unique way. The unique way in doing anything

is God's ordained principle. The entire universe is full of principles set up by God, the Creator. If you are going to be married, you must take God's ordained way with the principle of marriage of one husband and one wife (Matt. 19:3-9). If you take a short-cut way, you will get in trouble. In our world and in the universe there are many God-ordained principles. Science actually discovers all these God-ordained principles.

To use other ways to preach the gospel or to carry the church on might be profitable, but that is the short-cut way. The short-cut way will always have some side effects. Only the proper way will never have any side effects. The best medical doctors are careful not to release any medicine that may have harmful side effects. Therefore, we should not use anything other than prayer, the Word, and the Spirit to carry on the gospel or the church life. Otherwise, we should be prepared for some side effects like dissension, which will damage the real one accord.

TOILING IN THE WORD, LABORING IN PRAYER,
AND BEING DILIGENT IN DEALING WITH
THE HOLY SPIRIT

It may seem very awkward to take the genuine way. It takes time and patience; we have to labor and toil. Let us toil in the Word, labor in prayer, and be diligent in dealing with the Holy Spirit. This is worthwhile. We have to spend much time to get into the Word; we have to get ourselves saturated, constituted, and even soaked with the holy Word. We must also get ourselves constituted with our contact with the Lord. We have to contact Him day by day and hour after hour; then we will be the right person. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, pp. 28-29)

... I am challenging you to get into the Word. Take the unique way of prayer, the Spirit, and the Word. Do not think of anything else and do not use any gimmicks. Get yourself constituted, qualified, and equipped. Then go out in your prayer with the Spirit presenting the Word.... Do not think of taking a way other than prayer, the Spirit, and the Word. Any other way will cause dissension and division. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, p. 33)

Our Way Is to Preach the Pure Word of God

Other groups of Christians use natural and worldly ways to attract people. They use the ways of being social, of rock music, and of choirs with colorful robes. They use these ways to gain people, but we cannot use these ways. When people get saved and come into our meeting, they hear the pure word of God. (*The Christian Life*, p. 58)

Using Gimmicks in Our Meetings Is Against the Lord's Way

The Lord is also going to recover the proper way of meeting. How are we to determine if our way of meeting is scriptural? While no one can say that our meetings are unscriptural, it is hard to say what is the scriptural way to meet. We have published a book called *How to Meet*. If you read it, however, you will still be puzzled as to the proper way to meet. But I do know that dancing or rock music or drama in the meetings are wrong. Having soloists is wrong. These things are not only wrong, they are against the Lord's way. The Lord is still recovering the proper way to meet. (*The World Situation and God's Move*, p. 38)

The Use of Rock Music Does Not Match the Constricted Way of the Divine Life

We all are happy to be in the Lord's recovery and appreciate the recovery very much. But let me ask you this question: As one in the Lord's recovery, are you walking on the constricted way? We all must be able to say that we are not taking the way of Christianity, but the way of constriction. We are constricted on every side. Those in Christianity can use rock music or other worldly methods in their services, but we cannot, because our way is constricted. (*Life-study of Matthew*, p. 298)

...According to the divine nature within us, we cannot use rock music in our meetings. Although you may try various worldly methods, the divine nature would disagree with them all and indicate that you are transgressing the lines. All those who are the kingdom people, all those who have been regenerated by the Father, have His life and nature within them. The Father's life and nature indicate whether or not we are in the constricted way.

Let us all run the race according to the Father's nature. (*Life-study of Matthew*, p. 306)

Use of Worldly Means Is Impure and Is Leaven

Dear saints, this is a vital group. This is what I have seen of the Lord. This is what I expect to see—that all you dear ones who are in the recovery would be this kind of persons. We are going to gain people not by rock music or by some other impure method. We are going to gain people by purely speaking Christ, speaking grace, speaking God, to everyone. In a certain sense, we should not care whether or not someone understands us or apprehends what we are saying. We should just care for speaking, for flowing rivers of living water all the time. (*The Training and Practice of the Vital Groups*, pp. 120-121)

...So many things in Christianity are leaven. These include Christmas, Easter, idols, pictures, images, rock music, drama, and the entire Y.M.C.A. system. We must be careful not to take anything other than Christ for God's purpose, because anything other than He is leaven. Oh, the subtle one is crouching nearby waiting for his prey! We can easily become his prey because in our human nature is the desire to make it easy for people to experience spiritual things. But whatever you use to help people to touch spiritual things is a type of leaven. The pure and sanctified way to preach the gospel and to bring people to Christ is prayer and the ministry of the Word. Do not take any other way. If after praying and ministering the Word, people will still not receive the gospel, that is up to the Lord. Whether or not people receive our word is a matter of the Father's will. We do not want to use any gimmicks to help in our preaching. Every gimmick is leaven. We are not for a work or for a movement--we are for the testimony of Jesus.

