What Deputy Authority is Not

The purpose of this writing is to show what authentic spiritual authority is *not*, rather than to talk much about what it is. For, once we see what it is not; we are in a better position to clearly understand, and appreciate, what genuine spiritual authority is.

In the aftermath of the 1980s turmoil in the Local Churches, Andrew Yu wrote a book to explain what deputy authority is. In its most basic definition, a deputy authority of God is one who *represents* God, and he does so at times by *exercising* God's authority among men, *according to* God's thought and *according to* God's own action. In the first two chapters of Yu's book, he points to the Scriptures that reveal examples of deputy authority and teachings on the subject. Then in the third and final chapter, he ascribes blame in the most severe fashion imaginable to former leaders for their alleged rebellion against Witness Lee, who had been the recognized leader in the Local Churches for three decades.

In an atmosphere of chaos and clouds in the late 1980s, Yu formed his opinions and then came forward in 1989 making his seismic judgments on men that he believed had rebelled against God's authority, likening them to Old Testament leaders, Korah, Dathan, and Abihu, who were swallowed up by the earth and delivered into Sheol in God's judgment upon them for rebelling against God's delegated deputy authority, Moses.

www.ourneedtoexamineourselves.com/AndrewChapterThree.pdf

Yet, Andrew Yu was wrong in his assessments. The men he judged had not rebelled against God's authority. Rather, they had stood firm to represent it in their respective local churches in the face of a wide-sweeping movement to usurp that authority. Bill Mallon, John So, John Ingalls all experienced the usurpation, prior to their quarantines in 1990. Their testimonies are told in detail in

www.DeviatingfromthePathintheLordsRecovery.com

Signs of Not Having Spiritual Authority - *DCP*

The first problem in Andrew Yu's charges of "rebellion" is that he showed no concern for the actual spiritual state of Witness Lee. However, others surely did and discerned, with good reason, that he had turned from the right path and that his spiritual authority had waned. In a book recently printed by DCP and fully endorsed by LSM, *Properly Discerning Spiritual Authority To Rightly Follow The Lord*, there is a list of the signs that describe a person who does not have spiritual authority.

They did not realize they were describing Witness Lee during the late 1980s turmoil. The book says, ***"Just as there are signs that a person is an authority, there are signs that indicate that a person is not an authority".*** The first two signs mentioned are Asserting One's Own Authority and Practicing Self-Vindication.

Brother Lee was the personification of both these signs; and there were other signs as well that he manifested, so that conscientious ones had to exercise to ***"properly discern spiritual authority to rightly follow the Lord,"*** and many decided they should no longer follow Witness Lee.

Ascribing blame on such ones for being "rebellious" is untenable. Let us have an overview of the facts and discuss the points of concern about Witness Lee that turned many away from him in the Local Churches from 1985-1989, and then consider if Yu's book has merit, or if it is a book full of false witness.

1. Asserting One's Own Authority

The blending brothers' book states, "Whenever someone asserts his own authority, that is a sign of a lack of genuine spiritual authority."

Then they offer these strong quotes by Watchman Nee : It is a most ugly thing for anyone to speak for his authority in order to establish authority for himself. (p. 46)

> I dislike and abhor those who say, "I am God's appointed authority. (p. 46)
>
> I hope that no one stands up to claim that he is an authority. (p. 47)
>
> Nothing is more unsightly than a person who struggles to be an authority. It is the most ugly thing for a person to try to control others in an outward way.(p. 47)

In a conference in Pasadena, CA in 1988, the elders gathered for a meeting with Witness Lee. There he asserted, among other things, "You cannot deny the fact that the Lord's oracle has been with me. I claim this at the face of Jesus Christ. The deputy authority of God is in His oracle; so whoever speaks for God has His deputy authority."

ourneedtoexamineourselves.com /PasadenaConferenceandEldersMeeting1988.pdf

2. Practicing Self -Vindication

> He referred to the title he has used for the Holy Spirit – "the all-inclusive Spirit of Christ as the consummation of the processed Triune God" – and asked who

