

**PUBLICATION WORK
IN THE LORD'S RECOVERY**

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Through Brother Lee's fellowship over the years, we have long realized that there should be one publication among us. The one publication is not only a testimony of our oneness in the Body but also a safeguard for the unique ministry in the Lord's recovery. Without one publication, there is no way to preserve the integrity of the Lord's ministry among us, which is crucial to the practical oneness among the local churches. Brother Lee gave this word of testimony on this crucial matter in the Lord's recovery:

When we were on mainland China, only Brother Nee had a publication, and the Gospel Room belonged solely and uniquely to him. He asked me to help in the publication work. I did write some books, among which were a book on the genealogy of Christ, a translation of part of Pember's *Earth's Earliest Ages*, and some books on the kingdom of the heavens. I never published anything by myself. I always mailed my manuscript to the Gospel Room, which was under Brother Nee and his helper. It was up to their discernment whether my manuscript should be published or not. I liked to have my writings checked as to whether there might be some inaccuracy in the truth. It is not a small matter to write a book that expounds the kingdom of the heavens. I liked my material to pass through their checking. This helped and protected me. Brother Yu, the eye specialist, translated some of the mystical books, but he did not publish anything. We only had one publication. Everything was published through Brother Nee's Gospel Room because the publication is really the trumpeting. The sounding of our trumpet is not just in the verbal message but more in the publication. (*Elders' Training, Book 8: The Life-pulse of the Lord's Present Move*, pp. 161-162. See the larger context of this quotation in the attached ministry portions.)

According to the practice established by Brother Nee in China, the one publication has always been trumpeted by one practical publication endeavor—in Brother Nee's day by his

Gospel Room, during Brother Lee's years after he left mainland China by Taiwan Gospel Book Room, and during his years in the United States by Living Stream Ministry. Today we must be diligent to continue this practice of the trumpeting in the one publication in a practical way through the publication service of Living Stream Ministry and Taiwan Gospel Book Room. Living Stream Ministry and Taiwan Gospel Book Room publish both the past ministry that was delivered to us by Brother Nee and Brother Lee and the ongoing, up-to-date speaking that comes out of the fellowship of the blended co-workers and is based on the ministry materials of Brother Lee and Brother Nee. These are the materials that have been used regularly in the church life in the Lord's recovery, and these constitute the one publication among us today.

When Brother Lee was among us, he took the lead in both the ministry and the publication work. As he released the Lord's ministry to the churches, he directed Living Stream Ministry and Taiwan Gospel Book Room to publish that ministry throughout the churches so that the saints everywhere could be kept in the up-to-date fellowship of the one ministry. Because the ministry was released originally in either English or Chinese, he formed Living Stream Ministry and Taiwan Gospel Book Room as publication offices that would carry out the practical service of publishing the ministry for the churches. Today, by the Lord's mercy, the ministry continues. Now it is carried out by fellow slaves who serve in a blended way according to Brother Lee's realization and fellowship shortly before he went to be with the Lord. He called this "the Lord's sovereign provision for His Body, and the up-to-date way to fulfill His ministry" (*A Letter of Fellowship with Thanks*, March 24, 1997). It is important to note that Brother Lee spoke directly about the continuation of the ministry among us. He felt that after his departure the ministry should be carried out by a group of co-workers who are blended, just as his own service in the ministry was under his coordination with the co-workers. Further, the need to publish the ongoing ministry still exists, and to this end Living Stream Ministry and Taiwan Gospel Book Room, a blended service overseen by a group of blended brothers who

serve in coordination with the blended co-workers, continue to publish the Lord's speaking among us in all the seven annual "feasts" and the weekly ministry meetings. In a meeting with the brothers to whom he committed the responsibility for Living Stream Ministry, Brother Lee said, "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" (from unpublished notes of a meeting of Living Stream, July 12, 1996). He placed the direction of this corporation for the continuation and publication of the ministry in the hands of a group of blended brothers, who labor to fulfill this charge before the Lord.

