

A FAITHFUL WORD

S E R I E S T W O

“That you all speak the same thing and
that there be no divisions among you.”

**THE
SCRIPTURAL
BASIS OF
ONE
PUBLICATION**
(Part 2)

**Book
2**

DEFENSE & CONFIRMATION PROJECT

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Phil. 1:7 – Even as it is right for me to think this concerning you all because you have me in your heart, since both in my bonds and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel you are all fellow partakers with me of grace.

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PREFACE

1 Cor. 1:10 – Now I beseech you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion.

In dealing with emerging divisions, Paul charged the Corinthians, “Now I beseech you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion” (1 Cor. 1:10). We do well to heed this word today. Recently, some have risen up to damage the oneness among the churches by speaking differently according to their own opinion.

A proliferation of different teachings was the stimulus for the July 2005 printing of *Publication Work in the Lord's Recovery*, an affirmation of the co-workers in the Lord's recovery of their intention to follow the pattern of the teaching and practice of Brother Nee and Brother Lee of being restricted in one publication. Although most of the workers and the churches in the Lord's recovery received the fellowship in this book, a small, but very vocal, minority openly opposed it. Because of the many misrepresentations of both what the co-workers had said in the book and what Brother Nee and Brother Lee had taught and practiced, DCP posted a series of articles on afaitfulword.org to address many of the issues raised.

This series of books reproduces that series of articles. This book demonstrates the responsibility of the co-workers and elders to protect the flock by preserving the churches and the saints from different teachings. It also shows that the type of public dissent carried out by the ones opposing the co-workers' fellowship is itself unscriptural (1 Cor. 11:16). Finally, it exposes the dissenters' faulty criticism of Brother Lee's interpretation of 1 Cor. 14:8.

IS “ONE PUBLICATION” SCRIPTURAL? – PART 2

B. The Co-workers’ Role in Preserving the Churches from Different Teachings

Furthermore, the New Testament is more than clear that the leading ones in the work have the standing and even the obligation to exhort, adjust, charge, admonish, and warn the saints concerning devastations caused by different teachings, including deviations from the scriptural principles in Part 1 this article printed in Book 1 of this series (1 Tim. 1:3–4; Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 4:14b; 1 Cor. 11:17a; Eph. 4:14; 2 Thes. 3:6; 1 Tim. 6:3–5a; 2 Tim. 1:13; 2:2; 3:5; 3:14; 4:2b; 1 Pet. 5:1; Jude 1:3).

1 Tim. 1:3–4 – [3] Even as I exhorted you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach ³different things [4] nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God’s economy, which is in faith.

fn. 1:3³ – ...Now, from 1 Timothy through Philemon a detailed revelation concerning the practice of the church is presented. This pertains to the administration and shepherding of a local church. For this, the first thing needed is to terminate the different teachings of the dissenters, which distract the saints from the central line and ultimate goal of God’s New Testament economy (vv. 4–6). The different teachings in vv. 3–4, 6–7; 6:3–5, 20–21 and the heresies in 4:1–3 are the seed, the source, of the church’s decline, degradation, and deterioration dealt with in 2 Timothy.

Rom. 16:17 – Now I exhort you, brothers, to mark those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and ²turn away from them.

fn. 16:17² – In ch. 14 Paul was liberal and gracious regarding the receiving of those who differ in doctrine or

practice. Here, however, he is unyielding and resolute in saying that we must turn away from those who are dissenting, who make divisions, and who make causes of stumbling. The purpose in both cases is the preserving of the oneness of the Body of Christ that we may have the normal church life.