> made such a title. Webster? he asked. Then he answered his own question, "That Lee! Lee has to be famous! Lee! Lee! Lee must have the credit! And if you listen to me, you do not listen to Lee, you listen to the very God in His oracle spoken by me." A little later in his message he said, "Going with God's oracle, surely there is the deputy authority of God in this oracle. Whoever speaks for God, he surely has certain divine authority. I'm claiming this for Lee!" – *John Ingalls* 1990

Long-time elder, John Ingalls, then posed the question, "Now I would ask, are these the words of a sober man, the words of a spiritual man, a man of God? To me it is shocking to hear him speak this way, for he has indeed been used of God in the past to speak His Word. But to vindicate oneself so blatantly and boastfully indicates to me a fall. May the Lord have mercy on us all." - *John Ingalls* 1990

In their book, the blending brothers own statement reads, "Whenever a person vindicates himself, that one demonstrates he is not an authority." (p. 48) They provide, then, strong Nee quotes again:

> We must never speak one word to vindicate our own authority. (p. 48) It is a most ugly thing for anyone to speak for his authority in order to establish authority for himself. (p. 48) Authority and vindication are incompatible...those who vindicate themselves have no authority whatsoever. (p. 48) Whenever a person vindicates himself, he loses his authority. (p. 48)

We see, then, that "asserting one's own authority" and "practicing self-vindication" is what genuine spiritual authority is NOT.

The Footnote The blending brothers are quite aware of the assertions of authority and the self- vindication statements made by Witness Lee in the days of turmoil and, further, that such speaking and behavior contributed greatly to the turmoil. So they have provided a footnote in their book (p. 48) on "discerning spiritual authority" that refers to the apostle Paul's vindication he made to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 12.) In that verse they say Paul was not vindicating himself; rather, he was defending his ministry for the Corinthians sake. This would indicate that Witness Lee's vindicating speaking might be considered also to be in the defense of the ministry. However, there is marked distinction between the two leaders and their defense of the ministry. **The Major Difference** Paul's ministry was *for* the churches, *without* the churches needing to be *for* his ministry. Witness Lee's ministry was *for* the churches, but *with* the expectation that the churches would be *for* his ministry. This major difference should not be underestimated; it led to monumental problems in the local churches.

3. Bearing False Witness

With the focus now on a man and a ministry, Witness Lee became a factor of oneness in the local churches; and, he became a factor of division, as well. Those who could no longer conscientiously follow Witness Lee were said to be in "rebellion" to the leadership of Lee, and therefore, in "rebellion" to God. This led to denunciations of these men, and to their "quarantines". It also led to the bearing of false witness concerning them, which has continued to this day. There are over seventeen sources in Living Stream literature that refer to the "rebellion" and to the "rebellious" ones. Yet, these speakings are false. The chief source available is Witness Lee's *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* that summed up the reasons for the "quarantines" of Bill Mallon, John So, and John Ingalls. In his book, Lee either withholds pertinent information or distorts the truth when he does speak, even appearing to outright lie. A prime example of his disingenuous reporting is concerning Bill Mallon.

Bill Mallon had shared his experiences with John Ingalls, as John records:

> In the following month, September 1987, due to my health, and also due to a burden to fellowship with Bill Mallon, a co-worker with whom I had an intimate relationship for twenty- four years, I decided to go to Atlanta, Georgia, for a two-week period of rest and fellowship. Bill had recently passed through sore trials and sufferings [with LSM--*ed*], and I hoped that our fellowship could render comfort and encouragement to him. We drove up to the nearby mountains and had a number of days opening to one another.
>
> At that time I was entirely supportive to Brother Witness Lee and his ministry and work related to the "new way" that was being promoted. I therefore did my utmost to persuade Bill to visit Taiwan and participate in the full-time training. I felt that this might be the answer to his need. On four separate occasions during those days I attempted to convince Bill to take this step, but he steadfastly refused, affirming that he was not free or clear to do that.

