

## Introduction

I came into the Lord's recovery in 1971 and until this year had never known the history of the church in Shanghai under the leadership of Watchman Nee. But now saints who were there have prepared an account of their experience and what the church passed through in Shanghai, including the change in vision Nee introduced concerning the church and the work **that effected a momentous shift from Christ alone as the center to Nee and his ministry also, as an additional center.** "We all sat there astonished" as this radical word "pulled out of him for over an hour" – W. Lee 1948

Later, during his own era of leadership, Witness Lee followed a similar path as many brothers were confounded at the conflict in visions that emerged regarding the church. "The two visions cannot co-exist", said one brother, Don Rutledge, who was there from the beginning and experienced the blessing that issued from the original vision and the turmoil and division that accompanied the additional center.

Indeed, the paths run parallel that both Nee and Lee took in their respective eras of leadership, having begun the same, but later deviating from their original vision to the virtual insistence upon the churches' being one with a man and a ministry also. This additional center, Nee had once said, "will create a sphere which includes all believers who attach themselves to that second center and excludes those who do not. This dividing line will destroy the God-appointed boundary of locality, and consequently destroy the very nature of the churches of God." (The Normal Christian Church Life, p. 184)

## **HIDING HISTORY** in the Nee and Lee Eras of the Lord's Recovery

### **Their Parallel Paths of Deviating from the Vision**

**1948** "According to Nee's new theory of the Jerusalem Principle, all the Local Churches had to hand over their churches under the leadership of 'the Work'. It contradicted his previous principle of the 'independence of each Local Church'. He also discarded his viewpoint of the Local Church: One locality, one church." (A Timeline of Watchman Nee Era, p. 3)

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## **HIDING HISTORY** in the Nee and Lee Eras of the Lord's Recovery

This writing is a transparent rendering of the history of “the local churches” under the leadership of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee and their ministry(s), which now is in the hands of a group of “blending brothers” who were mentored by Lee and are fully engaged in promoting his ministry in and through the “local churches” associated with them and with Living Stream Ministry.

*“Living Stream Ministry publishes the works of [Watchman Nee](#) and [Witness Lee](#) providing the authoritative and definitive collections of treasures from these two servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. The writings of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee focus on the enjoyment of the divine life, which all the believers possess, and on the building up of the church, the goal of God's work with man in this age.” (from LSM Home page)*

The term “local church” is to be applied to Christians in a locality who meet on a ground of understanding that they are one in Christ with every true believer on the earth and desire practically to be built up with believers in their own locality **according to Christ alone and God's receiving**. This is the picture we see in the New Testament.

It is also the vision we see at the beginning of the Lord's recovery in the Watchman Nee era, but toward the end his view had changed dramatically as the threat of Communist interference rolled across China. The era of Witness Lee parallels that of his mentor: They both began with 1) Christ as life for building up local churches, with “administration local each answering to the Lord”; but ended up inspiring a movement in the churches to 2) “hand over” the reins of leadership to one man and his ministry.

### **Following the Vision**

**DON RUTLEDGE:** “In **1975**, we were having a conference in Dallas. Before the meetings, we would pray in the large home on our property and then walk across the parking lot to the large new meeting place we had just built. One evening I was walking with Brother Lee. He stopped, turned to me and then put his arm around my shoulder. (Never before and never since had I seen him embrace a brother. Thus, I realized he was about to tell me something very serious.) In his speaking **he shared with me that he once told Watchman Nee that he was not just following him, but rather was following the truth and vision Brother Nee taught** for practicing the church life according to the New Testament pattern. Furthermore, he told Brother Nee that he would not follow him if Nee left the vision, but that he, Brother Lee, would continue to follow the vision. He then looked me straight in the eye and charged me, ‘Brother Don, if I leave the vision do not follow me, but follow the vision.’ I was a little speechless but I did manage to return the embrace and assure Brother Lee that I would remain true to the vision and the truth.” *D.R.*

Brother Lee knew well of the deviation that Watchman Nee took in China in 1948 that was short-lived and ended abruptly at the hands of the Communist government in 1952 and with the church leaders' **thorough review and judgment of Nee** (1957). The roles of the government and the church brought an end to the Nee era.