1 Cor. 4:14b – ... I write these things ... to admonish you as my beloved children.

1 Cor. 11:17a – But I give you this charge...

Eph. 4:14 – That we may be no longer little children tossed by waves and carried about by every ³wind of teaching in the ⁴sleight of men, in craftiness with a view to a ⁵system of error.

fn. 4:14³ – Any teaching, even a scriptural one, that distracts believers from Christ and the church is a wind that carries believers away from God's central purpose.

fn. 4:14⁴ – The Greek word for *sleight* refers to the cheating of dice players. The word for *craftiness* denotes the trickery employed by gamblers. The teachings that become winds, carrying believers away from the central lane of Christ and the church, are deceptions instigated by Satan in his subtlety, with the sleight of men, in order to frustrate God's eternal purpose, which is to build up the Body of Christ.

fn. 4:14⁵ – The dividing teachings are organized and systematized by Satan to cause serious error and thus damage the practical oneness of the Body life. The sleight is of men, but the system of error is of Satan and is related to the deceitful teachings that are designed by the evil one to distract the saints from Christ and the church life.

2 Thes. 3:6 – Now we charge you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother walking disorderly and not according to the things which were handed down to you and which you received from us.

1 Tim. 6:3–5a – [3] If anyone teaches different things and does not consent to healthy words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the teaching which is according to godliness,

[4] he is ¹blinded with pride, understanding nothing, but is ²diseased with questionings and contentions of words, out of which come envy, strife, ³slanders, evil suspicions, [5]¹perpetual wranglings of men corrupted in mind....

fn. 6:4¹ – ...Teachings that differ from the healthy words of the Lord always issue from people's pride and self-conceit, which blind them.

fn. 6:4² – To question and contend about words is a disease. *Diseased* here is in contrast to *healthy* in v. 3.

fn. 6:4³ – Lit., blasphemies; referring here, as in Col. 3:8, to slanders and railings toward man, not blasphemies toward God.

fn. 6:5¹ – Or, incessant quarrels.

2 Tim. 1:13 – Hold a pattern of the healthy words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

2 Tim. 2:2 – And the things which you have heard from me through many witnesses, these commit to faithful men, who will be competent to teach others also.

2 Tim. 3:5 – Having an outward form of godliness, though denying its power; from these also turn away.

2 Tim. 3:14 – But you, continue in the ²things which you have learned and have been assured of, knowing from which ones you have learned them.

fn. 3:14² – The things that Timothy learned from the apostle and was assured of constituted the vital portion of the content of the New Testament, a portion that completed the divine revelation (Col. 1:25). Hence, he had practical apprehension of a great part of the New Testament.

2 Tim. 4:2b – ... convict, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and teaching.

1 Pet. 5:1 – Therefore the elders among you I exhort, who am a fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory to be revealed.

Jude 1:3 – Beloved, while using all diligence to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to

write to you and exhort you to earnestly contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

The leadership is produced, strengthened, and also limited, restricted, in the apostles' teaching. In 1 Timothy 1:3–4 Paul charged Timothy to remain in Ephesus to do one thing with a definite purpose. He was there to charge the dissenting ones not to teach the things different from the economy of God in faith. He had to charge these ones not to teach things that were different from the apostles' teaching, which is concerning God's New Testament economy to dispense the processed Triune God into His chosen and redeemed people that Christ might have a Body to express Himself and that the Triune God might have a complete, eternal expression in the New Jerusalem. Any minister who preaches or teaches should carry out such a ministry. Otherwise, this preacher or this minister should be limited. Paul had the authority to charge people not to teach differently from God's economy. Timothy was to tell these dissenting ones that their way of teaching had to be restricted and corrected. First Timothy shows us that there was some leadership that charged people to teach the right thing....

Paul, in his work in the New Testament ministry, exercised leadership to correct those who taught wrongly, and John exercised his leadership to charge the believers not to receive those who taught heresy, which was not according to the teaching of the apostles. The apostles who participated in the ministry of the New Testament economy did exercise some leadership. (*The God-Ordained Way to Practice the New Testament Economy*, p. 168–169)

NOT TO TEACH DIFFERENTLY

This is why Paul wrote 1 Timothy in the midst of a confusing environment and after many years of his work with his co-workers. This Epistle is altogether an inoculation. Poison after poison was injected into the Christian church while the church was going on. At the conclusion of his writing ministry, Paul wrote 1 Timothy to inoculate the church against all these poisons. In the opening word of this Epistle, however, Paul did not write in a way that we would think to be so serious: "Even as I urged you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach differently (1:3)." This phrase

