

**BROTHER BENSON PHILIPS' TESTIMONY
IN HAMILTON, NEW ZEALAND ON APRIL 6, 2010**

Growing Up in a God-fearing Home

I grew up in a God-fearing home. Mom and Dad were very active in a Southern Baptist congregation, and for as long as I can remember, we went to the meeting three times a week. No questions asked. "Do I have to go?" You just were expected to get in the car and go. The Wednesday night prayer meeting, the Lord's Day morning, two sessions, the Lord's Day evening, two sessions. This is where I lived my whole life.

Being Saved Strongly

Actually, because I was around the gospel-preaching every Lord's Day, I was quite convicted about the receiving the Lord. Eventually when I was around 11, I was so convicted by the Lord, and I even had the Lord come to me in the night. I realize I was not saved. It was like in a dream. I know I needed to get saved. So that very day after school, I went back to see my pastor. I told him, "I'm not saved!" I wanted him to help me to get saved. So he and I went in, and we prayed, and I just wept and wept and wept. I remember going out of that room that day. I came 10 miles to the school. I live in the country. The bus had already left by that time, so I had 10 miles to walk home. I still remember I was walking down to get to the highway. It was about a one-mile walk down on pave street. I'm walking down that street. Everything was brighter. The sky is blue. The grass is greener. That was really nice experience. I was just a young person, but anyhow I was a joyful one. I went home. I think I got a few rides. I don't think I walked 11 miles. But anyhow, I went home, and I was full of the presence of Lord. Just at that age, I knew I had been saved and I had been saved strongly. I wanted my life to go for the Lord's interest.

Being a Real Dichotomy in High School

I wouldn't say that my junior high, high school years for that much about living a Godly life. All that wasn't too bad. I got in a lot of trouble with the teachers, with the students, with everybody. Anyhow, I had my experiences. I don't like to tell you many of them, but some were not pleasant. But anyhow, that's just the way it was.

But on the other hand, I wanted to see people saved because I had such an experience in my salvation experience. I can remember a number of times going and putting my arm around some of my friends and got them saved. I just wanted to see people saved because I wanted them to touch what I touched. A number of my friends got saved. I remember one of them, still remember his name. His name was Donald. He was the worst one. Nobody liked him. We talked him into going to a camp with us. In that camp, the one caring for us got him saved. I was so excited that Donald had got him saved. I remember running out of that place, running onto the baseball diamond. For some reason, I wasn't playing that day. I was running out into the field and just shouting to my friend, "Donald just got saved". Because I was so happy to see people receiving the Lord. He stayed with me all through high school. Even though I got in trouble in high school. I hardly remember one time; I had surrendered to preach. This is what you try to do if you want to serve the Lord. You don't have many options.

Anyhow, I went to go out and preach the gospel. I brought the quarterback of my team, got him saved and baptized. The Lord used me to get him saved. I saw him after about 40 years. He told his friends, "This is the one that baptized me." Actually, I didn't baptize him, but I did get him saved. The pastor was baptizing. But anyhow, I was so good to hear him to give that testimony after all those years.

But anyhow, on the other side, you drifted in and out when you're at that age. I started dancing some. Well, the pastor heard about that, and he came to me. I was in senior high school with that time. He was very upset that I was dancing. Good kids don't dance. That's for sure. Anyhow, he made me get up in front of the whole congregation and apologize. I remember I got up and apologized. Then I used that opportunity to preach the gospel even though I was apologizing and repenting. As I got through, I remember 21 people came forward to rededicate themselves to the Lord. I was a real dichotomy. Anyhow, my goal was to preach the gospel.

Reading Watchman Nee's Books in College to Be Attracted to This Ministry

I went to college after I finished high school, to a Southern Baptist University in Texas. After one year there, I went to another school, and this was a very school that the Lord brought His recovery to. This was just the sovereign move of the Lord in me. I wasn't there when Brother Lee came the first time, because I had graduated the year before.

But in my last year there, all of you know a brother named James Barber. At least many of you do. He visited New Zealand a number of times. He actually became a very good co-worker of Brother Lee. He and I were very close. But anyhow he was the Student Union Director that they sent to that school to head up the work among all the Christian organizations. By that time, I was the president of this organization and that organization and having to take care of so many things. I had a lot of contact with James, so he and I became very close. We began to read the books by Watchman Nee. We read all the ones that were out by that time, *Sit, Walk, Stand, The Normal Christian Life, Love Not the World*, and *Authority and Submission*. Anyhow, he and I got into these books. *What shall this man do?* We read them. We fellowshiped over them, and we became more and more attracted to this ministry.

