

IS LSM CREATING A "THIRD TESTAMENT"?

The Blended Brothers' "New Language of the New Culture"— Biblical OR Bogus?

The Lord's Recovery is based on the principle that God is successively restoring New Testament truths which were lost during the degradation of the Church. Thus what God spoke in the New Testament is being progressively reestablished among God's people in its vitality through various ministers as church history unfolds. This general view of God's recovery recognizes the role of a broad spectrum of the Lord's servants throughout history. However, LSM's¹ "blended brothers'" Minister-of-the-Age paradigm narrows the focus of God's recovery work from an extensive group of ministers to a single thread of successive "Ministers of the Age."

The concept of a unique "Minister of the Age"² is the touchstone of the "blended brothers'" teaching. Under this view, in every age God has a single mouthpiece for His up-to-date speaking. Hence, they assert,³ *"God does not give other ministers their own light and revelation. All the ministers in a particular age must... speak only the contents of the unique vision...This is a strong principle that holds in every age, including today."* The "blended brothers" also claim that the latest⁴ *"ministry of the age subsumes and includes all the foregoing ministries."* Hence, the up-to-date ministry, identified as Bro. Witness Lee's ministry, is described as *"all-inheriting, all-encompassing and all-inclusive."* Moreover they allege the existence of a *"new language...in the new God-man culture of the new man."* These striking claims warrant investigation. Here we present the "blended brothers'" teaching and its practical implications. We ask—Have they elevated Brother Lee's writings to the point that their authority equals or exceeds the Old and New Testaments of Scripture? **Are they creating a "third testament"? Are they exalting Witness Lee's writings (the "Interpreted Word") above God's inspired Word (the Bible)?** Moreover, is the "blended brothers'" notion of a "new language and new culture of the new man" biblical or bogus?

Witness Lee's "All-inheriting, All-encompassing, All-inclusive Ministry of the Age"

An historical perspective suggests why LSM's "blended co-workers" promote Brother Lee's ministry beyond anything he claimed during his lifetime. Consider the Taylor branch of the Plymouth Brethren, a group related to the Recovery. During 1932-5, James Taylor's Brethren established close ties with Watchman Nee and the local churches in China. The relationship was short-lived due to fundamental differences. Nevertheless, despite the divergence, the parallels are suggestive. The decease of James Taylor Sr. was a watershed for the Brethren, just as Brother Lee's was for the Recovery. Taylor's personal leadership had been universally recognized and accepted for 50 years. His death in 1953 created a vacuum with the potential of undermining the Brethren's cohesion. The next group of leaders responded by⁵ *"promoting the ongoing implementation of Taylor's ministry, alongside a move to establish beyond challenge its binding status."* Their leadership has been described as⁶ *"an oligarchy working with a mutual aim of reinforcing the authority of previous ministry, particularly Taylor's."* This historical precedent suggests that, after the leader's decease, when his personal leadership is gone, his ministry is promoted and elevated to have binding authority in order to preserve the group's cohesion. Perhaps this explains why the "blended brothers" exalt Bro. Lee's ministry beyond anything he professed. Let's first document their promotional claims.

The "blended brothers" identify Witness Lee as the most recent "Minister of the Age." LSM's Ron Kangas proclaims,⁷ *"Brother Lee could not say it then, but we can say it today;... he was the minister of the age..."* His ascribed status even exceeds that of being a Minister of the Age, because his ministry subsumes all previous ministries. The "blended brothers" claim the latest⁸ *"ministry of the age subsumes and includes all the foregoing ministries."* This is indeed a bold assertion.

Special emphasis is placed on the final years of Bro. Lee's ministry when *"the vision of the age reached a phenomenal development...even the highest peak, of the divine revelation"* says⁹ LSM's Ron Kangas. No superlatives are spared when describing Brother Lee's vision. Bro. Ron says,¹⁰ *"At the very end of the last century...the Lord's recovery reached a virtually unprecedented peak...the consummate, ultimate, all-encompassing, all-inheriting vision. ...the consummate vision in the*

Lord's recovery, the all-inheriting vision of the age." Bro. Dick Taylor adds to the accolades, calling it¹¹ *"the all-inheriting, all-embracing, all-inclusive vision of the age."* The adjective, "consummate" implies a completed state of perfection. Whatever happened to the thought of on-going recovery—"The Lord has yet more light and truth to break forth from His Word" (Hymns #817)?