When Brother Lee came to the U. S. in **1962**, he did not talk about the factors that ended the Nee era and published little on it later; he simply came back to the vision, with anointing and blessing that attracted people to come and see what the Lord was doing in Los Angeles. New ones were added and the churches grew and spread; until **1974**, that is, when the churches in the Witness Lee era experienced *their* turning away from the vision.

## The Vision and Practice of Receiving Believers

On receiving fellow believers Witness Lee had shared in **1968**,  
“It is only by being so liberal and general that we can receive all the saints in a proper way. If we are otherwise, we cannot avoid being sectarian in the matter of receiving. If we are special in anything and insist upon that, we will probably not receive those who differ from us in certain matters. Our receiving must be the same as God's receiving, no less and no more. God's receiving is the basis of our receiving. Our receiving must not be according to our taste, our opinion, or our assertion. It must be in accordance with God's receiving. It must be based upon God's receiving – nothing else.

“God **receives people according to His Son**. As long as a person receives His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, as His personal Savior, regardless of the concepts he holds regarding all other things, God receives him immediately. Since God receives people in this way, we too must receive people in the same way. **Our receiving must be in accordance with God's receiving**. If our receiving differs from His, it means that we are wrong: either we are more narrow or more broad than God. This will cause much trouble and damage to the church life.” (W. Lee, *Practical Expression of the Church*, pp 66-77, 1968)

### Turning Away from the Vision

Don Rutledge as a former elder in local churches in Texas was well-respected among church leaders, including Witness Lee, and he wrote about the flourishing time in the sixties and early seventies when the churches were growing in life and numbers, and spreading. It was certainly a time of blessing on a path of receiving believers according to God's Son alone. That is, until the seismic shift in the direction of the churches occurred and wide-sweeping changes throughout “the recovery” set the churches on the path Nee had taken in 1948.

#### 1974

**DON RUTLEDGE:** “The turn away from the vision Witness Lee had regarding the practice of the local church life began in **January 1974** at the very first special elders and co-workers conference. This is when the concept of the work began in the U. S. Few of the saints realize the magnitude of effect this meeting had on the churches. *With charts and statistics, Witness Lee and Max Rapoport came forth to launch the movement. It was boldly declared that the churches would use Witness Lee as the exclusive source of teaching* and Max would serve as the coordinator to bring the various churches, with their elders, into a unified movement. Two life-study messages a week were going to be given in Anaheim and ministry stations were set up in various cities to repeat the messages through designated brothers. Some smaller churches consolidated to the larger localities where there was a ministry station. The official list of twelve men who could give conferences was announced. Bi-annual trainings began that year. From that time on, the individual churches would be called to account if they were moving “independently.” In addition to coordinating the elders to act in a single direction, Max was charged to assist the various churches to be more effective with gospel preaching and outreach. “He began to travel and, in particular, to meet with the elders. Those who would not be good movement men were pushed aside, if possible, or moved somewhere to be out of the way. On several occasions, Max told me that he was working to bring the elders and churches into one coordination for the purpose of carrying out the burden of Witness Lee. He told me several times that only he could ‘put the whole thing together’.

"I am not attempting to call into question the motive of Witness Lee or Max. During this time, Witness Lee did some very good teaching and Max did some very good gospel work.

But what did happen was that **the nature of the various 'local churches' changed from being local in administration and spontaneous in actions to being directed from a center with clear administrative leaders and directors.**

“Things were definitely not the same. Some were saying the time of blessing has passed; or we changed our vision; or the moving of the Spirit left the churches; or teaching, doctrine, and methods replaced life. This time ended with a split between Witness Lee and Max Rapoport after a power struggle between them. Both had their followers, and Witness Lee won out. It was at this time, the time of becoming a movement that opened the door to Philip Lee and set the stage for the current Blending Brothers. After the split with Max, there was a pause in the development of the movement. Witness Lee began again to start up the movement consolidation in 1981. He bought property in Irving, Texas and began making plans to strengthen the movement. Benson Phillips and Ray Graver of Texas began traveling to the churches to promote Witness Lee, his ministry, and the office. By 1984 the first round of law suits had been won. WL declared that the boulders were off the road and the “Lord’s Recovery” could proceed. In 1986 the final pieces were put in place. The movement looked nothing like the early days of Elden Hall, Ohio, the Northwest or the East Coast.