At the end of my senior year, many of you heard of this person in England, named Major Ian Thomas. His ministry is on the saving life of Christ. In my school, they did something they had never done before. They invited someone who was not pro Southern Baptist to speak for three meetings. He wasn't encouraged to be invited. Anyhow, he convinced the university to invite him, and he came. By the time he left, many students have been stirred up. The students that were stirred up was the group that I was connected to, about 50 students. We prayed together. We went out to Southern Baptist churches to preach the gospel together. We were very close. We all were attracted to that word of ministry. James Barber was one of our close friends and associates. So together we were seeking. The Lord brought us in contact with the ministry. That was a great thing. I was a senior by that time, and it's almost time for me to leave the school. But anyhow, we always got together.

Yet Being Hindered by His Active Gospel Preaching

But my problem was that I love the gospel so much that even though this had come in among us, it was hard for me to receive it, because I wanted to get people save. I remember one time they had a special meeting of all the Christian organizations. The leaders asked me to speak. I rebuked the whole bunch. I still remember. One thing I told him. I said, "Well, what we're just heard is very good. However, I can testify to you that when you and I are speaking this kind of words, Paul is putting on his coat to take the next ship out to go to the other places to preach the gospel. And that's what we ought to be doing, is preaching the gospel." I had my view and I was strong in my view. All those years I was very active in that way.

My heart during this time was stirred up more and more and more toward the Lord and toward His way. I wanted to know the Lord's way and some others that I was with wanted to know the Lord's way.

Being Attracted to Christian Activities

Anyhow, I left that summer. I had the opportunity to go to the Baptist Royal Youth Conference in Beirut, Lebanon. The Lord sovereignly supplied me the money unbelievably to go. So I went. At that time I met a person at Baylor University. I was at Wailing. It was called by that time, which is a university now. But anyhow, he and I became very close. His group called *The Navigators*. Some of you heard of those. They very much emphasized entering into the word every day, preaching the gospel, contacting people, visiting them after they got saved and brought them on in the Christian life. I was very much attracted to that. This brother was exactly the same. I met him. We gathered in Beirut, Lebanon. Then we came back to the States.

I just graduated and intended to go to the seminary. Some of the money that I used, even though it was a gift, I just wouldn't take it to be a gift. Hence, I was going to work for six months before I started the seminary, and paid back that brother, who was actually my uncle. He had a coin collection. He went and sold all those coins. There was enough money to pay my plane fare to Europe and back. So my conscience couldn't allow that to happen. So I went and worked to make money to pay him back within about four months.

Being Ambitious to Do Something for the Lord

The Lord was very much moving in me in those days. I wanted the Lord's best, the topmost. I went to the seminary. This was the spring of 1964. Two things were going on with me and my life. This brother had a father who owned a ranch in Texas. He had travel to Europe, to Holland, Amsterdam, these places. He had a small river running through his property. He had a large building that slept many people. He gave that to his son and to me to be our training center. This is what we were going to do. By that time, I was 21 years of age. But I was too ambitious and so was he. So we matched each other and we had everything going.

Even Declaring Not to Leave the Denomination

I was in the Seminary also. All of a sudden, a note came to our house, announcing that there was going to be a special weekend conference with Witness Lee. By that time, at the college that I was at, so many of these that I mentioned earlier were beginning to turn to the way of the Lord's recovery. I was living in New Mexico with my parents to make that money. They decided they wanted to go to Los Angeles to hear Brother Lee. This was in November. So I said to them, "Okay, you want to do that. I'll let you borrow my car. You come by and pick it up. I'll be responsible for getting all of you there, but I can't go." So they went.

I remember my wife, not my wife yet, but she was there visiting. I remember telling her, "I will never leave the Southern Baptist. I will be just like Martin Luther." He stayed with the Catholic church until they kicked him out. I said, "I will do the same. I will never leave. I intend to reform that convention." I told her, "I will never do this. If these come back and say they're leaving, that's fine. But not me. I will not leave." I made the declaration, and nine months later, I was at a training with Brother Lee. But anyhow, I had no intention to leave. I did love the Lord in my way as much as I could. I wanted to serve the Lord. I wanted to do something for Lord. I wanted to see the Lord's people rise up to live another kind of life, the life that I was beginning to discover. But I didn't want to do it outside, the context of the denominations, particularly the one I was in.

