

A FAITHFUL WORD

S E R I E S T W O

“That you all speak the same thing and
that there be no divisions among you.”

**THE
SCRIPTURAL
BASIS OF
ONE
PUBLICATION**
(Part 1)

**Book
1**

DEFENSE & CONFIRMATION PROJECT

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DCP is a project to defend and confirm the New Testament ministry of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee and the practice of the local churches.

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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PREFACE

1 Cor. 1:10 – Now I beseech you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion.

In dealing with emerging divisions, Paul charged the Corinthians, “Now I beseech you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion” (1 Cor. 1:10). We do well to heed this word today. Recently, some have risen up to damage the oneness among the churches by speaking differently according to their own opinion.

A proliferation of different teachings was the stimulus for the July 2005 printing of *Publication Work in the Lord's Recovery*, an affirmation by the co-workers in the Lord's recovery of their intention to follow the pattern of the teaching and practice of Brother Nee and Brother Lee of being restricted in one publication. Although almost all of the workers and the churches in the Lord's recovery received the fellowship in this book, a small, but very vocal, minority openly opposed it. Because of the many misrepresentations of both what the co-workers said in the book and what Brother Nee and Brother Lee taught and practiced, DCP posted a series of articles on afaithfulword.org to address many of the issues raised.

This series of books reproduces that series of articles. This book presents ten scriptural principles which support Brother Lee's fellowship on being restricted in one publication. These principles are:

1. The uniqueness of the teaching and fellowship of the apostles,
2. The apostles teaching the same thing in every church,
3. The Lord's speaking to one church being His speaking to all of the churches,
4. The oneness of the Body of Christ,

5. The one accord,
6. Thinking the same thing,
7. Speaking the same thing,
8. The one ministry of the New Testament,
9. The one work with one goal, and
10. Serving in the one flow of the Lord's move.

INTRODUCTION TO THIS SERIES

In 1986 Brother Lee issued a clear call for all of the serving ones participating in the ministry and leadership among the churches in the Lord's recovery to be restricted in one publication. At the same time, he made it clear that we should not receive or reject any individual saint or local church based on whether or not they accept this practice.

Whether or not a certain church takes the ministry does not decide whether that church is a genuine local church. The title of this message does not say "no uncertain sounding of the trumpet in the Lord's recovery" but "in the Lord's ministry." I am not talking about something in the Lord's recovery, but I am talking about the ministry.... The ministry is altogether filled up with a fighting spirit. I do not control any church. All the saints who have left the denominations, the divisive sects, and stand on the proper ground are a local church in their locality. They can express their opinions, but they may have nothing to do with this ministry.

...I have to be faithful to the Lord, faithful to so many of you who have been very much affected by this ministry, and faithful to myself. For this reason, this ministry cannot allow anyone to pretend to be in it and yet still say something different. This does not mean that I ask you to stay away from your local church or that your local church is no longer a local church. What I am fellowshiping about is the impact of the ministry for the fighting of the Lord's interest in His recovery. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, pp. 81-82)

Brother Lee spoke this word in response to problems that had arisen in the churches due to different teachings propagated by some who claimed to participate with him in the ministry. In doing so, he strongly testified that the practice of being restricted in one publication was the common practice in the Lord's recovery since Brother Watchman Nee was raised up in China.

One thing that has caused the Lord's recovery trouble is the fact that we have different publications. If we mean business

for the Lord's recovery, we must avoid any kind of involvement in problems. When we were on mainland China, only Brother Nee had a publication, and the Gospel Room belonged solely and uniquely to him. He asked me to help in the publication work. I did write some books, among which were a book on the genealogy of Christ, a translation of part of Pember's *Earth's Earliest Ages*, and some books on the kingdom of the heavens. I never published anything by myself. I always mailed my manuscript to the Gospel Room, which was under Brother Nee and his helper. It was up to their discernment whether my manuscript should be published or not. I liked to have my writings checked as to whether there might be some inaccuracy in the truth.... We only had one publication. Everything was published through Brother Nee's Gospel Room because the publication is really the trumpeting. The sounding of our trumpet is not just in the verbal message but more in the publication. (*Elders' Training, Book 8: The Life-pulse of the Lord's Present Move*, pp. 161-162)

Brother Lee presented this pattern of one publication work to the whole recovery for us to follow. The principles our senior co-worker presented represented what had been learned and practiced by those taking the lead in the ministry in the Lord's recovery over the preceding half century.

In 2005, as the co-workers in the Lord's recovery were considering how to face a similar rising tide of different teachings that were troubling the saints and dividing the churches, they recalled how Brother Lee conducted himself in the ministry and how he had addressed the same issues two decades before. Out of much fellowship and prayer, the co-workers issued the statement *Publication Work in the Lord's Recovery* in June 2005, in which they reaffirmed their desire to continue in the practice of being restricted in one publication in the ministry in the Lord's recovery according to the pattern and principles established by Brother Nee and Brother Lee.

In the conclusion of that statement, the co-workers made it clear, as Brother Lee had before, that, while the one publication work in the Lord's recovery is essential to the health and even

the continuation of the recovery, it “should not be insisted on” as a basis for fellowship with the saints or the churches:

Finally, all the churches and saints everywhere must understand that the matter of one publication is not a matter of the common faith but something related to the one ministry in the Lord’s recovery. The ministry is the sounding of the trumpet among us in the Lord’s recovery, and there should be no uncertain sounding of this trumpet, as Brother Lee has mentioned on a number of occasions. However, the one publication should not become the basis of our accepting or rejecting any persons in the communion of faith or in the fellowship of the churches; it should not be insisted on as an item of the faith. If any are not inclined to be restricted in one publication, these ones are still our brothers; they are still in the genuine local churches. (*Publication Work in the Lord’s Recovery*, p. 9)

Notwithstanding this attitude of generality, since the release of the co-workers’ statement, a few have risen up to oppose it, not only dissenting about the need to be restricted in one publication and misrepresenting the co-workers’ stand, but also teaching and acting differently from the New Testament ministry of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee in many vital matters. The Web site afaitfulword.org was necessitated by this very public, strident, and sustained opposition to the co-workers’ affirmation of Brother Lee’s teaching and pattern for carrying out the work in the Lord’s recovery in a blended way. Our hope is that the articles reprinted in these books will help to instruct, heal and inoculate those saints who may have been shaken by these questionings and to equip all of the saints to inoculate others against this dissenting speaking (1 Tim. 1:3-4; 6:3-4; 2 Tim. 2:1-3, 14-15, 23-26; 3:16-17).

IS “ONE PUBLICATION” SCRIPTURAL? – PART 1

The writer of “Publication Work in the Lord’s Recovery’: Analysis & Response” errs when he asserts that there is no scriptural basis for the co-workers’ expressed desire to have only one publication in the Lord’s recovery. In fact:

- A. The co-workers’ statement *Publication Work in the Lord’s Recovery* violates no biblical tenet but is, in fact, solidly based upon numerous critical Scriptures and scriptural principles.
- B. The New Testament also shows us the obligation of those taking the lead in the Lord’s ministry to equip the saints concerning these points of truth and to provide guidance to the churches so that their practice would match these truths.
- C. It further shows the responsibility of the elders in the churches to shepherd the saints under their care accordingly.
- D. What in fact has no scriptural basis is the kind of public attack seen in “Analysis & Response” and other dissenting publications against those bearing such responsibility.
- E. “Analysis & Response” also errs in rejecting Brother Lee’s application of Paul’s word in 1 Corinthians 14:8 to the matter of one publication.

The co-workers addressed the issue of multiple publications because of problems caused by a proliferation of different teachings (1 Tim. 1:3-4) among the churches, teachings which violate vital scriptural principles and which are different from those of the “general ministry” in the Lord’s recovery.