What Living Stream Ministry and Taiwan Gospel Book Room do, as set forth in the Living Stream's Articles of Incorporation, is "to promote the enlightenment and revelation regarding the Bible as interpreted by the teachings of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee." It was Brother Lee's express wish that Living Stream Ministry and Taiwan Gospel Book Room would be the sole publishers of his and Brother Nee's ministry. According to this wish and arrangement, Living Stream Ministry and Taiwan Gospel Book Room should be responsible for the publication of the ministry materials of these two brothers, and any use of Brother Lee's materials or of *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee* should be done in coordination with Living Stream Ministry and Taiwan Gospel Book Room, and only with their express permission, according to their guidelines, and in proper fellowship with them. This includes the translation of these materials into any language as well as any republication in any form or through any medium. Further, Living Stream Ministry and Taiwan Gospel Book Room also publish the ongoing ministry in the Lord's recovery as the extension of the ministry of these two brothers. The ongoing ministry is carried out according to the fellowship of blended co-workers and is based on outlines compiled from Brother Lee's and Brother Nee's ministry materials. As has been apparent to all the saints everywhere, this labor produces the same ministry with the same taste as

has been enjoyed in all the churches since Brother Nee's time. The up-to-date speaking among us is published primarily in the outlines of the messages for the seven "feasts," *The Holy Word for Morning Revival*, and *The Ministry* magazine by Living Stream Ministry and in corresponding publications by Taiwan Gospel Book Room. In addition, Living Stream Ministry and Taiwan Gospel Book Room publish works that support the Lord's ministry. There are a number of publications which Brother Lee initiated that fall into this category, most notably the journal *Affirmation & Critique*, which presents the truths of the Lord's recovery to an academically-trained audience as we have received them from Brother Lee. As much as possible, Living Stream Ministry and Taiwan Gospel Book Room avoid venturing into other kinds of publications, but according to Brother Lee's own example, occasionally there may be publications of these other kinds which Living Stream Ministry and Taiwan Gospel Book Room feel to publish either under their own names or under special imprints that serve particular publication needs. For example, Living Stream Books (as opposed to Living Stream Ministry) publishes *God's Plan of Redemption* by Mary E. McDonough, and A&C Press publishes a translation from French of a scholarly study on deification in the early church.

At times there may be writings among us that could be considered for publication as part of the one publication among us. As Brother Lee points out in the quote from *Elders' Training, Book 8* above, these proposals should be "checked as to whether there might be some inaccuracy in the truth." Discernment must always be exercised when expressing matters related to the divine truth, the divine life, and the gospel. The exercise of this sort of discernment not only protects the teaching among us and the spiritual supply to the saints; it also helps and protects those who endeavor to write. Hence, it is proper that those who endeavor to write in this way bring their work to those who take the lead in the ministry and those who take the lead in the publication work, and those who take the lead should exercise the discernment as to whether or not such proposals should be published as part of

the one publication. This was the practice when Brother Nee took the lead in the ministry and in the publication work in China, and it was our practice when Brother Lee took the lead in the ministry and in the publication work among us. It should be our continued practice today. Thus, those who wish to write in this way should bring their proposals to the blended co-workers as well as to Living Stream Ministry and Taiwan Gospel Book Room and have their proposals checked to see whether they should be published or not. In every way, this practice of passing everything that we publish through a discerning check is best for all of us and best for the sounding of the one trumpet in the Lord's recovery today.

We all must realize that the one publication in the Lord's recovery is quite a serious matter. Anyone who participates in it must genuinely have the portion from the Lord to do so, and this portion should be easily recognizable to the churches and affirmed by those who take the lead in the ministry and those who take the lead in the publication work. No one can take up this portion in the Lord's recovery on his own. While we all have a basic right to publish, in the Lord's recovery we are governed by the higher vision of serving under the cross in a blended way in the Body, especially when it affects the churches and the dear saints everywhere. Since Brother Nee's day we in the Lord's recovery have been "restricted in one publication" (*Elders' Training, Book 8*, p. 161), and this restriction has resulted in one testimony among us. For decades we all have been nurtured and richly supplied by the one publication. The benefits of being restricted in one publication can hardly be denied.

But being restricted in the one publication does not mean, and has never meant, that individual churches are not free to produce and distribute materials for their local needs. We have always had publications like this among us, and there have generally been no problems related to these. Songbooks, local tracts, church meeting outlines, testimonies, etc., have long been produced among us without controversy. These are actually not part of the one publication among us in that they do not involve all the churches. These are publications that address local needs. Problems can

be caused, however, when these local and non-permanent publications gain larger geographical status. Further, it is particularly problematic when new technologies, such as the Internet, are used to distribute these local publications. The elders should take special care to assure that what is produced for their local churches remains a local matter. Otherwise, damage may result. Although technologies now exist that permit the easy dissemination of material, we should not use these technologies at the risk of causing confusion among the saints and of damaging the one accord among the churches. The elders and saints everywhere should exercise the same caution that Brother Lee spoke of when he testified concerning the one publication in mainland China: all the saints and all the churches everywhere should similarly be restricted in one publication in the Lord's recovery.