“not to teach differently” seems so simple. If you merely read this phrase, you will not sense the seriousness of different teaching. We may not think that this is serious, but actually it is more than serious. It kills people to teach differently. To teach differently tears down God’s building and annuls God’s entire economy. We all must realize that even a small amount of teaching in a different way destroys the recovery. There is a proverb which says, “One sentence can build up the nation and one sentence can destroy the entire nation.” You do not need to give an entire message. Just by speaking one sentence which conveys your kind of concept tears down everything. We must realize that ministry is “terrible.” Your speaking can build up or destroy. It is possible that your speaking destroys, kills, and annuls. (*Elders’ Training, Book 3: The Way to Carry Out the Vision*, pp. 42–43)

NOT ENOUGH TO TEACH SCRIPTURALLY

Please do not have the peace and assurance that as long as you teach things scripturally that it is all right. It is not all right because your teaching creates division. Even your right teaching creates division. We all must realize that, generally speaking, the different denominations do not teach anything wrong. They have all tried and endeavored to teach the right things, the scriptural things. Eventually, however, the Body of Christ has been cut into pieces. We thank the Lord that thousands of missionaries went to China. They brought the Bible, the gospel, and the Lord’s name to China, and they brought a substantial number of God’s chosen ones into the salvation of Christ. Through them, the old, conservative people of China were opened up to receive the things of the Lord. No one can deny this. On the other hand, there were some missionaries who went to China to teach different things according to their concept. As a result, they brought divisions there that have cut the Body of Christ in China into pieces and which could never be healed. What a terrible situation this is! They did something right. They preached the right thing but with a terrible issue. Who is responsible for this? The teacher who taught the right thing to create a division. This is terrible. (*Elders’ Training, Book 3: The Way to Carry Out the Vision*, p. 45)

From experience we know that the one who teaches differently is the first one to be sacrificed. This means that if

you teach differently, you run the risk not of sacrificing the recovery but of sacrificing yourself. We all need to practice Paul's word to Timothy: "Even as I urged you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach differently" (1 Tim. 1:3). Instead of teaching differently, we should all speak the same thing. (*Elders' Training, Book 3: The Way to Carry Out the Vision*, p. 128)

Teaching Differently Being Prohibited

In 1 Timothy 1:3 Paul said that he urged Timothy to remain in Ephesus in order that he might charge certain ones not to teach differently. To teach differently is to teach things different from what the apostles teach, that is, to teach things other than God's New Testament economy (1 Tim. 1:4). This indicates that all the teaching ones should teach the same things in all the churches according to the apostles' teaching. Of course, this indicates also that all the churches should be one in the matter of teaching. (*The Intrinsic Problem in the Lord's Recovery Today and Its Scriptural Remedy*, p. 32)

In order to understand 1 Timothy, we must first understand the background behind the writing of this book. In Acts 20 we find Paul sending for the elders of the church in Ephesus while he was on his way to Jerusalem. He spoke a solemn and crucial word to them. He reminded them how for three years he was in their midst, not shrinking from declaring to them all the counsel of God (w. 20, 27, 31). This means that Paul fully and thoroughly explained to them God's revelation in the New Testament. Then he said, "I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock" (v. 29). The wolves here refer to the Judaistic believers. They were doing an unhealthy work in the church, speaking unhealthy words. Unhealthy words are poisonous words, killing words. Those who were speaking these unhealthy words destroyed men and poisoned them rather than supplying them. In this sense, they were like wolves. In John 10 the Lord said that He is the good Shepherd and that He came to lay down His life that men may receive life (vv. 10-11). He also said that the wolf comes not to give life but to snatch and scatter (v. 12). Hence, everyone who causes harm and destruction in the church is a wolf. Outwardly, those who

teach differently are God's people, but the different teaching that they are teaching is the unhealthy teaching. To be unhealthy means to not supply men with life. This is to harm and destroy. This may be compared to the food that we eat: if it is not healthy, it is harmful. If we eat unhealthy food, not only will it not benefit us, but it will actually harm our body and threaten our physical life. (*The Vision of the Age*, pp. 59–60)

The co-workers' responsibility to guard against the incursion of different teachings into the churches is crucial because the New Testament leadership resides primarily in the teaching and fellowship of the apostles. The co-workers discharge their responsibility through their teaching and their fellowship with the elders and the saints in the churches.