- 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.

Let me cite another illustration to show that something done by a local church may not merely be a local church matter, but fully related to the entire Body. For a local church to receive a ministry that is different from the general ministry which produces the churches, establishes the churches, and is still edifying the churches affects the entire Body. Paul's ministry was a general ministry to produce the Gentile churches, to establish them, to edify them, and to help them grow. I refer to Paul's ministry as a general ministry. Then Apollos came in with another ministry. For the church in Corinth to receive such a ministry, they must consider the effect of receiving such a ministry. Undoubtedly, you have the right to receive any ministry because you are a local church. However, you must consider that your receiving of such a ministry is not merely a local matter. This is not like making a decision as to how many meetings a local church should have.

We must also realize that for a local church to print and distribute publications affects the testimony of all the churches. When a local church puts out a printed testimony it should be done in a very careful way with much consideration as to how this would affect the Lord's testimony universally. We must always consider the effect of what we do on all the local churches.

These three illustrations are good enough and strong enough to tell us that it is not right to think that just because we have a regional work with a few churches under this regional work, we have the full jurisdiction to do everything according to our choice without caring for the Lord's universal testimony, universal Body, universal ministry, and universal move. If we think and practice in this way, we will get in trouble, and we will make trouble for others. Every local church does have its own jurisdiction, but whatever a local church does must be done in a careful consideration as to how this would affect the Lord's universal testimony, universal Body, universal move, and universal ministry. (*Elders' Training, Book 4: Other Crucial Matters Concerning the Practice of the Lord's Recovery*, p. 33)

This “general ministry” has been carried out by our brothers Watchman Nee and Witness Lee and is now being continued by the nearly all of the co-workers on the earth. *Publication Work in the Lord’s Recovery* is their response to the increasing problems among the churches over the entire earth caused by different teachings propagated through different publication works.

A. The Scriptural Basis of One Publication in the Lord’s Recovery

The blended co-workers’ fellowship in *Publication Work in the Lord’s Recovery* is solidly based on many fundamental scriptural principles, including the following:

1. The uniqueness of the teaching and fellowship of the apostles,
2. The apostles teaching the same thing in every church,
3. The Lord’s speaking to one church being His speaking to all of the churches,
4. The oneness of the Body of Christ,
5. The one accord,
6. Thinking the same thing,
7. Speaking the same thing,
8. The one ministry of the New Testament,
9. The one work with one goal, and
10. Serving in the one flow of the Lord’s move.

Brother Lee’s fellowship to “be restricted in one publication” is a practical outworking of these principles and reflects his burden for the preservation of the Lord’s recovery in the genuine oneness and one accord for the building up of the Body of Christ. These ten principles should guide our conduct in the church generally and in carrying out the Lord’s ministry particularly. We should be especially vigilant to apply them in the matter of publishing, so that what we publish does not violate the truth and become a factor of confusion or division among the churches. Being restricted in one publication is the wise application of these principles by Brother Nee and Brother Lee. Their ministry and practice presented us with a pattern to follow to preserve the uniqueness of the Lord’s recovery. As part

of that teaching, one publication represents a healthy extension and direct application of each of these principles, which are elaborated in the following excerpts from the Word and the ministry.

1. THE UNIQUENESS OF THE TEACHING AND FELLOWSHIP OF THE APOSTLES (ACTS 2:42; 1 JOHN 1:3; 1 COR. 1:9)

Acts 2:42 – And they continued steadfastly in ¹the teaching and the fellowship of the apostles, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.

fn. 2:42¹ – ...In God's New Testament economy there is only one category of teaching revealed and recognized by God—the teaching of the apostles—and only one category of fellowship that is of God and is acceptable to Him—the fellowship of the apostles, which is with the Father and the Son, Jesus Christ..., and which is the unique fellowship of the unique church, the Body of Christ.

1 John 1:3 – That which we have seen and heard we report also to you that you also may have ³fellowship with us, and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

fn. 1:3³ – ...Fellowship here indicates a putting away of private interests and a joining with others for a certain common purpose. Hence, to have fellowship with the apostles, to be in the fellowship of the apostles, and to have fellowship with the Triune God in the apostles' fellowship is to put aside our private interests and join with the apostles and the Triune God for the carrying out of God's purpose...

1 Cor. 1:9 – God is faithful, through whom you were called ²into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

fn. 1:9² – This fellowship of God's Son became the fellowship that the apostles shared with the believers (Acts 2:42; 1 John 1:3) in His Body, the church, and should be the fellowship that we enjoy in partaking of His blood and His body at His table (10:16, 21). Such a fellowship, which is carried out by the Spirit (2 Cor.

13:14), must be unique because He is unique; it forbids any division among the members of His unique Body.

Therefore, Acts tells us that on the one hand, there was one accord among the disciples, and on the other hand, all those who were one in one accord were continuing in the teaching of the apostles (2:42). The teaching of the apostles was the very holding factor of the one accord. If there were more than one teaching, this would damage the holding factor. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, p. 111)

The fellowship of the apostles is based upon the apostles' teaching. Fellowship always comes after teaching. If there is no teaching, there is no element or realm of the fellowship. Actually, the teaching is the element and the realm of the fellowship. By the Lord's mercy, today in the Lord's recovery we are under the apostles' teaching and in the apostles' fellowship. (*A Brief Presentation of the Lord's Recovery*, p. 39)

According to the New Testament record, the leadership is in the apostles' teaching (Acts 2:42). In 1 Timothy 1:3-4 Paul exhorted Timothy to remain in Ephesus that he might charge certain ones not to teach different things from God's economy. First Timothy shows us that there was some leadership that charged people to teach the proper thing. This shows that the proper leadership is in the apostles' teaching. (*Elders' Training, Book 9: The Eldership and the God-ordained Way (1)*, pp. 29-30)

Furthermore, we take this one way for one goal without different teachings (1 Tim. 1:3-4). We take only the apostles' teaching (Acts 2:42) as the healthy words of the Lord Jesus (1 Tim. 6:3). First Timothy 1 speaks of the teaching concerning God's economy and chapter six speaks of the healthy words of the Lord Jesus. All the teachings of the apostles are for God's economy, and these teachings are the healthy words of the Lord Jesus. The apostles learned these words from the Lord and followed the Lord to teach the same thing that He did. The apostles' teaching is the teaching concerning God's economy. We must preach and teach concerning Christ's unsearchable riches and God's New Testament economy. In Ephesians 3:8 Paul speaks of the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel and in verse 9 he speaks of God's eternal economy. We must preach and teach

these two items. May the Lord preserve us in the one way for one goal without opinion and without different teachings. (*The God-ordained Way to Practice the New Testament Economy*, p. 147)

The Unique Fellowship of the Apostles,
Which Is Uniquely and Universally
of All the Members of the Organic Body of Christ

The intrinsic fellowship of the churches is the unique fellowship of the apostles, which is uniquely and universally of all the members of the organic Body of Christ (Acts 2:42). The flow was first the fellowship of the divine life of the divine Trinity. Then this fellowship was passed on to the apostles, who were among the first group of believers on earth. Therefore, this flow became the fellowship of the apostles. All of the early apostles were in the flow of the divine life. Furthermore, in those early days, all the believers continued steadfastly in the teaching and the fellowship of the apostles. There was only one teaching and one fellowship. The apostles did a wonderful work to impart the divine life into people and bring them into the flow of this divine life. This flow, this fellowship, became the new believers' fellowship. Their fellowship was the fellowship of the apostles, and the fellowship of the apostles is the fellowship of the Triune God. (*The Organic Building Up of the Church as the Body of Christ to be the Organism of the Processed and Dispensing Triune God*, p. 60)

**2. THE APOSTLES TEACHING THE SAME THING
IN EVERY CHURCH, CAUSING THE CHURCHES
TO BE ONE IN LIFE, NATURE,
EXPRESSION, AND PRACTICE
(1 COR. 4:17; 7:17; 11:16; 14:33, 36; 16:1; REV. 1:12)**

1 Cor. 4:17 – Because of this I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach² everywhere in every church.

fn. 4:17² – This expression indicates two things: (1) that the apostle's teaching was the same universally, not varying from place to place; and (2) that *everywhere* equals *every church*, and *every church*, *everywhere*.