In the Fall of 1963, Missing to Attend Brother Lee's Conference

I did go to the seminary. My brother was one of those that had gone to Los Angeles, being in that conference. Like I suspected, they came back and they were all leaving. They were going to start meeting there at Wayland Baptist University in Plainview, Texas. It was very interesting. I went to Wayland and said, "Well, I know all these people. I'd like very much to see them again and has some fellowship and just be with them." So I want to see them. I believe this was sovereignly arranged by Lord.

That very weekend was the weekend that James Barber went to a place in Texas where Witness Lee was speaking. That was in the fall of 1963. So I said to myself, "I should check this out." So I got on the plane to go back. I checked with my boss, "I need a few more days off. Would you do that to me?" He said, "Yeah, that's fine to go ahead and go." So I went. I was flying there and I got to the airport in Dallas. There was a telephone call. I thought who in the world is calling me? It was Barbara. This is the first time she calls me trouble. Anyhow I went and answer the phone. This brother that I had been coordinating with and development of this ranch. It was him. We had agreed to meet with his father to work out all the arrangements to have the use of that facility to do what we wanted to do. He said, "If you don't go, then it's all over."

You know what I did. I got back on the plane and flew back to where I came from and went home. I didn't see Brother Lee. That was in the fall of 1963. I don't know if that was the Lord, the enemy, or what it was. I wasn't ready. But anyhow I didn't make it.

During Brother Lee's Conference in Dallas in 1964, Being Impressed with His Sharing on the Church

These brothers and sisters I saw in this meeting in Plainview. The whole school got an uproar. It was bad. But these saints stood firm. I went ahead to the seminary in January to continue my line while they were taking their line. Then all of a sudden, a note comes to our house. I don't know who sent it. Who put that note in that box? I'm not sure. Why was my name on it? Anyhow it was announcing Witness Lee is going to be in Dallas a couple weekends from then. So I said to myself, "Okay, I didn't get to see him last time. This time I'm not going to miss."

I went, me and another brother. I was very much touched by the Lord. I remember he shared Romans 8. The word was very strong. The human spirit and the divine Spirit, and learning to live in such a realm. Then I miss the second meeting and came back to the third meeting. They had warned Brother Lee, "Don't speak on the church. You can speak on anything else, but don't speak on the church." That's just the way they operate around here. Anyhow, Brother Lee got up and asked everybody to open their Bible to Romans 12. He told me later, he said, every head just went down. When he said open your Bible to Romans 12, they know what was going. They don't want to hear anything about the church. They didn't want anything to come in to affect their wonderful time.

So anyhow, he began to speak. He picked back up where the meeting I was at, and he shared that Romans 8 is for life and the experiences of Christ. But chapters 9 through 11 of Romans is like parenthesis. Then he said, "Actually, Romans 12 follows Romans 8. After you experience Christ, that's life. You need the body. You need the church." Well, they were not happy. But I thought it was great. I think it was really made just for me.

Brother Lee didn't know I was in the meeting. One time I was in Taiwan and we were with his family. We were all there and he asked me to give my testimony. When I started to give my testimony, I related this experience and Dallas. Brother Lee didn't know that I was in the congregation. I told them what happened. I don't know if it altogether worked for me, but the fact was nobody else got caught. So I guess it worked. Anyhow, that was a very impressive to me.

My Heart Being Turned to the Way of the Lord's Recovery by Studying the Word

I finished out that term in the seminary. At the same time, I'm still working with this brother on the ranch to get it all prepared. We had something in our hands and we didn't ever want to give up. In the meantime, I read certain portions of *The Normal Christian Church Life*. I said to myself, "Either Watchman Nee is right, and everybody else is wrong. Or everybody is right and Watchman Nee is wrong. And I've got to find out for myself." This was my real beginning of coming into the church life. This was after I heard Brother Lee.

So I went through the New Testament, and listed 55 points as I could on the church life. All kinds, the ground of the church, anything I can think of, 55 points. I went through the whole New Testament almost three times, looking for every verse on all these points. Well, the more you study the Word, the more you're convinced. Little by little my heart was turned to the way of the Lord's recovery.