The "blended brothers" assert that Bro. Lee's ministry incorporates every positive element in the Scriptures. Bro. Ron Kangas states dogmatically,¹² *"Every positive element of vision in the Scriptures is included in the up-to-date all-inheriting vision of the age. Thus there is no reason to go back."* Similarly, LSM President, B. Phillips refers to W. Lee's ministry as¹³ *"this glorious ministry, which is the New Testament ministry in all its fullness."*

To clarify, let's ask—What is meant by "the New Testament ministry"? According to Bro. Lee, the New Testament ministry *"comprises all the works (ministries) of all...the ministers of the new covenant."*¹⁴ He explains,¹⁵ *"We may speak of Peter's ministry, of Paul's ministry...[but] these individual ministries are only small parts of...the unique ministry of the New Testament."* Contrast this reference to Peter and Paul's ministries as *"only small parts,"* with Bro. Benson's claim that W. Lee's ministry¹⁶ *"is the New Testament ministry in all its fullness."* He is also on record saying,¹⁷ *"we declare strongly that his [Bro. Lee's] ministry could never be over because his ministry is the New Testament ministry."* It is difficult to avoid concluding that LSM's "blended co-workers" elevate Brother Lee above the Apostles Peter and Paul. According to them, the entire New Testament ministry (including the ministries of the Apostles Peter, Paul and John) is all incorporated in Brother Lee's ministry, since⁸ *"The ministry of the age subsumes and includes all the foregoing ministries. The whole New Testament ministry has been recovered..."* This grandiose claim appears without any further qualification. Surely *"all the foregoing ministries"* includes the ministries of the New Testament writers, Peter, Paul and John? Doesn't this ascribe to Bro. Lee's ministry—the latest "ministry of the age"—a status at least equal to the New Testament? Isn't the same superlative status implied when Brother Lee's ministry is called¹⁰ *"the consummate, ultimate, all-encompassing, all-inheriting vision...of the age"?*

The "blended co-workers'" exaltation contrasts with Brother Lee's own attitude. Bro. Lee never piled tributes upon his ministry as the "blended co-workers" have. At times he provided a balancing word. For example, Bro. Benson doesn't hesitate to equate Bro. W. Lee with the Apostle Paul.¹⁸ Yet Bro. Lee distinguished himself from Paul, saying,¹⁹ *"[Paul's] ministry was to...complete the revelation of the New Testament. I had no part in this completion work so I do not add anything to the apostles' teaching."* In contrast, the "blended brothers" unabashedly equate Witness Lee's ministry with both the entire New Testament ministry and the Apostles' teaching.

Concerning the Apostles' teaching, LSM-president B. Phillips boldly proclaims,²⁰ *"We need to declare to the whole universe that the ministry we have been under is the apostles' teaching."* Let's clarify what is being asserted. In the Recovery, the phrase, "the apostles' teaching" indicates the whole New Testament. Hence Bro. Lee says,²¹ *"...the entire New Testament, from the first word of Matthew to the last word of Revelation...This is the apostles' teaching."* So, what is Bro. Benson implying when he claims²² *"the ministry we have been under is the apostles' teaching"?* When taken with his other statements (equating W. Lee's ministry with¹⁶ *"the New Testament ministry in all its fullness,"*) we conclude Bro. Benson considers Witness Lee's ministry to be equal with the Apostles' teaching, the entire New Testament.

Does the Recovery have a "Third Testament"?

Although Bro. W. Lee has passed away, the riches of his ministry remain in his writings, including the Recovery version footnotes encapsulating his ministry. LSM's Ron Kangas makes striking claims regarding these writings. He is on record saying,²³ *"The footnotes of the Recovery Version of the Holy Bible are all-inclusive. The truth, the life, the light, the revelation, and the vision in these notes are inherited...Every positive element of vision in the Scriptures is included in the up-to-date all-inheriting vision of the age. There is no reason to go back."*

It is a short step from such statements to regard Witness Lee's writings as the summation and replacement for the Scriptures. After all, if "every positive element... in the Scriptures" is incorporated in Bro. Lee's "all-inheriting, all-encompassing ministry," why not take a "short cut" by focusing exclusively on his writings, bypassing the Scriptures? If, as Ron Kangas claims,²⁴ "*The high peak of the divine revelation [is] the 'diamond' in the 'box' of the Bible,*" why not take the "diamond" and leave the "box of the Bible"? If the Recovery Version footnotes "*are all-inclusive,*" in terms of "*the truth, the life, the light, the revelation, and the vision,*" why not focus on the footnotes and ignore the Biblical text? Doesn't this teaching emphasize the "Interpreted Word" (of the ministry) above the divinely-inspired Word of God? Doesn't this imply the Recovery has a "third testament"—Witness Lee's writings—which equal or surpass the two testaments of Scripture. The "blended brothers'" practice appears to confirm this. Their messages at LSM's "seven annual feasts," are based on proof texts mined from Bro. Lee's messages. Obligatory Scripture references merely supplement outlines composed of proof texts from his writings. In LSM's practice, hasn't the "canon of the ministry" replaced the canon of Scripture?

