

Chapter 3 Awakening and the Path of Righteousness

(Ages 37–49; 1976–1988; Period of Spiritual Maturation)

"He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake." (Psalm 23:3)

I. From Delusion to Awakening

Mistaking One Thing for Another

As mentioned in Chapter 1, my entire family—starting with my three older siblings, then my parents, and finally myself and my two younger brothers—successively came to salvation within what was then known as the "Church Meeting Hall" (later renamed the "Local Church"). Initially, I mistakenly believed that Witness Lee was a fellow disciple of Watchman Nee and that the "Church Meeting Hall" was the same as the "Christian Assembly Hall" movement that had existed in China. However, through my experiences and interactions across Taiwan, Southeast Asia (including Singapore), and North America (the US and Canada), I finally realized that Witness Lee was by no means a fellow preacher with Watchman Nee, and that the "Local Church" was certainly not the "local ground of the church" originally preached by Nee. Doubts gradually accumulated until I finally had a sudden realization: I had boarded the wrong ship—a "pirate ship" (the Witness Lee-led Local Church)—right from the start. I had been immersed in it for 34 years, surrounded by people who openly called black white and lacked any moral sense of right and wrong; they won lawsuits through lies and helped cover up acts of adultery and illegality—acting just like those described in the Bible who, while committing murder, "think that they are offering service to God" (John 16:2).

Witness Lee constantly claimed that if any church was willing to stand on the "local ground," the matter of administrative authority could be negotiated; yet, the reality was quite different. "Christian Assembly Halls" established by Watchman Nee's co-workers already existed in places like Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines, but wherever Witness Lee went, he would set up a rival organization and go his own separate way. I recall a Japanese co-worker who staunchly upheld the "local ground" of the church. One year, I took him to visit various church gatherings in Taipei—groups that all claimed to stand on the local ground yet had no fellowship with one another. These included the Xinyi Road building (headquarters for the pro-Witness Lee faction), the Mantingfang group, the conference convened by Lin Fonming in the name of Titus Chu, and the Yongkang Street church. Regrettably, that Japanese co-worker has yet to see the truth of the matter. This illustrates just how difficult it is to purge the "toxins" once a person's mindset has been poisoned.

****Firmly Believing in the Local Ground of the Church****

The church is, by nature, the house of God (1 Timothy 3:15), the Body of Christ (Ephesians 1:23), the Bride (Ephesians 5:31–32), and the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:22). No reason—whether race, language, level of faith, outward signs of piety, social class, culture, or gender—can justify dividing the church (Colossians 3:11; Galatians 3:28). If there is any reason preventing believers from gathering together, it is simply that we live in the flesh and are naturally subject to geographical limitations; in other words, the only thing distinguishing "you" from "me" is our location. Any other reason serves only to destroy unity. I once held this conviction firmly, even declaring, "Even if someone were to take a broom and try to sweep me out, I wouldn't leave!"

****Experiencing the "Four Great Pillars" Incident in Taiwan****

As it turns out, back in the 1960s, a rift developed between Witness Lee and the so-called "Four Great Pillars" (Shi Bocheng, Lin Sangang, He Guangming, and Wei Jianzhang), leading them to part ways. While the ostensible reason was their influence by Brother T. Austin-Sparks, the actual cause was dissatisfaction regarding Witness Lee's mishandling of massive overseas donations—specifically, his misappropriation of funds intended for the co-workers' ministry work for his own personal use. Years earlier, in the 1950s, a wealthy brother from the Philippines had donated a substantial sum (approximately one million US dollars), entrusting Witness Lee to use it to provide for the living needs of the co-workers serving across Taiwan at that time. Mr. Lee actually transferred that huge sum of money to Hong Kong, commissioning someone to purchase Western medicines on his behalf. These were then smuggled into Taiwan for resale, yielding a massive profit. This account came directly from Du Huanzhang—a fellow worker who was in Hong Kong at the time and later worked alongside me in Southern California; he admitted to participating in the procurement of these medicines himself. Later, the vast majority of the proceeds from selling the smuggled medicine was misappropriated by Mr. Lee for his personal use. Each fellow worker received a monthly stipend of only 360 New Taiwan Dollars (equivalent to nine US dollars at the exchange rate of the time), with small additional allowances for their wives and children based on family size—amounts that fell far short of covering basic living expenses. To my knowledge, there was an instance when Huang Guangsheng, while stationed in Yilan, asked my second older brother, Timothy Huang, to put in a good word with a Railway Bureau official responsible for managing waste "coal ash." He asked for special consideration so that the discarded ash could be set aside for him; he would then use it to manufacture coal briquettes for sale to supplement his income.