1984

And, “the recovery” did proceed in **1984** with Brother Lee coming forward to announce the new way which would feature him and his ministry. The work for the spread of the ministry took on the look of local churches melting into unity under one universal leader who now held the reins of the churches in the movement he alone orchestrated. The key, he said, to “the Lord’s new move” is the one accord among the saints in all the churches. Thus, he sounded a call to have an army of followers under him as the "commander-in-chief", while brothers responded in **1986** by constructing and signing a paper stating their allegiance to him and to his ministry. Refer to [www.TwoTurmoils.com](http://www.TwoTurmoils.com) for details.

It is not that “ministry churches” are not good; they may be “good” but actually sectarian. Are they aligned with the New Testament vision of Paul or John that oneness is according to Christ alone - not a particular ministry also? Witness Lee gave the strongest warning about this in a chapter from *The Vision of God’s Building*, 1964.

## **The Ministry Becomes the Lampstand** W. Lee

1964

“All gifts and all gifted persons are for the building up of the Body; they are not for any work in itself. The practice of today’s Christianity is absolutely different in principle. Wherever there is a gifted person, a spiritual “giant” with a certain gift, that person will begin a work. He will build up a certain Christian organization or ministry, and possibly call it some worthy name. We are not opposing anyone, but we are against the wrong principles which damage the Body life. The Apostle Paul did not form any Christian organization; he did not set up any kind of work. For possibly thirty years, he just established local churches. And, he did not keep any work in his own hands. In reading the New Testament we can only find the churches which were built up by him.

“At the time the Apostle John wrote the book of Revelation he was greatly experienced and matured. Of the twelve apostles he was the only one remaining. Yet he did not build up anything as his work, his ministry. Consider the local churches in Asia to whom he wrote: most of them were exceedingly weak; yet those churches were the lampstands, not the ministry of the Apostle John. John’s ministry was far more spiritual than the condition of those churches; yet he did not set up his ministry as a lampstand. In fact, he did not set up his ministry as anything. All he did was to further the building up of those local churches as the lampstands. Oh, we all must learn this! We must be aware of the dangerous tendency for any local church to become a work, kept in the

hand of some gifted person. If such is the case, that is a real degradation. However much the Lord may use a gifted person, however great his ministry may be, the local church must not become his work. **God's intention is not to build up the ministry of any person, but to build up His church. This is not a small matter.**

"In the New Testament there are the titles, the "church of God" (Acts 20:28), the "church of Christ" (Rom. 16:16), and the "church of the saints" (1 Cor. 14:33); 1Thess. 1:1). There is never any "church of the apostles. The church belongs to God, to Christ, to the saints, not to any apostle.

"The greater our gift is, the greater is the danger that we will take over the church and keep it in our hands. This will greatly damage the church life. We must learn not only how to minister in the local church, but also how to keep our hands off the church. This is not easy. The local church is not our personal enterprise. The local church is the property of the local saints, not some worker's business. Some gifted persons put a local church in their pocket. Oh, this is a real problem!

