

## Cutting Straight the Word of the Truth on Romans 16:17 & Titus 3:10

### **What is the Scriptural Principle of Quarantine Applied to a Divisive Person?**

Fourteen months after the quarantining of the opposing sister, she continues to challenge the validity of the said quarantine and the scriptural basis for its principle and practice. She published an article quoting the definition of “excommunication” and “quarantine” from Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary instead of delving into the ministry, which is replete with teachings on the subject solidly based on the Scriptures as applied in practice.

While brothers Nee and Lee clearly differentiated “excommunication” and “quarantine” in principle and in practice, the dissenting sister mixed up the two to give an obscure impression that they are the same. Either she was confused or she was confusing others. Based on this ambiguous association, she made a straw man of herself as one who has been excommunicated, not just quarantined, by quoting Brother Lee’s word out of context regarding “the only three acceptable reasons to stop a saint from coming to the Lord’s table meeting,” where Brother Lee in fact made no connection of the three reasons to quarantine and where he even taught against the practice of excommunication. The sister went ahead of herself to conclude that it was a “blunder” for the leading brothers to quarantine her who claims to have “never committed the aforementioned three sins,” thereby absolving herself from being classified as one who deserves to be quarantined. In a recent follow-up writing, she boldly declared:

**“Only idolatry, immorality and heresy warrant a quarantine.”**

This teaching is not only eccentric but also unscriptural. Brothers Nee and Lee never interpreted the Bible this way and they never made such a statement. On the contrary, Brother Lee had this teaching concerning the three tests that warrant quarantine:

*“Among all the tests of the oneness of the Body and of the one accord of the church listed above, only three—divisions, heresies, and fornication—are intolerable and need a quarantine by the churches and the saints according to the apostles’ teaching.” (W. Lee, *Elders’ Training, Book 10, Chapter 5, Section 20, LSM*)*

It is not hard to figure out why the dissenting sister seems to have intentionally omitted “division” as one major factor for quarantine. Her self-serving equivocations and twisting of the truth notwithstanding, let us dive into the healthy speaking of brothers Nee and Lee to be inoculated with the truth concerning the quarantining particularly of divisive persons so that we would not be carried away by the winds of teaching in the sleight of men but stand fast and be preserved in the central lane of God’s economy for the building up of His Body.

#### **Quarantine from the Example in the Old Testament**

The practice of the exercise of quarantine has its basis in the practice of the quarantining of lepers in the Old Testament. The quarantining of Miriam is a foremost example of such a practice:

*“In Leviticus and Numbers God charged the Israelites to ‘remove’ a leper from their fellowship that this one might be healed (Lev. 13:45-46). After his healing, such a one was to be brought back into the fellowship (Lev. 14). The dealing here with a leper was a quarantining.” (W. Lee, *The Ministry of the New Testament and the Teaching and Fellowship of the Apostles, Chapter 2, Section 5, LSM*)*

*“This is according to the practice of the quarantining of the lepers in typology (Lev. 13:45-46; Num. 12:10-15). When Moses’ sister, Miriam, rebelled, God punished her with leprosy. Then she was quarantined. To be quarantined is to be put aside for the profit of the whole congregation.*

This is because certain diseases are very contagious.” (W. Lee, *The Intrinsic View of the Body of Christ*, Chapter 6, pp. 100-101, LSM)

## **Quarantine from the Teaching in the New Testament**

In the New Testament, Brother Lee taught that to practice the apostle Paul’s charge to “refuse” and “turn away from” the divisive members in the church is to quarantine them:

“In dealing with the divisive ones, we must also take Paul’s word in Titus 3:10, ‘A factious man after the first and second admonition refuse.’ A factious person is a divisive and sectarian person. According to Paul’s word in Romans 16:17 and in Titus 3:10, after the first and second admonitions, we must reject such persons and turn away from them. To do this is to quarantine such persons.... To practice Paul’s word in Romans 16:17 and in Titus 3:10 is to quarantine the divisive members in the Body of Christ. This is not my teaching; it is my presentation of the holy Word to you.” (W. Lee, *A Brief Presentation of the Lord’s Recovery*, Chapter 2, p. 46, LSM)

“We must quarantine all rebellions. Titus 3 says that we should refuse a factious man after a first and second admonition (v. 10).” (W. Nee, *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, Set 3, Vol. 59, Chapter 24, p. 242, LSM)