"During that time Bill explained to me how he had suffered in various ways by events that had transpired in recent months in the churches and in the work in the Southeast. I came away from our talks with one deep impression: Philip Lee was becoming increasingly involved in spiritual things concerning the Lord's work, the churches, the elders, and the co- workers. I had already noticed this in Irving, Texas the preceding month. This, I felt, was completely untenable, incompatible with his position and person, and intolerable. Philip Lee was employed by his father, Witness Lee, to be the business manager of his office and was reportedly instructed to deal only with business affairs. He was totally unqualified both in position and character to touch spiritual matters related to the work of the Lord and the churches. I became alarmed and began to fear for the Lord's testimony. With this burden I determined upon my return to Anaheim to fellowship

with Godfrey Otuteye, who then was involved in coordinating with Philip Lee in the Living Stream Office. I wanted to frankly ask him about Philip's role, expressing my alarm and concern." Assuredly, bearing false witness against brothers in Christ is what genuine spiritual authority is NOT.

For Mallon's classic letter to Lee and Lee's disingenuous response to it see

www.ourneedtoexamineourselves.com/MallonLetterLeeResponse.pdf
See *Deviating from the Path in the Lord's Recovery.com* for a point by point refutation of *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion.*

4. Misrepresenting God

Once falsehoods are reported about God's people, misrepresentations follow ever after. In such cases, not only are certain people being misrepresented, but God Himself is also.

It is quite strange that a leader of God's people would call his co-workers *rebellious,* and do so continuously over a several year period. Yet, this is what Witness Lee did, and oftentimes in anger. This spirit of condemnation permeated the leadership in the local churches and still prevails today, even though the *spirit is wrong,* the *assessment* of the condemned brothers *is wrong*, and the *impression given* the saints in the churches *is wrong* that they have been told the truth and that God's mind has been represented.

Moses' Wrong Spirit - Spiritual Authority, W. Nee, p148

"And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said unto them, hear now, ye rebels; shall we bring you forth water out of this rock?" (Num. 20:2-3, 7-13)

Delegated Authority Ought to Sanctify God

After over thirty years of wandering in the wilderness, the people again forgot the lessons they had learned through their rebellion. When they came to the wilderness of Zin and found no water, they once again contended with Moses and Aaron, uttering many unpleasant words. God, nevertheless, was not angry with them. He merely commanded to take the rod and speak to the rock that it might give water. Moses took the rod, a symbol of God's authority, in his hands. However, he was so provoked by anger that he called the people rebels and then, ignoring God's command, he smote the rock twice with the rod. He erred, yet water still flowed out of the rock.

Because of this, God reprimanded His servant, saying, "You did not believe in me, to sanctify me in the eyes of the people of Israel." It meant that Moses had not set God apart from himself and Aaron. He had misrepresented God, for it was of himself that he had a wrong spirit and had thus spoken wrongly and smote wrongly. God seemingly remonstrated with Moses on this wise: "I saw my people and was willing to give them to drink, so why did you scold them?" God did not reprove the people but Moses did. And so he gave the people of Israel a wrong impression about God, as though God was fierce, reviling, and lacking in grace.

To be an authority is to represent God. Whether it be wrath or mercy, an authority must always be like God. If, in such a position, we do anything wrong, we should acknowledge it as our own doing. We ought never to draw God into our own fault.

5. Because Moses misrepresented God, he had to be judged. If anyone in authority misrepresents God and does not confess it, God will have to vindicate Himself.

Thus, he showed the children of Israel that this was Moses' doing, not His. True, the people had murmured and perhaps they had been rebellious, nevertheless, God had not judged them. How could Moses be so impatient as to judge them before God did, and to speak angrily without restraint? It was *his* attitude and *his* wrath, but most likely the people of Israel got the impression that it was God's attitude and God's wrath. Hence, God had to acquit Himself by separating Himself from Moses and Aaron.