****Mr. Lee's Eldest Son Suffers Repeated Business Failures****

Timothy Lee, the eldest son of Witness Lee (Mr. Lee), was a spendthrift who squandered the funds his father had acquired on various business ventures—including selling shirts, real estate dealings, and participating in the Vancouver World Expo—all of which ended in failure; at one point, he even fled Taiwan to escape creditors. Finally, in the early 1970s, he leveraged Mr. Lee's influence to rally believers into investing in the "Daystar Motorhome Company." Mr. Lee served as Chairman, Philip Lee as General Manager, Jeng Guangmin as Deputy General Manager, and Bao Shouheng as Factory Manager. I recall Brother Bao even calling me at the time to consult on matters regarding production management and quality control. Rumors circulating among the saints in Kaohsiung suggested that Mr. Lee's eldest son lived a dissolute life, frequently indulging in womanizing. Consequently, the motorhome business hemorrhaged capital until the original

investment was completely lost; Mr. Lee then asked the investors to treat their contributions as religious offerings, effectively writing off the lost capital as a settled matter.

At the time, regarding the various rumors circulating within the church, I took the view that financial matters were a private affair concerning Mr. Lee's personal conduct—something for which he alone was accountable to the Lord, and which did not concern me—so I had no intention of looking into the details.

The Rise of the Lee Family's Second Son and the Plundering of the Faithful

Witness Lee's second son, Philip Lee, was roughly my age; his son was a classmate of my eldest son, and he even hosted a private dinner for my eldest son at the time of his wedding. In the late 1970s, it was Philip Lee who conceived the idea of holding the "Life-study" training conferences twice a year (summer and winter) in Anaheim, California. These events involved both in-person attendance and the distribution of video recordings to churches worldwide for viewing; a fee of \$50 USD per person was charged for each conference—whether attending in person or watching the video—generating substantial total revenue. Following the conferences, the spoken messages were printed and sold as individual booklets, priced at 25 cents each. Later, these messages were compiled into a single, large volume for each conference and sold again. Finally, they were printed as hardcover editions and sold yet again at a high price. Beyond the exorbitant production fees pocketed by the Lee family's "Ministry Station" and the "Taiwan Gospel Book Room" (a private enterprise owned exclusively by the Lee family, though nominally a non-profit organization), massive copyright royalties were allocated to Witness Lee personally, resulting in immense profits. Consequently, the assets held by the Lee family in the United States and Taiwan ballooned to tens of millions of dollars in a remarkably short time.

Tragically, while Witness Lee was still alive, a rift developed between him and his second son; the son ordered Ministry Station staff to engage in a work slowdown, forcing Witness Lee to apologize to him before normal operations could resume. After Witness Lee's passing, his eldest son sued the second son in a Taiwan court, accusing him of monopolizing their father's estate; the matter was eventually settled privately, though the amount the eldest son received remains unknown. Even more distressing was the second son's conduct starting in the early 1980s: he lorded over the Ministry Station and repeatedly engaged in sexual misconduct with female believers—scandals that caused an uproar among the churches. Witness Lee, upon hearing the news, hesitated to intervene; instead, he blamed the female believers for the seduction and criticized the church elders for mishandling the situation. His attitude in this regard was likely linked to the aforementioned work slowdown incident.

Witnessing the Berkeley Incident Firsthand

The entire Berkeley incident was a farce. Young people gathered from across California, primarily to exploit the ignorance of youth in order to mock, suppress, and belittle the elders and co-workers of various local churches. For instance, some would dress up as John Ingalls, mimicking his gestures and tone of voice to make him a laughingstock. Young people from different locations wore uniforms of various colors and vied to outdo one another with creative stunts and gags—such as using water guns, dumping buckets of water from the upper levels of the meeting hall (accompanied by the pun "Water you!"), burning leaflets atop rented buses (damaging the paintwork and eventually having to pay for repairs), and staging street

demonstrations (including brothers carrying sisters on their shoulders during the marches). Because the "Berkeley incident" was so outrageous, it provoked a strong reaction from many saints. Consequently, Max Rappoport became the scapegoat and was forced to leave "the Lord's recovery." While Max's ill intentions certainly deserved condemnation, he was, at most, merely the lead actor on stage; there were others directing this "Red Guard"-style farce from behind the scenes, modeling it after the "Cultural Revolution" of 1960s mainland China to instigate a "cultural" revolution within the church. Fortunately, the older brothers and sisters were almost unanimously opposed and reacted strongly, thwarting the scheme; the instigators then shifted the blame onto Max while managing to extricate themselves unscathed. The later "New Way" door-knocking movement could be considered a rehash of the "Berkeley incident." Furthermore, the young leaders involved in the Berkeley incident—such as Andrew Yu and Minoru Chen—later became key figures in the "Witness Lee-led churches."

