

## Misrepresenting Witness Lee's Critique of Christianity

If we are going to voice differences, therefore, we have an obligation to make a serious effort to understand the person with whom we differ. That person may have published books or articles. Then we should be acquainted with those writings. It is not appropriate for us to voice sharp differences if we have neglected to read what is available. The person with whom we differ should have evidence that we have read carefully what has been written and that we have attempted to understand its meaning.<sup>1</sup>

This statement sets forth the responsibility of polemic or apologetic writers to represent accurately and fairly the beliefs of those with whom they disagree prior to attempting to refute those beliefs. Norman Geisler expressed a similar sentiment in the preface to a book critiquing Islam that he co-authored:

It is our belief that it is not possible to evaluate another viewpoint fairly without first understanding it.<sup>2</sup>

It is patently unfair to present a differing perspective in such a way that those holding that view cannot recognize it and then to assail those whose beliefs are misrepresented.

Sadly, that is the exact method employed in "A Response to the Christian Research Journal's Recent Defense of the 'Local Church' Movement" (henceforth "Response") by Norman Geisler and Ron Rhodes. In a section of "Response" entitled "Admittedly Regrettable and Harsh Statements about Other Religious Groups," Geisler and Rhodes make several onerous and inaccurate statements by which they misrepresent the teachings of Witness Lee. These statements were made concerning the third chapter of Witness Lee's book *The God-ordained Way to Practice the New Testament Economy* (henceforth *Practice*). In what appears to be an effort to convince their readers that the local churches despise all Christians and utter hate speech against their brothers and sisters, Geisler and Rhodes claim, in reference to that chapter, that:

Witness Lee ... engages in a slanderous attack on "all of Christianity," "all Christians," "today's Christendom" "all Christianity," and "today's Catholic Church." He calls organized Christianity "deformed and degraded," containing "false teachers," who are "in their apostasy."

Even in this short section, there are numerous serious errors. Geisler and Rhodes:

- Misapply Witness Lee's references to "false teachers" and ignore his interpretation of the parable of the tares (Matt. 13:24-30);
- Misrepresent Witness Lee's statement about "all Christians";
- Ignore Lee's positive appraisals of fellow Christians;
- Mischaracterize Witness Lee's critique of Christianity based on their own definitions, not his;
- Misconstrue Witness Lee's biblical critique of the system of Christianity as:
  - Being deformed as shown in the parable of the mustard seed (Matt. 13:31-33);

- Being degraded according to the course of church history; and
- Disregard the focus of Witness Lee’s teaching in the subject chapter.

It is evident that in “Response” Geisler and Rhodes intend to convey to their readers that Witness Lee purposely, harshly, and injuriously criticized all his fellow believers without basis and that Lee’s statements about “false teachers” and “apostasy” applied generally to those throughout evangelicalism. In the same section, they refer to Lee’s teaching as “harsh,” “lamentable,” and “inexcusable.”

Shortly after the portion quoted above with its accusation of slander, Geisler and Rhodes also accused Witness Lee of libel. In the same section, they said, “If ever there were grounds for religious libel, this would be it.” The most intrinsic, crucial matter in any accusation of slander or libel is that the statements in question must be examined in context and proven false in order for the accusation to stand. Curiously, Geisler and Rhodes did not attempt to challenge the truth of Witness Lee’s statements.

### **Witness Lee Rightly Labels Modernists as Apostate False Teachers**

On examination of the context of Witness Lee’s criticism of Christianity, it is difficult to fathom the visceral intensity of Geisler and Rhodes’ reaction. They complain vociferously that Witness Lee “calls organized Christianity ‘deformed and degraded,’ containing ‘false teachers,’ who are ‘in their apostasy’” as if these false teachers were genuine, Bible-believing teachers. Rather than a blanket condemnation of evangelical teachers, Witness Lee addressed a specific category of persons—those who deny some of the essential elements of the common faith. In speaking of the parables in Matthew 13 as descriptions of the outward appearance of the kingdom of God or the equivalent of Christendom, Witness Lee said:

One parable shows us that while the wheat is growing the enemy of the Lord comes and sows tares amidst the wheat (vv. 24-30). This means that the false believers, the nominal Christians, were sown into the so-called church. In degraded Christianity there are many false or nominal Christians...