New Language, New Culture, One New Man

In Christ, all believers are "One New Man" (Eph. 2:15; 4:24; Col. 3:10.) In this New Man "*there cannot be Greek and Jew...slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all*" (Col. 3:11.) Since Christ is everything in the New Man, there's no room for our natural status, background or culture. Based on this verse, one could say there's a "new culture," because Christ is the determining factor in the corporate "New Man." But, does this imply a "new language"?

On occasion Bro. Lee invented new terms to convey spiritual truths. He coined the term, "*son-ized*" to describe the process of becoming full-grown sons of God (e.g. Rom. 8:14). The "blended brothers" develop this technique even further. Asserting²⁵ "*Language and culture are inseparable,*" they deduce a "new language" is associated with the "new culture of the New Man." So Bro. Ed Marks exhorts,²⁶ "*We must learn the new language...in the new culture, the God-man culture of the new man...Today we are learning a new, divine, mystical vocabulary.*" But, what is this "new language"? Bro. Ron Kangas links it to Bro. Lee's "high peak" messages. He says,²⁷ "*By 1994 the ministry... brought the recovery into a new realm, a new stage, and a new culture with a new language...*"

"In the Lord's Recovery we speak the language of Judah, the language of God"

The "blended brothers" (alluding to the Old Testament types of Babylon and Egypt) tell us²⁸ "*When we are reconstituted with...the new language...our culture is changed from a Babylonian, Egyptian, worldly culture, to the new man culture.*" Moreover, since Babylon represents "fallen Christianity," believers in the Recovery are exhorted,²⁹ "*We need to acquire a different language...We in the Lord's recovery have an entirely different culture from Babylon. We should never try to join the two or compromise between the two...We speak the language of Judah, not the language of Ashdod or ...of the Ammonites. **We speak the language of God.**" In terms of "language," the contrast between "the Recovery" and "Christianity" couldn't be greater—"they" speak the language of Babylon, the Ammonites and Ashdod; "We" speak the language of Judah, the language of God! Bro. Ron asks rhetorically,³⁰ "*Where is there pure language today? It is not in the world. It is not in Christianity... **In the Lord's recovery there is a pure language, the language of the pure God.**" Yet, even in the Recovery, "*the Egyptian and Babylonian languages and elements are still with us. Therefore we need to be re-educated and reconstituted to speak the new language...*" Bro. Dick Taylor warns.³¹**

But where can we find this "new vocabulary, the new language of the New Man"? One might think, based on the bold assertion, "*We speak the language of God,*" that the Bible, God's Word is the lexicon of the "new language." Not so, say the "blended brothers"! They state unequivocally,³² "*Brother Lee was in another culture, and in the new culture, new terms must be found to make new sentences and paragraphs to express that culture.*" "*The utterances found in the ministry compose the language of our culture,*"³³ Bro. Dick Taylor confirms. Hence, W. Lee's "all-encompassing, all-inheriting ministry" provides the vocabulary for the "new language." His ministry is the lexicon. Moreover comprehending Bro. Lee's writings is not a prerequisite, since "*Even if we do not understand what it all means, we should still begin speaking...We need to speak the new language,*" Bro. Minoru Chen assures us³⁴

“New Language of the New Culture”—Erroneous Extrapolation OR Biblical Exegesis?

What’s the Scriptural basis for this “New Language of the New Culture”? The “blended brothers” base their teaching on the Old Testament account of some Israelites who couldn’t speak the language of Judah. This situation arose from the Israelites’ intermarriage with other nations, for which Nehemiah rebuked them (Neh. 13:23-4.) Surely the obvious New Testament application is the injunction against believers being “unequally yoked” with non-believers (2 Cor. 6:14.) However, LSM’s “blended co-workers” focus instead on language, saying “*We must learn the new language.*” They then extrapolate, asserting,³⁵ “*Brother Lee was in...the new culture, new terms must be found to make new sentences and paragraphs to express that culture.*” This “new language” doctrine is based entirely on an Old Testament type. Haven’t they violated the principle of interpreting the Old Testament through the New? Where’s the New Testament basis for this teaching?