Lee Initiates Chinese-Language Meetings in North America (1983)

Brother Zhang Xiangze came from a military background, having served as a general under Chiang Kai-shek, while his wife was a delegate to the National Assembly. The three brothers surnamed Zhang—Zhang Wuchen (father-in-law of Brother Christian Chen), Zhang Xiangze, and Zhang Yulan (father-in-law of Brother Joseph Chu)—served as elders in the Taipei church. The first two also served as itinerant apostles to the churches in Southeast Asia. Because of my relationship with my eldest and second-eldest brothers, they placed great trust in me; on one occasion, when they needed to hold a serious discussion with a co-worker from Indonesia, they even had me stand guard outside the room to ensure no one else approached. Later, Brother Zhang Xiangze was entrusted with assisting Lee's second son, Philip Lee. During the establishment of Chinese-language gatherings in churches across North America, he selected a dozen or so brothers—myself included—to serve as those in charge of the Southern California Chinese gatherings, and he appointed me as the general overseer of Chinese literature and publications for North America. For a time, only another brother and I were permitted to preach at the Anaheim church's Chinese gatherings. Initially, Lee would provide us with the sermon topics and scripture passages a week in advance; later, he would give them just a day ahead; eventually, he stopped providing them altogether, only revealing the topic and verses after we had prayed together half an hour before the meeting—a method he used to train and equip us. When the Chinese gatherings first began, Lee encouraged us to pioneer the work ourselves and instructed his second son, Philip Lee, to provide us with office space, funding, and resources from the ministry headquarters. Unexpectedly, a few months later, he required us—the brothers in charge of the Southern California Chinese gatherings—to take orders from Philip Lee. I then realized that Lee intended to use the Chinese gatherings as a power base in North America to contend with the leaders of the English-speaking gatherings, who were somewhat uncooperative at the time. Finding Philip Lee difficult to work with, I once considered stepping down; the dozen or so brothers in charge of the Southern California Chinese gatherings had solemnly vowed to stand together and deal with Philip Lee as a united front. Yet, to my astonishment—and despite those earlier pledges—during the preparations for a Chinese-language special conference, I witnessed a scene that left me dumbfounded: as we waited for Philip Lee to arrive and take the presiding seat, seven or eight brothers rushed to pour tea, only to place all seven or eight cups on the table directly in front of him.

Later, Lee instructed me to take two brothers—each about ten years my junior—to the nearby

city of CE to establish a new church (which, over the course of more than thirty years, grew to a membership of five or six hundred). These two young brothers were brothers-in-law (HZJ and ZGH; English names AH and GC, respectively); they were always impeccably dressed in suits and maintained a sanctimonious air, specifically currying favor with Philip Lee. Philip Lee had a bad habit of staying up past midnight, and they would keep him company, not daring to sleep themselves. After I left the CE church, a female member—the daughter-in-law of a high-ranking Taiwanese official—engaged in an extramarital affair with Philip Lee, and the two brothers in charge helped cover it up.

****Entrusting his second son, Philip Lee, with the behind-the-scenes leadership of the "Door-Knocking Movement"*****

Lee's second son, Philip Lee, was good for nothing other than extorting money; he had a history of misconduct and repeatedly committed sexual immorality, having illicit relations with numerous sisters in the faith. Almost any woman who came near him fell victim to his predatory behavior. Yet, not only did Lee allow his son to run wild, but whenever rumors of the misconduct surfaced, he would blame the women for allegedly seducing him. Despite this, Lee repeatedly entrusted him with key roles, placing him in charge behind the scenes of both the "Chinese-Language Meeting Movement" and the "New Way Door-Knocking Movement." Anyone who catered to Philip Lee's preferences rose to become a senior leader in these two movements; it is little wonder, then, that such outrageous rhetoric and behavior repeatedly emerged within them. During the "Knock-on-Doors" campaign, a stream of bizarre claims and incidents emerged, such as: (1) The "Quaternity" doctrine—the idea that Witness Lee had become one with the Triune God; notably, the Japanese-American elder from the LB church who championed this view passed away suddenly after the campaign fizzled out. (2) The "Prayer is Unnecessary" theory—arguing that since Lee was one with the Triune God, believers need only obey him rather than pray to God; the American elder from the RM church who made this claim later died in a car accident. (3) The notion that "visiting prostitutes is for relaxation"—WYC, the leading elder of the TP church, took Philip Lee to visit prostitutes; when discovered, he claimed, "He handles a myriad of affairs daily and needs to unwind." The man who made this statement later died of a severe illness. (4) "Even if Philip Lee were a murderer, I would still follow him"—the elder from the CE church who said this is still alive today, but God will hold him accountable. (5) "As a result of the 'Knock-on-Doors' campaign, church membership doubles every year; at this rate, by the year 2000, the whole world will be ours." The person who predicted the result of campaign—a man from Hong Kong named CS (English name MC)—has now actually become a spokesperson for the "Witness Lee Church" faction.

The "Knock-on-Doors" campaign employed various worldly tactics; for instance, those who baptized a large number of people were awarded badges or medals as encouragement. Ultimately, an awards ceremony was held—reminiscent of the Olympic Games—where high achievers were publicly commended by Witness Lee, a gesture considered a great honor. By the time the campaign concluded, thirty thousand new converts had been baptized in the Taipei church alone. Yet, a few years later, very few remained in the church; the vast majority had never truly been saved. The campaign eventually petered out without lasting success, yet the key figures who rose to prominence through it—and who are still alive today—have all become celebrated heroes within the "Witness Lee Church" faction.