I had the testimony of those 15 or 20 saints, who are my very close friends meeting there in Plainview. We're really close. My brother was one of them. I even wrote to my brother and said, "If you want to take this way, that's fine. Just take it with your whole heart. Because I wasn't going to oppose it, but I just wasn't going to be a part of it."

Intending to Attend the Conference and Training in Los Angeles Afterwards

When I'm through, this brother and I went out to that ranch to spend a few weeks. But what was in my heart was that I had to see what this recovery was all about. There would be a conference and a training in Los Angeles. An eight-day conference and a six-week training. I said to myself, "I want to be in that, but I want to see the church life first. I want to see really what is being worked out there in Los Angeles." So I went out there to that ranch. I was still reading some other books. I was trying to decide how about this way. What's going on here? Is this the Lord's way? What is it? The more I was in the Word and reading some particular books, I was fully convinced that the decision that these saints, my friends had was the right decision.

I went back to Dallas and got home, where I worked two weeks for an agency called manpower. You go or are sent out every day to different place. Within two weeks I had enough money to pay for my gas. I headed out there. I want to be in Los Angeles for one month before the training and just see the church. So I went by where they were meeting in Plainview. I've been impressed and studying the Word that Paul, when he was on his way to Jerusalem, the last time he had fellowship from the brothers "Not to go." But Paul wouldn't listen to them, and Paul got in trouble. And I've been impressed about that point. I'm going to go by the church in Plainview. I went to them and I told them I had the burden to go to Los Angeles. You can imagine what they said.

Being Fully Convinced to Leave the Southern Baptist Denomination

I went back. You have to realize. I had never even been into a meeting or anything, but I know this was the Lord's way. But My Dad, especially his heart's longing was to see me raised up as an evangelist in that denomination, preaching the gospel. I went back to see my parents.

This is before I've ever been to a church meeting, a conference, or training. But I was so convinced about all the studying I had done. I had to take this. So I went back and told my parents, "I was leaving the Southern Baptist denomination. I'm heading out to this conference. My days of being a Southern Baptist are over." My dad was a big guy. If he would have risen up against me, I've been all right because I can take it all. But You know what he did? He just wept right in front of me, just wept and wept, when I told him I was leaving the Southern Baptist. That was hard to take. Because he loved the Lord too. Seeing one of his sons, his oldest son, doing what he said he was going to do. I was more than he could bear. Anyhow, I had no choice. I knew this was the Lord. At least, I felt it was the Lord. So I got back in the car with my friend and we drove to Los Angeles.

Attending the Training with Sister Barbara and Getting Married Afterwards

During that month, I was there just seeing the church. I coordinated with all the brothers to get the place ready. They were remodeling the house. Then we had the conference and training.

I wish I could tell you the story about my wife and how the Lord operated in her. But eventually, she was at the training of the ones that I was talking to you about earlier, the Navigators. She had made a promise that she would never leave that. They had to make that kind of promise before the session was over. But here I am now. We were semi-engaged. Anyhow, she wanted to be there.

So she went to one sister and told her what was going on with me and that it might be that we would be married. "He is out now in Los Angeles. I would like to go. Would you release me from this training." You remember the story that I was going to this place in Texas named Tyler. This city was named Tyler. This was Brother Lee's first trip to Texas. It was in the house of a wealthy Texas oilman. His wife was a very good Christian sister and used all of her money and her big house to invite Christians. That was where Brother Lee had the conference about. They got 500 people in that place. It's a big house. This one that was over that camp and that my wife was going to. She has spoken to this sister. This was before my wife talked to her. That lady told the director that Witness Lee was the most Godly man that she had ever met. She never took this way, but she was so impressed with Witness Lee. So when Barbara went to this other lady, she had all that impression in her about Witness Lee. She said, "I think you ought to go and listen to him. Find out if you're going to marry this guy." So she showed up. She and I went to the whole training together. Six months later we were married.

But I'll have to tell you that once I was clear that this was the way of the Lord, I made a definite decision before the Lord that if Barbara didn't turn to this way and she didn't see what I saw, there would never be a marriage. Because I knew deep within me, this was God's way. I was convinced! The more I read the word, the more I studied, the more I knew. "If there is a way on this earth, this must be the way." I was so convinced! Praise the Lord that it all worked out! She got out of that training and she was in Los Angeles with me. We ended up in the church life together.