In today’s Christianity there are also modernists, who do not recognize the inspiration of the holy Word and deny the Lord’s incarnation through the virgin Mary. They say that the Lord’s death was not for redemption but only a kind of martyrdom. They believe that the Lord was martyred on the cross for His teachings which were different from the Jewish traditional religion. They also deny the resurrection of Christ and all the miracles in the Bible.<sup>3</sup>

Immediately following, Witness Lee spoke of how he and his contemporaries rose up to fight against modernism when it was brought to China in the early part of the twentieth century. Concerning the modernist teachers, he referred to 2 Peter 2:1, which says:

But there arose also false prophets among the people, as also among you there will be false teachers, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

It is concerning these modernists that Witness Lee said, “The false teachers *at Peter’s time, like today’s modernists* in their apostasy, denied both the Lord’s person as the Master and His redemption” (emphasis added).<sup>4</sup> Geisler and Rhodes omitted the words

shown in italics above that connected “false teachers” to “in their apostasy” and lifted them from their explicit qualifiers to create a false impression. This is a misrepresentation of Witness Lee’s words.

No one can deny that there are modernists in today’s Christianity, false teachers who are in apostasy and who trouble the genuine believers with their destructive heresies such as those Witness Lee listed above. It is difficult to imagine Geisler and Rhodes objecting to these statements of criticism about modernist or liberal theologians and their teachings. Geisler and Rhodes are not known as champions of modernism or of those who deny the inspiration of the Scripture, the virgin birth of the incarnate Son of God, the vicarious death of Christ on the cross for our redemption, or His resurrection for our justification. One is left to wonder why they would object to Witness Lee describing those who teach such things “false teachers” who are “in their apostasy.”

Many Christian teachers criticize the false teachers in Christianity. For example, Mike Gendron, Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries, is a Christian teacher who has many articles posted on the Ankerberg Theological Research Institute website, where many of Geisler’s articles are also posted. Gendron’s comments concerning false teachers and Christendom echo Witness Lee’s. Gendron states:

What are we to do with the false teachers within Christendom? We are to expose their false teachings and refrain from participating in their endeavors (Eph. 5:6, 11).<sup>5</sup>

The context of Gendron’s statement shows that he is speaking of the same “false teachers” as was Witness Lee, that is, those who are broadly within the system of Christianity but who deny the essentials of the faith. Yet, Gendron has not been misrepresented by Geisler and Rhodes nor has he been accused of slander and religious libel by them. Those who have written similar statements are far too numerous to mention in this article.<sup>6</sup>

Witness Lee’s use of the words “false teachers” who are “in their apostasy” in reference to today’s modernists is a legitimate application of the Bible. Geisler and Rhodes simply selected a few of Witness Lee’s words—ripped from the original sentence, severed from context—and strung them together in the most incendiary way to incite their readers to reject, perhaps even despise, Witness Lee and the local churches. This is neither fair nor truthful; rather, it is the apologetic equivalent of the anarchist’s bomb—angry, lawless, and indiscriminately damaging. Therefore, it is Geisler and Rhodes’ article, not the speaking of Witness Lee, that is laced with “harsh” and “regrettable” words.