“According to Romans 16:17 and Titus 3:10, we need to exercise to quarantine the divisive ones. Romans 16:17 charges us to turn away from those who make divisions. To turn away from them is to exercise to quarantine them. Titus 3:10 says that we should refuse a factious (sectarian, divisive) person after a first and second admonition. To refuse such a one also is to exercise to quarantine him.” (W. Lee, *Elders’ Training*, Book 10, Chapter 6, Section 12, LSM)

“Concerning the first case of division (case V), the Apostle Paul decisively and emphatically gave us a strong charge that we should carry out a quarantine by ‘turning away from’ the divisive persons (Rom. 16:17). Concerning the second case of division (case XXXI), the Apostle Paul also charged us strongly and decisively to exercise a stern quarantine by refusing the factious, divisive person (Titus 3:10).” (W. Lee, *Elders’ Training*, Book 10, Chapter 5, Section 19, LSM)

## **The Need to Quarantine the Divisive Persons**

A person who is divisive, rebellious, and factious is sick with contagious germs that might spread to the rest of the healthy members of the church. Hence, the person needs to be quarantined:

“Because some are sick, full of the germs of division, they need to be quarantined. This is according to Romans 16:17, where Paul charges us to turn away from those who make divisions. If we do not turn away from them, we will be infected with the same disease of division. To turn away from such ones is for our preservation. According to Titus 3:10, a factious, divisive person should be refused, rejected, after a first and second admonition in order to keep the oneness of the Body of Christ.” (W. Lee, *The World Situation and the Direction of the Lord’s Move*, Chapter 4, p. 56, LSM)

“We need to realize that in Romans 16:17 the apostle condemns the action of making divisions, regardless of what kind of person makes the divisions. A brother may be very right in every regard as a Christian, but if he makes divisions in the church or among the churches, he should be condemned and quarantined as the apostle charged.” (W. Lee, *The Ministry of the New Testament and the Teaching and Fellowship of the Apostles*, Chapter 2, pp. 29-30, LSM)

“The Scriptures charge us in the same way. Anyone who is spiritually sick of the disease of division, having become a divisive person, must be quarantined. Division is very contagious, so the church has to learn to quarantine the divisive ones. According to the apostle’s teaching, we must either turn ourselves away from them or reject them. This protects the entire church so that

the church can remain in a safeguarded situation.” (W. Lee, *The Intrinsic View of the Body of Christ*, Chapter 6, pp. 100-101, LSM)

“We should refuse such a one after a first and second admonition, knowing that such a one has been perverted and sins, being self-condemned. To refuse such a one is to exercise to quarantine him. When a believer is divisive, factious, sectarian, he becomes contagious; therefore, we need to refuse him, that is, to quarantine him.” (W. Lee, *Elders' Training*, Book 10, Chapter 5, Section 12, LSM)

### **The Meaning of Quarantine according to the Apostles' Teaching**

To quarantine means to separate or keep oneself away from any contact with divisive ones and to reject their divisive works and their different teachings:

“To quarantine is a medical term that means to separate. To separate, or to quarantine, a leper was not to give him up or to cast him away; it was simply to keep the leprous one separate from the rest of God's people so that they would not be contaminated by the leprosy. Once the leprosy was healed, that man was declared clean, and he could come back into the fellowship of God's people. According to Leviticus 13 and 14, to discern whether or not a person was leprous or was cleansed from leprosy was a difficult thing. This could not be discerned by ordinary people; it could be discerned only with great care and by a proper priest. We all must do our best to avoid churchlessness and division.” (W. Lee, *The Practice of the Church Life according to the God-ordained Way*, Chapter 1, Section 6, LSM)

“In Romans 16:17 Paul begged us to ‘keep a watchful eye on those who make divisions and causes of falling contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them.’ Titus 3:10 says, ‘A factious man after a first and second admonition refuse.’ A factious person is a sectarian person. We should warn such a person once, then a second time; if after that he does not repent, we should reject him. Rejecting any kind of division is similar to the medical practice of quarantining. To keep oneself away from anything divisive is to exercise to quarantine the divisive ones.” (W. Lee, *The Apostles' Teaching*, Chapter 2, Section 1, LSM)

### **Difference between Quarantine and Excommunication**

To excommunicate a person who is sick with a contagious disease is to cut him off and give him up; whereas quarantine means to remove a person temporarily from the church until such time when he would be healed and be recovered back to the church:

“In 1 Corinthians 5:9-13 the apostle taught us to remove this kind of person from our midst. However, many Christians interpret the word remove as excommunicate. This is a mistake. The sense here is not excommunicate but remove. The removing here is not an excommunication but a form of quarantining, as is used to isolate those who are sick of a contagious disease (cf. 2 Cor. 2:1-8).” (W. Lee, *The Ministry of the New Testament and the Teaching and Fellowship of the Apostles*, Chapter 2, Section 5, LSM)

“We have studied 1 Corinthians 5:13 particularly. The word translated remove here was taken from the Septuagint (Greek) version of the Old Testament. The removal of the sinful brother in 1 Corinthians 5 was like the putting of a leper outside the camp in the Old Testament (Lev. 13:45-46; Num. 5:2). In Numbers 12 Miriam rebelled against Moses, and she was stricken with leprosy. She was removed from the camp for seven days, until her leprosy was cleared up. This was a form of quarantining. There has been much talk among Christians concerning the matter of excommunication. It is wrong to excommunicate a believer. To excommunicate someone is to give him up; but to remove a person is to quarantine him with the hope that he would become sound.” (W. Lee, *Elders' Training*, Book 10, Chapter 5, p. 73, LSM)

“To cut people off, to excommunicate people, was the practice of the Brethren. From the beginning of the Lord’s recovery we realized that was wrong. However, to quarantine those who are sick with a contagious spiritual disease certainly is scriptural.” (W. Lee, *The Intrinsic Problem in the Lord’s Recovery Today and its Scriptural Remedy*, Chapter 3, p. 45, LSM)

### **Practicing Quarantine for the Protection of Body**

The basic principle of quarantine is to protect the Body from contagious diseases detrimental to the other members of the Body; it is the scriptural remedy to preserve and protect the church from the contagion of division:

“This turning away is to exercise to quarantine the divisive, sectarian ones in order to protect the saints from being contaminated. The divisive ones are very contagious. Anyone who contacts them will be ‘infected.’ This would not be good for them or for others. Thus, today we should carry out what is termed in medicine a quarantine. To quarantine a person does not mean that we do not love him. On the contrary, it means that we love both him and many others. If one member of a family contracts a contagious disease, the whole family may need to quarantine him. This is for the benefit of all the members of the family.” (W. Lee, *The Intrinsic Problem in the Lord’s Recovery Today and its Scriptural Remedy*, Chapter 3, p. 45, LSM)

“If a person is sick with a highly contagious disease, he is quarantined, separated even from his family members, until he is healed. This is for the protection of the entire family.” (W. Lee, *The Intrinsic View of the Body of Christ*, Chapter 6, pp. 100-101, LSM)

“Paul instructed us in how to deal with divisions in Romans 16:17: ‘Now I exhort you, brothers, to mark those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them.’ Concerning those who make divisions, we have to be watchful, mark them out, and turn away from them. In Titus 3:10 Paul said, ‘A factious man, after a first and second admonition, refuse.’ In a family someone may become very ill with a contagious disease. Then the whole family has to quarantine him, to be separated from him. This, however, does not mean to hate him or give him up. But for the sake of the health of the whole family, there is the need of some quarantine so that the family can be preserved and even healed.” (W. Lee, *Five Emphases in the Lord’s Recovery*, Chapter 1, p. 15, LSM)

“To quarantine a person does not mean that we hate that person. If one member in a family became ill with a contagious disease, the rest of the family would need to quarantine him for the safety of the whole family. Otherwise, the entire family would be affected.” (W. Lee, *A Brief Presentation of the Lord’s Recovery*, Chapter 2, p. 46, LSM)

“To turn away from the divisive ones and those who make causes of falling is to quarantine these divisive ones. When a person in a family is sick with a contagious disease, the members of the family turn away from the infected person so that they will not be contaminated with the same disease. If they do not turn away from the infected member, they may become infected themselves and spread the contagious germs to other members of their family. This does not mean that the members of the family do not love the infected member or have given him up; it simply means that the other members want to prevent the spread of the contagious germs.” (W. Lee, *To Be Saved in the Life of Christ as Revealed in Romans*, Chapter 4, p. 35, LSM)

### **Practicing Quarantine for the Recovery of the Diseased Ones**

Quarantine on the one hand is exercised to protect the Body from being infected with the contagious disease of divisiveness; on the other hand, it is exercised in the hope that the diseased member(s) can be recovered:

“Titus 3 says that we should refuse a factious man after a first and second admonition (v. 10). This refusal does not mean an open excommunication. It is a measure that aims at preserving the

purity of fellowship. Many times measures taken among the brothers and sisters have nothing to do with love; they are a matter of dealing with infection. If a man speaks in a rebellious way, the best way to love him is to separate him from others. This is the greatest love one can give to him, because this will bring him profit and save others. Quarantine is exercised under the principle that it is an effort of recovery for the quarantined and a measure of prevention against infection for others." (W. Nee, *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, Vol. 59, Chapter 24, p. 242, LSM*)

"I do feel that all the churches must do something to help the saints to know the real situation in the recovery. The saints must be helped to realize that a 'contagious disease' is now among us, and, as in the field of medicine, we must quarantine the diseased ones. To quarantine does not mean that we do not love those who are 'ill,' nor does it mean that we cut them off. It means that we do something to preserve both the contagious ones and the rest of the Body." (W. Lee, *Elders' Training, Book 10, Chapter 6, p. 109, LSM*)

### **Practicing Quarantine Regardless of Natural Relationship**

We need to reject our natural relationship and affection no matter how closely related we are to the divisive ones who have been quarantined in order to follow God's speaking through the Body:

"In the Old Testament there is the type of leprosy. Moses and Aaron's sister became leprous and she was quarantined (Num. 12:9-16). Moses and Aaron had to reject their natural relationship and affection in order to follow God's speaking to deal with Miriam. According to the type of the Old Testament, who is leprous depends upon the decision of the priest..." (W. Lee, *The Problems Causing the Turmoil in the Church Life, Chapter 2, Section 2, LSM*)

"We also need to turn away from those who make divisions (Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10; 1 Cor. 1:13). Even if a close relative such as our husband, wife, father, mother, brother, or sister is a division-maker, we must turn away from their division. The same applies to our intimate and close friends. Although it is difficult to turn away from those who are our intimate friends, we must realize that friendship is one thing, and the fellowship in Christ and in His Body is another thing. When Moses' sister, Miriam, became leprous, she was quarantined in Moses' presence (Num. 12)." (W. Lee, *The Practice of the Church Life according to the God-ordained Way, Chapter 1, pp. 17-18, LSM*)

"Because some of the saints were closely related to the divisive ones, their carrying out of this kind of quarantining is a suffering to them.... Because of their close relationship with the divisive ones in the recovery, some of the saints have said that they cannot quarantine them. However, even though Miriam was Aaron's sister, he still had to quarantine her during the period of her leprosy (Num. 12:10-15). Hence, even to exercise to practice the proper quarantining is a suffering. We suffer because we do not like to see these dissenting ones separated from us. Nevertheless, if we do not quarantine them, we will not be doing the will of God, for we will annul the testimony of the oneness of the Body." (W. Lee, *The Christian Life, Chapter 16, p. 172, LSM*)

### **Proper Attitude toward the Quarantined Persons**

In dealing with the divisive ones, we need to be narrow and strict by practicing what the apostle Paul exhorted us to do, that is, turn away and refuse them and not even try to exhort or argue with them. It is impossible to talk or argue with them without being contaminated by their poison:

"On the one hand, we need to receive all kinds of genuine believers; on the other hand, we need to be narrow and strict in dealing with divisive ones. In 16:17 Paul does not say, 'These divisive ones are brothers. We need to receive them and love them.' No, he tells us to keep a watchful eye on them and to turn away from them. To turn away from those who make divisions and causes of falling is to quarantine them." (W. Lee, *Life-study of Deuteronomy, Chapter 12, pp. 83-84, LSM*)

“Today there is some division in the Lord's recovery. Some of the dear ones who are with us are making divisions. Because of the contagious germs of division within these ones, it is not wise for us to contact them. According to Romans 16:17 and Titus 3:10-11, we must turn away from the divisive ones. This kind of turning away is like the quarantining of a contagiously sick person.” (W. Lee, *The Christian Life, Chapter 16, p. 172, LSM*)