1 Cor. 7:17 – However as the Lord has apportioned to each one, as God has called each one, so let him walk. And so I direct in all the churches.

1 Cor. 11:16 – But if anyone seems to be contentious, we do not have such a custom of being so, neither the² churches of God.

fn. 11:16² – That *churches* here is plural indicates that all the local churches are independent of one another, yet they all act in the same way according to the apostles' teaching.

1 Cor. 14:33 – For God is not a God of confusion but of peace.
²As in all the churches of the saints.

fn. 14:33² – This indicates that all the local churches should be the same in practice.

1 Cor. 14:36 – Or was it from you that the word of God went forth? Or¹ did it reach only to you?

fn. 14:36¹ – This too indicates that a local church should follow the other churches in its practice. All the local churches should submit to the universal order of the

Spirit according to the word of the apostles, from whom the word of God goes forth.

1 Cor. 16:1 – Now concerning the collection for the saints, ²just as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also do.

fn. 16:1² – Again, this strongly indicates that all the local churches should be the same in their practice (7:17; 11:16; 14:33).

Rev. 1:12 – And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands.

4. The Apostles Teaching the Same Thing in All the Churches

When the apostles taught in the various local churches, their teachings were all the same (1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17; 11:16; 14:33-34). There is no such thing as having one kind of teaching in one place and another kind of teaching in another place. The apostles taught the same thing in every church. (*A Timely Trumpeting and the Present Need*, p. 40)

...We also must teach the same thing in all the churches in every country throughout the earth. There should be no different trumpeting or different voicing among us. We should all voice the same thing, trumpet the same thing, and teach the same thing. We need to be one in teaching (1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17; 16:1; Acts 2:42; Rom. 16:17; 1 Tim 1:3-4; 6:3; Eph. 4:13-14).

All of the churches should also be one in practice (1 Cor. 11:16; 14:33b-34). If the churches are not the same in practice, this will damage the one accord. If we train the full-timers in the God-ordained way, and they return to churches who practice differently, this could cause problems. We will be contradicting ourselves. I hope that all the trainees who return to their churches will be so useful because we are all practicing the same way. (*Elders' Training, Book 9: The Eldership and the God-ordained Way (1)*, p. 16)

The apostle did not have different teachings toward different local churches. He taught the same thing everywhere in every church, and he commanded the same thing in all the churches (1 Cor. 4:17; 11:16; 14:33). In Revelation 2 and 3

there are seven epistles from the Lord to the seven local churches respectively, yet the end of each epistle says, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). Each epistle is written to one definite local church, but that particular epistle is also for all the churches. This implies that all the churches, as the Lord's testimony in the Spirit, should be the same. (*The Fulfillment of God's Purpose by the Growth of Christ in Us*, p. 61)

The Apostle Paul taught the same thing in all the churches (1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17). This means that all the churches in all the different localities should be the same. (*The Intrinsic Problem in the Lord's Recovery Today and Its Scriptural Remedy*, p. 32)

All the above teachings are God's speaking in the Son at the last of these days (Heb. 1:2), which should be universally taught everywhere in every church in the same way (1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17). (*The Ministry of the New Testament and the Teaching and Fellowship of the Apostles*, p. 22)

First Corinthians 4:17, 7:17 and 16:1 indicates that Paul taught all the churches the same thing. All the churches were under one teaching, the teaching of the apostles (Acts 2:42). Whatever I have been teaching is the teaching of the apostles. I do not desire to pass on anything of myself, but whatever I have ministered is altogether according to the apostles' teaching. I do not have my own teaching. My teaching is a part of the apostles' teaching, the unique teaching. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, p. 42)

Moreover, the practice of this oneness is according to the apostles' teaching (1 Cor. 4:17b; 7:17b; 11:16; 14:34a). The apostles taught the same thing to all the saints in all the places and in all the churches. (*The Oneness and the One Accord According to the Lord's Aspiration and the Body Life and Service According to His Pleasure*, p. 18)

In the New Testament the apostles considered all the local churches the same. In 1 Corinthians 4:17 Paul spoke of the way he taught "every where in every church." There is not a verse that indicates that the Apostle Paul taught differently in the various churches. In 1 Corinthians 7:17 he said, "And so ordain I in all churches," and in 11:16 he said, "We have no such custom, neither the churches of God." In Colossians 4:16

Paul said, “And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.” In these verses we see that the teaching of the apostles was the same in all the churches. Thus, Paul encouraged the churches to follow each other (1 Thes. 2:14). (*The Spirit and the Body*, 2nd ed., pp. 185-186)

As those who are taking care of the churches and participating in the recovery, you have to realize the recovery of the genuine church life is altogether, absolutely, wholly, and ultimately one in teaching, in practice, in thinking, in speaking, in essence, in appearance, and in expression. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, p. 41)

3. THE LORD'S SPEAKING TO ONE CHURCH BEING HIS SPEAKING TO ALL OF THE CHURCHES (COL. 4:16; REV. 1:11; 2:7A)

Col. 4:16 – And when this letter is read among you, cause that it be read in the church of the Laodiceans also, and that you also read the one from Laodicea.

Rev. 1:11 – Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.

Rev. 2:7a, 11a, 17a, 29; 3:6, 13, 22 – He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the ³churches...

fn. 2:7³ – On the one hand, each of the seven epistles is the Lord's word to a particular church, but on the other hand, it is the Spirit's word to all the churches. Every church needed to give heed not only to the epistle written to her particularly but also to all the epistles written to the other churches.

The apostle's epistle to the Colossians was charged to be read by the Laodiceans, and the epistle to the Laodiceans to be read by the Colossians (Col. 4:16). The local situations and conditions of these two places might have been different in some aspects. But the apostle said that the Colossians needed to pass the epistle to them on to the Laodiceans and that the letter to the Laodiceans needed to be read by the Colossians. The Laodiceans could have said to Paul that the letter to the Colossians applied to the condition and situation in Colosse but not to their condition. They could have felt not to read Paul's letter to Colosse but could have been happy to receive Paul's letter to them. The Colossians could have said the same thing, that is, that they appreciated Paul's writing to them but that they did not think his writing to the Laodiceans would fit into their local situation and condition.

To say that we do not like to reject the ministry, but we will have to pray to see how the Lord leads us sounds very

spiritual, but this is the best cloak to cover the subtle dissension. With Paul's charge to Colosse and Laodicea, however, there were no conditions or terms. Whatever Paul wrote was not only for a certain church or for two churches but for all the churches. We cannot tolerate anything contrary to this principle any longer.