Let us be careful that we never draw God into human failure by giving the wrong impression that He is expressing His attitude through us. In case such a wrong impression is made, God will have to absolve Himself. A delegated authority is supposed to manage affairs for God. If we should become angry, let us confess that this anger comes from us and not from God. The two must be separated. It is a dreadful thing to mix up one's own doing with God's.

We are too prone to err. Accordingly, whenever we do err, let us immediately acknowledge that it is our own error. Then we will not misrepresent God and give the evil one any ground, nor will we fall into darkness. If we confess first, then God will not need to defend Himself and we shall be delivered from falling into His governmental hand.

As a consequence of the above incident, God announced that both Moses and Aaron were not to be allowed to enter Canaan. If a person should speak carelessly and do something in a way which does not sanctify God, then, from the moment God has to step in to justify Himself there is no way left to ask for forgiveness. We must fear and tremble when we are managing the affairs of God. Let us beware lest we grow careless and reckless as we become older."

An authority figure that misrepresents God is what genuine spiritual authority is NOT.

5. Mishandling Financial Matters

The late James Barber was one of the most prominent elders in the Lord's recovery, and was originally one of the elders in Los Angeles with John Ingalls, Bill Mallon, Samuel Chang, Francis Ball, and Don Hardy. His son, Brent Barber, gives insight into the problem of Witness Lee, his money-making schemes, and his duplicity that caused great suffering to churches and saints.

Brent Barber: "Lee was guilty of many botched financial schemes that went sour. They were promoted in meetings. The "church" always strongly suggested that no one should seek any reimbursement. Some were incensed enough to get receipts. Most were intimidated into taking a big bath. There were several who lost everything in these deals that were sold in the meetings. Anyone remember the tennis racket factory? That one is hilarious. I think it was called 'Delta. Get this. A hurricane destroyed the factory after Lee had gotten everyone to shell out hundreds of thousands of dollars. I remember this one well because we had to cart around dozens of boxes of unsellable tennis rackets every time we moved...

On a strictly business level, they were simply bad investments. You play, you pay. But there was a whole different dimension to these investments in that they were being personally pitched by Lee and there was a suggestion this was for the Lord's way. One "elder" in OKC was still paying for his investment in Daystar in the late 80's, about 15 years after it quickly went belly up. He took out a big loan and was in hock ever since. Despite being an 'elder,' whenever he talked about that episode, he got red under the collar. A lot of people got burned.

My mom has told me about suits, jewelry, tons of import stuff. One time when she was washing the cup for the Lord's Table she happened to walk into the kitchen where Lee was all wound up in a sales pitch to someone. She was shocked

because he was a totally different person. According to her, he was unrecognizable and had a different personality when he was discussing money. When Lee saw her, he jumped a foot into the air and shut up."

Daystar Enterprise

Doug Krieger
Testimony

I think that the summer of 1970 and 1971 marked the high-water mark of "The Lord's Recovery" - but the seeds of disintegration were already growing in its midst...

The seeds of disintegration to which I allude stemmed from a little known meeting held among W.L., myself and Frank DeLuna outside of Eldon Hall--here, Frank shared with W.L. that his family (I will not disclose who) had received a significant inheritance and Frank asked Lee what to do with it. W.L. immediately seized upon the opportunity so extended and suggested that it could be "invested" and thereby spread the work and secure meeting halls, etc.- thus began the debacle known as the Daystar Enterprise and its spurious connection with a little known sister enterprise in the Far East known as "Overseas Christian Stewards" - an enterprise which Sal Benoit later exposed in the infamous "secret tape" heard around the world--a tape later carried into the presence of the IRS to launch an investigation of the enterprise. Little did Frank and I know that Lee would take Frank's money and the investments of scores of saints and catapult these investments into Lee's own private financial empire which later grew into the tens of millions of dollars. Thus, when W. L. and son Timothy were "forced to come to America" in the early '60s at the Seattle World's Fair selling Hong Kong suits to pay off growing debts in the Far East--and later encouraged the likes of Paul Border, Billy Moore and myself to sell those crazy suits (which if you pulled on a string sticking out of one, the entire thing came apart--time to laugh here, sad but true)--Lee's "dirty little capitalist secret" would remain an on- going enterprise that some day fabricated not only Daystars but tennis rackets and the most bizarre items--whatever the dumb Americans would buy.

