

LSM's QUARANTINE OF TITUS CHU—DOES THE EVIDENCE JUSTIFY THE VERDICT?*

The "blended co-workers" affiliated with Living Stream Ministry (LSM)¹ recently issued a proclamation calling for the quarantine of Brother Titus Chu. This declaration, entitled "A Warning to all the Saints and all the Churches...concerning Titus Chu..."² makes serious accusations and calls for drastic action—the quarantine of Titus Chu. Simultaneously, the LSM affiliate, Defense & Confirmation Project (DCP) issued, "Different Teachings and Dissenting Views of Titus Chu..."³ The latter document presents the "evidence" to substantiate the "judgment" pronounced in LSM's "Warning Letter"—Quarantine. Both were presented at LSM's Elders' Training⁴ in Whistler, BC October 7, 2006. Here we ask: Does the evidence justify the verdict?

The following pages examine 24 of the numerous allegations in LSM's "Warning Letter" and evaluate the supporting DCP "evidence." We ask: (1) Has the "evidence" been presented accurately, fairly and in an unbiased manner? (2) Does the "evidence" support the judgment, does it justify the verdict? We examine each **ALLEGATION** and provide a **RESPONSE**. To briefly summarize, we conclude the following:

- The allegation that Titus is divisive and dissenting is based upon his "teaching differently" measured relative to the current teaching of the "blended co-workers" (e.g. concerning 'one publication,' 'one Minister of the Age,' one 'wise Master Builder,' one global band of workers, the recovery equals the Body etc.) This standard of evaluation is erroneous. Applying the wrong standard leads to an erroneous judgment, an unjustified verdict.
- When evaluated against the standard of Scripture, Titus Chu and his co-workers are NOT teaching differently from the Apostles' teaching concerning God's economy. This criterion, using the Bible as our only standard, is the proper metric for evaluating who is "teaching differently." Titus & co. are not teaching differently from the Bible, the Apostles' teaching nor from a balanced reception of the ministries of both Brother Nee and Brother Lee.
- Both LSM's "Warning Letter" and the DCP document fail to offer convincing evidence for their numerous allegations. Serious accusations are made against Titus & co. Yet, for at least eight allegations, not a single shred of supporting evidence is presented to support the charges. These are purely unsubstantiated allegations. In other cases, the writings of Titus & co. have been misrepresented, quoted selectively or given biased interpretations aimed at prejudicing readers. Frequently relevant information has been omitted and withheld. This renders impossible a full and fair evaluation based on all relevant information.
- A careful comparison of the final version of DCP's "Different Teachings..." with an earlier "Draft Version" inadvertently released, suggests the evidence has been manipulated and skewed to generate a biased impression and prejudice the reader towards condemning Titus. The DCP authors have worked closely with lawyers handling LSM's litigation with Harvest House publishers. They are aware of the standards of proof required by the law courts. DCP's "evidence" falls far short of these standards of proof. It is biased, sloppy and incomplete.
- The divergent views of Titus & co. and the "blended co-workers" do not relate to essential items of "the faith." Nor are they core items of the recovery as taught by Brothers Nee and Lee. Rather, these differing views relate to non-essentials, items not clearly taught in Scripture (e.g. 'one publication,' one 'Minister of the Age' etc.). Therefore, there is no Scriptural basis to justify quarantine. Consequently, we recommend the saints and churches reject LSM's "Warning Letter" and its call for quarantine.
- Quarantine is the next logical step in the "blended co-workers'" implementation of their 'One Publication' policy. One publication is not a tenet of Scripture. Rather it is based upon the "blended co-workers'" system of teaching concerning: (1) One unique 'Minister of the Age,' recently Bro. Witness Lee, (2) One unique 'master builder, the acting God' who supervises God's building work world-wide, (3) One unique 'continuation' of the Minister of the Age—Master Builder i.e. the "blended co-workers," (4) One global company of workers. These non-essential, extra-biblical teachings "go beyond what is written" in Scripture (1 Cor. 4:6).
- If the local churches join LSM's quarantine of Titus Chu, this sets a precedent for similar measures to purge Brother Yu-Lan Dong of Brazil and others. This will divide the recovery into "exclusive" and "open" branches, like the Plymouth Brethren. The "exclusives" divided repeatedly, becoming isolated, inbred and irrelevant. Do we want to repeat this sad history?

LSM's QUARANTINE—DUE PROCESS DENIED!

A trial, or disciplinary hearing, occurred in Whistler BC at LSM's Elders' Training. Oral testimonies were given, written evidence presented and judgment was pronounced. The verdict was quarantine—"we solemnly exhort all the saints to join with us to mark Brother Titus Chu and those who disseminate his divisive views and his dissenting speaking and turn away from them." (p. 4). There was one striking characteristic of this "trial"—there was no defence. The "prosecution" presented their evidence, their witnesses testified and judgment was pronounced. However, there was no defence. We should ask, was this a "fair trial," an unbiased disciplinary hearing? Did the accused receive a "fair hearing"? Was there due process? The fundamental right of due process under law means that⁵ "All parties who may be affected by a judgment are entitled to a fair hearing. At the very least, this means advance notice of what is to be claimed against them, the opportunity to confront and cross-examine those who are testifying against them, and an opportunity to tell their side of the story." Contrast this with LSM's quarantine. Was the process balanced or biased? Why was only the "case for the prosecution" presented? Why was no opportunity given for presenting the "case for the defence"?

This was not a "fair trial," nor an unbiased hearing. Those accused had no opportunity to speak. No opportunity was afforded the accused to question either witnesses or evidence. Not only so, the verdict charges the saints not to read materials written by the accused. The "blended co-workers'" charge, "We also admonish the saints not to read the materials published and spread by these brothers in printed form or on the Internet." (p. 4) The "blended co-workers" want to deny the possibility of any redress stemming from the lack of due process.

I am aware that the "blended co-workers" may well retort, "This is the Body, a higher realm. Here constitutional rights like 'due process' don't apply!" To this I respond, shouldn't the righteousness exhibited among us 'exceed that of the Pharisees' (Matt. 5:20)? Shouldn't the standards of uprightness and justice in the Lord's recovery exceed those in the secular world? However, we leave these issues for another occasion. Here we want to examine the credibility of the evidence. Having been denied the right to address the evidence at LSM's Elders' Training, we wish to do so here in print. In what follows we examine 24 examples of the numerous accusations contained in LSM's "Warning Letter" and DCP's document. In each case the allegation is stated and a response offered.

ALLEGATION #1: Of "Dissenting" and "Teaching Differently"

RESPONSE:

"Dissenting"—Dissenting from What? "Different Teachings"—Different from What?

We reject the "blended co-workers'" and DCP authors' characterization of Titus Chu and his co-workers as "dissenters," having "different teachings." We strongly object to being labelled with these negative stereotypes. We ask: "Dissenting"—dissenting from what? "Different Teachings"—different from what? The reference point is **not** the current teaching of the "blended co-workers," including their recent emphases on "one publication," one "Minister of the Age," one "wise master builder who is the acting God," one continuation of Brother Lee, one global band of co-workers, "the Body equals the Recovery," etc.

The true reference point for evaluating the charge of "teaching differently" is the Scriptures which constitute our "canon" (rule or measure). As Watchman Nee stated, "The Bible is our unique standard". Put differently, the reference point is the Apostles' teaching (the entire New Testament revelation), centered on Christ and the Church, i.e. God's economy (RcV. 1 Tim. 1:3, fn. 3). When evaluated against this measure and standard, Titus and his co-workers are **not** teaching differently from the Apostles' teaching in the New Testament. Neither are we dissenting from a balanced reception of the entire ministries of Brothers Nee and Lee, understood in the light of the Scriptures. However, we are constrained to be "dissenters" against recent theological innovations which extrapolate "beyond what has been written" (1 Cor. 4:6; 2 John 9) in the New Testament and what has been confirmed Brothers Nee and Lee in their ministries. This has been our stand since the Lord's recovery began in this area. We have not deviated; nor do we intend to change.