C. The Elders' Responsibility to Protect the Flock

“Analysis & Response” dismisses the apostles’ words to the elders in 1 Peter 5:2 and Acts 20:28–29 as relating only “to the elders’ shepherding and guarding the flock,” as if these verses were misapplied in *Publication Work in the Lord’s Recovery*. Actually, they are very much on point.

Acts 20:28–30 – [28] Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood. [29] I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. [30] And from among you yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverted things to draw away the disciples after them.

The apostle Paul charged the elders to care for the church by protecting it from both fierce wolves who would come in from outside and from ones who would rise up from among them speaking perverted things to draw away disciples after themselves. According to the New Testament, the elders bear a particular responsibility before the Lord to exercise oversight to protect the local church and the saints under their care from the intrusion of unhealthy and destructive teachings (1 Pet. 5:1–2; Titus 1:7a, 9; Heb. 13:17). Surely there is the need for such oversight today!

1 Pet. 5:1–2 – [1] Therefore the elders among you I exhort, who am a fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory to be revealed: [2] Shepherd the flock of God among you, overseeing not under compulsion but willingly, according to God; not by seeking gain through base means but eagerly.

Titus 1:7a, 9 – [7] For the overseer must be unprovable as a steward of God... [9] ¹holding to the ²faithful word, which is according to the ³teaching of the apostles, that he may be able both to exhort by the healthy teaching and to ⁵convict ⁶those who oppose.

fn. 1:9¹ – The elders are appointed to administrate God’s government in a local church that good order may be

maintained in the church. To accomplish this, the elders need to hold to the faithful word, which is according to the apostles' teaching, that they may be able to stop troublesome talkers and calm a tumultuous situation (vv. 9–14).

fn. 1:9² – The trustworthy, reliable, and true word that was taught in the churches according to the apostles' teaching. The elders in a local church should hold to this kind of healthy word that they may fulfill their duty in teaching (1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17).

fn. 1:9³ – The teaching of the apostles (Acts 2:42) eventually became the New Testament. This indicates that (1) the churches were established according to the apostles' teaching and followed their teaching, and (2) the order of the churches was maintained by the faithful word, which was given according to the apostles' teaching. The disorder in the church was due mainly to deviation from the apostles' teaching. To counter this, we must hold to the faithful word taught in the churches according to the apostles' teaching. In a darkened and confused situation, we must cleave to the enlightening and ordering word in the New Testament — the apostles' teaching. To maintain order in the church, the apostles' word according to God's revelation is needed in addition to the eldership.

fn. 1:9⁵ – To disclose the true character of anything so as to convict and, hence, reprove someone by exposing his fault. It is translated reprove in Eph. 5:11, 13.

fn. 1:9⁶ – Or, the gainsayers.

Heb. 13:17 – Obey the ones leading you and submit to them, for they watch over your souls as those who will render an account, that they may do this with joy and not groaning; for this would be unprofitable to you.

One of Brother Lee's clearest words concerning being restricted in one publication was in a message from the elders' training in February 1986 entitled "Basic Principles in the Eldership and the Training of the Full-Timers." In it he concluded by charging the elders to swallow up dissension by taking care of the matter

of different publications in their localities, indicating that based on his fellowship the brothers should “make some adjustment of the eldership.”

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.

...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.

...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. 163-164)

At the end of the meeting in which *Publication Work in the Lord's Recovery* was presented to the elders, the co-workers similarly stated that their burden had been discharged through their fellowship and that it was now the elders' responsibility to consider how (not whether) to apply the co-workers' fellowship in their local situations. Thus, not only the content

of the co-workers' fellowship, but also the manner in which it was passed on to the churches, was absolutely according to both the scriptural pattern and Brother Lee's practice.