...Be careful not to take anything other than Christ. In building up the church and spreading the Lord's testimony, the only way is to pray and to minister the pure Word. In the eyes of God, any gimmick—anything other than Christ, the Word, prayer, and the Spirit—is leaven. We must pray until our preaching is in the power of the Spirit, and we must pray until our testimony is filled with the riches of Christ. This is the pure meal as food for God

and man. This is what the Lord wants today. (*Life-study of Matthew*, pp. 468-469)

Use of Gimmicks Exposes Our Shortages

...In charismatic meetings, they sometimes use rock music, dramas, and all kinds of performances to attract people. These are all gimmicks. The use of these gimmicks shows that the power of the Spirit is lacking. If we have the real power of the Spirit, we do not need any gimmicks. The early disciples did not use any gimmicks, but they had power (Acts 1:8; 4:33; 6:8, 10). On the island of Taiwan, no Christian work can compare or compete with the work of the Lord's recovery in the preaching of the gospel. There is no use of gimmicks, but the power of the Spirit is there. (*Preaching the Gospel on the College Campuses*, p. 12)

Any proposal to use gimmicks to preach the gospel is a strong proof that we have not exercised our faith. If I only exercised my mentality in the speaking of my messages, my speaking would be poor. I must exercise my spirit to believe that I am in the baptism in the Spirit and that the Lord will speak through me. You do not need any gimmicks to preach the gospel, but you do need to deal with your sins. You do not need to fast and pray, but you do need to open yourself to the Lord and have a renewed consecration. (*Preaching the Gospel on the College Campuses*, p. 12)

Use of Worldly Means Causes the Church to Fall into the World

“He shall not amass horses to himself, and he shall not turn the people back to Egypt so that he may amass horses, since Jehovah has said to you, You shall never again return that way” (v. 16). For the king to amass horses to himself would have caused the people to fall back to Egypt. Egypt signifies the world, and horses signify the worldly means. If we use the worldly means or the worldly way, we will surely become fallen and turn back to the world. (*Life-study of Deuteronomy*, pp. 120-121)

Music for Entertainment Is Idolatry

In the sight of God, the music and the dramas found in certain services are idolatry.... We also must be careful in the way we use musical instruments in the meetings. Our singing should be for worship, not for fun. When we sing in the meetings, we need to have a genuine spirit of worship. If our singing becomes mere entertainment, that is idolatry. The singing in the meetings of the church must not be play; it must be genuine worship offered to God. (*Life-study of 1 Corinthians*, pp. 422-423)

To Bring in Elements That Contradict God’s Nature, Christ’s Redemptive Work, and the Spirit’s Transforming Work Is to Mar God’s Building

First Corinthians 3:17 says, “If anyone destroys the temple of God, God shall destroy him; for the temple of God is holy, which you are.” To destroy the temple of God is to ruin, corrupt, defile, or mar it. To destroy the temple of God means to build with the worthless materials of wood, grass, and stubble, as described in verse 12. This refers to some Jewish believers who attempted to build the church with elements of Judaism, and to some Greek believers who endeavored to bring philosophical elements into the building. All this tended to corrupt, ruin, defile, and mar the temple of God, that is, to destroy it. Using any doctrine which differs from the fundamental teachings of the apostles (Acts 2:42), or any ways and efforts that contradict God’s nature, Christ’s redemptive work, and the Spirit’s transforming work is to corrupt, ruin, defile, mar, and destroy the church of God. (*Life-study of 1 Corinthians*, pp. 287-288)

Using Worldly Means To Produce “Fruit” Produces “Moabites” and “Ammonites”

...We all must endeavor to preach the gospel, but consider what we are. If we are in the image of God and if we have the dominion of God, we will surely bring others into the image of God and dominion of God. All the local churches need the increase, but never use gimmicks, which may produce “Moabites” instead of the proper fruit. (*Life-study of Genesis*, p. 108)

...In order to bear fruit, we should live by Christ, live out Christ, pray, and help people to receive the living word of God so that they might be reborn. This is the way to bring forth the proper fruit to be the “Isaac” for the fulfilling of God’s purpose. But look at today’s situation: some groups use rock music, dancing, drama, movies, and games to satisfy their desire of securing the increase. In the eyes of God, this is spiritual incest. (*Life-study of Genesis*, p. 721)

Lot’s drugged daughters were desirous of having seed regardless of the means (19:31-35). They cared only for the goal, not for the way. Many Christian groups are like this. (*Life-study of Genesis*, p. 722)

Those who use rock music and other gimmicks in their gospel preaching may bring some people to the Lord by these means, but all such will be Moabites. (*The World Situation and God’s Move*, p. 37)

Only Work That Is Based on the Divine Nature of the Father, the Redemptive Work of the Son, and the Transforming Work of the Spirit Will Be Approved at the Judgment Seat of Christ

Watchman Nee saw through 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 that the important thing regarding our work is not its quantity but its quality. Gold, silver, and precious stones are always small in quantity but high in quality, whereas wood, hay, and stubble are always high in quantity and low in quality. Wood, hay, and stubble cannot stand the test of fire, but gold, silver, and precious stones can. We will be judged at the judgment seat of Christ not according to the quantity but according to the quality of our work. (*Watchman Nee: A Seer of the Divine Revelation in the Present Age*, p. 86)

It is significant that Paul mentions only three categories of precious materials—gold, silver, and precious stones—for these correspond to the Three of the Triune God. The gold refers to the nature of God the Father, the silver to the redemptive work of the Son, and the precious stones to the transforming work of the Spirit. This is the experience of the Triune God becoming the supply for us to minister to the saints and the materials for the

building up of the church. If we build the church with these precious materials, and not with our natural man or culture, we shall be taking heed how we build on Christ. Then our building work will not destroy the temple of God, and we shall not suffer God's destruction. (*Life-study of 1 Corinthians*, p. 237)

...Instead, we must take Christ, the all-inclusive One, as the foundation and build on Him, not with our nature, being, or doings, but with the nature of God, the redemptive work of the Son, and the transforming work of the Spirit of God. If by the mingled spirit we build with these precious materials, we shall be carrying on a proper work for the Lord's recovery. As a result, when the Lord comes back, our work will pass the test, and we shall receive the reward to enjoy the coming kingdom.... (*Life-study of 1 Corinthians*, p. 254)

Using any doctrine which differs from the fundamental teachings of the apostles (Acts 2:42), or any ways and efforts that contradict God's nature, Christ's redemptive work, and the Spirit's transforming work is to corrupt, ruin, defile, mar, and destroy the church of God. (*Life-study of 1 Corinthians*, pp. 287-288)