### **Did Witness Lee Assail “All Christians”?**

By placing the words “all Christians” in quotation marks in their accusation referenced above, Geisler and Rhodes accused Witness Lee of directly slandering all genuine believers. Such an accusation should be supported by the text in question, but it is not. An examination of the chapter shows that their charge is false. In fact, the term “all Christians” appears only once in the chapter in a passage which is far from being either slanderous or harsh. Witness Lee stated:

When we talk about Christianity in such a way, this does not mean that we do not love all Christians. We love all of our brothers and sisters in the Lord, yet we have to admit that today's Christendom is absolutely far off from God's eternal plan.<sup>7</sup>

A statement of love toward "all of our brothers and sisters" hardly seems to be an attack on all Christians. Yet, this is the premise Geisler and Rhodes assert. It is simply astounding that they could have read the chapter (this phrase occurs in the introductory portion of the chapter) and come to the conclusion that this mention of "all Christians" was a "slandering attack."

These two brief sentences contain yet another important factor that seems to elude Geisler and Rhodes. That is, in the teachings of Witness Lee and the local churches, there is a definite, consistent, and crucial distinction made between the system of Christianity, which is open to criticism, and the Christians themselves, who are to be loved and received as brothers and sisters. As Lee further stated in the chapter in question, "We love all our Christian brothers and respect them, yet we cannot agree with the system they are in."<sup>8</sup> This important distinction was conveniently overlooked by Geisler and Rhodes.

Witness Lee did speak critically of the system of Christianity and the condition of Christendom, but not in the manner that Geisler and Rhodes would have their readers believe. Regardless of whether Geisler and Rhodes disagree with Witness Lee's view of Christianity as a system, it remains incumbent upon them to present his teachings accurately. Only when they have fulfilled this prerequisite are they free to argue certain points if they so wish, but in doing so they must remain within the bounds of truth, proper scholarship, and decency. To conceal the fact that Lee's criticism was directed toward the system of Christianity, not the believers, as they clearly did by including the term "all Christians" in their accusation, is inexcusable.

### **Witness Lee's Appreciation of Christians in the Denominations**

In "Response" Geisler and Rhodes ignored the positive statements Witness Lee made about the believers in the same chapter of *Practice*. The failure to point out the references to loving and respecting all Christians, as noted above, is an example of such neglect. As a further example, in speaking of his experience as a young person who was saved in China many years ago, Witness Lee states:

We [*Lee's generation of young Christians*] thank the Lord for sending the western missionaries to China to bring us the gospel. They told people that Jesus is the Son of God who became a man and died on the cross for our sins. They said that if we believe in Him we would receive the forgiveness of our sins. We heard the proper preaching of Christ being our Savior. These missionaries also brought us the real name of Jesus Christ, and we treasured this. They also brought the Bible with them, providing us with one of the best Chinese translations of the Bible. We thank God for these three things: the gospel, the name of Jesus, and the Bible.<sup>9</sup>

It is clear from this statement that Witness Lee appreciated the missionaries who brought such priceless things to China. He then explained that the practice of the local churches, starting in the 1920s, was to reject the unscriptural practices that the missionaries also brought with them. He enumerated several of these unscriptural things throughout the chapter. Contrary to the accusations of Geisler and Rhodes, it is once again clear that it is

not the believers or the Christian faith which are the subjects of Witness Lee's criticism but a system with which there is disagreement because it does not adhere to the Scriptures.<sup>10</sup> Surely Geisler and Rhodes would agree that it is right to hold to Christ, to hold to the gospel, to hold to the Bible, to love and respect all Christians, and to reject unscriptural practices. However, they ignored this and other similar statements that are crucial to understanding the teaching of Witness Lee and the stand of the local churches. By doing so, Geisler and Rhodes falsely represented a Christian teacher and misled their readers.

### **Witness Lee Criticized the System of Christianity, Not Christians**

When Witness Lee spoke of *Christianity*, he spoke of the system of Christianity, not the individual believers. In his usage *Christianity* is a broad term that encompasses a wide variety of institutions, including many that are only nominally Christian. His use of the term *Christendom* was similar in meaning and scope. These distinctions are crucial to understanding Witness Lee's teaching on this subject. Geisler and Rhodes should have pointed this out to their readers and, as a result, appropriately tempered their accusations.