“To avoid further damage by the present turmoil, we need to practice a strict quarantine over this contagious disease. Whenever any of the dissenting ones attempts to contact you, no matter in what way and in what polite or ‘spiritual’ manner, you should keep the apostle's teaching in Romans 16:17 and Titus 3:10 to turn away from him and reject him. Do not try to exhort or argue with such people or to find out what and how they really are. If you say anything to them, you will ‘swallow their bait’ and they will ‘hook’ you. You are a gentleman, a sincere, honest Christian, and a humble follower of the Lord, but they are under the deceiving of the devil and unavoidably bear some of his poison. It is impossible to talk or argue with them without being contaminated by their poison. Instead of spending the time to meet with this kind of dissenting ones, we had better save our time to pray and get into the Word so that we may have some riches of Christ to minister to the saints.” (W. Lee, *The Ministry of the New Testament and the Teaching and Fellowship of the Apostles, Chapter 2, p. 32, LSM*)

“If anyone comes to you with gossip, you should say, ‘Sorry, my ears are not trash cans.’ They will have no choice but to take their trash elsewhere. Those who cause divisions should be marked out, and no one should have any communication with them. We should maintain our purity in our fellowship. If any word is to go out, we must first examine it and see if there is any element of rebellion or gossip in it. Much so-called fellowship among believers is actually gossip. We must quarantine all rebellions.” (W. Nee, *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, Set 3, Vol. 59, Chapter 24, Section 4, LSM*)

### **Not Receiving the Division-Makers at the Lord's Table**

When we accept someone at the Lord's table, we have to consider the Body; we cannot receive division-makers who have been quarantined by the Body:

“When we accept someone at the Lord's table, we have to consider the Body. According to the principle of Romans 14, we accept all of the Lord's children, but according to Romans 16:17 we have to mark those who make divisions and turn away from them. We cannot receive division-makers who have been quarantined by the Body.” (W. Lee, *The Problems Causing the Turmoils in the Church Life, Chapter 3, pp. 30-31, LSM*)

“In discerning the Body of Christ we should not partake of the bread in any division or with a divisive spirit. Our participation in the Lord's table must be the unique fellowship of His unique Body without any division either in practice or in spirit.” (W. Lee, *The Conclusion of the New Testament (Msgs. 221-239), Chapter 2, Section 4, LSM*)

### **Not Disregarding the Feeling of the Body**

Whenever the leading ones who represent the Body quarantined certain divisive ones, we must not disregard the feeling of the Body; rather, we should honor the Body and respect the feeling of the Body:

“Both the ministry and the many churches in the recovery made a decision to quarantine certain divisive ones. Some did not accept this decision and have even joined these divisive ones. They have disregarded the feeling of the Body. How we behave ourselves depends upon the degree of our seeing of the Body.” (W. Lee, *The Problems Causing the Turmoils in the Church Life, pp. 28-29, LSM*)

“Furthermore, we have to realize who has the function and qualification as the priest to discern leprosy among the Lord's children. Again this is a matter of practicing the Body life. If a

local church receives someone who has offended the Body to the uttermost, that local church is obviously not going along with and not one with the Body. We have to take care of the Body." (W. Lee, *The Problems Causing the Turmoils in the Church Life, Chapter 3, pp. 30-31, LSM*)

"In this open letter [of the churches in California] they said that they had made the decision to quarantine these ones. Should we listen to the churches or take care of our own personal observation of the situation? If we put the notification of so many churches aside and go to investigate the situation for ourselves, this is an offending to the Body. Do we respect the Body or do we respect ourselves?" (W. Lee, *The Problems Causing the Turmoils in the Church Life, Chapter 3, p. 32, LSM*)

"The churches in California, West Malaysia, and Taiwan also sent out an open letter to quarantine these ones. In this matter we are touching a great truth, the truth of the Body. Do we honor the Body? The churches in California, West Malaysia, and Taiwan are parts of the Body. Should we not honor them and respect their feeling? But some were not clear and strong to keep the truth to maintain the feeling of the Body, which comprises all the churches." (W. Lee, *The Problems Causing the Turmoils in the Church Life, Chapter 3, pp. 18-19, LSM*)

### **Not Involving in the Idolatry of Division**

Brother Lee points out that our preference can become an idol. To reject a quarantine made by the Body is to isolate oneself from the feeling of the Body and join oneself to the idolatry of division:

"I have published a book called *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*, presenting the whole story, fully documented. That book concludes by saying that we need to 'reject any kind of division (1 Cor. 1:10), to stand against any wind of teaching and any spreading of spiritual death (Eph. 4:14; 2 Tim. 2:16-17), and to separate ourselves from the contagious ones-exercising to quarantine' (Titus 3:10; Rom. 16:17). Some, however, have not agreed to quarantine these ones and have embraced division. They have been deceived to such an extent that they take the matter of division as an idol." (W. Lee, *Life-study of Judges, Chapter 07, p. 40, LSM*)