THE GENTILE CHURCHES BECOMING IMITATORS OF THE CHURCHES IN JUDEA

The Gentile churches became imitators of the churches in Judea (1 Thes. 2:14a). To say that the church where you are should be different from the other churches is dissenting. To follow a Jewish church is not a glory in New Testament terms. It is not a glory to be Jewish, but Paul was so happy and encouraged that the church in Thessalonica took the lead to become an imitator of the churches in Judea. Suppose the churches in Brazil would imitate and follow the churches in the United States. Some may feel that this is wrong. They may feel that the churches in Brazil should remain different from the churches in the United States. In today's blinded situation they may think that this is spiritual. Every local church is free to take the leading of the Spirit. This sounds very good, but it is actually subtly dissenting and a real poison. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, p. 60-61)

At the same time, the practice of this oneness is also according to the same speaking of the Spirit to the churches (Rev. 2:7, 11a, 17a, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). The seven epistles to the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3 were words spoken to all the churches. He who has an ear, let him hear. Each epistle was written to all the churches. All the churches have the same Bible, and everyone is practicing oneness according to the same speaking. Finally, the practice of oneness indicates that the seven churches as the seven lampstands are completely identical (Rev. 1:20). The churches are God's golden lampstands. Although they are distinct and self-contained, they are completely identical in nature, shape, function and expression. (*The Oneness and the One Accord According to the Lord's Aspiration and the Body Life and Service According to His Pleasure*, p. 18)

In the book of Revelation the Lord Jesus clustered and blended the seven churches together as one. He wrote seven

letters, one letter to each of the seven churches, and yet He put all the seven letters together as the one total Epistle and sent it to all seven churches that they might all receive the same fellowship (Rev. 1:4, 11; 2:1—3:22). In the eyes of the Lord all the seven local churches were just one church because He has only one Body. Furthermore, the apostle Paul also blended the two churches in Laodicea and Colossae together. He wrote a letter to the church in Laodicea and asked the church in Laodicea to let Colossae read it. He also wrote a letter to the church in Colossae and asked Colossae to let Laodicea read it (Col. 4:16). (47 speakers, 1993 *Blending Conference Messages Concerning the Lord's Recovery and Our Present Need*, p. 48)

As we all know, in Revelation 2 and 3 there are the seven epistles to the seven churches. Although various differences are seen in these seven churches, these differences are all on the negative side. On the positive side, the churches are all the same. This is the reason that the seven epistles were not sent to each church separately and respectively; rather, all seven were sent to each of the seven churches. Moreover, at the end of each of the seven epistles there is the following word: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Rev. 2:7). Whatever was written to the church in Ephesus, for example, was a word that the Spirit was speaking to all the churches. This is a strong proof that all the local churches must be the same. (*The Spirit and the Body*, 2nd ed., p. 186)

All the Seven Epistles Being Closed as the Speaking of the Spirit to All the Churches

Although the contents of the seven epistles differ, at the end of each epistle there is the same closing word: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). Each epistle was written to a particular church in a certain locality, yet all the seven epistles were closed in the same way, as the Spirit's speaking to all the churches. This means that each epistle was written to all the churches, and it indicates that all the churches should be the same. This is the second item as the base for all the churches to practice the one accord. There must be the one accord among all the churches.

...In Colossians 4:16 Paul wrote, "And when this letter is read among you, cause that it may be read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you also read the one from Laodicea." The epistle to the church in Colosse was also for the church in Laodicea, and the epistle to the church in Laodicea was also for the church in Colosse. Thus, every epistle was written not only for the receiving church but also for all the other churches. This indicates that the Lord wants all the churches to have the one accord. (*The Intrinsic Problem in the Lord's Recovery Today and Its Scriptural Remedy*, pp. 31-32)

B. The Apostle Paul's Blending the Two Churches
in Colossae and Laodicea as One
by Sending Them Epistles in Common

The apostle Paul blended the two churches in Colossae and Laodicea together as one by sending them epistles in common (Col. 4:16). He wrote a letter to the church in Colossae and charged them to let the church in Laodicea read it. He also wrote a letter to Laodicea and asked Laodicea to let Colossae read it. Instead of having this practice, we may like to keep things secret in our locality, but Paul practiced differently. He wanted his letter to the church in Colossae to be read by the church in Laodicea and his letter to the church in Laodicea to be read by the church in Colossae. (*One Body and One Spirit*, p. 22)

Then in the New Testament we also see a marvelous blending. The Lord Jesus blended all the seven churches in Asia together by sending them one aggregate epistle. Paul blended the churches in Colossae and Laodicea by writing one epistle to each of the two churches respectively and asking them to read the two epistles reciprocally (Col. 4:16). This indicates that in the eyes of Paul those two churches were one. They both should know the same thing. (*The Practical Points Concerning Blending*, p. 25)

4. THE ONENESS OF THE BODY OF CHRIST (EPH. 4:4; EPH. 2:16; ROM. 12:5; 1 COR. 12:13)

Eph. 4:4 – One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling.

Eph. 2:16 – And might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it.

Rom. 12:5 – So we who are many are one Body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

1 Cor. 12:13 – For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one Body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.

...For such a Body the Lord only has one work on this earth. From the New Testament we can see that the Lord has one move on this earth, one Body, and only one testimony. According to space and time, His New Testament move, His Body, and His testimony are universal. These three aspects must impress us very deeply. The Lord only has one move, one Body, and one testimony. (*Elders' Training, Book 4: Other Crucial Matters Concerning the Practice of the Lord's Recovery*, p. 28)

I do not care what kind of burden you pick up to do in your locality. I am not concerned with whether what you are doing is right or wrong. My concern is that your kind of doing might be divisive. You may have the right to do things, but the Body would not swallow them. Rather, the Body would either spit out or vomit what you do. Then you will suffer. This is quite serious. We must realize that we are not doing a piece of Christian work. We are burdened to carry out the Lord's recovery for His unique Body to bear His unique testimony. (*Elders' Training, Book 4: Other Crucial Matters Concerning the Practice of the Lord's Recovery*, pp. 37-38)

Because the earth today is so small, this is the golden time for the Lord's lovers to bear His one testimony, the testimony of the one Body of Christ. Here on this earth people can see such a testimony among people of all nationalities and races

over the entire globe. Wherever you go, these people speak the same thing, minister the same thing, do the same thing, and bear the same testimony. If you go to Japan, Hong Kong, London, India, Israel, or Africa, you can see the same testimony.

Just to keep such a wonderful testimony is more important than anything. Even if I were a great Bible teacher and could teach the Bible to throngs of people, this work is not as worthwhile as keeping such a testimony. Even if I could do a great evangelical work and bring hundreds of people to the Lord, this is not as worthwhile as keeping such a testimony. I hope our eyes could be opened to thoroughly see what is more valuable. If our vision is so clear, we will be rescued from being distracted by any smaller points. To center on how to meet or on any kind of work is altogether not as worthwhile as keeping such a testimony. I do believe that the Lord's blessing is really here. Many of us can testify that when we touch things other than this testimony, the anointing is not with us that much. However, whenever we touch this testimony, we experience a living, rich anointing and there is a "jumping" within us. This is a strong proof that what the Lord wants today is such a testimony. He has been seeking such a testimony for two thousand years, and this is the real revelation that the New Testament bears and conveys to us. (*Elders' Training, Book 4: Other Crucial Matters Concerning the Practice of the Lord's Recovery*, pp. 38-39)

Do not consider that I am rebuking, warning, or threatening you. I am loving all of you. I am speaking a word in love because you all love the recovery. If you do love the recovery, be on the alert, not concerning others, but concerning yourself. Do not be cheated by the enemy. If you love the recovery and if you treasure the ministry, you must realize what the Lord's recovery is. The recovery is not for any kind of doing. The recovery is for God's economy in order to keep the oneness of the Body of Christ. This is the Lord's recovery. If we are through with the oneness, we are through with the recovery, and we will become another repetition of today's Christianity. Be on the alert to watch for the subtle one, the Devil, who can put any kind of mask on his face to come to you. This is my word of love. You may wonder whom I am talking about. I am talking about those of you who have an

intention to teach things different than today's ministry. You know and the Lord knows whether or not you have such an intention. If you do not have such an intention, praise the Lord. That is all right. We must realize, though, that it is a serious matter to teach scriptural things and good things, yet somewhat different from God's economy. (*Elders' Training, Book 3: The Way to Carry Out the Vision*, p. 47)

The secret of the practice of the church life is first the one accord in the local churches. Second, the secret of the practice of the church life is the oneness in the universal Body (Eph. 4:3; John 17:11, 21-23). Some insist to say, "We are local churches. Every local church has its own jurisdiction. Don't touch our affairs. If you touch our affairs, you touch our local administration." To say such a word is to make all the local churches separate from one another. This is separation; this is not oneness. Oneness should be among the local churches, and one accord should be in every local church. Then we will have the blessing....