**"All the local saints must realize that the local church is their church. If the local saints are not clear concerning this, they will allow a gifted person to take the local churches into his own hands and treat it as his personal property. Then the entire church life will be finished. The local churches belong to the local saints. The gifted persons are just the means to perfect the saints to function; they are only the instruments used by the Lord to build up the churches.**

"Consider the situation in Christianity today. Look at the situation even from the time of the Reformation: four or five hundred years have passed, and it is still basically the same. Whenever a gifted person is raised up, a certain kind of work is established. I establish my work, you establish your work, he establishes his work. Then the church is gone. This is the source of all the divisions. However, if one gifted brother comes to build a local church, and a second gifted brother comes to build up the same church, there will be no division. All the work must be for the church, not for the workers. **The ministry should be for the church; the church should never be for the ministry.** We must be exceedingly clear concerning this principle. We must drop all wrong practices. A gifted brother should keep his hands off the local church. Although a gifted brother may sometimes not speak openly in a way of ministry, yet he still may quietly maneuver behind the scenes. Any such maneuvering damages the church. All gifts and gifted persons must be entirely for the local church. This is a tremendously vital matter."

Dear brothers and sisters,

January 5, 2014

It has been 40 years to the week since the churches were impacted by the sudden change in direction for them instituted at the January 1974 leaders' gathering. From that event, though, we can see clearly the new path that was entered onto by the churches, paralleling Nee's movement away from his original vision. The following account of local church history in the U. S. features views of spiritual blessing on a ground of oneness with Christ as life; as well as showing *seeds of deviation* in the churches that grew and became so openly manifest when the movement for a man and a ministry was officially launched in **January 1974.**

## History of the Local Churches

by Don Rutledge

### *An excerpt*

“Bi-annual conferences and trainings were a time of rich fellowship and mutual encouragement in the local churches. The saints in Los Angeles had a tremendous supply of grace to host complete strangers for days and weeks at a time. I was impressed over and over again with the phenomenon of finding myself in a room full of strangers who all happened to know Christ. After an hour or two of flowing fellowship, you felt as if you knew these people better than many of your relatives or old school mates. Many visitors to the conferences and trainings testified that the fellowship in the hospitality was even better and more enlightening than the messages in the conference meetings.

By **1968** the rich flow of spiritual life was so prevailing that meetings would start 45-60 minutes before the scheduled time. Many of the members of the church in LA lived within a 10-15 minute walk of the Elden Avenue Hall. Often a few saints would begin walking to the hall and as they walked they would begin to sing and praise the Lord. As they came closer to the hall, others would join the group and enter into the singing and praising. As you came closer to the hall, more small groups would appear and join the singing and praising. It was as if the tribes of Israel were going up to Jerusalem for a feast and began to sing the Psalms of Assent. The meeting had in fact started in the homes, continued on the way and culminated at the hall far before the scheduled time.

After the meetings, restaurants and homes would be full of brothers and sisters sharing and building up one another. Occasionally the fellowship would go on into the night or become a little too loud making a joyful noise, and the police were called. But the police would tell the complainers that the church people had turned a crime infested downtown neighborhood into one of the most peaceful districts in LA. Thus, they were not going to interfere with them. On the other hand the older saints did urge the young people to respect the neighbors, and usually all was well.” D. R.

[www.LordsRecovery.us/HistoryoftheLocalChurches.doc](http://www.LordsRecovery.us/HistoryoftheLocalChurches.doc)

**In contrast to the above account which issued from the original vision the following is an account of the result of the change in vision and practice  
CHANGE IN VISION RESULTS IN CHANGE IN PRACTICE.**

## **A Man, A Ministry and Two Turmoils**

In 1981, Benson Phillips and Ray Graver began a campaign to promote brother Witness Lee and his ministry, with the inciting word that “we owe him”. The campaign became intensified in February 1986 when the same two brothers drew up a letter of allegiance to Brother Lee that was signed by 400+ elders and co-workers during an international elders’ conference in Southern California. Becoming immersed in such fellowship at that time and in the ensuing years, the leaders in the Lord's recovery were galvanized into the same mindset and embarked upon a new way in the churches that featured oneness with a man, a ministry, and a ministry office, the Living Stream Ministry. Such a drive brought in confusion, chaos, and division in the last thirty years and two major turmoils.