Migrating to Waco Texas and Starting the Church Life in the Lord's recovery

I had never been in a church life. So, after the conference, I went back to Plainview to be with these brothers and began to meet. We met for about three months together. My wife was at another university, the university where I met her when she was a freshman. We stayed in contact and she went to Baylor University. There was a burning in me. I got a job there in Plainview and then I worked for 3 months. But in my heart, there was a desire to go to Waco, where Baylor University was, to start the church life in that place. Praise the Lord that we had one in Plainview. I wanted to see something happen to another place in Texas. After three months, I migrated there, my first migration.

There was a couple with my wife. This couple was Barbara's good friends. They ended up in Los Angeles at the same training. This was the Lord's miracle, too. We invited them to come and they came. So those three were meeting there in Waco. Then I moved there, on one hand, to have the

church life, and, on the other hand, to marry my wife. I believe that's the order. We were there together. Then in January, we broke bread with five people. By that time, there were two couples and Barbara's roommate. So the five of us started the church life and we began meeting there. That was my beginning in the Lord's recovery.

I just like to say this. No doubt, it was the Lord's operation to bring me. I have no doubt. No Doubt. All my days in the recovery, I could never forget all the experiences. How clear I was in those days that this was the Lord's move! I believe it more today than I did then. But that was the Lord's mercy to me. I ended up in the Lord's recovery.

Being Introduced to Brother Lee

I'd like to say something just a little bit more. That is how I was related to Brother Lee. My introduction to Brother Lee. I was there in Dallas. Even though I wasn't introduced to him, he was introduced to me. I was just one in the congregation. I remember that Brother Samuel Chang was driving his Cadillac with Brother Lee through Texas and other places. Brother Samuel was the driver, taking Brother Lee around. In Dallas that night, I looked at Samuel Chang and Brother Lee sitting together. I decided, "Okay, which one is Witness Lee? Can I pick Witness Lee?" Finally, I decided this one was Witness Lee. Well, the real Witness Lee stood up. I picked Samuel Chang. I didn't know why I picked him. I guessed he had more Chinese looking. Brother Lee stood up. That was my introduction to Brother Lee. But even in that speaking that night, I knew this was a man of God. There was no doubt about it.

Praying to Be Used by the Lord to Carry Out His move

Let me just say this, as far as it is related to my own life. Because I love the Lord, whatever was going on in my life, there was a factor in me that I wanted to preach the gospel. I wanted to do it in a full-time way if the Lord would ever work that out. When I had come back from Beirut, Lebanon, I came back to my parents' home. So I wouldn't have to pay any rent.

I was so burdened. By that time, I didn't know about the recovery. I'll have to tell you what I did every morning. I would have a map before me. I started off with the map of the United States. First of all, I took Texas. That's where I live. I said, "Lord, use me in this city, and this city, and this city, and the city." Then as I prayed in that way, I was more bold and I began to pray for every state, "Lord, use me in every state of the United States." Then I enlarged my prayer. I went to the map of the world and I prayed over every country. I said, "Lord, use me in every country of the world before I die." I prayed for about three weeks, every day. I prayed and I brought these maps before the Lord. Because I wanted to serve the Lord and I wanted to do something for the Lord's name to carry out His economy.

I'm not 70, but I'm on the way to 70. I am 68. So I'm getting closer. When my Dad, turned 70, he said, "Well, the Lord promised us only 70 years. Praise the Lord that I made 70. All the remaining years are just grace from the Lord." I'm getting close to that myself now. Anyhow, I wanted the Lord to use me. Now that I'm at this age. I still remember the prayers I prayed in the bathroom. I didn't

have any room in the house where nobody was traipsing through except the bathroom. So, I just laid those maps out in the bathroom and I prayed to the Lord. I wanted the Lord to use me.

Last spring, I had to reunions with my class that I graduated with high school. Looking back over my life, I just got to think how many countries have I visited on this earth since I left these people. I just enumerated and I enumerated 60, at least 60. I've been thinking about this. I prayed desperately. I hope all of you would pray like this. I don't know how you would pray. I know how I prayed in those days. I wanted to see the Lord use me. I didn't know about God's economy but that's what I was praying for. I wanted to be a person that the Lord could use to carry out His move on this earth. All I knew was the gospel, but still I wanted to be used by the Lord.