D. No Scriptural Basis for Public Dissension

What is without scriptural basis is the public airing of dissension aimed at the blended co-workers, Living Stream Ministry and the co-workers' fellowship contained in *Publication Work in the Lord's Recovery*. Such lawlessness and unprincipled activity is contrary to each of the scriptural principles already mentioned and as such is strongly warned against (1 Cor. 11:16; Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10; Gal. 5:19a, 20b; 1 Cor. 11:19).

1 Cor. 11:16 – But if anyone seems to be contentious, we do not have ¹such a custom of being so, neither the churches of God.

fn. 11:16¹ – The custom of contention, disputation, and debating. Neither the apostles nor the churches tolerated any disputation concerning the apostles' teaching.

Rom. 16:17 – Now I exhort you, brothers, to mark those who make divisions and causes of ¹stumbling contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and ²turn away from them.

fn. 16:17¹ – Referring to being stumbled and leaving the church life. This must be the result of different opinions and teachings.

fn. 16:17² – In ch. 14 Paul was liberal and gracious regarding the receiving of those who differ in doctrine or practice. Here, however, he is unyielding and resolute in saying that we must turn away from those who are dissenting, who make divisions, and who make causes of stumbling. The purpose in both cases is the preserving of the oneness of the Body of Christ that we may have the normal church life.

Titus 3:10 – A ¹factious man, after a first and second admonition, ²refuse...

fn. 3:10¹ – A heretical, sectarian man who causes divisions by forming parties in the church according to his own opinions (see note 1³ in 2 Pet. 2). The Gnostic Judaism referred to in the preceding verse must be related to this.

fn. 3:10² – In order to maintain good order in the church, a factious, divisive person should be refused, rejected, after a first and second admonition. This is done to stop intercourse with a contagiously divisive person for the church's profit.

Gal. 5:19a, 20b – [19] And the works of the flesh are manifest, which are such things as... [20] ...⁴sects...

fn. 5:20⁴ – The same Greek word as for *heresies* in 2 Pet. 2:1. Here it refers to schools of opinion (Darby's New Translation), or sects.

1 Cor. 11:19 – For there must even be ¹parties among you, that those who are ²approved may become ³manifest among you.

fn. 11:19¹ – Sects, schools of different opinions, as in Gal. 5:20.

fn. 11:19² – Tested and found to have met the specifications.

fn. 11:19³ – Sects are useful for manifesting the approved ones, who are not sectarian.

There are two verses in 1 Corinthians concerning head covering which show us that we need to be one in practice. There were many different thoughts concerning the matter of head covering, but Paul told the saints in 11:16 not to be contentious concerning this: "But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God." The custom here is the custom of contention, disputation, and debating. Neither the apostles nor the churches tolerated any disputation concerning the apostles' teaching. The plurality of the churches here indicates that all the local churches are independent of one another, yet they all act in the same way according to the apostles' teaching. The practice of all the churches should be uniquely one. (*Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move*, p. 46)

In Romans 16:17 the apostle charged us to turn away from those who make divisions, and in Titus 3:10 he charged us to refuse a sectarian man, after a first and second admonition. According to Romans 14:1—15:13, we need to receive all genuine believers, regardless of their different views concerning doctrine and outward practices. However, we

cannot tolerate any kind of division, because division is an insult to the person of the Triune God and a violation of the constitution of the Body of Christ and the practice of the Body life. According to the clear and definite word of the apostle Paul in Romans 16:17 and Titus 3:10, we need to turn away from those who purposely make divisions, and we also need to refuse those whose purpose in contacting others is to cause division. (47 speakers, 1993 *Blending Conference Messages Concerning the Lord's Recovery and Our Present Need*, pp. 95–96)

The first thing is being divisive, making divisions and causes of falling contrary to the apostles' teaching (Rom. 16:17). In Romans 14 Paul said that we must receive all kinds of genuine believers, whether they keep certain days or consider every day alike, whether they eat herbs or eat meat (vv. 1–6). Then, in chapter fifteen Paul said that we must receive genuine believers according to Christ (vv. 5–7). In these portions of the Word, Paul was very broadminded, very generous, and, in a sense, very liberal. But at the end of chapter sixteen Paul said, "Now I beg you, brothers, keep a watchful eye on those who make divisions and causes of falling contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them." These two things—the making of divisions and causes of falling—have been and still are going on among us. Thus, we need to keep a watchful eye on those who make divisions and causes of falling contrary to what we have learned of the apostles, and we must turn away from them.