Only By Living Christ Can We Bear Remaining Fruit

Let us look to the Lord that we may see the unique vision concerning God's economy. His only desire is that we take Him as our life and person and live by Him. Branches bring forth fruit by abiding in the vine. In the same way our fruit-bearing is the outflow of life. It is not a work, but our living. The same is true of our meetings and our gospel preaching. Our gospel is the Christ we live. (*Life Messages*, vol. 1, p. 46)

The way to preach the gospel is to walk in Christ. Such a statement may seem abstract, because we are used to finding ways, or planning activities, to get things accomplished. Some of us may think that the way to preach the gospel is to use musical instruments or to have a quartet sing some gospel songs. There is also the way of eloquence, having a talented speaker give an entertaining message. It has even been said among us that the way to gain people is to go where they are; I have heard of some going to movies, bars, and ballet dances for the purpose of

“catching fish.” All such proposals are ways. They are devoid of Christ....

Because we live Christ, He is the way we preach the gospel. Do not have the opinion that this is a slow way to get the increase. If just one is saved per year through each of us, there will be a one hundred per cent increase. Further, those who are saved in this way will become the remaining fruit. Such will not be the case with those who are brought in through the use of gimmicks; most of them will not stay. (*Life Messages*, vol. 1, pp. 187-188)

LETTER OF CONCERN FROM FIVE BROTHERS IN TORONTO

May 30, 2006

Dear saints:

The purpose of this letter is to express our concerns regarding the gimmicks used in our young people activities, and ask your prayer that our young people may be preserved and sanctified in Him. Over the years, various saints have brought this matter to the elders' attention verbally, and we continue to pray for their shepherding the saints by setting a good pattern and protect the sheep from the perverted generation.

Recently a serving one from the Great Lakes area sent an email invitation to the saints in this area to promote the "Roots Boot Camp". It saddened us to learn, as stated at the beginning of the invitation, that "the Roots Boot Camp will be a discipleship camp like you have never seen before!" The main attraction of this Camp, as stated, is the once in a lifetime opportunity to meet celebrities: [a national championship winning ... football coach] in a lunch or dinner, city Mayor or other city official, and [a] nationally respected Christian author ... in a Christian Leadership Conference. The young people are also to experience a "diversity of ways" in which the Lord can use them to minister Christ to people like: serving in a homeless camp, being perfected to speak, singing in a nursing home, participating in a team outreach project, putting a presentation together for a prison outreach, learning how to share their faith by doing surveys, servant evangelism, random acts of kindness, etc, learning how to lead a small group Bible study, and teamwork activities like taking a trip to Cedar Point (an amusement park), participating in a team outreach project, and doing team exercise and sports together for physical health.

Based on the activities listed in the invitation, it is truly something we have never seen before in the history of the Lord's recovery or in the teaching and fellowship of the ministry of our Brother

Watchman Nee and Brother Witness Lee, from whom we have learned and have closely followed for decades.

These activities look very much like the ones we see in schools, in social and charitable institutions, and in the denominations. However, we do not see any example or teaching of these in the Bible. That is not what we see how the Lord “discipled” in the four gospels. We have not seen such a pattern of “discipleship” neither in the apostles nor in Brothers Nee and Lee. It is most reasonable to say that many of the proposed activities in Roots Boot Camp are categorically unscriptural and spiritually unbeneficial.

Listed between meeting the celebrities and the various physical activities, “in addition”, as the invitation states, is a short line-up of pursuits that may ground the young people in their faith: reading the Bible in one month, being personally mentored by someone who cares for their growth, learning how to cultivate a deep and rich private time with Christ, and getting grounded in foundational Biblical truths.

Undoubtedly, these many secular and social activities are designed to help draw and attract the young people to pursue the Lord by getting them involved with many things that suit their natural taste and things that may arouse their interest. Nevertheless, they run counter to the God-ordained way in His New Testament economy. God’s New Testament economy and the burden commissioned to the Lord’s recovery is neither to do a good social work like visiting prisons or homeless people, singing in nursing homes nor making someone a great speaker or a great leader in Bible study. These are not the visions and goals of our living and work as taught by the ministry of Brothers Nee and Lee. We are taught to bring people to Christ and to Christ only and not to any celebrity or through any celebrity. This is also what the Bible has shown throughout the entire New Testament. Only Christ is our goal, our means, our center, and our circumference. Christ is everything and Christ is all and in all.

Dear saints, Brother Lee had in numerous messages spoken concerning the God-ordained way to bring people to Christ and to perfect the saints according to the Bible as against the “diversity of

ways” taught and practiced in Christianity and in the Catholic church today. We all have come out of the denominations to follow the God-ordained way in the Lord’s recovery, for the building up of the one Body of Christ, to be faithful to our vision, in the purity according to the Biblical truths and the visions of Brothers Nee and Lee. We do not want to be drawn back to the impure mixtures and confusions of Christianity or the practices of Catholicism.

Brother Lee describes the various activities used by today’s religion to “attract” people such as rock music and its instruments, drama, movie, performances, sports, social outreach programs, and others in one word: **GIMMICKS**. Brother Lee characterizes these as “impure method”, “spiritual incest”, “wrong”, “against the Lord’s way”, “improper way”, “power of the Spirit is lacking”, “old”, “not exercised our faith”, improper fruit, “wicked current of the evil world”, “drugged”, “befuddled”, “no proper leadership”, “lack of function of life”, “ugly and worldly means”, “evil way of acquiring the seed”, “steam ships”, “lawlessness”, not taking the constricted way, “worldly methods”, “leaven”, “human methods and techniques”, “not effective”, “cunning craftiness” and, worst of all, “the practice of idolatry”. (Please refer to the complete excerpts from Brother Lee’s ministry concerning the use of various gimmicks in the attached.)