The church is one man, one Body. Just as a man cannot be divided into pieces, the church as the new man cannot be divided into pieces. Our physical body cannot be divided into separate, autonomous pieces. We cannot say that our shoulder, head, and hands are autonomies. All the local churches should be one, and every local church should be in one accord with no opinion. (*One Body and One Spirit*, pp. 18-19)

There is just one Body in the entire universe. All the churches must be one Body. But I do not mean that they should be organized to be one Body. If the church in Cleveland is afraid of being touched by the church in New York, I would wonder what kind of church there is in Cleveland. It would certainly be abnormal. If I am afraid that the person sitting next to me will steal my watch, I must have some kind of problem. I encourage you all to be at peace and to open your church to the other churches. Do not keep the church in your pocket as a pocket version of the church. The church is of Christ, of God, and of the saints (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 11:16; 14:33). It is not a church of you or me. Nevertheless, some desire to turn the church into a pocket church. In the past I saw this a number of times. In every instance those who tried this failed, for the saints would not agree with such a thing.

Every saint desires to be in a church that is an open church, a church that is of God, of Christ, and of the saints. Every local church must be open. (*The Spirit and the Body*, pp. 188-189)

5. THE ONE ACCORD (ACTS 1:14; 2:46; 15:25; ROM. 15:6)

Acts 1:14 – These all continued steadfastly with one accord in prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

Acts 2:46 – And day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house, they partook of their food with exultation and simplicity of heart.

Acts 15:25 – It seemed good to us, having become of one accord, to choose men to send to you together with our beloved Barnabas and Paul.

Rom. 15:6 – That ¹with one accord you may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

fn. 15:6¹ – The Greek word means *with the same mind, will, and purpose*. This is to be one in our whole being and results in our being one in our outward speaking. Whenever we are in one accord, we speak the same thing; we speak with one mouth. This oneness is the reverse of Babel, where the division among mankind caused their language to become confused and divided into many different speakings (Gen. 11:7, 9). The only way to be with one accord and one mouth is to allow Christ the room to be everything in our heart and in our mouth that God may be glorified.

BEING IN ONE ACCORD

All of us need to be one with the Lord in the life-pulse of His new move. For the Lord's new move, all of the churches need to be in one accord. In the past, we lost the one accord, but we must endeavor to recover and keep it.... (*Elders' Training, Book 9: The Eldership and the God-ordained Way (1)*, p. 16)

BEING IN ONE ACCORD WITH NO OPINIONS

The victories we have enjoyed in the past were one hundred percent due to the one accord. I say this as an encouragement to all of us. We all have to be in one accord with no opinions. To carry on the Lord's recovery we do not need to have any opinion. We should have the confidence in the leadership. You may be a little smarter than the ones who are taking the lead or who made the decision. Yet if you express your opinion, that will only delay the time. Your way may take twenty-five minutes, while the way decided upon may take thirty-five minutes. This ten minute difference is not worth your opinion. By discussing your opinion, what we want to do may take half an hour or even two hours longer. It may even create dissension or division. This is what we are suffering from today. (*Elders' Training, Book 8: The Life-pulse of the Lord's Present Move*, p. 71)

What we need is to recover this one accord. If we mean business to go along with the Lord's present day move, we need this one accord. Who is right does not mean anything; we need this one accord. We need to have the same mind and the same will for the same purpose with the same soul and the same heart. Philippians tells us that this matter starts from our spirit (1:27), yet we must realize we are not persons of spirit only. We are persons also of the mind, will, purpose, soul, and heart. For us to be in the same one spirit with the same one soul, one mind, and one will is to have the one accord, which is the key to all the New Testament blessings and bequests. Otherwise, we will repeat the pitiful history of Christianity by being another group of Christians repeating the same kind of disaccord. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, p. 20)

First Timothy 6:3 also refers to the teaching according to godliness. This is the teaching of the apostles after the Lord's ascension, which is mainly Paul's teaching. First Timothy 3:16 tells us that the great mystery of godliness is God manifested in the flesh, which is first Christ and then the church as the continuation of Christ's manifestation of God in the flesh. The teaching which is according to godliness, the teaching of the Apostle Paul, is altogether regarding the church as the great mystery of godliness. First Timothy 6:3 covers the Lord's

words in the four Gospels plus all that He has been speaking since His ascension through His apostles from Acts through Revelation. If we are teaching things other than what the New Testament stresses, we are teaching differently, and it will be hard for us to be really one. If we have many different teachings, we will also have many different practices resulting in division. It would then be impossible to have the one accord, the oneness. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, p. 45)

6. THINKING THE SAME THING (PHIL. 2:2; 4:2; 2 COR. 13:11; 1 COR. 1:10B)

Phil. 2:2 – Make my joy full, that you ³think the same thing, having the same love, joined in soul, thinking the one thing.

fn. 2:2³ – Among the Philippians there was dissension in their thinking (4:2), which troubled the apostle. Hence, he asked them to think the same thing, even the same one thing, that they might make his joy full.

Phil. 4:2 – I exhort Euodias, and I exhort Syntyche, to ¹think the same thing in the Lord.

fn. 4:2¹ – This indicates that the two sisters were dissenting from each other; they were not of the same mind. Hence, there was the exhortation in this book to strive together with one soul along with the personified gospel (1:27), to be joined in soul, thinking the one thing (2:2), and to have the same mind to pursue Christ (3:14-15).

2 Cor. 13:11 – Finally, brothers, rejoice, be ²perfected, be comforted, ⁴think the same thing, be ⁵at peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

fn. 13:11² – Or, completed thoroughly. I.e., repaired or adjusted, put in order again, mended, perfectly joined together; thus, restored. In Greek this word is the root of the word for *perfecting* in v. 9 and in Eph. 4:12.

fn. 13:11⁴ – Thinking the same thing must have been the main thing in which the distracted and confused Corinthians needed to be perfected, adjusted, put in order, and restored, as the apostle had exhorted in his first Epistle (1 Cor. 1:10).

fn. 13:11⁵ – At peace with one another, and probably with God also.

1 Cor. 1:10b – ...but that you be ⁴attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion.

fn. 1:10⁴ – The same word in Greek that is translated mending in Matt. 4:21. It means *to repair, to restore, to adjust, to mend, making a broken thing thoroughly complete, joined perfectly together*. The Corinthian believers as a whole were divided, broken. They needed to be mended in order to be joined perfectly together that they might be in harmony, having the same mind and the same opinion to speak the same thing, that is, Christ and His cross (vv. 17-18, 22-24; 2:2).