II. Leaving the "Witness Lee Church"

Most Co-workers Had Dishonest Motives

After the Chinese-speaking congregation was established in the United States, I once advocated for church unity. Sheng Jiansheng—who had moved from Chicago to serve at the Anaheim Ministry Station—secretly reported me to Witness Lee. Consequently, Lee summoned about twenty co-workers and berated me from 8:00 PM until 11:00 PM. At the time, the Anaheim church consisted of both English-speaking and Chinese-speaking congregations. The Sunday breaking-of-bread meetings were held separately: the Chinese group met in the afternoon and the English group in the early evening. Once a month, a joint meeting was held; however, the Chinese congregation continued to hold its own breaking-of-bread meeting in the afternoon as usual. As a result, only a few leaders from the Chinese congregation attended the joint evening service. During a meeting of the Chinese-speaking service team, I suggested suspending the afternoon Chinese breaking-of-bread service on the days of the joint meeting. Unexpectedly, this suggestion violated a taboo of Lee's, as he absolutely did not want the English-speaking elders to have any say in the affairs of the Chinese-speaking congregation. Right then and there, Daniel Sun (who later became one of the ten new elders of the Anaheim church, largely thanks to his wife's standing) naively tried to defend me; he pointed out that Lee had previously compared the Chinese-speaking congregation to a university-affiliated hospital—implying it was inherently part of the Anaheim church. Consequently, he too was fiercely scolded by Lee.

After Lee had ranted for three hours and the meeting was breaking up, two brothers actually knelt before him, weeping and begging for forgiveness. Both of them later defected from the "Witness Lee Church"; one of them was CSR (English name DC). As for me, I calmly said to Lee, "I am sorry! I made you angry." Among those present was an elderly brother named Guo Shaozhou—Lee's in-law—who was a retired doctor from Hong Kong living next door to me in the US. Worried that the scolding might keep me awake, he gave me a sleeping pill; I accepted it without objection and put it in my pocket. When I returned home, I showed no signs of distress; my wife had no idea I had been berated. I fell asleep within a minute of showering—having no need for the sleeping pill at all.

There was a man named LSH (English name PL), who served as a Chinese-speaking elder at the Irvine church. In his daily life, even his in-laws—including his parents-in-law and sister-in-law—looked down on him; yet, when the Chinese-speaking gathering was established, he specifically hosted a banquet for Mr. Lee and received public commendation from him during the meeting. On one occasion, having arrived a moment too late to secure a seat in the front row beside Mr. Lee, he deliberately sat at the very back. Then, when Mr. Lee finished his message and opened the floor for free sharing among the congregation, LSH suddenly spoke out loudly, declaring: "Brothers and sisters, do not assume that those sitting in the front rows are necessarily spiritual!" It was truly shameless.

There was another individual named ZJY (English name JC), also a Chinese-speaking elder at the Irvine church, who habitually fawned over the Lee respectfully while treating ordinary brothers and sisters with great hostility. My wife once witnessed him acting obsequiously toward the Lee family one moment, only to turn around and berate the brothers and sisters the next. His daughter was a classmate of my daughter; one day, she excitedly told my daughter that her family was about to become incredibly wealthy. It turned out her father had befriended a

prominent ethnic Chinese tycoon from Indonesia, who was set to appoint him as the general manager of a newly established bank.

Then there was HT (English name JH), another Chinese-speaking elder at the Irvine church, whose father-in-law was a leading figure among the churches in a South American country (Country B). During a planning meeting for a Chinese-language conference, Philip Lee once made a boastful remark about how his father required several layers of blankets to sleep at night—implying that his father would not easily agree to travel elsewhere to hold a conference. HT, the Irvine elder, openly flattered him, nodding repeatedly in agreement and saying, "You are truly wise; perhaps we should invite *you* to hold the conference instead, and we can all come to listen to you."

Lee himself played power games while holding morality in contempt.

One year, a church elder from South Korea stayed at my home in Anaheim; because he spoke Japanese, he was hosted by us. His purpose in visiting Anaheim was to lodge a complaint with Lee against Lee Xi-de, the then-overseer of the churches in South Korea. Lee Xi-de was a direct disciple of Wang Chung-sheng, a co-worker sent from Taiwan to South Korea. Years earlier, Wang Chung-sheng had led a group of Korean brothers and sisters to Taipei for a conference, during which they were accommodated in a hotel. One day, Wang Chung-sheng told that elder's daughter that serving him was equivalent to serving God, and he proceeded to defile her. The subsequent turn of events drove the elder's daughter to commit suicide. Wang Chong-sheng himself passed away from illness shortly thereafter. His disciple, Lee Xi-de, succeeded him as the head overseer in Korea but ignored the matter; this provoked the dissatisfaction of the young woman's father, who came to lodge a complaint with Witness Lee. Lee had asked the saints to pray for guidance on how to handle the situation, noting that there was a "moral faction" on one side and an "immoral faction" on the other. Ultimately, however, when Lee's resolution was announced, the "immoral faction" had clearly won a decisive victory. Devastated by this outcome, the elder belonging to the "moral faction" contracted cancer and died shortly after returning to his home country.