The end does not justify the means. The proposed activities in Roots Boot Camp, as well as that of Drama Camp for “young seekers” to “minister to the movie set” and Creative Media Camp, regardless of how the proposals were well-meant to “disciple” the young people cannot hide the fact that these are gimmicks, and gimmicks are leaven and idolatrous. Our young people do not need these; they need to be nourished with the words of faith and of the good teaching (1 Tim. 4:6) and of the healthy teaching (1 Tim. 1:10b) and healthy words (1 Tim. 6:3) that they may continue in the teaching and fellowship of the apostles (Act 2:42). Today’s young people who are already drawn to the world do not need the church to draw them again with worldly things further into the world; rather, they need to be ushered back to the central burden of the Lord’s recovery.

The central burden of the Lord's recovery is to build up the believers with the Triune God corporately as the Body of Christ, as the one new man, through the practical building up of the local churches with all the members in oneness and with all the elements and essence of the Triune God. This building work is not a mere gathering of believers together for various social functions. This building work is neither to build up individuals as great leaders (Matt. 21:25-28). We are all learners and servants with Christ as our only Teacher and Master and we are all members of one another in the one Body of Christ. The true building work is the transformation work done by the Lord on all the saints, conforming to Christ in life, nature, function and expression as a corporate God-Man, but not in the Godhead. On the positive experiential side, it is the working of the life-giving Spirit in resurrection, to impart and mingle the divine elements and attributes into the uplifted humanity in the saints in their tripartite being. On the negative aspect of this transformation work, it is the working of the cross of Christ in annulling the natural "self" with all those other negative elements such as sin, sins, flesh, the world, the old man, the ordinances and Satan in the believers' being. The glorious result of such a transformation and building work is that all the redeemed and transformed saints would become one corporate divine and human incorporation, built up with the Triune God together, but not in the Godhead, to be the New Jerusalem for eternity. Only with this one new man, the judgment on God's enemy, Satan, would be executed soon and to the full and Satan would be delivered to his final destination, the lake of fire.

For this cause we humbly appeal to you all for your prayer before the Lord, that our young people may be preserved pure and sanctified in Him and not to be defiled by mixtures. Let us pray that our next generation will not be "Moabites" and "Ammonites" but "Isaacs" for the fulfilling of God's purpose. With all sincerity and earnestness let us pray for our beloved shepherds and overseers of the church that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to them a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him (Eph. 1:17) and grant them, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with

power through His Spirit into the inner man (Eph. 3:16) that the riches of His grace may abound to them in all wisdom and prudence (Eph. 1:7b-8) in taking heed to themselves and to all the flock, to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood (Acts 20:28). May they take the lead to protect our young people from things that are perverted and deviated from the Scriptures and against the exhortation based on the visions that we have inherited from our Brothers Nee and Lee (1 Pet. 5:2; Acts 20:28-30).

May the Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

Your members in the Body of Christ and on behalf of the concerned saints,

Sam Brempong

David Chao

Mark Chiang

Jack Huang

Eric Lee

EXCERPTS FROM BROTHER LEE'S MINISTRY CONCERNING THE USE OF VARIOUS GIMMICKS¹

(Words in bold letters are negative, while the ones underlined are positive. Both underlined and bold letters are emphasized)

1. Brother Lee expected to see that in the God-ordained way, every believer will be a vital person (Isa. 40:31 & Psa. 84:7) gaining people by supplying them with flowing rivers of living water (John 4:14; 7:38) by purely speaking Christ, speaking grace, and speaking God. We gain people not by rock music or by some other impure means:

“Dear saints, this is a vital group. This is what I have seen of the Lord. This is what I expect to see—that all you dear ones who are in the recovery would be this kind of persons. **We are going to gain people not by rock music or by some other impure method**. We are going to gain people by purely speaking Christ, speaking grace, speaking God, to everyone. In a certain sense, we should not care whether or not someone understands us or apprehends what we are saying. We should just care for speaking, for flowing rivers of living water all the time.” (*Witness Lee, The Training and the Practice of the Vital Groups, Chapter 11, by LSM*)

2. Brother Lee exhorted us to meet together scripturally (1 Cor. 14:26) while pointing out that some Christian groups use dramatic performances, plays, and rock music in their meetings according to their taste and not according to the Bible:

“Of these three items, the third matter, that of meeting together scripturally, has been lost among today's Christians. What Christian group pays attention to this? The United States is like an amphitheater, where all kinds of Christian meetings can be seen. **In some Christian groups there are dramatic performances. They put on plays, with actors**

¹ These excerpts were attached to the letter from the brothers in Toronto. They are reproduced as they appeared in that attachment.

playing the role of Peter or James, and they have rock music. Other Christian groups meet in many different ways. There are Pentecostal groups with dancing, jumping, or shouting. **Christians come together according to what suits their taste.** It seems little thought is given to meeting according to the Bible.” (*Witness Lee, The World Situation and God’s Move, Chapter 4, by LSM*)

3. Brother Lee testified of his experience in Chefoo that the power and impact of gospel preaching came through much prayer and ministering of the word (Acts 6:4). He considered those who use rock music and other gimmicks as bringing forth children in an improper way, thus producing “Moabites” who are the sons of Lot out of the improper union with his daughters:

“In Chefoo, beginning in 1940, the church spent the New Year’s time in the preaching of the gospel. The New Year’s celebrations in China are far more elaborate than Christmas here. Instead of buying food and making special dishes like everyone else, the saints made no special food preparations at all. The entire family, old and young, gave themselves to prayer. The whole church prayed. When the gospel was preached, there was an impact. In the marketplace and on the street the unbelievers warned their friends, ‘Don’t go into that building. If you do, you will be subdued.’ The power was there. It came by prayer and by the Word. **There was no special music,** just some singing of choruses. It is a matter of prayer and the Word. The Apostles said, ‘We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word’ (Acts 6:4)..... **Those who use rock music and other gimmicks in their gospel preaching may bring some people to the Lord by these means, but all such will be Moabites. They will be the sons of Lot, brought forth in an improper way, by Lot with his daughters (Gen. 19:30-38). Too many Christians are Moabites, born improperly. Today the Lord is again recovering the proper gospel preaching.**” (*Witness Lee, The World Situation and God’s Move, Chapter 4, by LSM*)

4. Brother Lee spoke concerning the Lord’s desire to recover the scriptural way to meet (1 Cor. 14:31), which is the proper way

to meet in His recovery, while reiterating that dancing or rock music or drama in the meetings are not only wrong; they are against the Lord's way:

"The Lord is also going to recover the proper way of meeting. How are we to determine if our way of meeting is scriptural? While no one can say that our meetings are unscriptural, it is hard to say what is the scriptural way to meet. We have published a book called *How to Meet*. If you read it, however, you will still be puzzled as to the proper way to meet. **But I do know that dancing or rock music or drama in the meetings is wrong.** Having soloists is wrong. **These things are not only wrong; they are against the Lord's way.** The Lord is still recovering the proper way to meet." (*Witness Lee, The World Situation and God's Move, Chapter 4, by LSM*)

5. Brother Lee testified of his experience of gospel preaching in Taiwan by the real power of the Spirit, just like the early disciples (Acts 1:8; 4:33; 6:8,10). He instilled in us the reason why charismatic meetings use gimmicks like rock music, dramas, and all kinds of performances to attract people is due to the lack of the power of the Spirit:

"In contrast, I have to point out the shortcomings of the present situation in the charismatic movement. In charismatic meetings, they sometimes use rock music, dramas, and all kinds of performances to attract people. These are all gimmicks. The use of these gimmicks shows that the power of the Spirit is lacking. If we have the real power of the Spirit, we do not need any gimmicks. The early disciples did not use any gimmicks, but they had power (Acts 1:8; 4:33; 6:8, 10). On the island of Taiwan, no Christian work can compare or compete with the work of the Lord's recovery in the preaching of the gospel. There is no use of gimmicks, but the power of the Spirit is there." (*Witness Lee, Preaching the Gospel on the College Campuses, Chapter 1, by LSM*)

6. Brother Lee exhorted us to exercise our faith to speak and work in the Spirit (1 Tim. 1:4; 2 Tim. 1:7), and that we also need to deal with our sins (1 John 1:9). He admonished those who propose to use gimmicks, pointing out that they are

strong proof and indication of oldness and of not exercising their faith:

“When you go to the campus, exercise your faith to speak and work in the Spirit. **Any proposal to use gimmicks to preach the gospel is a strong proof that we have not exercised our faith.** If I only exercised my mentality in the speaking of my messages, my speaking would be poor. I must exercise my spirit to believe that I am in the baptism in the Spirit and that the Lord will speak through me. **You do not need any gimmicks to preach the gospel, but you do need to deal with your sins.** Some of you may have been saved for less than a year. You may think that you are too young, that you do not know very much, and that you do not have much experience in life. Do not listen to these thoughts. You have to reject them. **I have seen many newly saved ones who were bold, strong, and powerful in the preaching of the gospel. I have also seen ones who became old in their experience of the Lord. When they preached the gospel, they did not have any power. Then they turned to gimmicks and exercised their cleverness to convince people.** You do not need to use crafty words. As long as you are in the Spirit, you should be frank and strict with your words.” (*Witness Lee, Preaching the Gospel on the College Campuses, Chapter 1, by LSM*)

7. Brother Lee reminded us to believe in the Word, exercise our faith (2 Thes. 1:11), and preach the gospel with the power of the seven Spirits. We do not need any gimmick like rock music, movies, or dramas, for the demons are not afraid of gimmicks; they are afraid of our faith:

“We all have to be rescued from the concept that we need gimmicks. This thought has to go. **We do not need any gimmicks like rock music, movies, or dramas. The demons are not afraid of gimmicks. The demons are afraid of our faith.** If we exercise our faith, we will have the power to preach the gospel. Today, the seven Spirits are for the seven churches and for God’s administration. The seven Spirits have also been sent forth into the whole earth. We should exercise our faith to tell the Lord, ‘Lord, I am in the churches, I am for Your administration, and I am for the preaching of the gospel, the sending forth of Christ.’ This will give us the standing to

apply the divine truths. The New Testament tells us that Christ has been crucified and resurrected. He has ascended to the heavens, and He has baptized all of His chosen people in the Spirit. Let us believe in the Word, exercise our faith, and go to the campuses to preach the gospel. Let me say a balancing word. We must love the Lord and love His Word, forsake sinful matters, open ourselves to be fully cleansed, and consecrate ourselves to the Lord, or our faith will not work.” (*Witness Lee, Preaching the Gospel on the College Campuses, Chapter 1, by LSM*)

8. Brother Lee underlined the fact that the real gospel preaching is not about an outward work; rather, it is fruit bearing out of the overflow of the inner life. The fruit we bear expresses what we are. If we are in the image of God and if we have the dominion of God, we will bring others into the same (Gen. 1:28). While we need the increase in our local church, we must never use gimmicks, for we might produce “Moabites” instead of the proper fruit:

“Everything in the Christian field, including gospel preaching, has been damaged by the poor practice of the past centuries. The real gospel preaching is not only an outward work. Real gospel preaching is fruit bearing out of the overflow of the inner life...What kind of person are you going to bring in? People with the faces of scorpions or people with beautiful faces expressing God Himself? The fruit you bear is an expression of what you are. If you are an apple tree, you can never bear oranges. If you are a peach tree, you can never bear bananas. If you are going to produce bananas, you must be a banana tree. If you are a tree of knowledge, don’t expect to bear the fruit of life. Only the tree of life can produce the fruit of life. We all must endeavor to preach the gospel, but consider what we are. If we are in the image of God and if we have the dominion of God, we will surely bring others into the image of God and dominion of God. **All the local churches need the increase, but never use gimmicks, which may produce “Moabites”** instead of the proper fruit.” (*Witness Lee, Life-Study of Genesis, Message 9, pp. 107- 108, by LSM*)

9. Brother Lee suggested that leading the saints as the Lord had led us to pray-read God's Word (Eph. 6:18) and call on His name (Rom. 10:12) is far better than going to the movies or attending sports events or rock music:

“After the Lord led us to practice the pray-reading of God's Word and to call on the name of the Lord, some Christians began to oppose us in these matters. Some criticized us and others even condemned us evilly for these two things. If pray-reading or calling on the name of the Lord will change one's life, then I am in favor of it. **It is ten thousand times better than going to the movies or attending sporting events. And it is much better than rock music.**” (*Witness Lee, Life-Study of Genesis, Message 34, p. 462, by LSM*)

10. Brother Lee enlightened us that in order to bear fruit, we should live by Christ, live out Christ, pray, and help people to receive the living word of God. Some free groups use rock music, dancing, drama, movies, and games to satisfy their desire to secure the increase. In the eyes of God, this is spiritual incest (Gen. 19:30-38), bringing forth “Moabites” and “Ammonites”:

“We have seen that the leader was drugged and befuddled and that the function of life was lost. But the daughters, the members of this free group, still wanted to bear fruit and have the increase. Although they had neither the proper leadership nor the function of life, they had an evil way of acquiring the seed. The same is true among many free groups today. In order to bear fruit, we should live by Christ, live out Christ, pray, and help people to receive the living word of God so that they might be reborn. This is the way to bring forth the proper fruit to be the ‘Isaac’ for the fulfilling of God's purpose. But look at today's situation: some groups use rock music, dancing, drama, movies, and games to satisfy their desire of securing the increase. In the eyes of God, this is spiritual incest. The free groups adopt these methods because the wife, being worldly, has lost her function. In the churches we need the function of life to produce seed. Once people have lost the proper wife with the function in life, they use ugly and worldly means for securing the increase. This is the way of ‘incest’ which brings forth ‘Moabites’ and ‘Ammonites.’” (*Witness Lee, Life-Study of Genesis, Message 54, p. 721, by LSM*)

11. Brother Lee stressed that we need to serve the Lord according to the Father's will and way. We must not just care for the seed while not giving importance to the way of obtaining the seed. Some free groups today have been drugged with the wicked current of the evil world and only care for success and not for the means. This is lawlessness and wicked in the eyes of God. They will not be approved by the Lord – both the work and the worker (Matt. 7:21-23; 1 Cor. 3:15):

“Some free groups today have also been drugged with the wicked current of the evil world and only care for success, not for the means. They need the de-drugging of God's sobering word. Lot's drugged daughters were desirous of having seed regardless of the means (Gen. 19:31-35). They cared only for the goal, not for the way. Many Christian groups are like this. They say, “What is wrong with preaching the gospel in this way as long as we bring people to Christ? We have won a great many people. How many souls have you won?” They care for soul-winning, but they do not care for the proper way of doing it. Lot's daughters committed incest, breaking the governing principle ordained by God (19:36). Here we need to refer to Matthew 7:21-23. The Lord said that when He comes back, some so-called Christian workers will say, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name do many works of power?” (Matt. 7:22). If they had not done these things, they would be unable to talk like this. The Lord will not deny that they did such works. But in Matthew 7:23 the Lord said that He will “declare to them, I never knew you; depart from Me, workers of lawlessness.” For the Lord to say, “I never knew you” means “I never approved of you because you are a worker of lawlessness.” The runners in a race must stay in their lane. However fast they run, they are not permitted to run lawlessly outside the boundaries of their lane. Likewise, we need a governing principle for our spiritual activity. It is not a matter of prophesying, casting out demons, or working miracles. It is a matter of the Father's will (Matt. 7:21). Our spiritual activities must be the doing of the Father's will. Our preaching, loving one another, and all we do must be the Father's will. If we lack the assurance deep in our spirit that what we are doing is the Father's will, we should not do it. If we do things without this assurance, we shall break the

governing principle and commit spiritual incest. This is lawlessness in the eyes of God. The Lord will never approve of such lawless workers.” (*Witness Lee, Life-Study of Genesis, Message 54, pp. 722-723, LSM*)

12. Brother Lee interpreted the proper way to send out the gospel is by sailing ships empowered by the heavenly wind (Acts 1:8; 2:2). As Judah (signifying the riches of Christ as the gospel) has produced the riches of Christ, Zebulun (signifying the preaching of the gospel) is needed to export these riches to the nations (Gen. 49:13), but to preach the gospel by means of gimmicks is to change the sailing ship into a steamer:

“I would also point out that the gospel goes out by sailing ships, not by steam ships powered by man-made engines. Do not use any gimmicks in the preaching of the gospel. To preach the gospel by means of gimmicks is to change the sailing ship into a steamer. History proves that the gospel has never been exported by either donkeys or steamers. According to church history, whenever the gospel has been carried out, it has been carried out by sailing boats, by saints who sailed like ships under the power of the heavenly wind.” (*Witness Lee, Life-Study of Genesis, Message 101, pp. 1293- 1294, by LSM*)