In dealing with the divisive ones, we must also take Paul's word in Titus 3:10, "A factious man after the first and second admonition refuse." A factious person is a divisive and sectarian person. According to Paul's word in Romans 16:17 and in Titus 3:10, after the first and second admonitions, we must reject such persons and turn away from them. To do this is to quarantine such persons. To quarantine a person does not mean that we hate that person. If one member in a family became ill with a contagious disease, the rest of the family would need to quarantine him for the safety of the whole family. Otherwise, the entire family would be affected. Likewise, to practice Paul's word in Romans 16:17 and in Titus 3:10 is to quarantine the divisive members in the Body of Christ. This is not my teaching; it is my presentation of the

holy Word to you. (*A Brief Presentation of the Lord's Recovery*, p. 46)

There may be some divisive members among us. Paul referred to these ones in Romans 16:17, which says, "Now I exhort you, brothers, to mark those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them." Some make division purposely. We have to turn away from these division-makers. Titus 3:10 says that we must reject the factious, sectarian, members. Some members are very factious, very sectarian, very divisive, and their purpose in contacting others is to cause division. There are some like this today who have the intention of remaining among us to spread their poison. No doubt, they are division-makers, and they are factious, sectarian. Since they are division-makers, we have to turn away from them. Since they are still factious after being admonished again and again, we have to reject them. (*The Intrinsic View of the Body of Christ*, pp. 100-101)

Romans 16:17 charges us to turn away from those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching of the apostles. We must turn away from anyone who makes divisions and should not contact such persons to fellowship with them. This is another exclusion from the fellowship in the Body of Christ.

Some say that the apostle's charge to deal with the divisive ones in Romans 16:17 should not be applied to the division-makers in the Lord's recovery today. They say that Romans 16:17 refers to men who do not serve our Lord, but their own stomach, as mentioned in the next verse, and that the division-makers in the Lord's recovery today are not this kind of person. But we need to realize that in Romans 16:17 the apostle condemns the action of making divisions, regardless of what kind of person makes the divisions. A brother may be very right in every regard as a Christian, but if he makes divisions in the church or among the churches, he should be condemned and quarantined as the apostle charged. (*The Ministry of the New Testament and the Teaching and Fellowship of the Apostles*, pp. 29-30)

m. Division-makers Rising Up

In Romans 16:17 Paul says, “I exhort you, brothers, to mark those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them.” This indicates that division-makers had risen up.

n. Factious (Sectarian) Men Existing in the Churches

In Titus 3:10 Paul says, “A factious man, after a first and second admonition, refuse.” This tells us that factious (sectarian) men existed in the churches. Such sectarian men cause divisions by forming parties in the church according to their own opinions. (*The Satanic Chaos in the Old Creation and the Divine Economy in the New Creation*, p. 54)

Considering our present situation, the brothers taking the lead in the churches need very much to warn the saints to beware of those who sow division and confusion. The destroyers of God’s building hide behind a mask of “concern” for the Lord’s recovery, desiring to lead the churches and the saints away from the scriptural principles that have protected us for many years. Many of the different teachings and of the writings which oppose the co-workers’ fellowship in *Publication Work in the Lord’s Recovery* have received worldwide distribution through the Internet, including being posted on a church’s Web site. Such widespread dissemination of dissent bears strong similarities to an issue addressed years ago in an open letter signed by several co-workers—Francis Ball, Titus Chu, Les Cites, Eugene C. Gruhler, Joel W. Kennon, David Lutz, Benson Phillips, and James Reetzke, Sr.—in response to the “lawless” distribution of dissenting opinions by some who were at that time elders in the church in Anaheim.