## Brothers' Letter of Agreement

Dear Brother Lee,

After hearing your fellowship in this elders' training, we all agree to have a new start in the Lord's recovery. For this, we all agree to be in one accord and to carry out this new move of the Lord solely through prayer, the Spirit, and the Word. We further agree to practice the recovery one in: teaching, practice, thinking, speaking, essence, appearance, and expression. **We repudiate all differences among the churches, and all indifference toward the ministry office, and the other churches.** We agree that the church in our place be identical with all the local churches throughout the earth.

We also agree to follow your leading as the one who has brought us God's New Testament economy and has led us into its practice. **We agree that this leading is indispensable to our oneness and acknowledge the one trumpet in the Lord's ministry and the one wise master builder among us....** [Letter of Allegiance](#)

A new mentality of expectation, cooperation, and oneness was being melded into the minds of elderships everywhere, the essence of which was for the elders to drop their reins in all the churches and hand them over to Brother Lee. He would lead the churches. He and his ministry were now a center. That center would identify those who were of it, and those who were not. Those who were of it were in "the oneness". When this "oneness" began to be vigorously promoted, a big turmoil came in to the recovery that led to division in the late eighties. [Kyle Testimony](#)

Today, the local churches are in another major turmoil for the same reason. This center has become officially endorsed by "the leadership" in the recovery through the issuing of the One Publication edict, which promotes the "new" center, and draws a line between all who are "of it" and those who are not. Only LSM-approved publications are to be acceptable in the churches for "a testimony of our oneness in the Body" and "a safeguard for the unique ministry in the Lord's recovery", and "to preserve the integrity of the Lord's ministry among us, which is crucial to the practical oneness among the local churches". [Testimonies](#)

In the Holy Word for Morning Revival beginning next week, May 14, 2007, some of the Whistler conference fellowship from 2006 is given that is intended to help the saints understand the disciplinary action taken against a fellow co-worker accused of causing division. On page 166 the brothers responsible for the disciplinary action give a final word on the subject of *Shepherding the Flock of God*, which is what they feel their current action against Titus Chu is and also what the action taken by Witness Lee in 1990 was following the late eighties turmoil. Titus now joins, as a quarantined one, the four brothers who were quarantined at that time in the Lord's recovery - John Ingalls, Bill Mallon, John So, and Joseph Fung. The reasons for the quarantines? Essentially, the reasons these five brothers were quarantined were for not keeping the oneness of the "new center" that was being promoted in the recovery.

Three elders in Anaheim during the time of turmoil in the late eighties in fact resigned from the eldership primarily due to the "new center" promotions in their locality that they couldn't conscientiously support, and also due to an [activist group for the new center](#) from within the church that usurped them. The following was shared at the time of two of the elders' resignation.

## **Albert Knoch and John Ingalls Resign From Eldership**

“On Tuesday, March 14, 1989, Godfred, Al, and I had fellowship and prayer during the morning and then lunch together. It was a memorable time, a decisive time. I expressed strongly to the brothers my feeling concerning the futility and dishonesty of playing the role of elder in Anaheim any longer. It was hypocritical to go on in that status feeling as we did with strong conviction that we were in a system. Moreover, we were totally incapable of changing the course of the church or of practicing a generality with the saints where all were free to follow their own conscience. These considerations dictated that we should resign. Both Godfred and Al agreed. Of course, Godfred had already resigned and withdrawn from the eldership on November 13, 1988, about four months earlier, but he was still concerned for Al and me. We fellowshiped about this matter and felt very clear that we should take the step and resign. I proposed that we wait to announce this to the saints until I would return from a trip to Europe planned for the end of March, but both Godfred and Al urged that we should do it immediately. We decided then to make a statement to this effect in the coming Lord’s Day morning meeting, giving the reasons for it.

This was a critical and momentous decision for us. I had been an elder in the church in Los Angeles for twelve years and in the church in Anaheim for fifteen years, during all this time closely associated with Brother Witness Lee. This decision would change the course of our lives and of the church, but we believed it was of the Lord.