LSM's "Warning Letter" cites the Scripture, Titus 3:10, which says, "A factious [heretical, sectarian] man, after the first and second admonition, refuse." The "blended co-workers" apply this to Titus Chu, a senior co-worker in the Lord's recovery. However, this Scripture's immediate context talks about the Apostle Paul's co-workers (Titus 3:12-14). Paul's younger co-worker, Titus was

charged to receive and aid Apollos and Zenas (3:13), workers who didn't coordinate closely with Paul. Concerning this, Brother Lee writes,⁶ "*Zenas and Apollos worked independently of him. Yet Paul still charged Titus to care for the latter two, showing there was no jealousy between the two groups of co-workers.*" Differences existed between Paul and Apollos. Yet Paul did not excommunicate or quarantine Apollos. Rather, he charged Titus to care for him. Moreover, this directive immediately follows Paul's charge to refuse a "factious, divisive man." Obviously, in Paul's mind, that charge did not apply to Apollos, despite their differences. We contend that the context of Titus 3:10 argues against the "blended co-workers" application of this verse to the present case. Based on this Scriptural precedent concerning Apollos, how can the "blended co-workers" apply this Scripture (Titus 3:10) to Brother Titus Chu? Are the difference between Titus Chu and the "blended co-workers" greater than between Apollos and Paul? If so, this has not been proven by the "blended co-workers." Brother Nee said,⁷ "*The basic principle of the church is recovery, not excommunication,*" and (we would add) not quarantine. Let us now go beyond this general accusation, to look at the specific allegations.

LSM's "Warning Letter" of Quarantine:

EXAMPLES of the "Different Teachings" attributed to Titus Chu & His Co-workers

ALLEGATION #2: "Open Dissent concerning certain Scriptural Truths and Organic Principles"

The "Warning Letter" justifies the "quarantine" of Titus Chu and certain of his co-workers based on the assertion that "*Titus Chu and certain of his supporters are in open dissent concerning **certain scriptural truths and organic principles** that are part of the treasured heritage of the Lord's recovery as received through the ministry of" W. Nee and W. Lee. ["Warning Letter" Point 1, p. 1]*

RESPONSE: What are the "*certain scriptural truths*" which are being referred to? What are the "*organic principles*" mentioned here? Again this is a general accusation, without specifics.

ALLEGATION #3: Changing the Meaning & Application of Many Scriptural Terms and Concepts

The "Warning Letter" alleges that Titus Chu "*changes the meaning and application of many scriptural terms and concepts (such as the Body of Christ, fellowship, blending, oneness, ministry, one accord and co-working) that form the basis of certain crucial teachings and practices in the Lord's recovery. By doing so, he compromises both the nature and course of the recovery.*"

["Warning Letter" Point 3, pp. 2-3.]

RESPONSE: These are serious allegations. In what way has Titus Chu "*changed the meaning and application of... terms...such as the Body of Christ, fellowship, blending, oneness, ministry,*" etc? Has Titus introduced a heretical notion of any of these items? I have looked in vain for an explanation and substantiation of this allegation from the 63 "blended co-workers." Where is the "evidence" to back up this claim?

The 21 "blended co-workers'" first letter to Titus (June 2005) takes issue with Titus sharing on the "divine stream," but that isn't even mentioned here or in DCP's "Different Teachings..." Brother Titus Chu did raise the issue of the Body of Christ in his letter to 21 "blended co-workers," saying:

"It seems that Brother Ron Kangas rejects the idea that there is a local aspect of the Body of Christ. Yet Brother Lee clearly taught that the Church as the Body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12 is "both universal and local." (W. Lee, Life Study of 1 Corinthians.) Brother Lee's terse statement surely implies the Body has both universal and local aspects."
(Titus Chu's Letter to 21 "Blended Co-workers," 22 July, 2006)

He also wrote that:

"We should all clearly know that the universal Body of Christ is expressed by many local churches. All the local churches are the expressions of the Body of Christ. And not only so, but there is a sense in which a local church is Christ's Body (1 Cor. 12:27). We firmly declare that there are many local churches but One Body, as all the local churches are the expression of the one Body." (Titus Chu's Letter to 21 "Blended Co-workers," 22 July, 2006)

In saying this has Titus "*changed the meaning...of... the Body of Christ*"? Or is his speaking consistent with the New Testament and the entire teachings of W. Nee & W. Lee? Even if there is some slight difference in utterance or emphasis, couldn't these differences be resolved through the

prayer and fellowship which Titus repeatedly requested? Does this difference in views (if indeed there is one) warrant the drastic action of quarantine? I think not.

"The Recovery Equals the Body"

In fact, Titus and his co-workers questioned whether the "blended co-workers'" teaching about "the Body," has not departed from the Scriptural concept. Hence Titus wrote:

*"I am concerned that you brothers may not be clear about the universal aspect of the Body either. Brother Minoru Chen has said that **"the recovery equals the Body."** In addition, brother Ron Kangas referred to the (so-called) "seven feasts" as times when the Lord speaks "to the entire Body." Yet, if the Body of Christ is universal, including all believers in time and space, how can you brothers declare that "the recovery equals the Body," and how could an LSM gathering "speak to the entire Body"? If this is indeed "a body," what kind of "body" is it? A "global LSM body"? Are you brothers clear about the truth concerning "the Body," a topic you've repeatedly emphasized for the past nine years?"*

(Titus Chu's Letter to 21 "Blended Co-workers," 22 July, 2006)

This is a more serious point. It seems to me that Titus has raised a legitimate point about the truth, which should be examined in the light of Scripture. This also raises the question who has "changed the meaning and application of [the] scriptural terms...the Body of Christ"? Is it the "blended co-workers" who have "changed the meaning and application of...the Body of Christ"? The Great Lakes brothers also expressed concerns about the consequences of the "blended co-workers'" teaching on this point, saying:

*"The Bible never teaches that **"the Body equals the recovery,"** nor have we found this concept in Brother Lee's writings. Surely your adoption of a narrow and exclusive definition of "the Body," which differs from both the Bible and the teaching of Brothers Nee and Lee, risks producing something other than the goal of God's economy. We fear that your exclusive definition of Christ's Body may produce a "virtual body," which is in fact a global organization."* (Great Lakes Brothers' 3rd Letter to 21 "Blended Co-workers" February, 2006)

Because of this divergence in understanding, the Great Lakes brothers repeatedly asked for an "Acts 15-type" gathering to consider this (and other matters.) However, rather than following the New Testament pattern of resolution, the "blended co-workers" response is to quarantine those who express divergent views.

ALLEGATION #4: Opposing the Blending Co-workers' Adherence to One Publication

LSM's Warning Letter accuses Titus Chu and his co-workers of "opposing the blending co-workers' adherence to Brother Nee's practice and Brother Lee's practice and teaching of being restricted in one publication." ("Warning Letter," Point 2f, p. 2)

RESPONSE: The matter of publications is a major issue among senior workers in the recovery. The "blended co-workers'" initial letter to Brother Titus states that "multiple publications among us are causing many problems." ("Blended co-workers" to Titus June 4, 2005, p. 7) They also referred to, "the very crucial and central issue at hand—the problems raised worldwide from the propagation of Titus's publications." (21 Blended co-workers' Letter the Great Lakes brothers, December 6, 2005). Hence, publications are viewed as "the very crucial and central issue," by the "blended co-workers."

The Warning Letter accuses Titus and co. of "opposing the blending co-workers' adherence to...one publication." However, we have never opposed the blended co-workers' adherence to 'one publication.' If the "blended co-workers" feel before the Lord to be restricted in this way, we honor and respect their personal stand. What we oppose is the imposition of this restriction upon other workers (including ourselves) who do not share that view.

'One Publication'—Merely Reaffirming, Just Declaring?

The initial rationale offered for 'One Publication' was that the "blended co-workers" themselves wished to adhere to One Publication. Hence Bob Danker wrote to me:

*"The proposed statement ...is **a reaffirmation of the desire and intention of the coworkers** in the Lord's recovery to be restricted in one publication work... **we, the blending coworkers, would like to affirm** to the saints our intention to carry out this aspect of the recovery..."* (Bob Danker, E-mail to me June 25 2005, emphasis added, posted on AFaithfulWord.org)

LSM's Kerry Robichaux reassured me,

*"I am certain that among the co-workers...there is **no thought that their statement is anything more than a declaration that we desire to be restricted in one publication in the ministry....It seems that the act of putting down in writing their desire to be restricted in one publication in the ministry (following the admonition of our Brother Lee) is easily mistaken...."** (Kerry Robichaux's E-mail to me, 21 June '05 (emphasis added, posted on AFaithfulWord.org)*

Taken at face value, these words seem innocuous. The LSM brothers represented the statement, Publication Work in the Lord's Recovery as being nothing more than a declaration by a group of co-workers that they desire personally to be restricted to one publication.