Although some Christian teachers, perhaps Geisler and Rhodes among them, define *Christianity* as meaning either the believers or the items of the common faith, in *Practice* Witness Lee's usage of *Christianity* meant neither of these, as was made clear in the chapter in question. A proper apologist should first endeavor to understand an author's definition of terms and then communicate his teachings according to his definition. This Geisler and Rhodes failed to do in "Response."

### **Witness Lee's Criticism of Christianity Is Based on the Bible**

Geisler and Rhodes also neglected to point out to their readers that Witness Lee's criticism of the system of Christianity has a strong scriptural basis and that his interpretation of the Bible passages is based on the work of many respected Bible expositors throughout church history. In the third chapter of *Practice*, Witness Lee taught from Matthew 13 concerning the parables of the tares in the field, of the mustard seed that grew into a big tree,<sup>11</sup> and of the woman who hid leaven in fine flour.<sup>12</sup> His teaching in *Practice* concerning Babylon was based upon Revelation 17,<sup>13</sup> and his teaching concerning hierarchy and ambition was based on the Lord's words in Matthew 20:20-28 and 23:1-12. Witness Lee contrasted the Lord's simple way of meeting with people in John 12 and Matthew 14 with today's practice of gathering a crowd to listen to a speaker. These teachings, based in the Scripture, comprised much of the chapter Geisler and Rhodes addressed, yet they failed to mention Witness Lee's scriptural basis for his words. He was not slanderously attacking Christians as Geisler and Rhodes inveigh; rather, he was teaching the Bible and applying the Bible to today's situation. While Geisler and Rhodes may disagree with Witness Lee's interpretations of these passages, they remain obligated to acknowledge that his criticism of the system of Christianity was based in the Bible. This Geisler and Rhodes did not do.

### **Deformed Christianity as Seen in the Parable of the Mustard Seed**

In reference to Christianity, Witness Lee did use the words "deformed and degraded." While these words, especially isolated as they are in "Response," may strike some as stark; readers should pay close attention to how and why Witness Lee employed these

terms. As was made crystal clear in *Practice*, his use of the descriptor “deformed” was based upon the parable in Matthew 13 of the mustard seed that grew against its nature into a big tree. Witness Lee said:

Another parable in Matthew 13 describes today’s Christendom as a great tree with great branches that become a lodging place for birds (vv. 31-32). This is the parable of the mustard seed. The mustard is an annual herb, which shows that the church should be like an herb to produce food. Instead it became a tree, a lodge for birds, having its nature and function changed. These birds refer to Satan’s evil spirits with the evil persons and things motivated by them (13:4, 19). They lodge in the branches of the great tree, that is, in the enterprises of Christendom.<sup>14</sup>

Today’s Christianity is deformed because it has changed its form and nature from the simple entity presented in the Scripture. It is no longer a small herb good for food but has become a great tree with many branches that often offer cover for many evil things. Today’s Christianity is a huge enterprise that bears little resemblance to the house of Simon the Leper with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus at Bethany, a pre-figure of the New Testament church (John 12:1-3). Nor does it resemble the New Testament churches as shown in Acts and the Epistles. In contrast, today’s Christianity is an organized institution with many bureaucracies—truly a great tree. Sadly, it is often from the higher branches of this tree, where the birds of the parable roost, that evil teachings and evil things descend upon the believers. Witness Lee is not alone in ascribing this parable to Christendom.<sup>15</sup> Commenting on the mustard seed in Matthew 13, W. E. Vine says:

As the parable indicates, Christendom presents a sort of Christianity that has become conformed to the principles and ways of the world, and the world has favoured this debased Christianity.<sup>16</sup>

Witness Lee’s use of the word “deformed” has a strong scriptural basis and accurately describes the situation of modern Christianity. Granted, some may not consider this a pleasant subject. Witness Lee’s speaking is frank and forthright, but it is neither harsh nor regrettable. It is a faithful, healthy, and true word to the benefit of all believers in Christ.