I know I digress here - but one Samuel Chang in 1963 informed me that Lee was the spiritual side of Watchman Nee and that he was the "financial side." During Lee's Daystar enterprise and the stupidity of the "native way" of selling these exceedingly expensive dinosaurs "door to door in rich American neighborhoods" (in order to cut marketing costs) Chang came up with the bizarre idea of natural vitamins and minerals. The Churches, like Boston, were given a front row marketing presentation by Chang himself who set out hundreds of little cups full of this snake oil and attempted both to sell it to the saints and to have the saints market it--man, talk about Kool Aide! All this is so sad--but I share this to clearly let you know that "mingling" capitalism with Christianity - God with mammon - was at the heart and soul of the L.C. from its commencement--concealed until Lee saw an opportunity to advance his cause and a way to fund his empire and to secure a massive financial base for his family members--even his

"charging for the ministry" and the "trainings" was an idea concocted by him and shared with the elders in Washington, D.C. and me in a car on the way to the meeting hall in D.C. - Lee said that smart Christians like so-and-so were doing it and "so should we!" Thus, charging for the ministry became the way of the Local Church of Witness Lee--whereas prior to this time during the early days of the 1970s such a practice was non-existent--but Lee decided to follow the way of Christianity, a Christianity he resented and blamed as the Great Babylon!

A Pamphlet about Daystar Distributed

The saints in Anaheim and elsewhere began receiving a pamphlet in 1988 that included a report about the Daystar case that had occurred years before. Brother Lee was angry about this, but still didn't use the opportunity to admit any wrongs, let alone repent for Daystar being "a cancer to the Body", which he admitted to at least two brothers on separate occasions. This portion of the pamphlet, *Reconsideration of the Vi*sion, is kept in its original format. Mr. X is Witness Lee. Mr. M is Max Rapoport.

I. THE DAYSTAR CASE

We will refer to the most questionable person in this writing as Mr. X. This Mr. X in his messages hints that he is as the Apostle Paul in this age and the only successor to Watchman Nee. However, his practice contradicts his message and does not match what he states. Daystar is a conspicuous example.

A. THE FACT OF THE PRACTICE OF MR. X

1. To finance his oldest son's business ventures, he utilized the contributions of God's people to invest their money under the guise of the need of the work of the Lord. This was not supported in the Far East because they knew of the unstable and unreliable character of Mr. X's son [First son, Timothy. They also knew of the previous business failures involving him and Witness Lee--*ED*]. Also this would bring the local churches there into financial chaos. To our amazement, the elders of the churches in the United States openly persuaded the believers there to invest and told them they would be "killing two birds with one stone" - giving to the Lord and gaining financially. Even at the Lord's table, announcements and requests were made for this business. Mr. X had special meetings where he used the blackboard to point out the figures of halls to be built and moneys gained by investing in this business.
2. Mr. X arranged to have his eldest son as president of this company. Later the son mentioned to some saints that 2.5 million U. S. dollars disappeared

from his hands.

3. Many saints were pressured to give their life savings to this business.

4. At that time the Lord sovereignly intervened in causing an oil crisis which forced large vehicles as motor homes to be unwanted in the market and this forced the business to go bankrupt.

5. Mr. X then asked one of his co-workers, a Mr. M, to persuade the saints, who invested their money to consider the investment as a donation and not seek to be reimbursed. Many were stumbled at this and left the churches, and others who continued to demand reimbursement were ignored by Mr. X.

6. This hindered the expansion of the Lord's Recovery in the States and caused Mr. M to rise to the "top" position among the churches. [Migrations never did pick up after that; they are hindered still today. The spirit and atmosphere of migration disappeared--*ed*.]

B. THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE

1. Although Acts 18 tells us that Paul, Aquilla and Priscilla engaged in tent making for a living, this was a personal matter and they did not involve or pressure the churches to participate. In the entire Bible there is no instance of any apostle engaging in any business venture with churches or saints.

2. On the contrary, Nehemiah 13:8-9 tells us that Nehemiah cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber and commanded that the house of God be cleansed.

3. Matt. 21 shows us how the Lord cast out all those who were selling and buying in the temple, and He overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who were selling.

C. BROTHER NEE'S VISION IN RECONSIDERATION OF THE WORK.

1. Since Brother Nee does not approve of so-called "Faith Mission", he would never involve saints in any business venture to raise funds for the work. He states, "Although the 'Faith Mission' is a corporate way to trust in God, it is better to trust Him as an individual than corporately. In Scripture we see individual faith, but we see no such thing as corporate faith" (Chapter 9). The "Faith Mission" could only affect a coworker's individual faith, but "Daystar" damaged churches

and brought saints into serving mammon.

2. Nee states, "To test who is a false apostle, money is the biggest trial. Whoever is not clear regarding money or shows greediness, must be a false apostle. The Apostle Paul in helping saints in Jerusalem sent two saints with money. How honest and upright he is! Whenever money touches us and our work is influenced by money, then we have the possibility of becoming a false apostle, even though we started out as a true apostle". (Chapter 2) Compare this upright attitude with Mr. X's appointment of his own son as president of the Company. This puts him in a position that invites suspicion.

An authority with such a record as this is what genuine deputy authority is NOT.

Andrew Yu's Book

Andrew Yu depicted Witness Lee as a proper spiritual authority for others to respect and submit to, while ignoring the signs that he no longer had true spiritual authority. What ground then did he have to condemn the men in his book for not obeying Lee and following him in a movement that he alone had organized and orchestrated? His claims of Witness Lee's deputy authority and of the rebellion of his co-workers against him are groundless since a true representation of God's authority was no longer with Lee, and he had deviated from the right path in his leadership in the local churches.

As John Ingalls shared in the conclusion of his book, *Speaking the Truth in Love*, 1990,

> We are also widely and vociferously accused of being rebellious and of fermenting and fomenting rebellion. This also is an extremely serious charge, and one which I feel obliged to respond to and deny. Against whom, I would ask, are we rebelling? And what was our act of rebellion? For my part I have always sought to have a good conscience before God and man. To remain silent in a situation of departure and degradation, or to withdraw into "judicious obscurity", as some have done, would have been for me unconscionable. Not to speak out or to refrain from warranted action would have been for me a form of rebellion against the Lord's inner speaking and urging. My object was to follow the Lord, obey His Word, and practice the truth, fearing only Him. Perhaps I fell short in some particulars. Apart from that, however, "I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord" (I Cor. 4:4). I therefore consider the charge of rebellion to be totally inappropriate and unfounded. Is it rebellious to voice one's concerns, care for one's conscience, obey the Lord's Word, and follow the inner anointing? This is what I did and sought to do, as this account testifies. Was I ambitious for position or did I seek to raise a following for myself, as some say? The Lord knows that this is far from the truth. I can only consider the charges of rebellion

and conspiracy to be a form of character assassination, and a means to cover one's own track.

A state of enormous confusion and misunderstanding exists at the present time due to the widespread distortion of the facts and our intentions. Therefore in publishing this record we have felt constrained to chronicle the events just as the Bible chronicles events, recounting both the good and the bad. When this is done everyone is inevitably exposed. The Lord does not let anyone off the hook. How good it is to be exposed that we may repent and not live the rest of our lives in darkness or error! We are very thankful to the Lord for His abundant mercy in enlightening our inner being, in disclosing our failures and errors of the past, and in giving us a new beginning. May He do the same for every reader. We pray that He will use this account to that end.