These statements correlate with Brother Ron Kangas' words,

*"The statement is mainly **our declaration that we agree with and are one with... Brother Lee, with respect to the one publication work.** We are not saying anything new or different. ...**To us it is normal** as Brother Lee's co-workers, to speak on his behalf and **to echo his word.**" (*The Ministry* magazine, Vol.9, No. 7, July/Aug. 2005, p. 281, emphasis added)*

These justifications for 'One Publication' suggest these workers are simply "declaring", "reaffirming", "echoing", "agreeing with" and "putting down in writing their desire to be restricted to" one publication. There is "*no thought that their statement is anything more than*" this (to quote Kerry Robichaux). This concept corresponds to the LSM Warning Letter's reference to "*the blending co-workers' adherence to... being restricted in one publication.*" However, if this is the case, one would expect that other workers would be free to affirm or not affirm, declare or not declare their willingness to be 'restricted.' Moreover, if (as stated) the statement was "*nothing more than this,*" other workers should be free to not "affirm" or not "declare" without retribution or stigmatism.

Systematic Misrepresentation

Concerning 'One Publication,' the "blended co-workers" have conducted a systematic campaign of misrepresentation. Contrary to the rationale offered above, the LSM document, "Publication Work..." is **not** merely a "declaration," a "reaffirmation" or an "echoing" by the "blended co-workers" (as they claimed). Rather, the LSM-brothers have systematically sought to impose this restriction upon other workers—Brothers Titus Chu, Nigel Tomes, Frank Lin etc.

Even before the LSM-brothers, Bob Danker & Kerry Robichaux wrote to me offering their rationale for 'one publication,' the 21 "blended co-workers" had written to Brother Titus saying, "*we appeal to you to stop your publications in all languages.*" This was merely the first in an escalating series of measures to terminate Titus' publications. This process has now culminated in a call for quarantine. Yet that is **not** what the "blended co-workers" claimed to be doing when this matter was first proposed (see the quotes above.) Isn't this blatant misrepresentation? Isn't this is a case of "bait and switch"—claiming to be doing one thing, while actually doing something else. For the 63 "blended co-workers" to now allege that Titus & co. are "*opposing the blending co-workers' adherence to...one publication,*" **is another blatant falsehood.** They do not. If the "blended co-workers"—either the "21" or the "63" "blended co-workers"—wish to apply this restriction **to themselves** in their own publication work, we say "Amen." However, we reject the attempt by the (21 or 63) "blended co-workers" to unilaterally impose of this "yoke" **on others**, who never endorsed such a policy.

The 21 "blended co-workers" in their 1st letter to Titus say "*the real problem being expressed is with your [Titus'] publications as well as Brother Dong's*" (21 "blended co-workers" June 2005). Again, they say, "*To refocus on the purpose of this letter...multiple publications among us are causing many problems.*" (21 "blended co-workers" June 2005). Clearly 'one publication' is a central issue with the "blended co-workers."

Then, shortly after LSM released their document, "Publication Work..." (June 2005), the co-workers in S. California wrote a public letter denouncing Nigel Tomes for his writing on this issue (Sept. 2005). Now, one year later, the "blended co-workers" have issued this "Warning Letter" calling for the quarantine of Titus Chu and his co-workers, in large part over this issue, 'one publication.'

While calling for the quarantine of Titus Chu and his co-workers, the DCP authors have the audacity to claim:

"The words "insist," "mandate," "impose" and "policy" are all foreign to Publication Work in the Lord's recovery both in tone and in content. In fact...[it] concludes by stating explicitly

that one publication 'should not be insisted on' as an item of the faith and indicating that the saints and churches that choose not to...be restricted in one publication should still be received as genuine brothers and genuine churches." (DCP, "Different Teachings..." p. 6)

However, we ask: If 'one publication' is not being insisted upon, why call for the quarantine of Titus Chu and his co-workers? If it is neither "mandated" nor "imposed," why are these workers being disciplined? If 'one publication' is purely voluntary, non-compliance should bring no retribution. Then why quarantine Titus?

Perhaps, the "blended co-workers" will respond, "this action is related to the ministry." This however, means that 'one publication' **is being insisted upon** as an item of **the ministry**. So, evidently the "blended co-workers" are "talking from both sides of their mouth." From one side, they declare "*one publication 'should not be insisted on' as an item of **the faith**."* From the other side of their mouth, they affirm, "*one publication 'should be insisted on' as an item of the **ministry**."* Why then is the first statement explicitly made in LSM's "Publication Work...", while the second is concealed? Why not honestly state both sides? Moreover, the saints are instructed to uphold the faith and be 'one with the ministry'—to apply both these directives!

I'm amazed that the DCP brothers have the audacity to repeat these claims—"one publication should not be insisted on—in a document supporting quarantine! Isn't this a clear case of hypocritical double-talk? While justifying the quarantine of Brother Titus (over the issue of publications,) the DCP authors reiterate that "*that one publication 'should not be insisted on' as an item of the faith*" and should not affect our being "*received as genuine brothers*."! May we ask: How do the DCP brothers expect quarantine to work? Doesn't "marking," "refusing," "rejecting," and "quarantining" a brother (called for in the "Warning Letter") affect our "*receiving [them] as genuine brothers*"! Apparently the "blended co-workers" and the DCP authors don't see the obvious contradiction here! On the one hand, they repeatedly affirm "*one publication 'should not be insisted on' as an item of the faith*" and should not affect our being "*received as genuine brothers*." Yet, on the other hand, they call for Titus and his co-workers to be quarantined!

ALLEGATION #5: Deviation from the Central Lane of the Lord's Recovery

The "Warning Letter" states: "*Brother Titus Chu and certain of his followers...have deviated from the central lane of the Lord's recovery...*" [p. 3]

RESPONSE: Again, this is an unsubstantiated allegation. In what way have Titus and "his followers" "deviated from the central lane"? The "central lane" of the Lord's recovery is surely God's New Testament economy to dispense Himself into mankind. How have Titus and his followers deviated from God's New Testament economy? Have they brought people back to the Old Testament dispensation of law? Have they brought people into heresy, denying the Person and work of Christ? The writers of the "Warning Letter" don't say. Again, this is a serious charge, unsubstantiated by any evidence.

ALLEGATION #6: "Rejecting the Teaching of Brothers Nee and Lee on the uniqueness of the Vision, the Ministry and the Minister of the Age and the Wise Master Builder"

The first quotation presented by DCP to substantiate this claim is from my, "LSM's Eisegesis..." "In my view, 'one publication' is **not** a scriptural truth (implied or otherwise). Neither is it a "*direct application*" nor a "*healthy extension*" of "*fundamental scriptural principles*." It is the logical implication of the "blended co-workers'" teachings, which contain extra-biblical elements, including:

1. There is **a unique "Minister of the Age,"** most recently Brother Witness Lee.
2. The "blended co-workers" are **the unique continuation** of Brother Lee's "Ministry of the Age."
3. There is **a unique "Wise Master-builder,"** supervising God's building work on the entire globe.
4. The "Master-builder" (Brother Lee or his continuation) oversees **one global company of workers.**" (Nigel Tomes, "LSM's Eisegesis...")

RESPONSE:

Notice that the list above does not include either the Vision of the Age, or the Ministry of the Age. I have never "rejected" the teaching of Brother Nee and/or Brother Lee on "the uniqueness of the Vision, [and] the Ministry...of the Age" (the first two of the four items mentioned). Neither (to my knowledge) have Titus Chu, nor Frank Lin (the others mentioned by name).

In my writing, I have clearly distinguished between the "Vision and Ministry (service) of the Age" and the "Minister of the Age" (the person) saying:

"These three matters – the Vision, Ministry and Minister of the Age – are conceptually distinct. There can be a unique vision and one ministry in an age, yet, they may not belong to a particular "Minister of the Age." Hence, someone may agree that there are a vision and ministry in an epoch, yet reject the idea that these belong to a singular "Minister of the Age." Rather a number of ministers,..." Nigel Tomes, "1One, Unique "Minister of the Age"? – What Did Watchman Nee Teach?"

The DCP authors have chosen to wilfully ignore this distinction which I clearly stated.

I also endorsed (signed) the Great Lakes Brothers' Letter which says:

"We agree that in a particular era there may be a "Ministry of the Age" as Brother Nee defines it, *"In every age the Lord has special things that He wants to accomplish. He has His recoveries and His own works to do. The particular recovery and work that He does in one age is **the ministry of that age.**"* [W. Nee, Collected Works..., vol. 57, p. 260-1]

However, the NT pattern is a ministry (service) carried by a number of ministers (2 Cor. 4:1). Hence the "Ministry of the Age" in Acts 1-2 was carried by "the twelve (apostles)," including not only Peter, but also John, Matthew, etc. We see no NT precedent for identifying "the Ministry of the Age" with the personal ministry of one special servant of the Lord ("the Minister of the Age")." (Great Lakes Brothers' Letter Feb. 2006)

Notice this statement (which I endorsed) affirms the possibility of a "Ministry (service) of the Age." Yes, this statement questions the "Minister of the Age" teaching. But it does not "reject" the "Ministry (service) of the Age" nor the "Vision of the Age." **DCP misrepresents the true situation** when they claim we are "Rejecting the Teaching of Brother Nee and Brother Lee on the uniqueness of the Vision, the Ministry...of the Age" along with the related (though distinct) point on the "Minister of the Age." We never rejected the teaching of the unique Vision & Ministry of the Age (the first two items listed). By grouping these items together and asserting that we reject the entire group, the DCP authors knowingly and willfully misrepresent our position.