### **A Faithful Appraisal of the Degraded System of Christianity**

To say that something is degraded simply means that it has fallen below its ordinary standards or that it has negatively changed in its function and structure.<sup>17</sup> According to Witness Lee’s teaching in *Practice*, the system of Christianity is degraded in its standards, function, and structure because it has developed “formalities and rituals,” “regulations and unscriptural practices,” “hierarchy” with “ambition” for position, and the “clergy-laity system.” Today’s Christianity is also full of divisions.<sup>18</sup> It is these negative matters that kill the organic function of the members of the Body of Christ. In these passages, Witness Lee taught that to practice the negative things listed above is to take the worldly way rather than the God-ordained way revealed in the Bible. Lewis Sperry Chafer, the founder of Dallas Theological Seminary, recognized some of these same elements as signs of corruption and degradation:

All that God commits to men seems to follow the downward course of declension. This was true of Israel ... it is true likewise of the professing church. Leaven working in the pure meal symbolized the permeation power of certain forms of

evil within the true Church itself. Leaven is universally the emblem of corruption working subtly. It means mere formality (cf. Matt. 23:14, 16, 23-28); unbelief (cf. Matt. 22:23-29); and worldliness... The elect company of believers is ever beset with tendencies to formality, unbelief, and worldliness.<sup>19</sup>

An honest reading of current events testifies that today's Christianity is degraded. For example, two major denominations have voted to ordain homosexuals in their hierarchies and to approve of same-sex unions; two others narrowly turned down motions to do so. Divorce and immorality are rampant, so much so that there is little statistical difference between the believers in Christ and the world, much to the shame of all who name the name of Christ in sincerity. Christian ministries are under investigation for financial abuses, while some Christian ministers live in luxury and demand the perquisites to match their perceived status. Many strange and injurious teachings are propagated. Is this not degradation! This is not to deny that there are many sincere, seeking believers who, in their innocence and sincerity, are in this system. It is simply to recognize the general condition of the system of Christianity.

In 2003, Geisler withdrew from the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS) because he claimed that ETS had lost its doctrinal integrity, had adopted revisionist interpretations of the Bible, and operated contrary to its own history.<sup>20</sup> Without commenting on whether Geisler's characterization of ETS was accurate or not, it is fair to say that in his mind the standing of ETS had degraded from what it once was. In his seven reasons for his resignation, although he spoke at length of the doctrine of inerrancy of Scripture, Geisler cited no Scripture—a vivid contrast to the many scriptural passages expounded by Witness Lee in the subject chapter of *Practice*.

### **Geisler and Rhodes Distort Witness Lee's Teaching**

While Witness Lee did criticize many aspects of Christianity or Christendom, that criticism was never the focal point of his ministry. Neither is it the focus of the ministry among the local churches today. However, Geisler and Rhodes totally missed the main content and focus of Witness Lee's teaching in the third chapter of *Practice*. It was their responsibility to understand Witness Lee's statements in context, to represent those statements fairly, and then put forth their objections, if any. However, Geisler and Rhodes chose to give their readers the false impression that Witness Lee viciously and blindly attacked all Christians.

Witness Lee's message in the chapter in question is a crucial message that needs to be heard by today's seeking Christians. He addresses an issue of great import: how to practice the proper church life according to the God-ordained way presented in the New Testament. Witness Lee criticized the system of Christianity because major features of that system hinder or even prevent the believers from living and functioning as members of the Body of Christ according to the pattern revealed in the Bible.