Technology today allows almost any individual to publish whatever he or she desires, and it should not be the intention of the responsible ones in the Lord's recovery to suppress the rights of individuals to express themselves (unless, of course, such expressions are sinful, heretical, or divisive). Some saints have a desire to write church histories, to produce children's materials, to record music, and even to give and publish messages. Without much effort these can be reproduced in a variety of media and distributed widely, especially on the Internet and on CDs and DVDs. But the fact that these publications can be produced and distributed should not give them any more credence among the churches than anything else that can be published today, secular or religious. These are simply other publications that our brothers and sisters may or may not be interested in. They are not part of the one publication in the Lord's recovery, and they are not necessarily beneficial to the spiritual good of the saints among us. The churches, through the elders, should be educated to understand this, and the saints and the churches need to discern the value of these publications for themselves. As shepherds of the flock of God (1 Pet. 5:2), the elders everywhere should have a proper care for the churches with regard to publications, and they should guard the flock from things that could cause damage

(Acts 20:28-29). As long as the churches do not become platforms for the dissemination of these publications, these publications should not become matters of issue among us.

Finally, all the churches and saints everywhere must understand that the matter of one publication is not a matter of the common faith but something related to the one ministry in the Lord's recovery. The ministry is the sounding of the trumpet among us in the Lord's recovery, and there should be no uncertain sounding of this trumpet, as Brother Lee has mentioned on a number of occasions. However, the one publication should not become the basis of our accepting or rejecting any persons in the communion of faith or in the fellowship of the churches; it should not be insisted on as an item of the faith. If any are not inclined to be restricted in one publication, these ones are still our brothers; they are still in the genuine local churches. We would like to conclude with these words from our Brother Lee and wish to recommend that the full context of his words be read from *Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, pp. 74-75:

Whether or not a certain church takes the ministry does not decide whether that church is a genuine local church. The title of this message does not say "no uncertain sounding of the trumpet in the Lord's recovery" but "in the Lord's ministry." I am not talking about something in the Lord's recovery, but I am talking about the ministry...

I have to be faithful to the Lord, faithful to so many of you who have been very much affected by this ministry, and faithful to myself. For this reason, this ministry cannot allow anyone to pretend to be in it and yet still say something different. This does not mean that I ask you to stay away from your local church or that your local church is no longer a local church. What I am fellowshiping about is the impact of the ministry for the fighting of the Lord's interest in His recovery.

The blended co-workers in the Lord's recovery
June 30, 2005

Ministry Portions

BEING RESTRICTED IN ONE PUBLICATION

One thing that has caused the Lord's recovery trouble is the fact that we have different publications. If we mean business for the Lord's recovery, we must avoid any kind of involvement in problems. When we were on mainland China, only Brother Nee had a publication, and the Gospel Room belonged solely and uniquely to him. He asked me to help in the publication work. I did write some books, among which were a book on the genealogy of Christ, a translation of part of Pember's *Earth's Earliest Ages*, and some books on the kingdom of the heavens. I never published anything by myself. I always mailed my manuscript to the Gospel Room, which was under Brother Nee and his helper. It was up to their discernment whether my manuscript should be published or not. I liked to have my writings checked as to whether there might be some inaccuracy in the truth. It is not a small matter to write a book that expounds the kingdom of the heavens. I liked my material to pass through their checking. This helped and protected me. Brother Yu, the eye specialist, translated some of the mystical books, but he did not publish anything. We only had one publication. Everything was published through Brother Nee's Gospel Room because the publication is really the trumpeting. The sounding of our trumpet is not just in the verbal message but more in the publication.

I hate to see that some of the brothers would try to publish something by copying my points mixed with their "spices" and their "color." Why do they need to put out some points from my writings in this way? Brother Nee taught us concerning the kingdom of the heavens. I received the basic knowledge from his teaching, but he never expounded on it very much; he simply gave a sketch. It was I who from 1936 began to expound upon the sketch given to me by Brother Nee. After I

published my exposition, Brother Nee admired it and told me personally that it was very good.

I hope that some of you brothers would do much development and expounding of all the messages I give. Do not merely speak some points, adding your own "color" and "spices." This changes the taste. It damages my messages. You must receive the ability to expound all these things. I am not narrow. I would like to see that all of you will be great servants used by God. How wonderful that would be. But I do not like to see that some would merely repeat what I have said, pretending that it is their work with their spices and color.

It bothers me that some brothers among us still put out publications. According to my truthful observation there is no new light or life supply there. They may contain some biblical doctrines, but any point of life or light has been adopted from the publications of Living Stream Ministry. There is nearly no item of life or light that has not been covered by our publications. Based upon this fact, what is the need for these brothers to put out their publications? Because all the publications are mine, it is hard for me to speak such a word. But I am forced to tell the truth. By putting out your own publication, you waste your time and money. You waste the money given by the saints, and you waste their time in reading what you publish. Where is the food, the life supply, and the real enlightenment in the other publications among us? Be assured that there is definitely at least one major revelation in every Living Stream Ministry publication.