What is "the Teaching of W. Nee and W. Lee" concerning "the Minister of the Age"?

I find DCP's phrase "...**the Teaching** of Brother Nee and Brother Lee" on these points misleading, since it assumes both Brother Nee and Brother Lee held the same view and teaching on these points. The phrase implicitly assumes that "the Teaching of W. Nee" was identical to "the Teaching of W. Lee." In that case we can meaningfully talk of "the Teaching (singular) of W. Nee and W. Lee" on these subjects. While this is true of their "core teachings" on essential matters, I don't believe it is true concerning "the Minister of the Age." I have gone on record in my writing, saying I find no support in Watchman Nee's own writings for the assertion that he adhered to a "unique Minister of the Age." Rather than repeat myself, permit me to quote Watchman Nee,

*"When God chooses a man to be a minister, and his revelation reaches a certain height, he will become **the ministry of the word in that age...In every age God chooses great vessels to meet His need.** These vessels have learned many lessons and have gone through many dealings. As a result they see what no one else in that generation has seen.*

In a certain age God may choose five brothers to see what others in the same age have not seen. They see a kind of extraordinary revelation." [W. Nee, Vol. 60, p. 282]

Clearly, Brother Nee is referring to the "Ministry of the Age," for he talks of "*the ministry of the word in that age.*" Yet he says, "*In every age God chooses great vessels [plural] to meet His need.*" Moreover, W. Nee illustrates saying, "***In a certain age God may choose five brothers...***" The most obvious understanding would be that these "*five brothers*" ["ministers of the age"] together carry the "Ministry of that Age." Perhaps W. Nee was thinking of the late 1800's when Andrew Murray, Hudson Taylor, A. B. Simpson, D. L. Moody and Jessie Penn-Lewis were all ministering.

On this point—the Minister of the Age—the teachings of W. Nee and W. Lee differ. How then are we to understand the phrase, "the Teaching of W. Nee and W. Lee"? In this situation, presumably the phrase, "the Teaching of W. Nee and W. Lee" must be defined broadly enough to encompass both brothers' views. For that reference point, I have not taught differently from "the Teaching of W. Nee and W. Lee."

ALLEGATION #7: "putting words in Brother Nee's mouth."

DCP authors allege that "By putting words in Brother Nee's mouth, Nigel attempts to place him in opposition to Brother Lee." (DCP. p. 4)

RESPONSE: This is another unsubstantiated claim. What words am I "putting...in Brother Nee's mouth"? The authors never specify. Where is the supporting evidence? I categorically deny the charge of "putting words in Brother Nee's mouth." Rather, I have taken the words from W. Nee's own mouth as accurately expressing his views. On the contrary, it is **the DCP authors who put W. Lee's words** (about the "Minister of the Age") **into W. Nee's mouth!**

ALLEGATION #8: "Protesting 'Intolerance' toward Interpretational Differences to Justify Teaching Differently" (DCP. p. 4)

RESPONSE: This claim by DCP is unsupported by any evidence. They offer no quotation which employs the term "intolerance" (nor its synonyms). When addressing the topic of "interpretational Differences" we were not "protesting intolerance," (as DCP allege). The DCP allegation suggests that I and others claimed we were not being tolerated, but were being subjected to others' intolerant attitudes. That is untrue. We never made this claim.

The subject of "intolerance" was raised by the Great Lakes brothers Letter said: "*Brother Ron Kangas' teaching rules out any legitimate differences in Scriptural understanding among the saints. ...This statement, which appears without any qualification, apparently rules out all differences in interpreting even the parables, types, symbols or prophecies in the Bible, since any such "interpretational differences" in Brother Ron's words, "prove that some members have problems with the Head and are not under the Head."* Surely a serious application of this teaching will produce a strong tendency to conformity. Moreover, this kind of speaking encourages intolerance towards any understanding of the Scriptures which appears to be different." (Great Lakes Brothers, Feb. 2006)

This statement appeared under the heading: "**The tendency towards conformity and uniformity.**" Under this heading, the Great Lakes brothers "expressed apprehension about (what we perceive as) a tendency towards conformity and uniformity among the saints and the local churches." In this context, the brothers expressed the concern that "this teaching will produce a strong tendency to conformity." They continued by saying "this kind of speaking encourages intolerance towards any understanding of the Scriptures which appears to be different." Clearly, the intolerance mentioned here is intolerance by saints in the local churches regarding diverse understandings of Scripture held by any other saint. This was clearly a general statement about the tendency towards a universal attitude of "intolerance" in the recovery. It was clearly not a self-interested claim that I (and others labelled "dissenters") am not being tolerated (as DCP wishes to portray).

No evidence is offered by DCP that our "protest" was motivated by the desire to "*to Justify Teaching Differently*" (DCP. p. 4). Once again this is unsubstantiated allegation is presented by DCP without the support of a single thread of evidence.

• **ALLEGATION #9: "Building up their own Kingdom in the Lord's recovery"**

DCP's authors say "*The dissenters misapply the principle of generality exercised in receiving believers to justify teaching differently and building up their own kingdom in the Lord's recovery.*" (DCP, p. 5)

RESPONSE: Here again the authors attribute malicious motives to others—that of "building up their own kingdom." What evidence is offered to support this serious charge? **None!** This charge should be dismissed since it represents the authors' subjective evaluation of others' motives, unsupported by any objective evidence.

ALLEGATION #10: "Attempting to Discredit Living Stream Ministry. Falsely attributing to LSM many things related to the blending co-workers, DCP etc.

"Attempting to Discredit Living Stream Ministry. Falsely attributing to LSM many things related to the blending co-workers, DCP and the present litigation." (DCP, p. 7)

The DCP authors elaborate on these allegations, saying: "The dissenters' articles, including those written by Nigel Tomes, falsely attribute to LSM many things related to the blending co-workers, DCP, and the present litigation. These include:

- Portraying the present litigation as being carried out primarily by LSM
- Identifying DCP as an LSM project
- Identifying afaithfulword.org as an LSM website
- Identifying contendingforthefaith.org and localchurch-vs-harvesthouse.org as LSM websites
- Identifying the contributors to afaithfulword.org collectively as "LSM brothers"
- Attributing...Publication Work in the Lord's Recovery to LSM" (DCP p. 7)

RESPONSE:

Some of these allegations are easily answered. Take for example the last specific charge of:

- **ALLEGATION #11: Falsely "attributing...Publication Work in the Lord's Recovery to LSM"**

DCP charges us with falsely "attributing the fellowship in Publication Work in the Lord's Recovery to LSM" (DCP p. 7). Apparently, the DCP authors have forgotten that "Draft Proposal #8" of this document, Publication Work in the Lord's Recovery was distributed to the co-workers (dated, April 7, 2005). Significantly, that Draft was endorsed ("signed") by three parties:

- **[1] The co-workers in the Lord's recovery,**
- **[2] Living Stream Ministry,**
- **[3] Taiwan Gospel Book Room."** ("Draft Proposal #8")

Hence, it is not I who first ascribed the 'one publication' document, Publication Work in the Lord's Recovery to LSM. The authors of that document, "the co-workers in the Lord's recovery," themselves ascribe the document, in its penultimate draft (April 7, 2005) to both LSM and the Taiwan Gospel Book Room!

The final version (June 30, 2005) of Publication Work in the Lord's Recovery is identical to the "Draft Proposal #8" in 95% of its content. Why then is it deemed "false" to attribute the final version to LSM? Isn't my "attribution" of "Publication Work..." to LSM both fair and accurate? Aren't the DCP authors "grasping at straws"?