Lee's disdain for morality led him to disregard the explicit biblical requirement that "an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife" (1 Timothy 3:2). Many of the elders and co-workers ordained by Lee violated these biblical principles. One such individual was an American named RK, who served as Lee's English writer; he engaged in an extramarital affair with a married woman named DI, resulting in divorce for both parties. Lee temporarily transferred RK to Texas to avoid the ensuing scandal, only to bring him back to Anaheim as his chief spokesperson once the situation had quieted down. After Lee's death, it was RK—along with MC from Hong Kong—who presided over the twice-yearly training sessions in Anaheim.

Many of Lee's followers harbored impure motives.

Among the rank-and-file believers following Lee, it is unclear whether the behavior stemmed from a poor environment—where bad company corrupted good morals and people simply imitated one another—or if they had harbored improper intentions from the start, seeking to exploit the situation for personal gain. A significant proportion of the believers in the Anaheim church treated marriage as a trivial matter; many divorced and remarried, while others were unfaithful to their spouses. One Western husband, whose children were nearly grown, abandoned his ailing wife to

cohabit with another woman. Two Western wives, despite having large families, suddenly told their respective husbands they no longer loved them and abandoned both their children and their spouses to run off. Additionally, two Western husbands who held leadership roles in the church transferred their affections to other women and remarried. There was another Chinese husband who married a Western woman and had two children; later, he divorced and remarried a Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioner from China—a woman who also brought along two children from a previous marriage.

There was a brother responsible for a Chinese-speaking congregation who had married a Western woman and had three daughters. Suddenly, one day, he announced that he no longer believed in the Lord and stopped attending meetings. It is unknown what strange incident he encountered in the church or what kind of shock he had received.

I hosted hundreds of saints from various places at my home in Anaheim.

The house I purchased in Anaheim was less than a hundred meters from the meeting hall and about fifty meters from the Lee family's residence. Because attending meetings was so convenient, my mother lived with us for the last twenty-plus years of her life.

The compound where the Lees lived contained two adjoining houses connected by an internal doorway. One house was occupied by the Lees and Mrs. Lee's niece—who had come from Anhui to stay with them temporarily—while the other was home to their second son, Philip Lee, and his family. These houses had been built for the Lees as a private residence by the saints at the same time the meeting hall was constructed. As for Lee's younger brother (Lee Chang'en), his eldest son (Timothy Lee), his youngest son (Philymon Lee), and an unmarried daughter, they all lived nearby, not far from our home. Lee Chang'en, Philymon Lee, and Mrs. Lee's niece all enjoyed talking with us. The youngest son, Philymon Lee—whose brain had been damaged by a high fever in childhood—was particularly fond of recounting every detail of his family's affairs to me, continuing until I told him I didn't have time to listen. Lee's own brother, Lee Chang'en, told us that he had once criticized his brother to his face regarding his improper practices within the church. Meanwhile, Mrs. Lee's niece told us that her uncle's conduct in the church reminded her of the Cultural Revolution she had experienced during her childhood.

As for my home, we hosted attendants of special conferences at least twice a year, accommodating around ten saints each time; I estimate that over the years, we hosted at least one or two hundred saints attending these gatherings. In between conferences, we also hosted many saints and friends visiting from Japan, Taiwan, and Singapore. One sister from Sapporo, Japan—the wife of a hospital director—stayed at our home whenever she visited; she would always slip in through the back door to bring gifts for Mr. Lee. There was also a Japanese gentleman—a non-believer whose wife was a sister in the Lord—who came to the U.S. on business. Since his wife was too ill to make the trip, she asked him to stay at our home for a few days. One evening, during the prayer meeting, he accompanied my mother; on the way back, he asked her what everyone had been praying about. My mother explained that their prayers were like his wife's prayers to the Lord—hoping that her husband would come to believe and be saved. Upon hearing this, the Japanese gentleman told my mother, "Your words pierced my heart." He decided to believe in the Lord right then and there. Although his wife passed away after he returned home, he was inspired by the Lord's love and later became an elder in the church in Tokyo.

On one occasion, we invited about twenty brothers and sisters from Singapore—who were in

town for a conference—to our home for lunch. Afterward, as we were seeing them off outside, a sister noticed how radiant my wife's complexion looked in the sunlight and asked what brand of face cream she used; we laughingly replied that she used nothing more than Pond's moisturizer. Another time, a family of five from the Singapore church came for a conference and stayed in a hotel; I lent them my large Ford vehicle for their transportation, and they drove it for about a week.