The wise way is that we all take the full-time way and speak the same thing, think the same thing, present the same thing, and teach the same thing, having the same essence, appearance and expression. Then we will have the morale, the impact, to defeat the enemy. This is what the Lord needs! (*Elders' Training, Book 8: The Life-pulse of the Lord's Present Move*, p. 127)

In [Philippians] 2:2 the apostle again besought the believers, "Make my joy full, that you think the same thing, having the same love, joined in soul, thinking the one thing." The apostle's joy is made full when he sees that all the churches all over the world are practicing this kind of oneness, a oneness in which they are thinking the same thing, even the one thing. The Lord can accomplish His purpose for the satisfaction of His heart's desire only when we are thinking the same thing. (47 speakers, *1993 Blending Conference Messages Concerning the Lord's Recovery and Our Present Need*, p. 90)

Paul speaks of our need to be attuned in 1 Corinthians 1:10: "Now I beseech you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion." There should be no division in the Body of Christ (12:25a). In the Triune God, we have oneness. We have the oneness which is the Triune God Himself. Although this oneness is in us, we are full of opinions and preferences. Hence, we need to be attuned. We all need attuning so that there will be no division in the Body. (*Five Emphases in the Lord's Recovery*, pp. 14-15)

Today there is still much ground for us to cover in the spreading of the Lord's churches. We have to preach the gospel everywhere, build up the small groups, and teach the

truth. With this goal in view, we should have no arguments and no different opinions. We should speak the same thing, think the same thing, and press on in one accord. Not only should the churches in Taiwan do this, but all the churches in all the continents throughout the earth should do this. If we do this, the power will be great. The Lord will surely grant us an open door because this is the way that the Lord wants to take today. (*The Vision of the Age*, p. 55)

7. SPEAKING THE SAME THING (1 COR. 1:10A; ROM. 15:6)

1 Cor. 1:10a – Now I beseech you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all ² speak the same thing and that there be no ³ divisions among you...

fn. 1:10² – Because of their different speakings in their strife, which were condemned by the apostle in vv. 11-12.

fn. 1:10³ – In this Epistle the apostle dealt with eleven problems among the believers in Corinth. The first was the matter of division. Division is nearly always the leading problem, bringing in all other problems among believers. It may be considered the root of the problems among believers. Hence, in dealing with all the problems in the church at Corinth, the apostle's axe first touched the root, that is, the divisions among the believers there. The first virtue of the believers' walk that is worthy of God's calling is the keeping of the oneness of the Spirit in the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:1-6).

Rom. 15:6 – That ¹ with one accord you may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

fn. 15:6¹ – The Greek word means *with the same mind, will, and purpose*. This is to be one in our whole being and results in our being one in our outward speaking. Whenever we are in one accord, we speak the same thing; we speak with one mouth. This oneness is the reverse of Babel, where the division among mankind caused their language to become confused and divided into many different speakings (Gen. 11:7, 9). The only way to be with one accord and one mouth is to allow Christ the room to be everything in our heart and in our mouth that God may be glorified.

SPEAKING THE SAME THING

We are here for the Lord's recovery. I am not doing my own work, and you are not doing your own work. We all are

bearing one testimony; we all have our shoulders under the “staves” of the “ark.” Since we are all bearing the one testimony, we all should speak the same thing (1 Cor. 1:10). But the speaking in certain places is leading the saints in the direction that is away from the Lord’s recovery. Such speaking may not be wrong or unscriptural. It may be right and scriptural, but eventually it will lead the saints in a wrong direction...

From experience we know that the one who teaches differently is the first one to be sacrificed. This means that if you teach differently, you run the risk not of sacrificing the recovery but of sacrificing yourself. We all need to practice Paul’s word to Timothy: “Even as I urged you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach differently” (1 Tim. 1:3). Instead of teaching differently, we should all speak the same thing...

We all need to consider what we minister, preach, and teach. This means that we need to take care of all the churches. Before the Lord I can testify that this was my practice in China, and it is my practice today. When I was in China speaking in a certain locality, I considered how the other churches might be affected by my speaking. I asked myself, “Will this cause trouble to the other churches? How will it affect them? Will the entire recovery be able to accept this?” I realized that if I did not consider my speaking in this way, I could cause trouble. I could speak something that the recovery as a whole would not receive. I could speak something that others would reject because it was contrary to their taste. (*Elders’ Training, Book 3: The Way to Carry Out the Vision*, pp. 127-129)

I believe that if we really live a life of Christ as our reality, the increase will come. We should live such a testimony. Then all the churches over the whole earth will bear the same testimony and will carry the same New Testament ministry to establish the same New Testament church as the Body of Christ. Then wherever people go, they will see the same thing. They will see different peoples, different races, different ranks, and different societies, meeting together, bearing the same testimony, and always speaking the same thing. They will see people speaking the same thing in many different languages

and bearing the genuine testimony of Jesus. Even though we may have a small number, this is still something prevailing in the eyes of God. (*Elders' Training, Book 4: Other Crucial Matters Concerning the Practice of the Lord's Recovery*, pp. 134-135)

This was the case among the Corinthians. Some said, "I am of Paul," some, "I am of Apollos," some, "I am of Peter," and others, "I am of Christ." They exalted the gifted ones, thus creating divisions and strifes among themselves. Saying "I am of Christ" seemed to be very spiritual, but it was condemned by the apostle just as saying "I am of Paul," "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," because it caused division just as much as the other three sayings, which apparently were very fleshly (3:3-4). All of these sayings caused division; hence, all were condemned. The apostle charged all the Corinthians to speak the same thing and to be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion in order to avoid division among them (1:10-11). (*The Intrinsic Problem in the Lord's Recovery Today and Its Scriptural Remedy*, p. 46)

First Corinthians 1:10 says that there were divisions among the Corinthians. They did not all speak the same thing. If we all speak different things, we will be divided. Furthermore, the Corinthians were not attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion. To be attuned may be likened to the tuning of a piano. The piano will not give a harmonious sound if it is not tuned. We may be likened to a piano with the mind as one key, the emotion as another key, the will as another key, and the conscience as still another key. We may not be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion, so when Jesus comes to "play on us," we do not sound so well. Our sound is not harmonious, so we need the heavenly One to attune us. (*The Intrinsic View of the Body of Christ*, p. 94)

Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians has more problems in it than any other of his Epistles. There are at least ten problems in 1 Corinthians which all came out of the same source of disaccord, having different opinions and not speaking the same thing (1 Cor. 1:10). (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, p. 17)

Today we can be in one accord because we have only one vision and one view. We are all in this up-to-date, all-inheriting vision. We have only one viewpoint. We speak the

same thing with one heart, one mouth, one voice, and one tone, serving the Lord together. The result is a power that will become our strong morale and our impact. This is our strength. Once the Lord's recovery possesses this power, there will be the glory of increase and multiplication. Today our situation is not yet to that point; it is not yet at the peak. Although we do not have many major contentions, we do have some small complaints and criticisms. These things lower our morale. (*The Vision of the Age*, p. 54)

**8. THE ONE UNIQUE MINISTRY OF
THE NEW TESTAMENT
(ACTS 1:17, 25; 2 COR. 4:1; EPH. 4:12; 1 TIM. 1:12)**

Acts 1:17 – For he was numbered among us and was allotted his portion of ¹this ministry.

fn. 1:17¹ – Mentioned also in v. 25; referring to the ministry that bears the testimony of Jesus (v. 8). Though the apostles were twelve in number, their ministry was uniquely one — *this ministry*, a corporate ministry in the principle of the Body of Christ. All the apostles carried out the same ministry to bear the testimony not of any religion, doctrine, or practice but uniquely of the incarnated, resurrected, and ascended Jesus Christ, who is the Lord of all.

Acts 1:25 – To take the place of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.

2 Cor. 4:1 – Therefore having ²this ministry as we have been shown mercy, we do not lose heart.

fn. 4:1² – The ministry described in 2:12—3:18, that is, the unique ministry common to all the apostles of Christ. Although they are many, they have only one ministry — the ministry of the new covenant for the accomplishing of God's New Testament economy. All the apostles' works are to carry out this unique ministry, the ministering of Christ to people for the building up of His Body.