- **ALLEGATION #12: "Falsely attributing to LSM many things related to the blending co-workers"**

RESPONSE: Are the DCP authors now claiming that LSM is independent of the "blended co-workers"? In the past 9 years this has not been their teaching or stand. Even the "Warning Letter" and the DCP piece, "Different Teachings..." attributes interchangeable roles of LSM and the "blended co-workers." On one hand, the "quarantine letter" refers to "*the co-workers who labor together to carry out the ministry in the Lord's recovery over the whole earth.*" ("A Warning..." pp. 3-4). Clearly this is a reference to the current ministry of the "blended co-workers." The same document talks of "*the ministry which produced the Lord's recovery and continues to supply the recovery and lead it on.*" (p. 4). Again, this includes the ministry of the "blended co-workers." On the other hand, the DCP authors remind us Brother Lee "*asked some of **these brothers to continue to oversee the labors of Living Stream Ministry...***" They continue by quoting Brother Lee's words: "*My burden is for the recovery based on the interpretation of Brother Nee and me. I am the continuation of Brother Nee; I would like to have a continuation of me and **this needs a corporation...The Living Stream corporation will continue this ministry.***" (previously unpublished, quoted in 'Publication Work...' June 2006) Here the roles of LSM and the "blended co-workers" are interwoven and merged. On one hand, the "blended co-workers" claim they are the continuation of Brother Lee's ministry. On the other hand, Brother Lee's own words indicate, "*The Living Stream [Ministry] corporation will continue this ministry.*" If both these statements are true, why is it erroneous to "attribute to LSM many things related to the blended co-workers" (as the DCP authors allege)? According to their own words, both the "blended co-workers" and LSM Corporation are doing the same thing—continuing Brother Lee's ministry! Moreover, many of the "blended co-workers" hold positions of responsibility in the LSM Corporation. In this case why is it "false" to "attribute to LSM many things related to the blending co-workers"?

- **ALLEGATION #13: Falsely identifying AFaithfulWord.org & ContendingForTheFaith.org as LSM websites**

Among the "many things" we are charged with "falsely attributing to LSM" are "identifying AFaithfulWord.org as an LSM website" and "identifying ContendingForTheFaith.org and localchurch-vs-harvesthouse.org as LSM websites." (DCP, p. 7)

RESPONSE: Evidently the DCP authors wish to portray these websites as independent of LSM, based on the fact that organizationally they fall under DCP. However, this ignores LSM's own 'one publication' policy. The website, AFaithfulWord.org is administrated by Dan Towle (a "blended co-worker") along with Dan Sady and Bill Buntain. As a "blended co-worker," surely Dan Towle adheres to LSM's 'one publication' policy, applying it to both Internet and conventional publications. That policy stipulates that writers (including Dan Towle & co) should "*bring their work to those who take the lead in the ministry [the "blended co-workers"] and those who take the lead in the publication work [LSM]...[to see] whether or not such proposals should be published as part of the one publication.*" (Publication Work in the Lord's Recovery, June 30, 2005). I assume that Dan Towle adheres to this 'one publication' policy, which he endorsed as a "blended co-worker." Hence, I take it for granted the writings which appear on AFaithfulWord.org have passed through LSM's "discerning check," have received LSM's stamp of approval" and are part of LSM's 'one publication' in its Internet form. If, on the contrary, they are not "LSM-approved," why are these materials, posted by authors governed by 'one publication' being posted on the Internet? Non-LSM-approved documents are a direct violation of the 'one publication' policy. I stated this viewpoint on a number of occasions, for example, referring to an article:

*"In "Contributions" on the LSM-sponsored web-site: **AFaithfulWord.com**. ...*

We assume that the opinions expressed reflect the views of the "blended co-workers."

*Moreover, we assume all the items posted on this web-site have passed through LSM's "discerning check" and qualify as part of the "one publication" in its internet version. For simplicity, we refer to all the contributors to **AFaithfulWord.com** as "LSM-brothers."*

[Nigel Tomes, "Is the Recovery on the Road to Rome?"]

The same logic applies to the materials produced by DCP either in hardcopy or posted on its other Internet websites. Given the guiding principle of 'one publication,' aren't all these DCP-websites also "LSM-approved websites"? Why then is this a "false attribution"?

- **ALLEGATION #14: Accusing the Co-workers of Trying to Centralize Control**

The DCP authors allege, "*The dissenting ones claim that the co-workers are trying to centralize control of the work. They deny that there should be one coordinated leadership in the work, claiming that the groups of workers are independent*" (DCP, p. 8)

RESPONSE: Here it is appropriate to quote from the Great Lakes brothers' letters, since the draft version of DCP's "Different Teachings..." quotes from those letters.

The Great Lakes brothers said, "**We are concerned** that ...while you are emphasizing fellowship, you may be just exercising control; and as you are speaking about the organic Body, you may be actually establishing a global organization." (Sept. 24, 2005). The brothers expressed a genuine concern. Why is this concern distorted into an accusation?

As evidence of their "accusation theory," the DCP draft document "Different Teachings..." presents two quotations:

[1] "*...no group of workers should seek to dominate other workers in order to subjugate them and bring their work under their own control.*" (Great Lakes brothers, 02/28/06)

[2] "*There is no human "universal coordinator of the One New Man," nor "global supervisor of the Body," nor "world-wide overseer of God's building work." We reject, as unscriptural, the concept of an individual coordinator or a group of coordinators (directors, supervisors or overseers, etc.) in these aspects of God's work.*" (Great Lakes brothers, 02/28/06)

The first statement [1] is the Great Lakes brothers' response to the demand that Brother Titus Chu cease publishing and "*join [himself] and those co-workers loyal to [him] to the blending co-workers, with the continuation of [his] previous work left to...their coordinated oversight.*" The Great Lakes brothers felt "important matters of truth," were being infringed – "*firstly that genuine local churches are not under the ministry of a particular servant of the Lord and, secondly, that no group of workers should seek to dominate other workers in order to subjugate them and bring their work under their own control.*" (Great Lakes brothers, 02/28/06) Here a matter of Scriptural principle was presented for fellowship. Clearly, this was not an accusation of any wrongdoing.

The second statement [2] appears under the title, "The Stand of a Genuine Local Church," where the Great Lakes brothers expressed their *"thoughts... concerning the stand a genuine local church in the Lord's recovery should have today..."* Again, it was not an accusation, but a statement of our current position. It was followed by a reference to Brother Nee [Collected Works, Vol. 26, p. 425] which says, *"Some... are tempted to attain the position of director over all of God's servants. How good this seems from a human point of view ... We would say, however, that ...the Holy Spirit is always the unique Executor. He never needs man to be His manager."* Doesn't the Great Lakes brothers' statement [2] simply echo this word of Brother Nee? May we ask—Do the "Blended Co-workers" reject Brother Nee's view expressed here? Do they feel a "universal coordinator of the One New Man" (Max Rappaport's phrase) or a "global supervisor of the Body," is necessary in the recovery today? If so, doesn't this usurp the role of the Holy Spirit (according to W. Nee's word)?

ALLEGATION #15: "Claiming that Groups of Workers are Independent"

Moreover, in "Different Teachings..." the DCP authors allege the *"dissenting ones...deny that there should be a leadership in the work, claiming that the **groups of workers are independent.**"*

RESPONSE: The DCP authors allege we *"deny that there should be a leadership in the work, claiming that the groups of workers are independent."* However, the objective reader will find no evidence to support these fallacious claims. The Great Lakes brothers wrote,

"the New Testament pattern shows multiple groups of workers under the leadership of various apostles (Titus 3:13), yet extending the 'right hand fellowship' to one another (Gal. 2:9)." This statement recognizes leadership—"the leadership of various apostles."

It does **not** *"claim that the groups of workers are independent"* (as the DCP authors' falsely allege). On the contrary, the Great Lakes brothers' acknowledge the **interdependency** between worker-groups, *'extending the 'right hand fellowship' to one another.'* These statements echo Brother Nee's teaching on this topic. It seems the DCP authors of the draft version of "The Different Teachings..." have deliberately chosen to misconstrue and misrepresent the Great Lakes brothers' word. Elsewhere, the authors accuse others of "twisting." We respond—who is "twisting"?

QUESTION: Why Does the Published Version of DCP's "Different Teachings..." Differ Significantly from the Draft Version?

The "final version" of DCP's document, "Different Teachings..." differs significantly from the "Draft version" inadvertently released and posted on the LSM-friendly website: "lastadam.com. One striking difference is **all references to the Great Lakes brothers' letters** (including the quotes above) **have been eradicated from the final published version!** Why these changes? Two possibilities suggest themselves:

Will the Evidence Hold up in Court?

[1] Perhaps the authors' realized the "evidence" presented in their "draft" which derives from the Great Lakes brothers' letters (quoted above) is neither compelling nor convincing. Realizing it "won't hold up in the court of public opinion," maybe the brothers "withdrew this part of their case." If true, this suggests that when challenged the "evidence was found wanting," consequently the authors were compelled to shift their ground, retreating to other points (in the final version). But, if that is true for this point, what about the others? Are they equally unreliable? Will the other points also turn out to be "weak reeds," unable to withstand scrutiny?

No Problem with the Great Lakes Brothers?—Fact or Facade?