The Prayer Being Answered by Participating in the Living Stream Ministry

I've never said this to anybody, but I want to say it to you this morning. I am so happy that I'm in the Living Stream Ministry. Is there anybody else in Living Stream Ministry can say this? At least I can say it. I believe I'm in Living stream Ministry because the Lord has answered my prayer to use me throughout the entire world. I believe. I believe at least that's some of the answer. All the traveling. I don't think I'll visit every country on the earth. But I can participate with all the serving ones to get this ministry out to the whole earth. To me, when I see the Lord, I'm going to thank Him because I've got to participate in this. Maybe the others can't say that's an answer to their prayer, but I believe that's the answer to my prayer. Today the ministry of the Word through the Living Stream Ministry is going out to virtually every country on this entire earth.

I'm just a small member there functioning with Kerry and others and bearing some responsibility. When Brother Lee left, he asked me if I would be president of this organization. I'm a real poor one. Kerry is much more than I am. We served together. Anyhow, Brothers, I feel that this is the answer to the Lord's prayer. I didn't consider that way for a long time. But I thought back for the many years that the Lord would give me such an opportunity to serve in the Living Stream and be a part of the publication work. Kerry knows the nuts and bolts, all of this. I'm just looking over his head and says, "It looks good to me." But anyhow, I can participate and I am participating as much as I can, considering that I should participate more.

I hope that all of you would pray in this way, not in the way that I prayed, but that we would open ourselves to the Lord as the serving ones to be used by the Lord, and to pray in a way that is so specific to give the Lord the way to use you. Since I've been here, I just been considering we all need to pray. "Lord, every city, every place needs the church life in New Zealand." Would that be a great thing before you all go to be with the Lord that the Lord has raised up the church life in every place throughout New Zealand? Would that be a great thing?

We started off with 5. I still remember then we were up to 6, then we were up to 8, and we were up to 12, and we were up to 27. Little by little, the Lord increased the church and built up His testimony. I want to see this in the United States, too. I would like to see this in New Zealand as well. Here are the ones sitting before me right now that should be responsible for this. Forget money. Money is no

problem. The problem is with us. The Lord always has a way. May the Lord do something among us. May the Lord use you. There are 20 churches here in New Zealand. Praise the Lord for 20. But would it be better to have 50? Would that be the glory to the Lord? 50 churches in New Zealand. A hundred. I don't know how many towns are there in New Zealand. This is what the Lord has marked out for you all. This is it! I hope the Lord would use us.

Serving with Brother Lee Directly

Let me just continue a little bit more. That is related to my relationship with Brother Lee. I am not the one having worked directly with Brother Lee most the time. Kerry has had much more experience than I have. You all never had the opportunity to work with Brother Lee, except when on one occasion the Lord might bring you together. But I believe your heart is exactly the same as mine in this matter. You wanted to follow the ministry that was released by our brother, and even to follow him directly if the Lord would so allow.

I know there were several times that I received a letter from Brother Lee 1300 miles away. I remembered one day I was coming in to my house. I said, "It surely would be nice to hear from Brother Lee." When I opened up that box, there was a letter from Witness Lee. Brother Lee took care of those that had been directly brought in through his ministry. Can you imagine how encouraged I was to get that letter from Brother Lee? That was a great encouragement for all of us to press on. I had a good number of correspondences directly with Brother Lee about certain matters through the years, but I never had the opportunity to work directly.

I had made the decision. If there was anything that Brother Lee would ask me to do, I would endeavor to do it. Because, to me, that was to follow the Lord, especially in the work. I wanted to be submissive in the work and I wanted to carry out whatever the work wanted me to carry out.

Although I had this and that happen, the first thing that was a major incident in my life. I was lying in bed one night. Soon we would build the hall in Anaheim. The phone rang. I picked it up and it was Brother Lee. He said, "Would you come to Anaheim? Would you take care of the purchase of all the materials? It will be needed on this hall and the road?" My wife was eight months pregnant at that time with our last child. She was sitting there on the bed and I was sitting on the side of the bed, talking to Brother Lee. and All I knew to say was "Okay, Brother Lee, it will take me one week to get there because there's a lot of things I've got to do." He said, "Okay, very good!" So within a week I was in Anaheim. Francis Ball said, "Benson Phillips came to Anaheim. His wife, great with child." Anyhow, it was worth to pay any price to carry out the Lord's work through our brother. Anyhow, we came together there at that time. That was my first opportunity to serve with Brother Lee directly. It was a big thing to me.