Eph. 4:12 – For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ³ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ.

fn. 4:12³ – The many gifted persons in the preceding verse have only one ministry, that is, to minister Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ, the church. This is the unique ministry in the New Testament economy (2 Cor. 4:1; 1 Tim. 1:12).

1 Tim. 1:12 – I give thanks to Him who empowers me, Christ Jesus our Lord, that He has counted me faithful, appointing me to the ministry.

I am burdened to stress this point of the oneness of the ministry because of all the divisions and confusions that have taken place in the past centuries among the Christians. The most damaging thing among the Christians is the divisions and the confusions. Moreover, all the divisions and confusions came out of one source, and that source is the different ministries. (*Elders' Training, Book 1: The Ministry of the New Testament*, p. 12)

DIVISIONS COMING OUT OF DIFFERENT MINISTRIES

Why is it that there were divisions even from the time while the apostles, including Paul and John, were still here on this earth? Divisions began to take place from the last part of the first century and have continued to take place until the present century. There have been divisions after divisions, which have caused all kinds of confusion. What is the reason for all these divisions? They all came about simply because of different so-called ministries. (*Elders' Training, Book 1: The Ministry of the New Testament*, p. 14)

There is only one ministry which always builds up, edifies, and perfects with no destruction at all. There is only one unique ministry that is justified, promoted, uplifted, and even glorified in the New Testament. In 1 Timothy 1:4 Paul went on to tell Timothy what those ones who were teaching differently should be occupied with—God's economy. Through my contact with some of you brothers, I became burdened and made a quick decision to call this gathering for this training. I do not like to see the recovery destroyed by different teachings. I realize the real situation. The Lord covers me. You may not know what I am talking about because you do not know all the factors. My contact with some of you impressed me with a terrible factor. I realized that you were going to teach things differently to cause trouble and to create division. There is only one ministry that ever builds up and that never destroys—this is God's economy. (*Elders' Training, Book 3: The Way to Carry Out the Vision*, pp. 43-44)

In their administration the churches might be different from one another in their locality, yet their testimony should still be one because they all are one Body under the one ministry and one move of the Lord. This is my burden in this chapter. I hope this could be impressed into you.

The reason why I am sharing this at this time is because in the Lord's recovery over the entire earth, there are signs coming out to indicate that there is a certain realization that the churches in different regions under certain kinds of work have the freedom to be different.... (*Elders' Training, Book 4: Other Crucial Matters Concerning the Practice of the Lord's Recovery*, pp. 30-31)

I must testify that I really treasure the Lord's one move through the one ministry to produce the one Body of Christ to bear the one testimony of Jesus, which is of God's New Testament economy. The more I consider this point, the more I feel that this is marvelous and excellent that we could have such a reality on the earth today. (*Elders' Training, Book 4: Other Crucial Matters Concerning the Practice of the Lord's Recovery*, p. 38)

Furthermore, we should drop the thought of separate regions among us. Perhaps a brother is raised up in a certain area. When he moves to another area, there should not be any problem, but there have been problems in the past. We have to drop our way of having separate regions in the Lord's work. It is even good for some who have been in a certain area for a long time to move to another area. In the Lord's recovery, there should only be one work in one move with one ministry for the building up of the one Body. (*Elders' Training, Book 9: The Eldership and the God-ordained Way (1)*, p. 17)

In the Lord's recovery there is only one ministry. If you say that the ministry is my ministry, you must say it with the realization that what I minister is the New Testament ministry. The New Testament ministry was commissioned by the Lord Jesus to His twelve Apostles and then to Paul and his co-workers. Brother Nee had a clear realization that there was only one ministry. The ministry of God's economy in the New Testament is uniquely one. All the serving ones, the ministers, should participate in the same ministry. (*The God-ordained Way to Practice the New Testament Economy*, p. 164)

All of us need to learn this sober lesson and be on the alert not to deviate from the ministry of the New Testament. If we carry out something new, something different, something other than this unique ministry, we will be through as far as the Lord's recovery is concerned. Actually, the Lord's recovery is to bring us back to the unique ministry of the New Testament. (*Elders' Training, Book 1: The Ministry of the New Testament*, p. 72)

The only way that can preserve us in the recovery is the unique ministry. If we say that we are in the recovery, yet we teach something so lightly, even in a concealed way, that is different from God's economy, we sow the seed that will grow up in division. Therefore, the only way that we can be preserved in the eternal oneness is to teach the same thing in God's economy. This kind of teaching is called the New Testament ministry, the ministry of the new covenant. The ministry of the new covenant is only to minister the Triune God, processed, to be dispensed into His chosen people as life and life supply to produce members of Christ to form the Body to express the Triune God. This is the New Testament economy. To teach anything, even good things and scriptural things, which is even a little bit apart from God's New Testament economy will still issue in division and that will be very much used by the subtle one, the evil one. We must, therefore, be on the alert. (*Elders' Training, Book 3: The Way to Carry Out the Vision*, pp. 48-49)

**9. THE ONE UNIQUE WORK WITH THE
ONE UNIQUE GOAL—THE BUILDING UP
OF THE BODY OF CHRIST
(EPH. 4:12; 1 COR. 15:58; 1 COR. 16:10)**

Eph. 4:12 – For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the ⁴building up of the Body of Christ.

fn. 4:12⁴ – According to the grammatical construction, the building up of the Body of Christ is the work of the ministry. Whatever the gifted persons in v. 11 do as the work of the ministry must be for the building up of the Body of Christ. However, this building up is not accomplished directly by the gifted ones but by the saints who have been perfected by the gifted ones.

1 Cor. 15:58 – Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

1 Cor. 16:10 – Now if Timothy comes, see that he is with you without fear; for he is working the work of the Lord, even as I am.

We should not have the thought that we can do a particular work according to our way in the recovery. We may be very gifted and have a large capacity to work out something. But what we work out may be the same as worldly people carrying out a certain enterprise. We have to realize that in the Lord's recovery there is only one work. (*A Brief Presentation of the Lord's Recovery*, p. 40)

Actually, in this one Body there is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile. Every kind of distinction has altogether disappeared in the Body. In the Body there are no regions and there are no Jews or Greeks.... (*Elders' Training, Book 4: Other Crucial Matters Concerning the Practice of the Lord's Recovery*, p. 28)

If we try to justify ourselves by what we do, this means nothing. Are we on this earth doing different works in

different regions and bearing different colors with different flavors? If we do this and we say we are for the Lord's recovery, then what kind of recovery is this? Honestly speaking, I want to tell you that no work is ours. The work in California is not mine, the work in Texas does not belong to the Texan brothers, and the work in the Northwest does not belong to the brothers there. The work is the unique work of the Lord (1 Cor. 15:58; 16:10). (*Elders' Training, Book 4: Other Crucial Matters Concerning the Practice of the Lord's Recovery*, p. 49)

The Way of Not Having One's Work Mingled with Others' Work

In the past there was the hidden factor of working in a way of not having one's work mingled with others' work. The New Testament unveils to us that Peter's work for the Lord, mainly in the Jewish land, and Paul's, mainly in the Gentile world, were all for the one Body of Christ, without any distinction or separation. Rather, they were one in the carrying out of God's New Testament economy. The effect of Peter's work was realized in Corinth (1 Cor. 1:12), and Paul did go to Jerusalem to fellowship with the apostles and elders there (Acts 15:2, 4; 21:17-20a). This kind of fellowship, like the blood circulation of our physical body, helps the Body of Christ in the circulation of the divine life. It mingles the different pieces of our work for the Lord's recovery into one move. If our work is void of this kind of fellowship, this may develop into another factor of division. (*The Present Turmoil in the Lord's Recovery and the Direction of the Lord's Move Today*, p. 19)

There is only one way. All spiritual things are one. There is one God, one Lord, one Spirit, one church, one Body, one testimony, one way, one flow, and one work. If you do not take this way, you will have no way to take. (*The Vision of the Age*, p. 51)

**10. SERVING IN THE ONE FLOW
OF THE LORD'S MOVE
(REV. 22:1; EZEK. 47:1; ACTS 15:39)**

Rev. 22:1 – And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

Ezek. 47:1 – Then He brought me back to the entrance of the house, and there was water flowing out from under the threshold of the house to the east (for the house faced east); and the water flowed down below the south side of the house, on the south side of the altar.