I was burdened to publish the Life-study Messages to stress the matter of life because this matter has been neglected, missed, and even lost to the uttermost in today's Christianity. In most of the commentaries and expositions there is not much of life. Even the term *Life-study* is a new term. I have used this term for thirty-two years. In 1954 and 1955 I finished a Life-study on the entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation in Taipei.

This does not mean that I am so capable or so knowledgeable. It all depends upon whether or not our sovereign Lord has given you this portion. Even though I wrote some books in mainland China, I never dared to publish anything by myself.

I do not like to have another sounding. Our sounding must be one, so we must be restricted in one publication. My intention in calling a writers' conference was to encourage you to write something, but not in the way that came out. This fellowship may preserve and protect us from doing things lawlessly.

If some localities would have gone the proper way of the recovery, using all the materials of the ministry, their number would have increased greatly. Some are wasting their time by writing and publishing their own material. This is not their portion. I would like to see that many brothers had this portion with the riches of truth. This would be marvelous and wonderful, but this is our problem today. I advise all of you to take care of this matter. You have to swallow up the dissension. Do not let dissension eat you up.

I hope this fellowship will render some help to all the churches. Take these principles, pray before the Lord, and consider the real situation in your locality. Then you can make some adjustment of the eldership. (*Elders' Training, Book 8: The Life-pulse of the Lord's Present Move*, pp. 161-164, Witness Lee)

FULFILLING THE LORD'S COMMISSION TO HIS RECOVERY

The Lord's commission is His recovery, and His recovery today is to recover Christ as life, to recover the church as our living, to recover the enjoyment of Christ as everything to us, and to recover all the significances of the church life for the purpose of not only preaching the gospel but also spreading the truth. I believe that this is the unique reason that He has given us nearly all the truths in today's Christianity. He has given us His truths for us to spread them not only to Christians but even to the unbelievers. The entire globe is under darkness. Every human being on the earth needs to hear the truth, but our spreading of the precious truths we have received has been strongly limited. There have been many strong testimonies concerning people getting attracted and caught by the notes in the Recovery Version, but who has the burden to go out and spread these truths?

Some brothers who are with us do not use these truths when they teach and preach. They teach and preach what they

feel is good, yet they do not realize how poor their messages are. Some brothers among us continually put out some publications. I was honest to tell them that there was no light and nothing new in what they put out. The points in our publications are full of life and light, but these brothers would not present them as they are. I could not understand why they have to change the messages we publish to present something in their own style and in their own way. There are no new points of life or light in what they publish. Any life or light in their material is altogether adopted from this ministry. I have been observing this situation among us for years. I would like to see whether some younger brothers among us would be raised up by the Lord to speak something. If I could see this, I would praise the Lord. On the other hand, I have seen some who like to build up something around themselves.

The Lord has commissioned us with His recovery, and He has surely opened up the New Testament to reveal many dear and precious truths to us. What the Lord needs is for thousands of His dear saints who love Him, who live to Him, and who know nothing but His recovery to take one way. Regardless of whether the saints are from Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, Taiwan, England, Thailand, Indonesia, or the United States, we all bear the same burden, take the same way, and spread the same truths. We dispense the truths embodied in the "gold bar," the Recovery Version. We have no other merchandise! If we would be like this, the entire earth will be taken!

It breaks my heart to see some practicing to have another ministry, using the material of the ministry. We all have to pray, "Lord, rescue me from my ambition to be somebody in the recovery." We should only know the truths of God's New Testament economy. We only use one way by one accord, prayer, the Spirit, and the Word. This is what I believe the Lord is after, and this is what we all expect in the depths of our being. Everyone will feel happy about this.

When we go out, we do not go in a dissenting or ambitious way. If you go out with your ambition to build yourself up and I go out with my ambition to build my ministry up, we are finished. The Lord has to go to others. We all need to go out in

one way like an army. Then we will have the morale and the impact.

We do not need to do that much. We just need to go out with a pure heart, without anything to ourselves but all things to Him. Just go out with all the truths and the Recovery Version to read to people. I assure you that you will catch someone every week. You do not need to preach your teaching or your kind of doctrine with your terminology. We have to see what the Lord's recovery is. The Lord's recovery has been commissioned with a big enterprise to spread the Lord's truths. He has given us the truths which we are holding. But we need the faithful, pure-hearted ones, who do not have any intention to live to themselves but to Him, to go out to spread these "gold bar" truths. There is no need for you to preach or teach in your way. Open up the Recovery Version and read some of the notes with the hungry ones.