Learning a Lot from Brother Lee

I learned a lot from our brother and I realize the reason the Lord has used him so much. Of course, he was a gifted man. He was a person in the spirit, But also, he did everything thoroughly. For example, one day I'm working on that building. I came about a bit earlier than the other workers. I was there getting ready for the day. All of sudden, Brother Lee called me, and he said, "Benson, this

is what I want you to do today.” It was to purchase a piano. I can find middle C on the piano. They want me to purchase a piano. He said, “How long will it take you?” I said, “Okay, I think I can do it by noon.” But you know what? At 12 o’clock sharp, that phone rings. I knew it was Witness Lee. I had all the information and anyhow we purchased the piano. But my point was that Brother Lee was accurate. He was on time. His life was like a clock. I’ve heard the details of the way he served throughout his day, what he did in the morning, what he did in the afternoon, what he did in the evening. The reason that so much was realized to our brother was his faithfulness.

I don’t know how he was able to accomplish so much in the publication work. But the main reason that he was able to do it was just a little bit today, a little bit tomorrow, a little bit the next day. Then by the time he reached here, everything was finished. He wasn’t the one that started here and ran to finish it. He started here and always he finished it. His life was quite amazing. I just want to be the same kind of person.

I know Kerry told us this story. After the last meeting of the training, one book. He wanted to meet Kerry after the meeting. He would tell you the time what the next book was going to be. He wouldn’t care to start doing his part. When he walked off that podium, he was starting the next book for the next training 6 months from then. Kerry was being trained himself. I hope Kerry can tell you a lot more than I can tell you about laboring directly with Brother Lee.

I had a lot of experiences with Brother Lee, especially that year. I coordinated with him on every detail. “What color is this wall going to be here?” We went through the colors of paint and Brother Lee made the decision. I would go to buy it. I mean everything. He got into every detail. It was quite amazing. Nothing was slipped by him. He got involved in everything to oversee everything in a direct manner. After that project was over, I went back to Texas.

Closely Following the Ministry of Witness Lee

I know the Lord has graced the churches in New Zealand in this way. You all are thousands of miles from Anaheim. You are thousands of miles away from what the Lord is speaking there and what the Lord is publishing there. But I believe the Lord has graced the churches in New Zealand in the same way.

Anything that the churches in Texas and that area generally. Anything that we did was a direct following of the ministry of Witness Lee. Everything that we did, everything that we entered into, everything we spoke, were directly under the leading of Brother Lee.

I remember so well that Brother Lee had spoken in a training in 1987, 1988 One heavy burden with him was the matter of prophesying. Then he began to consider, “How are we going to bring the saints to prophesy? How are we going to do it? This is the Word. This is the revelation. But how do we bring in the reality?” Also, he was very burden that we all could live a life with the Lord to be the proper persons, the persons that would have the content being brought to the meeting, so that the prophesying could take place. He shared this word, “What are we going to do?” Then he enumerated a few points. What he enumerated was *The Holy Word for Morning Revival*. So in Texas we began to work out *The Holy Word for Morning Revival*, and in Taiwan they began to work out *The Holy*

Word for Morning Revival. We coordinated with Brother Lee. Eventually, he made the decision how we would publish *The Holy Word for Morning Revival*. What a great blessing that has been to the Lord's recovery. *The Holy Word for Morning Revival*. If we handle it properly, it brings us into the life of Christ, it brings us into some knowledge of the Word, and it enables all the saints to prophesy. What a great recovery this is! What a great thing that we have, the small book, *The Holy Word for Morning Revival*. That's just a small thing really that we study the Word and we enter into the Word. But this is something that every saint can enter into and come prepared to speak on the Lord's Day. What a great thing this recovery is!

I would just say this is just a show window into the kind of a cooperation we tried to render to Brother Lee. Whatever he wanted to do, we want to be a part of carrying that out. Sovereignly, we've got the guts to do that.