Acts 15:39 – And there was a ¹sharp contention, so that they separated from each other; and Barnabas, taking Mark along, sailed away to Cyprus.

fn. 15:39¹ – Barnabas and Paul were men who had given up their lives for the name of the Lord (v. 26), yet immediately after their victory in contending for the faith against the heresy concerning circumcision, there arose such a sharp contention between them concerning a relative of one of them that they separated from each other. The responsibility for the problem should rest with Barnabas, because after this incident he no longer appears in the divine record in Acts concerning the Lord's move in God's New Testament economy....

The Lord showed me that in the book of Acts the current of the Lord's work, the stream of the Holy Spirit, is one. He showed me that in the Acts there was only one line on the map, starting from Jerusalem and running to Antioch, from there to Asia, and from there to Europe. I saw that there never have been two streams, but always one. I said to the Lord: "Lord, I thank Thee. There can never be two streams of Your work in China. If there is something done for You or by You or through You in North China, it must first be that I go to Shanghai to be mingled together in the one stream, in order

that out from there something will flow forth to North China. Thus there will be one stream." (*The Divine Stream*, p. 14)

In 1934, after I had been in Shanghai close to four months, Brother Nee said to me, "Witness, we co-workers feel that you have to move your family to Shanghai so that we can work together. Bring this matter to the Lord, and see how the Lord will lead you." I took his word and brought this matter to the Lord. Then I saw that in the book of Acts there was only one flow, one current. It started from the throne of grace and went to Jerusalem. From Jerusalem this flow proceeded to Samaria and then to Antioch. From Antioch it turned westward to Asia Minor and Europe. The book of Acts shows that there was only one current of the Lord's move on earth. There is no record of any work which was outside of this current. When Barnabas separated himself from Paul (Acts 15:39-41), there was no more record of his work in Acts. After this incident, he no longer appears in the divine narration in Acts of the Lord's move in God's New Testament economy.

The Lord impressed me that the current, the flow, of the Lord's work in China should be one. If the Lord was to do something in the north, I would have to jump into the flow at Shanghai in the south. Then eventually the flow would proceed to the north from Shanghai. Based on this revelation, I made the decision to go to Shanghai to work with Brother Nee. (*The History of the Church and the Local Churches*, pp. 136-137)

The one expression of Christ is in the unique oneness of the Spirit of the unique Body of Christ (Eph. 4:3-4). Without the Spirit, we cannot have the oneness. This one expression is also in the unique fellowship of the unique Spirit, participating in the unique flow of the Triune God (1 John 1:3; 2 Cor. 13:14). There is only one Triune God and only one fellowship, one flow of the Spirit. The one expression of Christ is in the unique move of the unique God for the unique accomplishment of His unique economy (Eph. 1:10; 1 Tim. 1:4b) and in the unique blending in the unique life of Christ for His unique testimony in the universe (1 Cor. 12:24). Everything must be unique. If only the group of churches in your district are blended together, that is not the unique

blending. That is a “sect blending.” (*Ten Great Critical Ones for the Building Up of the Body of Christ*, p. 60)

The Lord has opened my eyes to realize as I have told you in the past, that in the Bible, especially in the New Testament, there is only one current flowing from the throne (Rev. 22:1). At Pentecost the current began to flow out of Jerusalem through Judea, through Samaria, and went up to Antioch. There the flow turned to Asia Minor, to eastern Europe, to Rome, and probably even to Spain, which by that time was considered as the uttermost part of the earth. There was only one flow. You cannot see two flows in the book of Acts.

Barnabas was an excellent brother who actually brought Saul of Tarsus into his ministry (Acts 11:25-26). At the beginning Barnabas took the lead. On the way of their first journey, however, the Spirit records that Paul began to take the lead, and the Spirit began to refer to Saul as Paul (Acts 13:9). The change of name may indicate the change in life. From this point on Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, took the lead in the apostolic ministry all the way, and Barnabas accepted that. Barnabas was one with Paul to go to Jerusalem to get the solution regarding the trouble of circumcision. Right after that solution was made as a decree to all the churches, there was a contention between Barnabas and Saul (Acts 15:35-39). This contention was not about something great but about something small. They did not separate from each other because of a different opinion concerning the faith or concerning the headship of Christ. The split between them was concerning a small, personal, intimate thing. Barnabas wanted to take his cousin Mark along with him on their journey and Paul said no. To us that is a small thing, but after Barnabas left Paul with Mark there is no more record of him in the Lord’s move in the book of Acts. The reason for this is because the Lord would only care for one flow.

I saw this matter clearly in 1933 when Brother Nee asked me to join him in the work in Shanghai. At that time I was doing a work in north China that was quite prevailing and even promising to me in teaching the Bible. Because my eyes were opened, I told the Lord that I would go to Shanghai to join Brother Nee and the work. I realized that the Lord’s flow, the Lord’s current, on this earth has been only one. If north

China were to be taken by the Lord, He would surely do it through the same flow. I had to jump into this current, to be one with this current to let the Lord flow. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, pp. 84-85)

Brother Lee stressed all of the above ten scriptural principles—the uniqueness of the teaching and fellowship of the apostles, the apostles teaching the same thing in every church, the Lord's speaking to one church being His speaking to all of the churches, the oneness of the Body of Christ, the one accord, thinking the same thing, speaking the same thing, the one ministry of the New Testament, the one work with one goal, and serving in the one flow of the Lord's move—because he realized that they are crucial factors in preserving the oneness in the Lord's recovery.

We always need to remember that we are in the Lord's recovery and that His recovery is unique. There is not another recovery, just as there is not another Body of Christ or another New Testament. The fellowship of the apostles is the fellowship for this unique recovery of the Lord....

We should not have the thought that we can do a particular work according to our way in the recovery. We may be very gifted and have a large capacity to work out something. But what we work out may be the same as worldly people carrying out a certain enterprise. We have to realize that in the Lord's recovery there is only one work.

When I came into the recovery, I realized what the recovery was and that it was uniquely one. The one who brought the recovery to China among us was Brother Watchman Nee. If I would not have taken the way of the recovery, I could have had a work in northern China, but I gave that up. I fully realized that the Lord has only one Body, one work, one Bible, one revelation, and one current, one flow, in one fellowship. At that time Brother Nee was being used by the Lord. I never tried to speak anything different from his teaching. This does not mean that I did not have any other teachings, but my speaking always followed Brother Nee's speaking in order to keep the unique fellowship in the Lord's unique recovery. I felt that it was a glory to participate in the Lord's recovery in such a subjective way with Brother Nee. I thank the Lord that He had mercy upon me in helping me to have the best choice. In

Moses' blessing in Deuteronomy 33, there is the term "the choicest things" (vv. 13-16). I realize that the Lord has been giving me the choicest things throughout my years in the recovery. This is due to His mercy in placing me and keeping me all the time in His recovery. As long as we are preserved in the Lord's way, we are preserved in the oneness in the unique fellowship. There is only one Lord, one Body, one Bible, one divine revelation, one speaking, one recovery, one fellowship, and one way to practice the recovery. (*Elders' Training, Book 10: The Eldership and the God-ordained Way* (2), pp. 117-118)