[2] Possibly there was a conscious decision not to label the "Great Lakes brothers" as "dissenters" who make "false accusations" and/or hold "different teachings" (as alleged in the draft). Instead, the title of the final version focuses criticism on "Titus Chu and certain of his co-workers." In the draft, the Great Lakes brothers are called *"dissenting ones [who] claim that the co-workers are trying to centralize control..."* However, in the final version, this sentence has been modified to read, *"The dissenting ones claim that the co-workers are trying..."* The supporting quotes from the Great Lakes brothers' letters (in the draft) have been eliminated. The net result is "the Great Lakes brothers" aren't targeted in the final published version. Rather, only individuals—"Titus Chu and certain of his co-workers"—are labelled as divisive, worthy of quarantine. Evidently the 100 "Great Lakes brothers" are "off the hook"!

Moreover, the authors' now draw a distinction between the rejection of Titus (and his defenders) and the "*rejection of the 'Great Lakes brothers' and of all churches in that area.*" On one hand, the final published version conveys the impression that the "blended co-workers" have no problem with "the Great Lakes brothers" who wrote them four letters. However, on the other hand, the draft version proves **the authors don't hesitate to condemn "the Great Lakes brothers" as "dissenters" who make "false accusations" about the co-workers and/or hold "different teachings."** Moreover, (in the draft) **the authors allege the Great Lakes brothers "deny that there should be a leadership in the work, claiming that the groups of workers are independent."** So, which impression represents fact and which facade?

This leads us to ask—Do the authors' of "Different Teachings..." (both versions) really have no issues with the Great Lakes brothers? Should we believe the authors⁶ are not rejecting, labelling or accusing the Great Lakes area brothers of being dissenters? (as suggested by their omission from the final version.) Or (based on the draft, inadvertently released) should we conclude the "blended co-workers" have serious issues with the Great Lakes brothers? We leave the answers to the reader.

Additional Examples of Serious Problems and Inaccuracies in DCP's "Different Teachings..." are the following:

- **ALLEGATION #16: Regarding Freedom of Speech**

The DCP authors' say, "***The dissenters claim that their 'freedom of speech' is being violated (Nigel Tomes, 'The One Publication Campaign'...***) criticizing a message by Minoru Chen (...) in which he said, "*The Lord's Body is the place with the least freedom.*" [p.5]

RESPONSE: What Nigel Tomes actually wrote (after quoting Brother Minoru's words) was, "We are aware that "freedom of speech" was strongly argued in the co-workers' meeting in Phoenix, AZ (February 2003), by some senior and respected brothers who disagreed with the "one publication" policy. In this instance the "blended co-workers" used their "monopoly of the podium" to promote their own views and depreciate alternative perspectives sincerely expressed by others." (Nigel Tomes, 'One Publication Campaign'...)

Nigel never made the "**claim that their 'freedom of speech' is being violated**" (as the authors' of "Different Teachings..." falsely allege). Rather he criticized Brother Minoru for publicly raising the "freedom of speech" issue after signing the "Phoenix Accord" in Feb. 2003.

This point was elaborated upon by Nigel in another piece where he wrote:

"We are aware that 'freedom of speech' was strongly argued in the Phoenix meetings, by a senior, respected brother from Chicago who disagreed with "one publication." In December, 2003, this brother [Jim Reetzke] wrote a short article surveying the impact of the printing press on God's recovery since the Reformation. ...The role of the "freedom of speech" in the US constitution was specifically mentioned [in that article]. This particular point was publicly attacked by the "blended co-workers" [Minoru Chen] at the 2004 LSM Winter Training, ...In this instance the "blended co-workers" used the "power of the podium and the printing press" to promote their own "one publication" view. Simultaneously, they depreciated the view expressed by this senior brother at the Phoenix gathering. May we ask, in this case did the "blended co-workers" apply the statement endorsed in Phoenix: "***In all of our speaking-privately, publicly, and globally-we should refrain from indictments and innuendos***"? May we inquire, is it ethical for the "blended co-workers" to publicly attack views which were expressed, in confidence, in a "private" co-workers' meeting in Phoenix? Had the "blended co-worker" who spoke this message [Minoru Chen] previously engaged in the "***direct communication [which] is imperative in all our relationships***"? Had the "blended co-workers" "***look[ed] for resolution of [these] problems through constant, personal, face-to-face fellowship [with this brother]***"? In this case, how did the "blended co-workers" apply the guidelines, they endorsed in Phoenix?"

[Nigel Tomes, "The 'PHOENIX ACCORD'.... on the Internet at concernedbrothers.com]

Clearly the issue was brother Minoru's apparent failure to abide by the "Phoenix Accord."

The DCP authors of "Different Teachings..." **never** pointed out that Nigel's statements were made in the context of the "Phoenix Accord." By omitting the context they seriously misrepresent his statements and twist their meaning by saying "*The dissenters claim that their 'freedom of speech' is being violated.*" That allegation is unfounded and untrue.

- **ALLEGATION #17: Regarding LSM's Bible-Smuggling into China**

The DCP authors say, "Concerning the arrest of Li Guang-qing for attempting to smuggle Recovery Versions into China, Titus Chu castigates LSM [saying] 'My point is that the behavior of you brothers, LSM and its representatives, was shameful and exposed the Lord's recovery to public ridicule.' 'Isn't this an unabashed lie? Isn't this unethical...?' He [Titus] calls the incident an 'LSM-Taiwan Gospel Book Room misadventure.'...the fact is that LSM, Taiwan Gospel Book Room, and the brothers representing them spoke and behaved truthfully, ethically and in a manner honoring the Lord. Titus Chu's...accusations are self-serving, irresponsible and untrue." [p. 7]

RESPONSE: The DCP authors conveniently omit the object of Titus Chu's questions—"Isn't this an unabashed lie? Isn't this unethical...?" Notice they have juxtaposed two separate quotes, omitting the material in between. What is Titus alleging to be a "lie" and "unethical"? The authors don't tell us. They simply assert that LSM and its representatives, the parties involved "spoke and behaved truthfully, ethically and in a manner honoring the Lord." They also assert that "Titus Chu's...accusations are self-serving, irresponsible and untrue." However, the DCP authors never present the relevant facts for the objective reader to evaluate. What are they trying to hide?

The relevant section of Brother Titus Chu's Letter (to 21 Blended Co-workers, July 22, 2006) reads:

"My point is that the behavior of you brothers, LSM and its representatives, was shameful and exposed the Lord's recovery to public ridicule. **Despite published reports of the close links between Mr Li (Lai) and the local churches ("Shouters") in China, the Church in Hong Kong and Living Stream Ministry, the Los Angeles Times reported, "In a telephone interview, Living Stream Ministry spokesman Chris Wilde in Anaheim denied any link between his organization and either Li or the Shouters. "We don't have any connection with them, and we really don't know that much about them," he said.**" (LA. Times, Jan. 9, 2002, p. A3) Isn't this an unabashed lie? Isn't this unethical for upright people, to say nothing of believers in Christ?" (Titus Chu to 21 "Blended Co-workers," July 22, 2006)

The section of Titus Chu's letter omitted by the DCP authors of "Different Teachings..." is emphasized above. What was Titus alleging to be a lie? It was the statement of LSM-spokesman, Chris Wilde reported in the LA Times: "*Chris Wilde in Anaheim denied any link between his organization and either Li or the Shouters. "We don't have any connection with them, and we really don't know that much about them," he said.*" (LA. Times, Jan. 9, 2002). Is this statement by Chris Wilde, a lie or the truth? Without the quote from the LA Times how can the elders, to whom this material was presented at LSM's Elders' Training, determine the truth? Vital information has been withheld by the DCP authors of "Different Teachings..."

Titus Chu (in his letter) went on to ask:

"How was it the LSM-spokesman *denied any link between [LSM] and either Li or the Shouters*?" Brother Chris Wilde is the official media spokesman for LSM. Yet, on behalf of LSM, he flat-out *denied any link* saying, *"We don't have any connection with"* the churches in China (the "Shouters") and Mr. Li, a brother facing execution. LSM and Andrew Yu were clearly implicated in this *"bungled smuggling scheme that became an international incident"*. Yet LSM *denied any link,...any connection.*" (Titus Chu to 21 Blended Co-workers, July 22, 2006)

It is clear from this that Titus was addressing the statements of LSM-spokesman, Chris Wilde quoted in the media. Was Chris Wilde's statement an "unabashed lie" as Titus Chu contends or are "Titus Chu's...accusations...irresponsible and untrue" (as DCP's "Different Teachings..." alleges)?