On Friday evening, March 17<sup>th</sup>, Al and I met with the other elders, Minoru Chen and Philip Lin, and announced to them our intention to withdraw from the eldership, giving them some explanation. They received it and urged us to notify Brother Lee immediately. This we intended to do, and did so by letter the next day.

Thus on the Lord’s Day morning, March 19<sup>th</sup>, I rose at the close of the meeting and announced our decision to withdraw from the eldership of the church. I made a few introductory remarks, saying that "I began to realize that our practices have differed and deviated from our vision. Our vision was the same, our teaching was mostly the same, the truth is always the same, but our practice has really differed." I included a statement that the nature of what we called the Lord’s recovery had changed, and then spoke in a number of points the reasons and basis for our decision to withdraw. I did this briefly without much elaboration, speaking for twenty-two minutes. I record here in abridged form the salient points.

1. There has been a change in emphasis to the building up of the work or the ministry more than the local churches. The ministry has been promoted, exalted, and built up, and the churches have suffered greatly in the process.
2. There had been a great effort and promotion to unite the saints and the churches around a certain leader and organization.
3. There has been much pressure with full expectation that all the saints and the churches will conform to the burden of the ministry and be identical with one another in full uniformity of practice to carry it out.
4. In February 1986 we had signed a letter along with 417 other elders agreeing that we would be identical with all the churches, that we would follow the ministry absolutely, and that we realized Brother Lee’s leading was indispensable to our oneness. Since these matters were not in agreement with the Word of God, we greatly regretted that we had subscribed to them, and I stated publicly that I would retract my signature.
5. There has been an emphasis, at least in practice, on a centralization of the churches and the work.
6. There has been a pervasive control exercised over the church, not so much directly, but very much indirectly, which makes it difficult to go on by getting our leading directly from the Lord.

7. Church history reveals that denominations have begun with the affiliation of groups of saints under one leadership followed by the commencement of a training center. We were also going that way.

8. I greatly appreciate Brother Lee's portion, but he has been exalted and honored above what is written, according to 1 Corinthians 4:6.

9. Brother Lee and his ministry have been made a great issue and factor of division among us.

10. Our going on and our relationship with the saints and with the church is made to depend on our relationship with Brother Lee. When this is done the ground of oneness is replaced with something else.

11. We have applied the teaching concerning the ground of oneness in a divisive and sectarian way, so that we divide ourselves from other Christians. This is due to an improper attitude and application of the truth. In the local churches we have become narrow and small as manifested in our attitude toward other Christians and in our reception of other saints.

12. Our attitude toward other Christians is one of belittling them and thinking we're superior. What we need is the reality of oneness, not just the teaching or slogan.

13. The Lord told us in His Word to go forth to Him outside the camp. The Lord is still calling His sheep out of every fold and every camp so that there can be one flock with one shepherd.

14. Our oneness should be as large as the whole Body of Christ. Any oneness that is smaller than this we should leave and not keep.

15. We should all go directly to the Lord for His leading in the church in order to have a local administration, at the same time maintaining a proper fellowship with other saints and other churches. At this point I quoted some sentences from a pamphlet entitled *The Beliefs and Practices of the Local Church*, published by the Living Stream Ministry. One sentence reads: "In all administrative affairs, the local churches are autonomous and locally governed."

16. There has been an over-stressing and distortion of the teaching concerning deputy authority, which has caused the saints to be fearful to follow their conscience, to be one with their spirit, and sometimes to speak their genuine concerns.

17. There has been too much emphasizing of methods more than the inner anointing, and external big success more than the experience of the inner life.

18. We have no problem with the matters of the "new way". We wanted to make that clear. Actually these things are not new.

In conclusion I said, "Based on the above points, we feel we must withdraw from the eldership. We are not able to lead you in this way, nor are we able to lead you out of this way. Many of you feel strongly that you would like to take a certain direction, and as elders we cannot lead you in that direction.... We really love you in the Lord. The Lord knows that. We care for you, and we wish you all the very best in the Lord. You are in our prayers. You will always be in our prayers. We ask you to pray for us too. Pray for Brother Al and me. If we've offended any of you saints, we ask you to please forgive us. We surely never intended to offend any one of you. We still like to keep our fellowship with you all as fellow-members of the Body of Christ."