Extrapolating from the Old Testament, unrestricted by the New Testament’s teaching, is dangerous. The Old Testament can be a “happy hunting ground” where Bible expositors find “scriptural support” for their narrow views, subjective concepts and legalism. In Old Testament times, the “language of Judah” was the dialect of all God’s chosen people. Perhaps one could claim the “language of Judah” corresponds to the New Testament, as the common portion of all believers. After all, doesn’t the Bible, “God’s Word,” contain the “language of God”? Yet, for the “blended brothers,” it seems God’s Word doesn’t qualify as the “language of Judah”! Rather, for them, only the *new, divine, mystical vocabulary* of the “high peak truths” qualifies. According to their interpretation the “language of Judah, the language of God” is the exclusive possession of the Recovery. But, is this exposition the product of an underlying exclusive bias or the result of “cutting straight the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15)? Isn’t this another example of LSM’s *eisegesis*?

To support their notion of a “new language” the “blended co-workers” cite Paul’s reference to “*words taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things with spiritual words*” (1 Cor. 2:13.) Bro. Lee explains that³⁶ “*The apostle [Paul] spoke the spiritual things...with spiritual words...taught by the Spirit.*” Surely this refers to Paul’s own writing in his epistles. Scripture itself contains these “spiritual words,” the “new language” of the Spirit. This verse does not justify inventing a new theological language beyond Scripture. Bro. Watchman Nee expounds this verse saying,³⁸ “*God gives us such words while we are waiting on Him and reading His Word.*” The New Testament is the “new language of the New Man.” We are charged to “*Let the word of Christ dwell in you...teaching and admonishing one another...*” (Col. 3:16.) We are exhorted to “*be filled in spirit, speaking...in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing and psalming...to the Lord*” (Eph. 5:18-19.) Aren’t such Spirit-inspired songs of praise and worship the “language of God”? What is the biblical basis for teaching that we need a whole new “theological language,” beyond the New Testament? Some may retort that “Trinity,” “Triune God” and “incarnation” are not explicitly in Scripture, but were invented by the “Church Fathers.” However, there’s a vast difference between inventing a few theological terms and developing a whole “*new, divine, mystical vocabulary*” (beyond Scripture.) This doctrine of a new language “*found in the ministry*” focuses attention on Bro. Lee’s writings, rather than Scripture. Again, doesn’t this imply the Recovery has a “third testament,” composed of Bro. Lee’s writings?

In our view the “blended brothers” “new language” doctrine is unscriptural, divisive, elitist and exclusive. It is unscriptural in that it contradicts the biblical “principle of incarnation.” The incarnated Christ spoke the language of the common people, Aramaic. He didn’t speak in the tongue of God, nor of angels. The resurrected Christ spoke to Saul in Hebrew, his mother-tongue (Acts 26:14). Moreover, the New Testament was written in *Koine* Greek, the common people’s language. It wasn’t composed using a newly-invented theological language. In contrast, it seems the “blended co-workers” are promoting a specialized theological dialect unique to believers in the Recovery. Furthermore, this teaching is divisive in that it creates a “language barrier” between believers initiated into the “new language of the new culture” and “uninitiated believers” outside the Recovery. Yet, surely the “One New Man” (like “the Body,”) includes all believers. How then can we justify re-dividing (with the partition of the “blended brothers’ new language”) the “One New Man” which God created from the divided Jews and Gentiles (Eph. 2:15)? Furthermore, this teaching is exclusive because it creates a “language barrier” hindering the reception of “uninitiated believers.”

Pray-Read the Bible OR PSRP Witness Lee's Message Outlines?

In practice the "blended co-workers'" teaching about the "new language of the New Man" shifts the emphasis away from God's Word towards the "word of the ministry." The "new language" is found, not in Scripture, but in *"the utterances found in the ministry."* Since the 1990's in many local churches the practice of "pray-reading" God's Word has been replaced with "PSRP," a practice invented in Taiwan. The mnemonic, PSRP denotes the four steps of "Pray-reading, Studying, Reciting and Prophesying." Significantly, the object of PSRP is not the Word of God (the Bible); it is "the ministry." Under the practice of PSRP, published outlines of Bro. Lee's messages have become the object of pray-reading and study in the Recovery. It is not the memorization and recitation of Bible verses which is encouraged. Rather, W. Lee's message outlines are memorized and recited. In this sense, in many local churches, W. Lee's outlines have replaced the Bible. The saints are encouraged to be "tape recorders" of Bro. Lee's speaking.³⁸ "Pray-reading" was taught, based on the biblical exhortation to *"receive...the word of God by means of all prayer..."* (Eph. 6:17-18.) Historically it was known as *Lectio Divina*, "divine reading." I can find no scriptural basis for practicing "PSRP" using LSM Message outlines. However, PSRP is justified if (as the "blended brothers" assert) Bro. Lee's writing is *"the New Testament ministry in all its fullness..."* and the latest *"ministry of the age [which] subsumes and includes all the foregoing ministries,"* including Paul, Peter, John and the other New Testament writers! Then Witness Lee's words supersede God's Word!