As a whole *Practice* presents believers with a view of producing a church-life in which every member is filled with the living Spirit, equipped with the truth, and active, that is, functioning in four main areas: 1) preaching the gospel to unbelievers, 2) caring for new believers by nourishing them through personal, vital contact, 3) mutual perfecting, teaching, and care for all the believers carried out in home meetings full of prayer, the Word, and the Spirit, and 4) coming together as the church so that all believers may

prophesy, not mainly by predicting the future, but by speaking forth the Word of God (1 Cor. 14:26). To this end, in the chapter in question, Witness Lee wrote:

We must believe that every believer is a living one because every believer has the living God, Christ, the Spirit of life, in him. We should afford every believer an opportunity to express his living situation as a living member of the Body of Christ. In today's Christianity the living members are killed, and their functions are annulled.<sup>21</sup>

These few sentences express both the reason for criticism—that formality, organization, and the unscriptural trappings of today's Christianity kill the spiritual life of the members of the Body of Christ and annul their function—and the goal of Witness Lee's speaking—to provide an atmosphere in which all the members can become living and functioning in God's economical move. Witness Lee closes this section with the following:

We should stand for the testimony of Jesus in this age. We need to compare what is revealed in the Bible with what is being practiced in today's Christianity. We must stay away from the practice of the deformed and degraded Christianity and come back to the divine revelation for the Lord's recovery... We must come back to the biblical way, the new way, the living way, that affords God the opportunity to operate among His chosen people.<sup>22</sup>

This matter is not merely theoretical. When, in the late 1980s, Witness Lee began to minister concerning the way ordained by God in the Bible, his desire was to rescue the local churches from the perils of the negative things mentioned above and to open the way for all believers to enter into a daily living as members of the Body of Christ. Since its inception among the local churches, the worth of the God-ordained way has been demonstrated many times over. Those researching the local churches, both from CRI and from Fuller Theological Seminary, have witnessed these matters firsthand and have testified of their appreciation for what they have seen. It is truly regrettable that Geisler and Rhodes have chosen to despise the testimony of their Christian brothers.

## **Conclusion**

The opening of this article set forth the minimum requirements for a believer to critique those with whom he may disagree. It is evident that Geisler and Rhodes have failed to perform the requisite research, have failed to represent the teachings of Witness Lee and the local churches accurately, and have failed to present adequate context so that the readers could fairly discern between truth and error.

In the small section of "Response" addressed in this article, Geisler and Rhodes misled their readers about Witness Lee's references to "false teachers" who were in "apostasy" and chose to create a false impression that Witness Lee was attacking all Christian teachers. They falsely accused Witness Lee of slanderously attacking "all Christians" when he spoke only of love and respect for his fellow believers. Geisler and Rhodes ignored these and other similar statements that are in the same chapter of *Practice*. They also concealed from their readers the fact that Witness Lee's criticism of Christianity was directed at the system of Christianity, not at the believers or the faith. They neglected in its entirety the fact that Witness Lee's criticisms were solidly based in several portions of



Scripture. Geisler and Rhodes failed to provide their readers with the requisite context concerning Witness Lee's use of the terms *degraded* and *deformed* to describe the system of Christianity. Instead, they plucked these and other words out of context and rearranged them in a misleading manner. Finally, Geisler and Rhodes ignored the thrust of Witness Lee's ministry in the referenced chapter.

Geisler and Rhodes are both signers of the so-called open letter to the leadership of Living Stream Ministry and the local churches. In that letter, they and their fellow-signers called upon the local churches to disavow similar statements made by Witness Lee, statements they presented wrenched from context and separated from meaning as Geisler and Rhodes have done in "Response." After reading the many points above, one can understand why there has been no rush to disavow statements by Witness Lee. On the contrary, good faith efforts have been made to answer the false accusations in a straightforward way and to invite proper, meaningful dialogue.

---

<sup>1</sup> Roger R. Nicole, "Polemic Theology: How to Deal with Those Who Differ from Us," *The Founders Journal*, Issue 33, Summer 1998 (<http://www.founders.org/journal/fj33/article3.html>). The author further details his observations concerning Cornelius Van Til and his research methods in Van Til's long-running dispute with Karl Barth. Nicole saw Van Til's copies of much of what Barth wrote and testified that Van Til had thoroughly researched Barth's writings as evidenced by his handwritten notes on nearly every page. This is a stark contrast to Geisler and Rhodes, who reject the need to further research Witness Lee's writings and demonstrate a lack of familiarity with the corpus of his work, let alone an accurate understanding of the portions of his teachings they misrepresent in "Response."