Three Couples Drive Together to Visit Northern California

One year, three couples—Daniel Sun and Felisa Lin, Moses Kuo and Mary Kuo, and my wife and I—traveled together in my large Ford vehicle. We drove north from Anaheim to visit the veteran brother Wei Guangxi and the couple Ma Jianyuan and his wife, while also making stops to visit my second older brother, Timothy Huang, and the older brother of Brother Moses Kuo. During the car ride, the six of us freely discussed recent events at the Anaheim Ministry Station, and we all agreed that such things should not occur within the church. However, as we neared Anaheim on the return trip, Felisa Lin warned her husband, Daniel Sun, in front of everyone not to mention the Ministry Station incidents again after we got back. Later, Daniel Sun and Moses Kuo defected; at the end of 1988, they were ordained by Lee as new elders of the Anaheim church and participated in rehabilitating the reputation of Lee's second son, Philip Lee. Furthermore, questions arose regarding Daniel Sun's eligibility to serve as a church elder, given that he had remarried Felisa Lin following a divorce. As for Felisa Lin, she was originally from the Philippines and had long served as Lee's English secretary, acting as his interpreter during conferences. She adopted her younger brother's two daughters; one of them later married Philip Lee's eldest son, effectively making Felisa Lin an in-law to Philip Lee.

****Establishing the CE Church and Moving On****

Between 1984 and 1986, I was assigned to lead two younger brothers—HZJ and ZGH—in pioneering a new church in the city of CE, near Anaheim. Unfamiliar with the area and the people, I enlisted two unmarried, middle-aged local sisters to join my wife and me for home visits one evening a week. This group of four conducted visits for over a year with considerable success. Later, due to differences in vision with brothers HZJ and ZGH, I resolutely resigned from my position as an elder at the CE church. I returned to Anaheim to establish a Japanese-speaking gathering; initially, we had only five Japanese-speaking brothers and sisters, but within two years, the group grew to over thirty. Among them were three Japanese sisters who had newly received the Lord's grace; years later, all three became leaders in churches elsewhere.

In 1988, our group of over thirty Japanese-speaking brothers and sisters traveled to the Vancouver, Canada area to visit a Japanese couple living there. We also led several new believers—who had recently received salvation—in baptism, sharing together in the joy of the Lord. During that time, we were staying in an unoccupied three-story building owned by a Filipino-Chinese brother. We later learned that he knew Felisa Lin and asked me to convey his greetings to her upon my return to Anaheim. However, after I passed on the message, she actually called that brother right in front of me to tell him that he had hosted the wrong people.

****Outbreak of the Philip Lee Scandal Sparks Dissatisfaction Among the Saints****

In 1987, Philip Lee was caught by a white brother while engaging in illicit sexual relations with a female assistant in a storage room at the Ministry office; the long-hidden truth about his sexual abuse of multiple sisters finally came to light. Lee subsequently transferred that female assistant to Irving, Texas, to serve as the manager of a newly established branch office. Her husband, who had previously worked in a university laboratory in Southern California, was also instructed by Lee to resign so he could take up a new position at the branch office; he was later transferred to the UK for a time. Their former home in Anaheim was purchased by Lee and rented to a white brother—who, ironically, was secretly opposed to Lee and frequently gathered other dissenters in that very house to strategize against him. Even more tragic was the fate of the couple's eldest son; already an adult, he was so overcome with shame and distress that, while driving in the southern United States one day, he was involved in a fatal accident and died instantly. In another instance, the husband of a sister who had been violated by Philip Lee, consumed by rage and a sense of injustice, contemplated shooting Lee and his son to vent his anger; although he was dissuaded from doing so, he remained deeply depressed and soon passed away from cancer. By the end of 1988, after months of fruitless negotiations with Lee and his representatives, saints across Southern California decided to leave the "Witness Lee-led church." By this time, our three children had also come to realize the truth and voluntarily chose to stand with us in this decision. Our eldest daughter was relatively mature and supported our view from the very beginning; our two sons, however, were initially enthusiastic participants in the "Knock-on-Door Movement." Our eldest son even neglected his university studies to go door-knocking three times a week, as mandated by Lee; later, when Lee added a requirement to care for newly baptized converts, the workload became overwhelming, leading to a sense of frustration. Meanwhile, our second son joined the audio service team at the ministry headquarters; during the movement, he even traveled to Taipei and Texas for training. There, he personally witnessed secrets unknown to outsiders, which led to a sudden realization and an affirmation of our stance. The whole family eventually acted in unison—we truly thank the Lord!