Al Knoch then rose and spoke for eleven minutes, giving a very genuine and touching statement regarding his inner feeling about the eldership. I will just quote briefly here. He began: "I am so thankful that John could share those points, because I could not do it so clearly. I hold the same concerns.... These were the same concerns we presented to Brother Lee in all our times with him. So he knows all of these things already, and he has

considered them....As elders in the recovery we do have a problem with many of our practices, and there's no way we could in a good conscience continue on in the position without the reality. How can we lead you? We can't lead in that way, and yet the recovery is going that way.

"So we brothers feel...it's good for us, it's good for you, and it's good for the Lord that we withdraw at this time. The reason we didn't withdraw sooner, though we were clear to withdraw last December, is that we felt the need to stand here for these very concerns for a while longer to see what could be done, and to see how the saints would respond to this kind of stand. But the more we have done this, the more clear we have become that there will not be any change at this time in the way the recovery is going."

The saints, generally speaking, listened well, only interrupting once. The Lord's presence and strengthening were with us. Minoru Chen closed the meeting, saying that we all must realize that the points I had made were an expression of my own personal view. He made a special point of controverting my assertion that the nature of the recovery had changed. He said that the nature of the recovery had indeed not changed. That was his view.

I also resigned by letter from the board of directors and the presidency of the corporation. A great step had been taken and a turn made.

The next day I left with my wife for Europe, where I rested, while visiting and fellowshipping with a number of churches. Upon returning to Anaheim on May 2<sup>nd</sup> I was not led of the Lord to return to the meetings on Ball Road, where I had met with the saints for fifteen years, and where I had resigned from the eldership on March 19<sup>th</sup>. I continued to gather with saints for the Lord's Table in one of the couple's homes, where I had been meeting for some time prior to resigning.

## **Hiding History**

**WITNESS LEE:**      [www.HidingHistoryintheLordsRecovery.us](http://www.HidingHistoryintheLordsRecovery.us)

This website provides a voluminous study of the hidden history of the "local churches" and Witness Lee that is not included in LSM publications.

### **John Ingalls Speaking the Truth in Love**

This book by a former prominent leader is an account of events and concerns that led to turmoil and division in the "local churches" (late 1980s) and to the departure of many leaders and saints and families from the churches. As one who was close to Brother Lee from the very beginning, brother John Ingalls' testimony is invaluable.

[localchurchdiscussions.com/vBulletin/showthread.php?p=6020](http://localchurchdiscussions.com/vBulletin/showthread.php?p=6020)

### **WATCHMAN NEE:**

The era of Witness Lee in the "local churches" parallels that of his mentor, Watchman Nee, before him: They both began with 1) Christ as life for building up local churches, with "administration local each answering to the Lord"; but ended up inspiring a movement in the churches involving 2) the "handing over" of the reins of leadership to one man and his ministry, far from the original vision and claims of church legitimacy. [The timelines below indicate as much, as well as what were the true causes of turmoil and the real factors of division in both the Nee and Lee eras of the Lord's Recovery.](#)

## **Timelines of Nee and Lee Eras**

[www.HidingHistoryintheLordsRecovery.us/TimelineofWitnessLeeEraUS.pdf](http://www.HidingHistoryintheLordsRecovery.us/TimelineofWitnessLeeEraUS.pdf)

[www.HidingHistoryintheLordsRecovery.us/TimelineofWatchmanNeeEra.pdf](http://www.HidingHistoryintheLordsRecovery.us/TimelineofWatchmanNeeEra.pdf)

It seems to me that truth beckons our leaders to examine our history and then to “right the wrongs” printed in our church publications that run contrary to the truth. It is a simple work of the righteous, who above all things, desire to make straight the way of the Lord.

[www.MakingStraighttheWayoftheLord.com](http://www.MakingStraighttheWayoftheLord.com)

Steve Isitt

January to July 2014