The "prophesying" practiced in some local churches, often amounts to reciting the "high peak truths" from Bro. Lee's writings. Does this resemble the "prophesying" the Apostle Paul talked about in 1 Corinthians 14? The "blended brothers" exhort people to speak the "new language," even if they don't understand it. This is so-called "prophesying." However, in actuality, isn't it in the principle of "tongues"? The Apostle Paul exhorted the Corinthians to give a *"word easy to understand"* (14:9.) Yet, Bro. Minoru says,³⁴ *"Even if we do not understand what it all means, we should still begin speaking...We need to speak the new language."* Paul asks, *"How can...the unlearned say the Amen... since he doesn't know what you are saying?"* (14:16) The Apostle was talking about tongue-speaking; but doesn't this often describe "prophesying" based on the "high-peak truths"?

Have Witness Lee's Writings replaced the Bible?

In the late 1980's a senior worker³⁹ in the Recovery suggested that Bro. Lee's writings were becoming a replacement for Scripture. Eight senior brothers, led by Bro. Benson Phillips, issued a rebuttal, vehemently denying this charge. They replied,⁴⁰ *"You imply...that [Brother Lee's] writings have become a replacement for the Bible. If this has been the case with you, you should repent and have a change but with regard to ourselves and others, this has not become the case."* Twenty years have passed. LSM's *The Ministry* magazine, provides accumulated data to re-evaluate that charge. Undoubtedly the "blended brothers" have elevated Brother Lee's ministry and writings to a more exalted position than during his lifetime. This allegation may not have been true in the 1980's. However, the cumulative evidence makes the charge—that Witness Lee's writings have replaced the Bible—much harder to refute today than twenty years ago.

Is the Bible our unique standard or is it Bro. Lee's exposition? For the "Blended Brothers" it seems the latter. A recent denunciation of Bro. Titus Chu contains these revealing statements concerning a one-year training conducted in Taiwan in 1980. The DCP-brothers say:⁴¹ *"Titus led the trainees to study the Bible primarily by using Greek, Hebrew, and English reference books and concordances. Life-study messages and other ministry materials were used only to confirm what had been independently gained through the use of the reference tools."* Most fundamental, Bible-believing Christians would not see this as problematic. Isn't this taking "the Bible as our unique standard"? Yet, according to the DCP-brothers, this is a deviation,⁴² *"This was a departure from Brother Lee's way to train the saints, which was firstly to constitute them with the divine revelation in the Bible as opened up in the ministry materials and then to use the reference tools—and only with discernment—to support the divine revelation. Titus Chu's way of training produced a different result..."* Clearly these are two different approaches. Titus Chu's training method gives priority to the Bible. He has confidence that what trainees will discover in Scripture matches Brother Lee's core

teachings. However, according to the "Blended Brothers," trainees should first be constituted "with the divine revelation...in the ministry materials" and, only then, "use the reference tools—and only with discernment—to support the divine revelation." Again, doesn't the "Blended Brothers" method make Bro. Lee's writings—"the ministry materials" as the standard, the "canon"?

Perhaps the exalted status ascribed to Bro. Lee's ministry shouldn't surprise us. During Bro. Lee's lifetime his leadership was based upon his personal ministry and his work, the churches he raised up. He could say, with some justification,⁴³ "the recovery I brought to the United States..." and⁴⁴ "through my ministry on this globe, thousands of saints have come into the recovery..." The "blended co-workers" cannot make such claims. In contrast to Brother Lee, their claim to leadership in the Recovery is wholly based upon the on-going promotion and implementation of Brother Lee's ministry. Their leadership's legitimacy relies on establishing Bro. Lee's ministry beyond challenge, as the "orthodoxy" binding upon all saints and every local church in the Recovery. Hence, "the ministry, the ministry" has been the "blended brothers'" mantra for the past decade. In promoting Bro. Lee's ministry, they have piled up accolades, describing it as "the consummate, ultimate, all-encompassing, all-inheriting" "ministry of the age [which] subsumes and includes all the foregoing ministries" and "is the New Testament ministry in all its fullness." By so doing, (in the eyes of many) they have crossed the line, creating a "third testament" (Bro. Lee's writings,) alongside the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. It is not the Bible, but proof texts mined from Brother Lee's ministry which provide the basis for the "blended brothers'" ministry at LSM's "seven feasts." Moreover, the elevation of the "consummate ministry of the age" has resulted in Bro. Lee's writings vying with the Bible as the unique standard for many saints. The question, "What does the ministry say?" has replaced the query, "What does the Scripture say?" (Gal. 4:30.) In many local churches, the spiritual exercise of "pray-reading" the Bible has been replaced by "PRSP-ing" Bro. Lee's message outlines.