Our writing to you is not an attempt to interfere in the affairs of the church in Anaheim, but is rather a reasonable response to the lawless distribution of your statements concerning your stand in church affairs. Had the publication of your standing been confined to your locality, things would be different....

We press this point because it seems to us that the administration of the church in Anaheim has become different in kind from the administration of the other local churches

and because the bold and reckless distribution of this new stand is a direct attack upon what we have been practicing in the Lord's recovery up to this time. (*An Open Letter to the Speakers in the Meeting of the Church in Anaheim on August 28, 1988*, p. 16)

E. One Trumpet in the Lord's Ministry

Finally, concerning the assertion in "Analysis & Response" that 1 Cor. 14:8 has been "borrowed and applied to a foreign context" by the co-workers, we must recognize this false claim for what it is. In opposing this interpretation, the writer is actually opposing the ministry of our Brother Witness Lee and displaying his ignorance of the full biblical context of Paul's writing. Beginning in 1984, Brother Lee called a series of urgent elders' trainings because of a trend toward division in the Lord's recovery caused in large part by workers carrying out their own works within the Lord's recovery as "feudal princes."

In March of this year eight brothers were needed for the release of the word in the international blending conference in Indonesia. They came and asked me, "What shall we do there?" I told them that they should go there to do the work in the Body and that they should not be as they had been in the past, each one doing his own work, each one having a little region that had become a mountain fortress, and each one as a result becoming a feudal prince building his own fortress and occupying his own mountain top.

This is the reason that I have called several urgent meetings for the elders and co-workers since 1984. I called the urgent meetings because I observed that among us there was an inclination toward division. I released a series of truths that were later printed in several volumes (see *Elders' Training, Books 1—11*). You all should read these books. I said that the age of feudalism is over and that we should no longer do the work of feudal princes. The co-workers should go out, but they should never do the work of building fortresses, the work of the feudal princes; they should only do the work of the Lord's recovery. If we all do the work of the Lord's recovery, there will be the one Body. If only three or five people who are of the same mind go out to work in a small region, the outcome is not oneness or one accord; rather, that outcome creates division. This is the very reason for the turmoil in recent years. (*The Governing and Controlling Vision in the Bible*, p. 32)

Against this background, in a 1986 elders' training message entitled "No Uncertain Sounding of the Trumpet in the Lord's Ministry," Brother Lee applied 1 Corinthians 14:8 (along with Num. 10:9; Judges 7:18; and 2 Tim. 2:3) to the matter of having only one clear sounding of the trumpet through the ministry in the Lord's recovery.

1 Cor. 14:8 – For also if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who will prepare himself for battle?

Num. 10:9 – And when you go to war in your land against the adversary who oppresses you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, so that you may be remembered before Jehovah your God and be saved from your enemies.

Judges 7:18 – When I and all who are with me blow the trumpet, you also blow the trumpets around all the camp and say, For Jehovah and for Gideon!

2 Tim. 2:3 – Suffer evil with me as a good ¹soldier of Christ Jesus.

fn. 2:3¹ – The apostle considered their ministry a warfare for Christ, just as the priestly service was considered a military service, a warfare, in Num. 4:23, 30, 35 (lit.).

Some of the so-called workers, the leading ones, like to think that they can take another line, not following the one line in the ministry. They may consider this and speaking in tongues without a definite interpretation small matters which we do not need to pay attention to. To some extent I myself have had this kind of thought in the past. Although I gave such a serious word that my toleration is over, some brothers may feel, not in a negative way, but in a very positive way concerning me, that they love me and do not think that I need to be that serious about little things such as these. I had the same kind of thought in the past, but through my study I realized that in the New Testament the illustration of a trumpet being sounded to prepare others for battle is only used in 1 Corinthians. This illustration in 1 Corinthians is not used in relation to the person of Christ in His Godhead or to the crucial, eternal redemption of Christ. This illustration is used concerning a minor point, the interpretation of tongues.