Actually, though, I do not care that much for the increase. I care for the spreading of the truths so that they can get into the needy hearts. If we spread these truths, we will become the faithful servants to serve food to the Lord's people at the appointed time (Matt. 24:45). Then we will fulfill the commission of the Lord's recovery. This is where my heart is. I will die to this. I told the brothers in the Far East I will not stop until my entire being is exhausted by this ministry. I hope you all will say the same thing.

If the Lord can gain ten thousand saints in the United States to go full-time with one kind of teaching, one kind of preaching, one kind of material, one kind of publication, one kind of way, and everything one kind, this will be our morale! The wise way is that we all take the full-time way and speak the same thing, think the same thing, present the same thing, and teach the same thing, having the same essence, appearance and expression. Then we will have the morale, the impact, to defeat the enemy. This is what the Lord needs! (*Elders' Training, Book 8: The Life-pulse of the Lord's Present Move*, pp. 123-127, Witness Lee)

THE MINISTRY AND THE CHURCHES

Whether or not a certain church takes the ministry does

not decide whether that church is a genuine local church. The title of this message does not say "no uncertain sounding of the trumpet in the Lord's recovery" but "in the Lord's ministry." I am not talking about something in the Lord's recovery, but I am talking about the ministry. The citizens of the United States may say many things to criticize the government and the commander in chief of the Armed Forces. But when you get into the army and become a soldier, you lose your right to say anything. It is possible to argue, debate, and even fight in the Senate, but even when the senators get in the army and become soldiers, they have to be quiet. There is no uncertain sounding in the army. The ministry is not like the Senate. The ministry is not a Congress for anyone to come here to express his opinion. The ministry has no capacity for that. The ministry is altogether filled up with a fighting spirit. I do not control any church. All the saints who have left the denominations, the divisive sects, and stand on the proper ground are a local church in their locality. They can express their opinions, but they may have nothing to do with this ministry.

Paul told us that all who were in Asia turned away from him (2 Tim. 1:15). The believers in Asia who had formerly received the apostle's ministry now forsook him. They did not lose their status as local churches due to the fact that they gave up Paul's ministry, but in fighting the battle, Paul's ministry could not depend upon them. For Paul's ministry they could not be counted on. To say that the ministry cannot depend upon a certain church does not mean that that church has been cut off from being a local church. It is still a local church, but we must realize that the ministry is a fighting unit. In this fighting unit there is no capacity and no time for your opinion.

I mean business for the Lord's interest. I have sacrificed my entire life for the Lord's ministry. I gave up everything to take the way of the Lord's recovery. Now I must be faithful to myself. Furthermore, through my ministry on this globe, thousands of saints have come into the recovery, so I must be faithful to them. Many of the saints have given up high degrees to follow the Lord in His recovery, yet it seems what

they are in is tending to be disappointing. This burdens me. Some of the saints became what they are in the Lord one hundred percent due to my ministry, and I do not want my ministry to waste their time. I have to do something to insure their investment of their whole being into the Lord's recovery. They have given up their future in the world, but they cannot have much encouragement in the Lord's recovery. I have to be faithful to the Lord, faithful to so many of you who have been very much affected by this ministry, and faithful to myself. For this reason, this ministry cannot allow anyone to pretend to be in it and yet still say something different. This does not mean that I ask you to stay away from your local church or that your local church is no longer a local church. What I am fellowshiping about is the impact of the ministry for the fighting of the Lord's interest in His recovery.

Whatever I would say concerning the home gatherings, the full-timers, the truth lessons, and the spreading of the gospel is not for anyone who does not feel good about my ministry, who is dissenting to my ministry, who is pretending to be here under the ministry yet actually is not. I still love all the dear saints who may fall into this category and still count them as brothers in Christ, but we need to have an army full of impact, and this army has no capacity and no time for anyone to express any kind of opinion. We are fighting a battle. The army began the fighting already in Taiwan. Now we want to see this army increasing to fight the battle not only in the United States but also in Canada, in Central America, in South America, in Europe, in Africa, in Australasia, and in the entire continent of Asia. This is what I want to see. I am not talking about the churches, I am talking about the ministry. The ministry is one thing, and the churches are another thing. These two things can be differentiated in the Epistles written by Paul. Paul's ministry is one category, and the churches are another category. Paul never tried to force all the churches to follow him in his ministry, but Paul surely had a ministry for the churches. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, pp. 74-76, Witness Lee)