Answering the Lord's Call to Russia

I'd just like to tell you one more particular thing. This relates to the Lord's move to Russia. A few of us had the burden to go on over to Russia and pass out to publications as Russia was opening up. So we did that. We just walked into a situation that you just couldn't believe. We brought back signatures 25,000 addresses from Russia to Anaheim of people that wanted to receive our literature from the Living Stream. They ordered it. So we brought that back.

The next day we gave a report. Then Brother Lee invited several of us brothers to his home. I was just sitting there. I just enjoyed being a part of that. This was just out of the blue. He says to me, "Brother Benson, would you go to Russia? Would you take care of this, this, this, this, and this? He gave me five points. There I was sitting and I had no thought ever to go to Russia. Then he said, "Would you go?" It seemed like an eternity before I got my answer. I just said, "Okay, Brother Lee, I'll go." So I went. I was there five years. My first thought was my last child at home. She was a sophomore in high school. What was I going to do with that girl? I got a wife. So my wife took care of her for three years. She graduated. I wasn't able to be with my last daughter in the last three years of her school.

You know you're not called to pay that kind of price every day, but sometimes you may be called to pay some kind of price. Brothers, we have to have the heart and the willingness to just respond to the Lord's call.

My daughter was not doing that well. Praise the Lord that she got out of high school. Then she went off to college. She had a terrible experience in that university. So it brought her back to Irving. Her husband-to-be was in the training and he had to sign the agreement that he couldn't contact her for two years. Yet they were wanting to get married. So she was suffering. My daughter just lost her boyfriend. She was suffering. The Lord brought those two together. He needed help. My daughter needed help. Both of them got so revived just through their contact with one another. That's the Lord's sovereign hand. I couldn't do anything, but the Lord arranged something to meet the need in my family. Then praise the Lord that she finished college and went to the training. Now she's got three good grandkids.

She told my wife one time. She said, "I will never marry someone as an elder in the church. I will never do this." She told her mother one time. We had a few restrictions. She said, "I am going to be a Catholic because in the Catholic church you can do anything you want to do, but not here. So I want to be a Catholic." My wife was just crushed. Praise the Lord that the Lord is so sovereign.

I'd like to tell you this kind of sacrifices of me, nothing. The Lord's move means everything. The sacrifice to move, the sacrifice related to your family, whatever. We have to carry out the Lord's move. It's worth it. One day we're going to face the Lord. What do we do in our situations to carry out His divine economy?

Having a Renewed Consecration to Be used by the Lord to Carry Out His Divine Economy

I'd like to tell you some other things, but I think this is good enough. Brothers, I do hope that you would have a renewed consecration to the Lord to serve the Lord in this way. Why are you all sitting in this room? You shouldn't be here. But the Lord had mercy and you are here. The opportunity to carry out the Lord's move to spread His testimony all over New Zealand. That is in your hands. I hope every day this would be before you. You don't just live out your life in a mundane way, but you have a goal and you have your reaching for something.

Of course, one person can only do just a little. I'm glad there are close to 50 people in this room. Brothers, if the Lord would give us a consecration, a consecration to Him from everyone, that would be a great, great thing. Some of your wives or some of your husbands are not here. I believe they are just the same. What could the Lord do in New Zealand? What could the Lord do throughout the whole Earth? It's worth it.

We don't have so many days left. We have three below 30 in this room. I thought you all were still on your way out. Look at the rest of us. May the Lord continue to use us though. Witness Lee said, "The age between 70 to 80 really should be the best years of your life and the most useful years of your life, because you've learned everything." I had all the experiences and you spent your life in the truths of the Lord. That should be your most fruitful years. It was at that time that Brother Lee encouraged all of us to take care of our health, so we can reach this point and be useful to the Lord in our later years. So I'm not discouraged.

All of you nearly or over 30 years, it would be wonderful to have a bunch here sitting on the front row, 20, 25, or 40 people. These are the ones we need. They've got a lot more strength than you have, but they need us to guide them. We need them. The Lord needs to gain more full-timers to carry out of His work.

Brothers, I'll just stop here. I love the Lord and I know you love the Lord. I'm so thankful that we all have the opportunity to serve the Lord. Soon we'll be looking back on our whole life. Only that which is used to carry out His divine economy is going to be worth, even speaking about in the New Jerusalem. The other things won't matter a bit. Brothers, the Lord has put so much in our hands. I hope we all could be brought on in His way.