<sup>2</sup> Norman L. Geisler and Abdul Saleeb, *Answering Islam: The Crescent in Light of the Cross* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2002), p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Witness Lee, *The God-ordained Way to Practice the New Testament Economy* (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1987), pp. 25-26.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>5</sup> Mike Gendron, "The Vatican's Call for Unity" (Ankerberg Theological Research Institute, Nov. 2001) [http://www.johnankerberg.com/Articles/\\_PDFArchives/roman-catholicism/RC1W1201.pdf](http://www.johnankerberg.com/Articles/_PDFArchives/roman-catholicism/RC1W1201.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> See "Biblical Critiques of Christianity – Selected Bibliography and Biographical Notes on Sources Cited."

<sup>7</sup> Witness Lee, *Practice*, op. cit., p. 25.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

<sup>10</sup> Witness Lee is not alone in criticizing the system of Christianity. Please refer to "Biblical Critiques of Christianity – Selected Bibliography and Biographical Notes on Sources Cited." which addresses what some other Christian teachers say about the system of Christianity and how believers should view it relative to God's eternal purpose for the church.

<sup>11</sup> Other expositors who have understood the parable of the mustard seed in Matthew 13:31-32 in a similar way as Witness Lee include John Nelson Darby, Robert Govett, W. E. Vine, A.W. Pink, G. Campbell Morgan, G. H. Lang, J. J. Ross, Herbert Lockyer, John F. Walvoord, and Ray Stedman.

<sup>12</sup> Other expositors who have understood the parable of the woman, the leaven, and the fine flour in a similar way as Witness Lee include John Nelson Darby, Robert Govett, C. I. Scofield, W. E. Vine, G. H. Lang, A.W. Pink, G. Campbell Morgan, J. J. Ross, Lewis Sperry Chafer, Herbert Lockyer, Lehman Strauss, and John F. Walvoord.

<sup>13</sup> Among those who have shared Witness Lee's understanding that Mystery Babylon the Great in Revelation 17 refers to Roman Catholicism are William Tyndale, John Huss, Martin Luther, John Knox, John Wesley, John Gill, Albert Barnes, John Peter Lange, John Nelson Darby, Andrew Miller, G. H.

---

Pember, Robert Govett, Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, David Brown, Charles H. Spurgeon, Charles Hodge, H. A. Ironside, C. I. Scofield, Arno C. Gaebelein, J. J. Ross, William R. Newell, Lewis Sperry Chafer, Louis Talbot, Lehman Strauss, Merrill F. Unger, John F. Walvoord, Walter Lewis Wilson, W. A. Criswell, and Donald Grey Barnhouse.

<sup>14</sup> Witness Lee, *Practice*, op. cit., p. 26.

<sup>15</sup> See footnote 11.

<sup>16</sup> W. E. Vine, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (McLean, VA: MacDonald Publishing Company,) p 777.

<sup>17</sup> In *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/degraded>.

<sup>18</sup> Witness Lee, *Practice*, op cit. All of these items are mentioned and expanded upon on pages 28-34 of *Practice*.

<sup>19</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology, Vol. IV* (Dallas, TX: Dallas Seminary Press, 11<sup>th</sup> Printing, October 1973), p. 353.

<sup>20</sup> Norman L. Geisler, "Why I Resigned from The Evangelical Theological Society," November 20, 2003, [www.normangeisler.net/etsresign.htm](http://www.normangeisler.net/etsresign.htm).

<sup>21</sup> Witness Lee, *Practice*, op. cit., p. 32.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

© 2010 DCP. All Rights Reserved