Let us read 1 Corinthians 14:6–8 to see the context of this illustration: “But now, brothers, if I come to you speaking in tongues, what shall I profit you, unless I speak to you either in revelation or in knowledge or in prophecy or in teaching? Even lifeless things, whether flute or harp, in giving a sound, if they give no distinction in the sounds, how will it be known what is played on the flute or on the harp? For if indeed the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who will prepare himself for battle? So also you, unless you give by the tongue an intelligible word, how will it be known what is being said? For you will be speaking into the air.” It is concerning the matter of speaking in tongues, something which we consider to be so small, that the Apostle Paul inserted this verse with the word “battle” in it. No one among us would consider a battle a small thing. An army that is fighting a battle needs the morale, a fighting unity. In order to maintain this morale even a little dissension concerning the smallest matter has to be killed. If that little dissenting talk is not killed, the morale will be annulled. There will be no more morale, and surely the army will lose the fight, the battle. This warns me concerning the seriousness of the Lord’s ministry. The Lord’s ministry is like the sounding of the trumpet for the army to go to war (Num. 10:9; Judges 7:18). The Lord’s ministry is a matter of a battle (2 Tim. 2:3 and note 3¹—Recovery Version). (*Elders’ Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord’s Move*, pp. 75–77)

Actually, what Brother Lee spoke in 1986 was not a new interpretation. In 1975 he made the same application concerning the sounding of the trumpet.

God would not send out trumpeters to sound different trumpets for His army to fight the battle (1 Cor. 14:8; Num. 10:9; Judg. 7:18). This would be confusion. God is wiser than this. He will raise up only one trumpeter to sound one calling, one voice, so that His people on the earth can march on. (*The Testimony of Jesus*, p. 99)

On both occasions Brother Lee pointed out that to have a speaking different than the one being trumpeted through the general ministry which is taking the lead in the Lord’s recovery creates uncertainty and confusion among the saints and damages the Lord’s recovery. Brother Lee’s desire, expressed

throughout the series of elders' trainings in the 1980s, was that the gifted brothers would lay aside their personal ministries so that there could be a clear sounding of the trumpet to lead the saints in the Lord's recovery into battle for the accomplishment of God's eternal economy. He further pointed out that the trumpeting is even more in the publication work than in the spoken ministry.

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... 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)

Brother Lee's interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:8 is supported by Paul's word in Acts 20:26–27. There Paul told the Ephesians elders that he was clean from the blood of all men because he did not shrink from declaring to them all the counsel of God. This word is a direct reference to the Lord's charge to Ezekiel to be a watchman to blow the trumpet to warn His people of their enemies' attack (Ezek. 33:1–6). Paul's declaration of the full counsel of God, including his words of guidance and warning to the elders, were his blowing of the trumpet in the New Testament ministry.

Acts 20:26–27 – [26] Therefore I testify to you on this day that I am clean from the blood of all men, [27] for I did not shrink from declaring to you all the counsel of God.

Ezek. 33:1–6 – [1] Then the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, [2] Son of man, speak to the children of your people, and say to them, Whenever I bring the sword upon a land and the people of the land take a man from their midst and set him up as their watchman, [3] and when he sees the sword come upon the land, he blows the

trumpet and warns the people; [4] then whoever hears the sound of the trumpet and ignores the warning, if the sword comes and takes him away, his blood will be on his own head. [5] He heard the sound of the trumpet and ignored the warning; his own blood will be on him; whereas if he had taken warning, he would have delivered his soul. [6] But if the watchman sees the sword come and does not blow the trumpet and the people are not warned and the sword comes and takes someone away from them, he is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand.

To reject the application of 1 Corinthians 14:8 to the need to have one trumpeting in the Lord's ministry or to say that it does not apply to the matter of having only one publication is not just to oppose the fellowship of the blended co-workers; it is to reject Brother Lee's application of this verse to our situation and by doing so to annul our brother's fellowship on the way to preserve the oneness in the Lord's recovery through being restricted in the carrying out of the Lord's ministry.