Here is some additional relevant information to help readers decide:

[1] The Washington Post reported: "*Friends said Li is a member of the Local Church, and was asked by a church leader from Anaheim, California, to deliver the Bibles to Fuqing [China] about a year ago.*" Later reports identified Andrew Yu as the "*church leader from Anaheim,*" saying: "*Prosecution papers name Andrew Yu, 51, general manager of Living Stream, as a source of the Bibles.*"

[2] Another newspaper reported: "*Mr. Li is...only someone helping to deliver the Bibles on behalf of another Christian group [LSM] based in Anaheim, Calif.*" An "in depth" report revealed the depths of involvement, "*Church members in Taiwan gave businessmen from Fuqing [China] money to buy*

33,000 Recovery Bibles. The Bibles were printed at a Living Stream plant in South Korea and shipped to Hong Kong." In the light of these reports, is Chris Wilde's denial of "any link between his organization [LSM]" and the participants in this Bible-smuggling scheme credible? Are these news reports consistent with Chris Wilde's statement on behalf of LSM, that "We don't have any connection with them, and we really don't know that much about them"?

The brothers involved with LSM's Defense & Confirmation Project are familiar with due process in the sphere of the law courts. Yet they willfully withheld crucial information from the "evidence" presented in the DCP document, "Different Teachings..." Is this fair? Is this honest?

- **ALLEGATION #18: Regarding Brother Lee's Final Public Speaking, Repenting for Past Failures**

DCP accuses Titus Chu and certain of his co-workers of "Distorting Brother Lee's Speaking about Repenting for Past Failures in Receiving Believers to Justify Embracing Christianity" (p. 14) **RESPONSE:** Who is distorting the meaning? On this point the draft document differs significantly from the final version. The draft talks of "Brother Lee's...Repenting for **the Churches'** Failures..." (heading). The text says, "The dissenting brothers distort a statement that Brother Lee made in the last message of the 1997 Chinese-speaking Conference about repenting to the Lord **for mistakes made by the churches** in receiving all believers..." This idea is repeated in the draft, saying "In fact, what [Brother Lee] repented for was **the negligence of the churches** under his ministry to fully practice receiving people according to God..." However, in DCP's final version this has been modified, all references to "**the churches** repenting for past mistakes..." Have been removed. The final version leaves unanswered the question of who made the mistakes.

However, DCP's published writings posted on AFaithfulWord.org echo the draft version. Under the series heading, "**A Pattern of Twisting**" one article is entitled: "**Repenting for Offending the Body of Christ – What Did Witness Lee Really Say?**" It states:

"What Brother Lee said in the Chinese-speaking conference was his observation and realization before the Lord **that the churches receiving his ministry had at times failed** in the past to live up to that standard," Later it alleges, Brother Lee "shared with the saints his grieving **that the churches under his ministry had caused offence** through coming short in our practice of these truths." (AFaithfulWord.org)

Yet is DCP's presentation of this point on AFaithfulWord.org accurate? Or is DCP "twisting" the facts? A literal translation of Brother Lee's message (spoken in Chinese) reads:

"...**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. 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..." (W. Lee)

Clearly, Brother Lee was not merely repenting for mistakes made by "**the churches under his ministry**" (as DCP's AFaithfulWord.org contends). Brother Lee included himself, saying, "**We all made mistakes** in this matter in the past, **I myself included.**" Yet the DCP authors balk at admitting that Brother Lee himself ever made mistakes. Instead they shift the focus of Brother Lee's "repentance" away from himself and on to the churches. We ask--Who then is "distorting" and "twisting" Brother Lee's final speaking?

Other Unsubstantiated Allegations

The "Warning letter" of quarantine against Titus Chu contains other allegations for which no evidence or supporting information are offered. Point 2 of the "Warning Letter" contains 14 points (numbered (a) through (n).) **Eight of these 14 points, a majority, 57% of the total, are unsubstantiated by any "evidence"** in the DCP document, "Different Teachings..." They are merely unsubstantiated accusations. The following are a few examples:

- **ALLEGATION #19: "LSM is a headquarters exercising control over the churches"**

For example, the "Quarantine letter" alleges that "*open dissent and opposition on the part of Titus Chu and some of his co-workers...[has been] expressed in the following:*

Slandering LSM,...and those who serve in it, by declaring that LSM is a headquarters exercising control over the churches throughout the world.” (A Warning..., Point 2b, p. 2)

RESPONSE: No supporting evidence is offered in the “Warning Letter” or in the supporting DCP document, “Different Teachings...” Nor is this matter referred to in the “Blended co-workers’ letters to Titus Chu. No reference is made to published materials by either Titus or his co-workers in the form of published messages, audio or video tapes etc. No supporting evidence is provided to back up this claim.

- **ALLEGATION #20: LSM publications have replaced the Bible**

LSM’s “Warning Letter” alleges “*open dissent and opposition...[has been] expressed in the following: Claiming that the publications of LSM have replaced the Bible as the source in some churches and are emphasized above the Bible.*”(A Warning..., Point 2c, p. 2)

RESPONSE: Again, **no supporting evidence** is offered. Where and when did Titus, or his co-workers make this claim? If indeed this allegation was made, which churches are the “some churches”? Moreover, if this allegation was made, shouldn’t it be examined to see if there is any substance in fact? The “Warning Letter” seems to assume that this allegation was made and that it is false. How can this allegation be evaluated without any evidence?

- **ALLEGATION #21: “No speaking of the Lord through the ministry to all the churches”**

“Asserting that there is no speaking Lord through the ministry to all the churches thereby opening the door to different speakings, different teachings, and different leadings in the Lord’s recovery.” (A Warning..., Point 2j, p. 2)

RESPONSE: This is a serious allegation, yet again **no support is offered, no evidence presented**. Where, when and by whom was this critical statement made? Where is it documented? How can this claim be evaluated without any supporting facts? Was the statement actually made that “*there is no speaking Lord through the ministry to all the churches*”? Or is a significantly different statement being misunderstood and misrepresented?

The Great Lakes brothers made a statement related to this topic, saying, “*We reject as unscriptural the concept that the Lord’s “up-to-date speaking” (“God’s present oracle”) to the local churches and the saints in the Lord’s recovery occurs **exclusively** through ministry conducted under the auspices of LSM (i.e., the “seven annual feasts,” the weekly ministry meetings, the FTT, etc.) or **exclusively** through a group of “blended co-workers” associated with LSM.*” (Great Lakes brothers’ 3rd letter to the “blended co-workers,” February 28, 2006, emphasis original).

Note that this statement does not say that there is “*no speaking Lord through the ministry to all the churches.*” Rather, the Great Lakes brothers repudiate the concept that the Lord **only speaks** through the LSM ministry. The question arises whether this kind of statement has been distorted and misrepresented in the allegation contained in the “Warning letter.” The onus of proof surely lies with those making this allegation. As of now, no evidence is presented. This is yet another unsubstantiated claim.

- **ALLEGATION #22: “Disparaging and Misrepresenting the FTTA in order to hinder saints from attending the training”**

RESPONSE: This allegation about Titus and his co-workers appears as point 2e in the “Warning” letter. Again **no supporting evidence is presented** in either the Warning letter itself or the supporting material, “Different Teachings...” The “draft version” of the DCP document says, “*In a number of churches saints desiring to participate in the FTTA and MAFTT have been discouraged from doing so and not supported by their churches financially.*” (The Different Teachings and False Accusations of the Dissenters, [Draft] Point IV 1d). The accusation is vague, “in a number of churches”—how many churches? Which churches? Saints “*have been discouraged,*” by whom? On what basis? The statement seems to assume that every saint “*desiring to participate in the FTTA and MAFTT*” is automatically qualified and should be recommended regardless of spiritual, psychological, physical or financial condition. Are there never any who should be “*discouraged from doing so*” for legitimate reasons? Moreover, the statement seems to assume that trainees ought to

be "supported by their churches financially," as a matter of right. Lastly, what is the role of Titus Chu and some of his co-workers in all this?

- **ALLEGATION #23: Discouraging and even preventing people from participating in the seven annual international gatherings**

It is alleged that Titus Chu and some of his co-workers have been "discouraging and even preventing people from participating in the seven annual international gatherings, saying that these gatherings are unscriptural and are used as a means of controlling the churches." ["Warning Letter" Point 2d, p. 2]

RESPONSE: Again, when was this statement made and by whom? **No verifiable facts** are offered to substantiate this allegation. Under "Preventing people from attending..." The "draft version" of "Different Teachings..." says "some churches do not announce the seven international gatherings." Which churches? If some churches don't announce..., does that amount to "preventing people from participating"? Why is blame attributed to Titus Chu and certain co-workers? Don't the elders of the local churches decide what to announce? Are they controlled by Titus and his co-workers? The Draft continues, "In April 2006 the elders in Columbus..." Again why is this attributed to Titus and his co-workers? The draft clearly identifies the Columbus' elders as being responsible.