13. Brother Lee emphasized that the Lord’s testimony is borne by our transformed humanity as typified by the acacia wood (Exo. 25:12-16) and not by the use of rock music and dramas for preaching the gospel, as some Christians do today:

“Today for the testimony of Christ we also need poles made of acacia wood. Some Christians, how ever, resort to the use of rock music and dramas for preaching the gospel. But the Lord’s testimony is not carried by such a means. Rather, it is borne by our transformed humanity with its high character and standard. This humanity is the strength for the move of Christ as the embodiment of God’s testimony.” (*Witness Lee, Life-Study of Exodus, Message 85, p. 1004, by LSM*)

14. Brother Lee encouraged us to take the constricted way (Matt. 7:13-14) by living and walking in our spirit (Gal. 5:16, 25). Those in Christianity take the broad way of using rock music or other worldly methods in their services, but we cannot:

“We all are happy to be in the Lord’s recovery and appreciate the recovery very much. But let me ask you this question: As one in the Lord’s recovery, are you walking on the constricted way? We all must be able to say that we are not taking the way of Christianity, but the way of constriction. We are constricted on every side. **Those in Christianity can use rock music or other worldly methods in their services, but we cannot, because our way is constricted.** All young people desire to be free, that is, to put off all restriction. When the young people graduate from high school, they are like caged birds wanting to be free. However, many are so free that they have no constriction, no restriction. We in the Lord’s recovery, on the contrary, are taking a constricted way. We must even have some restriction in the practice of pray-reading. In our pray-reading we should not be like worldly people at a ball game who have no restrictions. We in the Lord’s recovery must walk in our spirit. Living in spirit and walking in spirit restrict us. Even when we are loving, rejoicing, and happy, we must be under restriction. We must not be like those who throw off all restraint in their excitement. Rather, we must be excited within the limit of the spirit. This must even be true in the meetings. Although we may fully release our spirit, we should be restricted as far as physical activity is concerned. In everything, **we need to take the constricted way, not the broad way.**” (*Witness Lee, Life-Study of Matthew, Message 24, p. 298, by LSM*)

15. Brother Lee reassured us that we, the kingdom people, have constricting lines within us (Matt. 7:13-14) in the divine life and the divine nature (1 Pet. 1:3; 2 Pet. 1:4). This divine nature of the Father disagrees with rock music and various worldly methods:

“Likewise, we have the constricting lines within us, the lines of the divine life and the divine nature, and we can tell where we are. According to the divine nature within us, we cannot use rock music in our meetings. Although you may try various worldly methods, the divine nature would disagree with them all and indicate that you are transgressing the lines. All those who are the kingdom people, all those who have been regenerated by the Father, have His life and nature within them. The Father’s life and nature indicate

whether or not we are in the constricted way. Let us all run the race according to the Father's nature." (*Witness Lee, Life-Study of Matthew, Message 24, p. 306, by LSM*)

16. Brother Lee reiterated that the pure and sanctified way to preach the gospel and to bring people to Christ is prayer and the ministry of the Word. We must not take any other way like the Catholic church and the Protestant denominations and groups that use leaven (Matt. 13:33; Lev. 2:4-5, 11) – rock music and drama – just to make it easy for people to experience spiritual things:

“Not only the Catholic Church has taken in leaven, but the Protestant denominations and groups have also. **Rock music and drama are types of leaven used to make spiritual things easier for people to accept.** When I was in China, I knew of some young men in a certain organization who mixed basketball with the preaching of the gospel. Using basketball for gospel preaching is also leaven. I doubt that very many were saved through this. The whole principle of the Y.M.C.A. is leaven, for the goal of the Y.M.C.A. is to bring the heavenly standard down to the earthly level, to bring the gospel to secular society in a worldly way. **So many things in Christianity are leaven. These include Christmas, Easter, idols, pictures, images, rock music, drama, and the entire Y.M.C.A. system. We must be careful not to take anything other than Christ** for God's purpose, because anything other than He is leaven. Oh, the subtle one is crouching nearby waiting for his prey! We can easily become his prey because in our human nature is the desire to make it easy for people to experience spiritual things. But whatever you use to help people to touch spiritual things is a type of leaven. The pure and sanctified way to preach the gospel and to bring people to Christ is prayer and the ministry of the Word. Do not take any other way. If after praying and ministering the Word, people will still not receive the gospel, that is up to the Lord. Whether or not people receive our word is a matter of the Father's will. **We do not want to use any gimmicks to help in our preaching. Every gimmick is leaven. We are not for a work or for a movement—we are for the testimony of Jesus.**" (*Witness Lee, Life-Study of Matthew, Message 38, p. 469, LSM*)

17. Brother Lee encouraged us to propagate Christ by the Spirit (John 20:22; Acts 1:1-2) and not by any gimmick or human methods and techniques or rock music practiced among Christians today:

“The propagation of the resurrected Christ in His ascension is by the Spirit. His propagation is not by any gimmick or human technique. But consider the situation among Christians today concerning the propagation of Christ. Where is the propagation by the Spirit? **In many instances, there is very little of the Spirit but much use of human methods and techniques.** For example, **some even use rock music in their preaching of the gospel.** We need to realize that the propagation of the resurrected Christ is by the Spirit, in particular, the economical Spirit. In the book of Acts we see the economical Spirit for the carrying out of Christ’s propagation.” (*Witness Lee, Life-Study of Acts, Message 2, p. 13, by LSM*)