Lee's "Man-Becoming-God" Doctrine Helped Us Firmly Break Away

Lee's years of erroneous leadership and his insensitivity to moral issues—compounded by the lack of moral discernment among his close associates—had already planted the seeds of our desire to leave. The final straw, however, was Lee's arrogant "Man-Becoming-God" doctrine. This doctrine shattered my resolve to cling to the "local church position," prompting me to decide to leave the "Witness Lee-led church." Lee's advocacy of the "Man-Becoming-God" doctrine mirrored Satan's own path of the Fall—refusing to be content with the status of a son of God and instead desiring to go further and "become God" (although Lee was later forced to issue a correction, claiming this meant possessing God's name but not His Godhead). Regardless, the "Man-Becoming-God" doctrine is heresy and absolutely unacceptable to a true Christian. At the same time, news arrived from mainland China that some extremists within the "Shouters" movement had begun placing an empty chair in their meeting halls to symbolize the presence of "Witness Lee" among them. One day, I even received a flyer found in a park in Chengdu, Sichuan, which proclaimed: "Witness Lee is the modern Christ, the Sun of the East; people can only be saved through him," and so forth. I immediately sent the flyer via registered mail to Lee himself, hoping he would publicly condemn such claims; yet, until the day he died, I never heard him say a single word regarding that flyer.

III. Engaging in Literature Ministry

Founding the "Christian Digest"

After I resolved to leave the "Witness Lee Assembly, Witness Lee-led church." I visited church elders in Taipei, Taiwan. One of them, Brother Xu Zhihui—with whom I was very close and who has since passed away—asked me with concern: "You dare to leave Brother Lee? Aren't you afraid of starving to death?" He meant that spiritual sustenance could only be obtained from Brother Lee, and that leaving him would result in spiritual starvation. His question deeply stirred me; upon returning to the United States, I prayed and asked the Lord: "Throughout the ages, countless spiritual giants have left us a vast spiritual heritage and enlightenment, yet in the eyes of many, all of that counts for less than this one man, Lee!?" Consequently, I decided to dedicate myself to a literature ministry and founded the "Christian Digest." Modeled after the famous *Reader's Digest*, the publication featured excerpts from the works of spiritual giants alongside my own biblical commentaries. At the same time, I authored materials opposing Lee's teachings—such as "Refuting the Fallacy of Man Becoming God" (see Appendix V). Unexpectedly, Lee commissioned my eldest brother, Huang Gonghuan—a leading co-worker based in Japan—to warn me. He demanded that I retract my writings and apologize to Lee, threatening legal action otherwise. Lee further threatened that even if he failed to win the lawsuit, he would sue me until I was financially ruined; he claimed to have a monthly legal budget of \$100,000, funded by monthly contributions of \$1,000 each from ninety-nine of his larger churches and the Anaheim-based Ministry Station, specifically earmarked for litigation. Facing my own brother, I offered no rebuttal and simply laughed it off, fully prepared to face Lee in court at any time. Ultimately, it was a case of "loud thunder but little rain"—much bluster with no real follow-through—and the matter quietly fizzled out. As for my eldest brother, he had actually opposed Lee himself, once remarking that if one were to compare Lee's wickedness to that of Shoko Asahara—leader of the Japanese cult Aum Shinrikyo—Lee was, if anything, even worse. However, because my eldest brother opposed the "Knocking on Doors" movement, he was targeted and pressured by an elder of the Tokyo church whom he had personally mentored, in collusion with a co-worker from the Osaka church. The resulting stress deprived him of sleep for two weeks; after being hospitalized for several weeks, he emerged with an altered mental state. Compounded by a stroke, he lost the ability to make sound judgments and—ironically—ended up supporting the Lee faction. Consequently, from that time until he passed away at the age of ninety, I could only visit and pray for him, unable to discuss church matters with him.

The Origin of Being Described as Having "Three Heads and Six Arms"

At that time, I had to juggle three demanding roles: earning a living to support my family, serving the Lord and the saints, and engaging in a writing ministry. Each required my full, personal commitment. It is no wonder that Joseph Feng—a leading co-worker in the Hong Kong church—exclaimed when we first met in the U.S.: "Brother Huang, you must have three heads and six arms!" I had immigrated to the U.S. in middle age with an elderly mother who had lived with us since 1976 and three young children—aged nine, seven, and five—so I had no choice but to work hard to provide for the family. Fortunately, the Lord made a way; shortly after arriving, I

found work with the son of my former boss from Taiwan, who had started an import-export business in Compton, a predominantly Black neighborhood in Southern California. Initially, my monthly salary was only \$800—leaving a net pay of just over \$600 after taxes—which was far from enough to cover expenses. Whenever he asked if my pay was sufficient, I would simply smile sheepishly, as the Lord was the only One to whom I could pour out my complaints. My English was poor when I started working. I remember that whenever I spoke to clients on the phone, the white female colleagues nearby would bow their heads onto their desks to hide their laughter from me. I also managed the warehouse; once, after the workday had ended, more than a dozen large trucks arrived unexpectedly. Since the warehouse workers had already gone home, I was forced to operate the forklift myself to unload the cargo, and I didn't get home until midnight. Because of situations like these, I would return home every day with my body aching as if my bones were falling apart. This grueling routine, however, had one upside: I could fall asleep within a minute of lying down.