About fifty years ago the demise of James Taylor Sr. produced a situation among the Exclusive Brethren similar to that faced by the Recovery following Bro. Lee's passing. "In his absence...the ongoing implementation and enforcement of his teaching appeared essential to the continuing cohesion of the group," says a historian.⁴⁵ The subsequent elevation of Taylor's ministry spawned a teaching that⁴⁶ "contemporary ministry...was on a par with Scripture. Indeed...its authority went beyond that of the Bible." In effect Taylor's ministry became a "third testament." It's time to ask—are we repeating history? Have LSM's "blended brothers" created a "third testament"?

Nigel Tomes,

Toronto, CANADA

May, 2007

NOTES:

1. We use the terms "LSM" and "LSM's blended brothers" as short-forms to denote the "blended brothers" or "blended co-workers" associated with Living Stream Ministry (LSM). The core group of "blended brothers" and LSM's board of directors are interlocking and overlapping. The vast majority of the "blended brothers" who minister at LSM's "7 annual feasts" are directors and/or officers on LSM's Board. A majority of the 21 "blended co-workers" who wrote to Brothers Titus Chu and Yu-Lan Dong in June 2005 are present or past members of LSM's board. Our use of the term, "LSM's blended brothers" is justified based on these objective facts. The "blended brothers'" mantra that "LSM is only a book publisher" is contradicted by the facts.
2. LSM-president, Benson Phillips states "In every age there is a particular vision... released not through many persons but through one person who is the minister of that age." (Benson Phillips, *The Ministry*, Vol. 7, No. 6, Aug. 2003, p. 34)
3. Bob Danker, "On the Minister of the Age and the Wise Master Builder" In "Contributions" on the LSM-affiliated DCP web-site: AFaithfulWord.org. This quote in context reads: "...**in every age God does not give His vision, the design of His building, to two men; He gives it to only one man. The man who holds the blueprint of God's building and supervises the building work is the wise master builder; he is the minister of the age. In God's unique work of building His eternal habitation, only the word of the master builder counts. Anyone who speaks for God in any particular age must speak according to the design and the blueprint that the master builder has unveiled. God does not give other ministers their own light and revelation. All the ministers in a particular age must enter fully into the vision of**