18. Brother Lee underscored the use of the Word and the speaking of the Word directly in our gospel preaching. As the Apostle Paul did not use gimmicks in preaching the gospel, we must also not use them (Acts 9:20, 22; 17:2-3; 18:5):

“In the book of Acts we see that the **Apostle Paul did not use gimmicks in preaching the gospel.** Rather, “he proclaimed Jesus, that this One is the Son of God” (9:20). When Saul was in Damascus, he was “empowered and confounded the Jews dwelling in Damascus, proving that this One is the Christ” (9:22). In a foregoing message we emphasized the fact that in Thessalonica Paul reasoned with those in the synagogue from the Scriptures concerning Christ and saying, “This is the Christ, Jesus, whom I announce to you” (17:2-3). Likewise, we have seen that in Corinth Paul solemnly testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ (18:5). Therefore, **instead of using gimmicks, Paul always spoke the word directly.**” (*Witness Lee, Life-Study of Acts, Message 49, p. 430-431, by LSM*)

19. Brother Lee revealed to us that all believers are apostles (Rom. 1:5) sent out by God to preach the gospel of God (Rom. 1:9). As ones sent out by God for this purpose, we must serve God in the newness of the spirit (Rom. 7:6) and always be burning

in spirit (Rom. 12:11), for preaching the gospel of God is absolutely a matter of our spirit. We should exercise our spirit and should not employ gimmicks in preaching the gospel:

“This gospel is preached in spirit (1:9). Note that the word spirit here begins with a small letter, thereby indicating that it does not refer to the Holy Spirit. All Christians believe that we must be in the Holy Spirit in order to preach the gospel. However, I never heard anyone tell us that we must be in our spirit. But Paul says that we need to be in our spirit. Preaching the gospel depends on our spirit. Paul said that he served God in the spirit in the gospel of His Son. **When we preach the gospel, we should not employ any gimmicks; we should exercise our spirit.**” (*Witness Lee, Life-Study of Romans, Message 2, p. 23, by LSM*)

20. Brother Lee added that if we mean business with the Lord in the matter of preaching the gospel of God, we must exercise three things: in spirit, by prayer (Rom. 1:9), and with eagerness (Rom. 1:13-15; Acts 20:20). Gimmicks and techniques are not effective:

“Thirdly, we must preach the gospel with eagerness (1:13-15). If we mean business with the Lord in this matter of gospel preaching, we must exercise these three things: in spirit, by prayer, and with eagerness. **Gimmicks and techniques will not be effective.** We all need to exercise our spirit to touch people, to pray, and to be ready with eagerness. If the gospel does not inspire you, it will never inspire others. If the gospel cannot convince you, it will never convince others. If you yourself do not weep with the gospel, no one else will repent. If you weep, others will weep in repentance. Once I read a biography of a brother who was prevailing in the gospel. He did not preach very much. However, when he stood up he wept in front of all the people. After a period of weeping before them, tears of repentance came down from the eyes of the people. That was preaching the gospel with eagerness.” (*Witness Lee, Life-Study of Romans, Message 2, p. 24, by LSM*)

21. Brother Lee warned us against idolatry (1 Cor. 10:7) and idol-worshipping (Matt. 4:10) in our living, meetings, and services. He mentioned that in many of today’s Christian services, the

music and the dramas constitute the practice of idolatry in the eyes of God. We must flee from them (1 Cor. 10:14). We must also be careful in the way we use musical instruments in the meetings:

“[1 Cor. 10] Verse 7 says, “Neither become idolaters, as some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play.” The abusive eating of the children of Israel was related to their idolatry in worshipping the golden calf (Exo. 32:1-6). The apostle’s word here implies that the Corinthians’ eating of idol sacrifices without any consideration was also somewhat related to idolatry. In verse 7 we have the biblical interpretation of idolatry. Idolatry is to eat, drink, and play. When the children of Israel worshipped the golden calf, they sat down to eat and drink, and they stood up to play. Here to play means to have entertainment. Eating, drinking, and playing are equal to worshipping idols. Today people everywhere are committing idolatry in this way. Whenever there is a holiday or a long weekend, they give themselves to play, to the pursuit of various kinds of entertainment. Furthermore, **in many of today’s Christian services there is the practice of idolatry. In the sight of God, the music and the dramas found in certain services are idolatry. In many places Christians are not actually worshipping God--they are practicing idolatry. Their way of service is idolatrous in the eyes of God. We also must be careful in the way we use musical instruments in the meetings. Our singing should be for worship, not for fun. When we sing in the meetings, we need to have a genuine spirit of worship.** If our singing becomes mere entertainment, that is idolatry. The singing in the meetings of the church must not be play; it must be genuine worship offered to God.”
(*Life-Study of 1 Corinthians Message 47, pp. 438-439, by LSM*)

22. Brother Lee asserted that the church can subdue the enemy, defeat him, and cut him into pieces in the spiritual warfare by using the whole armor of God. When we pray-read the Word, every word becomes *rhema*, the sword of the Spirit that cuts the enemy (Eph. 6:17-18). We do not use gimmicks, skills, or politics. Our only weapon we wield is the Spirit-Word, which is the sword:

“As we engage in spiritual warfare against the enemy, we do not use gimmicks, skills, or politics. Our only weapon is the Spirit-Word, which is the sword. We do not employ cunning craftiness – we wield the sword of the Spirit. Our loins are girded with truth, and our conscience is covered by Christ as our righteousness. Then we have peace as our firm foundation. We can boast to the whole universe that we have no problems with God or man, for we are standing on the peace accomplished by Christ on the cross.” (*Witness Lee, Life-Study of Ephesians, Message 65, p. 555, by LSM*)