While working, I also had to attend to my church service. For instance, every morning at six o'clock, my wife and I would go to the meeting hall for morning watch. Although the groups were reorganized three times—eventually leaving just the two of us—we persisted to the end. Now, on top of my church service, I have added a writing ministry; it is a case of being busy upon busy—yet what a joy it is!

Reading the Bible While Drawing a Salary: Putting Three Children Through College

I never shirked my duties at work; my boss noticed this and gave me a raise every two or three months. Within a few years, my salary had reached the maximum threshold for Medicare tax deductions. During economic downturns, the company frequently laid off staff, and at one point, I was doing the work of eight people all by myself. Even when the company had cut its workforce down to just me, the boss kept me on to handle the cleanup and final wrap-up operations. After the first import-export company closed, the boss opened a new furniture company; he would import mahogany from the U.S. to Taiwan for manufacturing, then ship the finished furniture back to the U.S. to sell to retail chains. This process required booking dozens of shipping containers each month for the round-trip transport of lumber and furniture. The shipping companies would automatically offer a kickback—a commission paid "under the table"—to the person handling the arrangements (myself), but I always turned these commissions over to the boss. In contrast, the boss's brother-in-law secretly pocketed the commissions from the mahogany purchases, an act the boss eventually discovered. When the second company faced another economic slump, the boss laid off his brother-in-law but kept me on alone to handle the aftermath. He specifically told me, "You handle the sale of the company's assets for me; when there is no daily work to be done, you can read the Bible in the office, and I will continue to pay your salary." At that time, our three children were entering college—a period when expenses were high—yet I found myself spending much of my time reading the Bible and drawing a salary that enabled me to put all three of them through university.

My work for the second company took me to Baltimore, Dallas, Missouri, Toronto and Jamaica. Meanwhile, my boss—who was younger than I—had also established a small bank in the U.S. called Preferred Bank, of which he was the majority shareholder. Additionally, he founded an electronics company, Microtek Lab, which specialized in manufacturing electronic scanners and, at one point, held a monopoly on the U.S. market. Such a wealthy man placed such immense trust in me that he appointed me as his "Power of Attorney" for all his assets in the United

States—including properties in the star-studded neighborhoods of Beverly Hills and Rolling Hills. At that time, though I possessed almost nothing materially, I felt as though I had everything (cf. 2 Corinthians 6:10).

****Learning to Use a Computer for the Writing Ministry****

Throughout my life, I have constantly learned new things and acquired new skills—mastering subjects I had never encountered in school, such as production management and planning, quality control, accounting, inventory management, and operating a forklift. One day, when the company's chief accountant resigned, I took over the bookkeeping the very next day. I taught myself the concepts of debits and credits, learned to prepare balance sheets, and eventually mastered financial budgeting. In the beginning, I would often spend ages hunting down a discrepancy of just a dollar or a few cents. Yet, a year later, when external auditors examined the accounts, they could not find a single error. I transitioned from handwriting articles to typing on a computer; I gradually became proficient, typing several times faster than I could write by hand. Although I initially knew nothing about websites or web pages, I independently designed a system of coding and numbering that has remained unchanged for over thirty years. While I never authored a traditional Bible commentary, I designed a unique format that allowed my work to stand out among the thousands of expository books on the market and become a favorite among readers. Much of this success is due to that original design—simple and clear—which ensured readers could grasp the true meaning without confusion.

****Publishing the *Christian Digest* Monthly****

Initially, the manuscripts were handwritten. I engaged a printing shop run by two sisters to have the text typed—paying a fee of eleven or twelve dollars per thousand Chinese characters. We printed two thousand copies each month; I would personally transport them from the print shop to my home, stuff them into envelopes, affix address labels and stamps, pack them into boxes, and haul them to the post office for mailing—handling every step of the process myself. Moving dozens of boxes of magazines in and out each month was both physically exhausting and time-consuming. For a time, a lower back injury prevented me from bending down to put on my socks, so my wife would kneel before me to do it for me; we worked in perfect harmony, affixing mailing labels and stamps together—moments that felt deeply heartwarming.

In this manner, we published a total of forty-two regular monthly issues, plus twelve issues of *Bible Study Highlights* and another eighteen issues featuring fundamental teachings and various special topics—bringing the total to seventy-two issues spanning six years and extending into the early 1990s. Feeling that the physical demands were becoming too great, I prayed for the Lord to open a way for me to focus solely on writing rather than publishing, thereby relieving me of the strenuous manual labor involved. Ji Zhaoqi, the late president of a seminary in Macau, saw my *Christian Digest* and deemed it worthy of recommendation to Christians in mainland China; he instructed me to pack the remaining stock into a shipping container for transport to Macau, where he would arrange for the materials to be shipped across the border and then distributed via express delivery services nationwide. I shared in the costs of this undertaking, and I recall remitting four thousand US dollars to him. Thus, the work on the monthly publication finally came to a close.

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