- that age, speak only the contents of the unique vision, and carry out their portion of the building work strictly according to that vision. This is a strong principle that holds in every age, including today."**
4. Ed Marks, *The Ministry*, vol. 9, No. 2, Feb. 2005, p. 137
 5. Roger Shuff, *Searching For The True Church*, (Paternoster, 2005) p. 121
 6. Roger Shuff, *Searching For The True Church*, (Paternoster, 2005) p. 122
 7. Ron Kangas, *The Ministry*, vol. 10, No. 1, (Jan./Feb. 2006) p. 150
 8. Ed Marks, *The Ministry*, vol. 9, No. 2, Feb. 2005, p. 137 Referring to the current situation, Bro. Ed Marks says, "The ministry of the age has brought us to the point where the Lord no longer needs any spiritual giants. **The ministry of the age subsumes and includes all the foregoing ministries.** The whole New Testament ministry has been recovered..." (emphasis added)
 9. "**From 1994 until early 1997** the vision of the age reached a phenomenal development, which is the reason we call it **the high peak, even the highest peak**, of the divine revelation." (*The Ministry*, Vol. 9, No. 8, Sept. 2005, p. 12)
 10. "At the very end of the last century the revelation and the vision in the Lord's recovery reached a virtually unprecedented peak... **the consummate, ultimate, all-encompassing, all-inheriting vision.** ...the consummate vision in the Lord's recovery, the all-inheriting vision of the age." [Ron Kangas, *The Ministry*, Vol. 9, No. 8, Sept. 2005, p. 10] Ron Kangas explains, "All-inheriting means that we inherit all the crucial things that were lost and recovered,"
 11. "We are not inheriting a partial vision or a small portion of a vision but the **all-inheriting, all-embracing, all-inclusive** vision of the age" *The Ministry*, Vol. 9, No. 8, Sept. 2005, p. 33
 12. "Within this ultimate consummation everything is included. The footnotes of the Recovery Version of the Holy Bible are all-inclusive...**Every positive element of vision in the Scriptures is included in the up-to-date all-inheriting vision of the age. Thus there is no reason to go back.** We should be in today's recovery." (*The Ministry*, Vol. 9, No. 8, Sept. 2005, p. 17)
 13. Letter to Great Lakes Brothers by Bros. Liu Suey and Benson Phillips, Aug. 10, 2006 on AFaithfulWord.org
 14. W. Lee, *The Ministry of the NT & the Teaching & Fellowship of the Apostles*, p. 10
 15. W. Lee, *The Ministry of the NT & the Teaching & Fellowship of the Apostles*, p. 12
 16. Letter to Great Lakes Brothers by Bros. Liu Suey and Benson Phillips, Aug. 10, 2006
 17. *The Ministry* Vol. 10, No. 1, Jan. 2006, p. 275. Benson has also said, "The ministry of the age raised up the churches. **Brother Lee's ministry** was used and propagated by the Lord because **this ministry is the New Testament ministry.** The ministry the Lord gave our brother accomplishes so much because **it is the New Testament ministry, not something different.**" (BP, *The Ministry*, v. 9, no. 6, June 2005, p. 88)
 18. We refer to statements such as, "[when] Brother Lee said, 'We need to imitate the apostle [Paul].' To me this means that we need to imitate Witness Lee..." (Benson Phillips, *The Ministry*, v. 9, no. 2, February 2005, p. 107) Moreover, by referring to Witness Lee's ministry as "this glorious ministry, which is the New Testament ministry in all its fullness," (Letter to Great Lakes Brothers, Aug. 10, 2006) hasn't Bro. Benson promoted Bro. Lee beyond the Apostle Paul?
 19. W. Lee, *One Accord for the Lord's Move, Elders' Training Book*, 7, p. 42
 20. *The Ministry*, vol. 9, No. 3, March 2005, p. 124
 21. W. Lee, *The Ministry of the NT & the Teaching & Fellowship of the Apostles*, p. 22 The quote in context reads, "...we need to consider the entire New Testament, from the first word of Matthew to the last word of Revelation, as God's speaking through the different mouths and hands of the apostles. This is the apostles' teaching."
 22. "We need to declare to the whole universe that **the ministry we have been under is the apostles' teaching.** This is the ministry that is being released into the recovery today." [BP, *The Ministry*, vol. 9, #3, March 2005, p. 124]
 23. Ron Kangas, *The Ministry*, Vol. 9, No. 8, Sept. 2005, p. 17 The quote in context reads: "The vision that the lord has given us in His recovery is the ultimate consummation of all visions...Hence, we should not go be preoccupied with John Calvin, Count von Zinzendorf, or John Nelson Darby. We appreciate them, and we inherit what they had...Within this ultimate consummation everything is included. **The footnotes of the Recovery Version of the Holy Bible are all-inclusive. The truth, the life, the light, the revelation, and the vision in these notes are inherited...Every positive element of vision in the Scriptures is included in the up-to-date all-inheriting vision of the age. There is no reason to go back.**"
 24. The quote in context reads: "The high peak of the divine revelation—the '**diamond**' in the '**box**' of the **Bible**—is the revelation that in Christ God has become man in order that man might become God in life and nature but not in the Godhead." [Ron Kangas, *The Ministry*, Vol. 9, No. 8, Sept. 2005, p. 23]
 25. Ed Marks, *The Ministry*, vol. 9, No. 5, May, 2005, p. 137.

