

The local churches of the Lord's recovery "began in 1962" in the U. S. and in 2012 reached their 50<sup>th</sup> year. I came into the church life in 1971 and have testified of my positive experience in and among the churches.

But there happens to be "another side of the story" to the positive things that must be addressed, as Witness Lee admits to church leaders in his final message. He urged leaders, especially those who succeeded him, to study our history and to learn from it.

### Witness Lee's Final Message

"[Concerning the matter of receiving people according to God] we coworkers in every place all need to learn, the responsible ones in every place all need to learn, the brothers and sisters in every place all need to learn, too many things cause us to learn. **We all made mistakes in this matter in the past, I myself included;** I confess that, I had, for this matter and before the Lord, a very painful repentance. I am really sorry...toward the Body of Christ, also really sorry, not only toward the brothers and sisters among us, but even to those in the denominations, also really sorry toward them...(a long pause)

You must bring this message back, read it once, read it twice, and come together to fellowship with one another. Then **you will see that, we, in the past, were wrong!** Of course, denominations are wrong. The sectarianism is what God condemns the most. However, the Lord still hopes that all His children... do not have such condemnation. To **understand and analyze** this needs a fair bit of effort. Again I say a few of you must come together through pray-reading, studying, reciting, and prophesying. We must learn from **our past mistakes** to receive people according to God's Son, undeviating... not deviating a bit from the path..." (a translation, Chinese New Year conf., Feb. 1997)

Although the leaders did not follow his exhortation, I did do such a study and delivered early results to Dan Towle, encouraging fellowship among brothers over my findings.

"Dear Dan, (January 28, **2001**)

I have written a little book for the sake of fellowship, mainly with leading ones, concerning our past sixteen-year history of the new way. I think this period of time in the Lord's recovery warrants our careful study of both the benefits and the costs to the church in what was such a highly controversial move among us in those beginning years.

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

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

However, what I meant to be an earnest appeal to leaders in a spirit of fellowship was instead taken by them as an attack. To my great surprise I was placed in a discipline mode in my locality, until I could repent for the booklet I wrote. I found nothing to repent for, but did apologize for upsetting those leaders in my locality who were bothered by the writing, and suggested to them that we put the matter aside and just go on in the church life. Instead of receiving me and this step of submission to them, a case was built against me as one who opposes God's government; and I was kept in an isolated mode which served only to inspire me to do much more research and work that more than confirmed my initial booklet.

In the 12 years since then, I have put out many writings that address our past mistakes and I have presented my findings to brothers, especially asking for fellowship with those in Anaheim, who have only proved again and again that they are not concerned for examining past mistakes and behavior in the leadership. **After the first 3 years that my requests for fellowship were ignored, I began placing my findings on the internet.**

Up till today I still know of no respectable attempt by any leader to refute my writings. Certainly, there has been no work done commensurate to mine to disprove what I have said regarding our appalling record of failure since 1974 of receiving others in the church life according to Christ alone – nothing else.

But if I am as LSM leaders say, “a man of death”, “a wolf among lambs”, the “embodiment of the Accuser of the brethren”, and more, why aren't clear, cogent public announcements made about me to warn the churches? “[I expect Steve Isitt will write evil things until he dies and someone else will take his place](#)” - What evil things is Ron Kangas referring to? “[It seems this will never end](#)”, he adds. My writing does not end because the reckless speaking of the leaders does not end, which began when three books emerged excoriating *former leaders*, and obliterated their standing among us. The adversarial position by LSM was set from that time forth against former leaders, and also against any righteous appeal and honest challenge to the seeming inviolable borders of LSM publications.

1989 Ron Kangas    1989 Andrew Yu    1990 Witness Lee

Those three books by LSM conceal the facts of division that should be brought into the light. If brothers are willing to come together to address the inveracity of those books, then progress will be made toward ending my writings and the need for announcing the truth on an internet forum. Such announcements could and should be made by leaders.

As I wrote in 2010, [although there is compelling reason for open, honest, mutual fellowship with church leaders, the opportunity to meet with them is closed. The concept in the leadership is that no one in the churches should make an issue of anything or care for right and wrong, which has worked well to keep church members un-informed and the truth suppressed. Thus, announcing serious concerns goes to an open forum.](#)

## **Conclusion**

The expectation and hope in those overseeing my case is that I would repent and line up with their concepts that do not entail the need to examine our past, a thinking that is different than Brother Lee's own word that there is such a need.

But this word, "we coworkers, in every place all need to learn, the responsible ones in every place all need to learn, the brothers and sisters in every place all need to learn", leaves brothers with a sense of mystery as to what Brother Lee was referring to. He was not specific, but he at least gave the charge to others to study and to learn, that we could "see that we in the past were wrong!"

"Facts are stubborn things" and should prevail, not politics and the revision of history by church leaders, used to escape scrutiny and their need to scrutinize their own behavior. Doing so would bring them to offer genuine public repentance for the first time in 50 years of local church history in the U.S.

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