Moreover, "A sister reported that she was told by the elders in her locality...[they] were 'conference junkies'." says the DCP draft. Again which locality? Which elders? What does this have to do with Titus Chu and his co-workers? Even the biblical principle is violated here, "Against an elder do not receive an accusation, except at the mouth of two or three witnesses." (1 Tim. 5:19) The Apostle Paul called for "two or three witnesses," yet the DCP authors offer the anecdotal evidence of one sister! This is clearly insufficient evidence according to the Biblical standard. Lastly, DCP alleges, "Saints were instructed by the elders in their localities not to take others with them to these [LSM] gatherings." Again which elders? Which localities? The statement assumes those accompanying were qualified (e.g. met the minimum age requirement). Without this information, how can this allegation be evaluated? Lastly, again, what did this have to do with Titus and his co-workers?

By making serious unsubstantiated allegations against Titus Chu and certain co-workers, the "blended co-workers" and the DCP authors are violating some basic scriptural and ethical tenets—that allegations should be backed up by credible evidence. In making unsubstantiated allegations, they seem to be engaged in "mud slinging," hoping that "some of the mud will stick."

- **ALLEGATION #24: Carrying Out Rival Independent Moves in the Work**

LSM's "Warning Letter" accuses Titus Chu of "carrying out in the way of rivalry independent moves in the work in various continents..." [Point 2n, p. 2]

RESPONSE: This point relates to the actions, activities of Titus and his co-workers. Yet Brother Lee emphasized that there is no restriction on the movements of the workers. He said,⁸

"the leadership is not exercised over the ministers' acts. No one should exercise any control over the work for the Lord. If one has the burden to go to Alaska, he must be clear that this going is of the Lord. No one controls his going or not going, but he need to be clear that his decision is of the Lord through fellowship with the Lord and the Body. There is no restriction exercised in the movements of the workers, but if someone rises up to teach something beyond the teaching of the apostles, the leadership may rise up to tell this one not to teach differently. The leadership which is shown in the New Testament is mainly in the teachings of the ministers, not in the acts of co-workers. As the Lord's recovery is spreading throughout the entire world, who can direct the acts of so many co-workers and serving ones? We do not have a board or a mission to direct the acts of the co-workers. No one is in a position to direct the ministers' acts."

Evidently in this matter—the move of each worker—the "blended co-workers" are not following Brother Lee; Apparently, they are seeking to exercise control over other workers beyond what Brother Lee clearly taught.

CONCLUSION

LSM's "blended co-workers" have called for the quarantine of Titus Chu and certain of his co-workers. This disciplinary action was announced at the LSM elders' training in Whistler, BC. One

would expect a drastic measure like quarantine to be based upon irrefutable evidence of serious misdeeds—heresy, idolatry, immorality or similar documented behaviour. On the contrary, no such offences were alleged or proven. Rather, the tenuous charges of “teaching differently” and “being dissenting” were alleged. During the LSM proceedings at Whistler, BC the accused were denied due process. No opportunity was given for the accused to answer serious charges, nor to present their case, nor to question the “evidence” presented. Here we have examined some of the numerous allegations. We have found the “evidence” presented by DCP seriously flawed. At least eight accusations are made without a single shred of evidence. Other facts have been misrepresented and given biased interpretations. Relevant information has been withheld. The DCP authors participated in LSM’s litigation with Harvest House publishers. They are aware of the standards of proof required in courts of law. The “evidence” presented by DCP in the present case falls far short of those standards of proof. DCP have manifestly failed to prove their case. **The evidence does not justify the verdict—the quarantine of Titus Chu.**

Before closing, I wish to raise the question—What’s next? The present case sets an important precedent for the future. If the local churches join LSM’s quarantine of Titus Chu, on the basis of this kind of evidence, who’s next? The quarantine of Titus is merely the first step. The 21 “blended co-workers’” initial letter to Titus Chu (June 2005) was accompanied by a similar letter to Brother Yu-Lan Dong in Brazil. In writing to Titus, the 21 “blended co-workers” made reference to⁹ “*your work, Brother Titus, and that of Brother Dong in Brazil.*” Titus was also told,⁹ “*the real problem being expressed was with your [Titus’] publications as well as Brother Dong’s.*” Who’s next? Brother Dong. LSM’s current quarantine campaign sets a precedent for similar measures to purge Brother Yu-Lan Dong of Brazil and then others. What about the local churches? Do the “blended co-workers” also intend to quarantine those local churches which reject their directive to quarantine Titus? Will they then proceed to quarantine churches who fellowship with those churches which receive Titus? In short, when will the quarantining process end? The ghoul of quarantine the “blended co-workers’” have unleashed threatens to divide the recovery into “exclusive” and “open” branches, like the Plymouth Brethren. History shows the “exclusives” divided repeatedly, becoming isolated, inbred and irrelevant. Do we want to repeat this sad history?

Nigel Tomes

November, 2006

NOTES:

* This article is based, in large part, upon my personal submission to the review panel established by the Church in Toronto to consider LSM’s “Warning Letter” of quarantine and accompanying materials. The review panel’s conclusions have been posted on the “ChurchInToronto.net” website. The views expressed here are my personal views. They do not necessarily express the views of any other elders, workers or any local church with whom I am associated.

1. We use the phrase “the ‘blended co-workers’ affiliated with Living Stream Ministry (LSM)” because (1) the core members of the “blended co-workers” hold positions within the LSM corporation—president, directors, manager etc., and/or they are employed by LSM. (2) The core “blended co-workers” minister from the podium at the (so-called) “seven feasts,” events conducted under the auspices of LSM. (3) The “blended co-workers” previously issued the “One Publication” document, “Publication Work...” (June 2005) which declares that LSM (and the TGBR) is the sole “authorized” publisher within the Lord’s recovery and “authorized” publications should pass through their “discerning check.” We assume the authors of the “Warning Letter” and DCP’s supporting material have passed their documents through LSM’s “discerning check.” We regard them as “LSM approved” documents. (4) The documents analysed here were presented at LSM’s elders’ training (ITERO) held at Whistler, BC, October 2006. In the interests of being concise, we use the short-hand phrases “LSM’s blended co-workers” or “LSM” (as in the title of this piece,) based upon this understanding.

2. The title in full is: “A Warning to all the Saints and all the Churches in the Lord’s Recovery Concerning Titus Chu and those who Promote and Disseminate his Divisive Teachings, Publications, Practices and Views.” (October, 1, 2006) Signed “on behalf of all the blending co-workers in the Lord’s recovery” by 63 brothers representing various continents and countries. Posted on the LSM-approved website, “AFaithfulWord.org.” Hereafter, we refer to this document as the “Warning Letter.”

3. The full title is: “Different Teachings and Dissenting Views of Titus Chu and Certain of His Co-workers” by “Defense & Confirmation Project” (October 8, 2006). Posted on, “AFaithfulWord.org,” an LSM-approved website. Hereafter, we refer to this as DCP’s “Different teachings.” (On the relationship between DCP and LSM see “Allegations #12 and #13” below). A “Draft” version of DCP’s document was inadvertently made available

through the website, "lastadam.com." The "Draft" version of DCP's document entitled, "The Different Teachings and False Accusations of the Dissenters," is significantly different from the "final" version on several points. Some of these differences are pointed out below.

4. Officially known as the "International Training for Elders and Responsible Ones" (ITERO) held in Whistler, BC, Canada, October 5-7, 2006.

5. Quote from: "The Right to Due Process of Law", Canadian Civil Liberties Association, www.ccla.org. The denial of due process is not the major focus of the present article. It will be developed elsewhere. Moreover, one should also ask: Based upon what authority did the "blended co-workers" sit in judgment upon their co-worker, Titus Chu? Where is the precedent for this in Scripture?

6. RcV. Titus 3:13 fn. 1

7. This quote in its wider context refers to accepting and rejecting co-workers, Watchman Nee says: "A preacher once spoke sternly, "Look at your co-workers! What kind of persons they are!" Our attitude should take God's attitude as its standard. We cannot reject what God accepts, and we cannot accept what God rejects. We may have sloppy and under-qualified brothers, but we must ask, "Is he a brother?" If he is, we cannot "deport" him, unless he has committed excommunicable sins. We can excommunicate a student from a school, but we cannot excommunicate and reject a brother from a family. If anyone thinks that he can choose between brothers, I can exercise a choice as well. But a brother is a brother. We cannot cut off our relationship with him. **The basic principle of the church is recovery, not excommunication.**" (W. Nee, Collected Works, Vol. 60, p. 383)

8. Witness Lee, Leadership in the New Testament p 15.

9. 21 "Blended co-workers" letter to Titus Chu dated June 4, 2005. Quotes from p. 2