26. *The Ministry*, vol. 9, No. 5, May, 2005, p. 137 The quote in context reads: "When we are reconstituted with...the new language of the high peak of the divine revelation, our culture is changed from a Babylonian, Egyptian, worldly culture, to the new man culture. Language and culture are inseparable. Therefore we need to learn the new language."
27. The quote in context reads: "**By 1994 the ministry in the Lord's recovery had brought the recovery into a new realm, a new stage, and a new culture with a new language.** The ability to speak this new language as a native speaker is a testimony that we have been reconstituted. Today there is opposition to learning this language." [Ron Kangas, *The Ministry*, vol. 9, No. 5, May, 2005, p. 51]
28. "**When we are reconstituted with...the new language** of the high peak of the divine revelation, **our culture is changed from a Babylonian, Egyptian, worldly culture, to the new man culture.** Language and culture are inseparable. Therefore we need to learn the new language." [Ed Marks, *The Ministry*, vol. 9, No. 5, May, 2005, p. 137]
29. "**We need to acquire a different language, a new vocabulary, with a different culture... We in the Lord's recovery have an entirely different culture from Babylon.** We should never try to join the two or compromise between the two. To bring them together is impossible. We are in a different realm, and we have a different culture. We speak the language of Judah, We speak the language of Judah, not the language of Ashdod or the language of the Ammonites. **We speak the language of God.**" [Minoru Chen *The Ministry*, vol. 9, No. 3, March 2005, p. 36]
30. "Where is there pure language today? It is not in the world. It is not in Christianity... In the Lord's recovery there is a pure language, the language of the pure God." [Ron Kangas, *The Ministry*, vol. 9, No. 5, May, 2005, p. 11]
31. "We need to learn the new language with the new vocabulary of the new culture of the Lord's present recovery....**Even today, the Egyptian and Babylonian languages and elements are still with us.** Therefore we need to be re-educated and reconstituted to speak the new language of the new culture..." [Dick Taylor, *The Ministry*, vol. 9, No. 3, March 2005, pp. 68-9]
32. *The Ministry*, vol. 9, No. 3, March 2005, p. 51
33. *The Ministry*, vol. 9, No. 3, March 2005, p. 68. I understand this to mean, "The utterances found in the ministry [of Witness Lee] compose the language of our culture"
34. "The Lord's move in His recovery is always advancing...This culture is so divine and mysterious that it requires a mysterious and divine language to communicate it... Therefore, we have a new language today. We need to pick up the new language. **Even if we do not understand what it all means, we should still begin speaking...** We need to speak the new language." [Minoru Chen, *The Ministry*, vol. 9, No. 3, March 2005, p. 51]
35. *The Ministry*, vol. 9, No. 3, March 2005, p. 51
36. "The apostle [Paul] spoke the spiritual things...with spiritual words, which are the spiritual words taught by the Spirit." (1 Cor. 2:13, Rcv. Footnote)
37. "Under ordinary circumstances, God gives us such words while we are waiting on Him and reading His Word. We may receive a word from God today in our study of the Scripture." Watchman Nee, *Collected Works*, vol. 53, p. 198
38. Brother Minoru Chen says, "Towards the end of his life, Brother Lee said that he hoped we would all become 'tape recorders' of what he spoke...To be a good 'recorder,' we need to truly enter into what he spoke. **We need to be a tape recorder.**" [Minoru Chen, *The Ministry*, vol. 9, No. 3, March 2005, p. 40] In contrast Watchman Nee said, "We should realize that the ministry of the word means that God has entrusted His word to man. **This is not a replay from a tape recorder.**" [W. Nee, *Collected Works*, vol. 53, p. 41] Also "...God is not after a machine that can preach." [W. Nee, *Collected Works*, vol. 53, p. 49]
39. Brother John C. Ingalls. It is not our purpose here to examine the question of whether this allegation—that Witness Lee's writings have replaced the Scriptures—was true in the 1980's. We leave that issue to others and other occasions. Our point is that the cumulative evidence of the last 20 years makes the charge—that Witness Lee's writings have replaced the Bible—much harder to refute today than twenty years ago.
40. "Open Letter to the Speakers in the August 28, 1988 Meeting"-- Letter to John Ingalls et. al. from some 8 senior brothers---Benson Phillips, Francis Ball, Joel W. Kennon, Titus Chu, David Lutz, Les Cites, Eugene Gruhler, & James Reetzke, Sr. dated: April 10, 1989
41. "From Such Turn Away"--A Brief Account of the History Leading to the Co-workers' Letter of Warning Concerning Titus Chu and Certain of His Co-workers" on "AFaithfulWord.com" (May 21, 2007)
42. "From Such Turn Away" on "AFaithfulWord.com" (May 21, 2007)
43. Witness Lee, *One Accord for the Lord's Move*, Elders' Training Book #7, p. 40.
44. Witness Lee, *One Accord for the Lord's Move*, Elders' Training Book #7, p. 81.

45. Roger Shuff, Searching For The True Church, (Paternoster, 2005) p. 123 The quote in context reads: "*In his [James Taylor's] absence, however, the ongoing implementation and enforcement of his teaching appeared essential to the continuing cohesion of the group;*"
46. Roger Shuff, Searching For The True Church, (Paternoster, 2005) p. 123 The quote in context reads: "*This absolutist view of ministry...the proposition that such contemporary ministry, implicitly synonymous with the current voice of the Spirit, was on a par with Scripture. Indeed, by inference, its authority went beyond that of the Bible since the Scriptures contained only the written words of Christ, while current teaching in the power of the Spirit represented Christ's direct and personal words to the contemporary Church.*"