### **Concerning Public Announcement to Quarantine**

As the dissenters have protested the public announcement of their quarantine, yet Brother Lee himself made a public announcement when he quarantined the division-makers, even as the churches also sent out open letters to let other churches know of the quarantine they had made as well as their support for the quarantine of certain divisive ones by the Body:

"This time, however, I would meet with all the co-workers of the whole province of Taiwan on the day after my arrival. The first thing I would do would be to make an announcement asking all the dissenting ones to leave the work. I would not 'quarantine' them because they had not committed any sin which would require their being separated from the church, but since they had violated the principle of the work, they would not be allowed to participate in the work any longer." (W. Lee, *The Economy of God and the Mystery of the Transmission of the Divine Trinity, Chapter 10, Section 1, LSM*)

"The churches in California wrote an open letter because they felt burdened and were held responsible to let the churches on this globe know the damage certain ones did in California and the loss which they had suffered. In this open letter they said that they had made the decision to quarantine these ones." (W. Lee, *The Problems Causing the Turmoil in the Church Life, Chapter 3, Section 4, LSM*)

"In *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*, I mentioned only four names of ones who should be quarantined. The churches in California, West Malaysia, and Taiwan also sent out an open letter to quarantine these ones." (W. Lee, *The Problems Causing the Turmoil in the Church Life, Chapter 2, Section 2, LSM*)

## Summary and Conclusion

The quarantining of the dissenting sister was not done in haste; rather, it was done after much prayer and fellowship over an extended period of time. The elders and co-workers had exhausted all options of exhortation, admonition, and warning for her to repent and turn from her divisive ways that were damaging the building up of the church. But instead of taking heed to the fellowship of these brothers to recoil from her divisive words and works, the dissenting sister stepped up her relentless, public and private attacks against the brothers whom God has ordained to take the lead among the churches, while goading even more saints to follow her in rebelling against God's deputy authority in the church. In May of 2010, she was quarantined in accordance with the apostle Paul's charge in Romans 16:17 and Titus 3:10 for the saints to turn away from and refuse such divisive ones in the fellowship of the Body. Hence, such a practice of quarantining a divisive person is absolutely scriptural.

In Romans 16:17 the apostle Paul charged us to turn away from those who make divisions, and in Titus 3:10 he charged us to refuse a sectarian person after a first and second admonition. In Romans 14 and 15 the apostle Paul was generous, broad-minded, and all-embracing in instilling the need to receive all genuine believers, regardless of their different views concerning doctrine and outward practices. However, in Romans 16:17 he was very narrow and strict in not tolerating any kind of division; he decisively and emphatically charged the believers to carry out quarantine against divisive persons. This is so because division is an insult to the headship of Christ and a violation of the constitution of the His Body and the practice of the Body life. According to the clear and definite word of the apostle Paul in Romans 16:17 and Titus 3:10, we need to turn away from those who purposely make divisions, and we also need to refuse those whose motive and intention in contacting others is to cause division.

Unlike the practice of excommunication by the Brethren which is to cut a person off and give him up, the quarantine on the divisive sister was meant to remove her temporarily from the fellowship of the Body until such time when she would be healed and could be recovered back to the Body. This is in line with the practice of quarantining lepers in the Old Testament (Lev. 13:45-46; Num. 12:10-15). Due to the fact that leprosy is very contagious, anyone who was sick with leprosy must be quarantined, that is, put away temporarily from his family and the whole congregation until he had recovered from the sickness. The quarantining does not mean that the family no longer loves the member who is ill. On the contrary, this is a means of expressing love toward that member and toward all the other family members. This was practiced in order to prevent the other members of the family from being infected with the disease. In like manner, if anyone is spiritually sick of the disease of division, having become a divisive person, he must be quarantined. This will protect the entire church from the contagious germs of division, and the church will be safeguarded in oneness. It is a measure that aims to preserve the purity of fellowship in the Body. Miriam, the sister of Aaron and Moses, became leprous due to her insubordination and rebellion against God's deputy authority, and was still quarantined regardless of whatever reason she may have to justify her rebellion. Moses and Aaron, on the other hand, rejected their natural relationship and affection in order to follow God's speaking to deal with Miriam.

In his book *The Apostles' Teaching*, Brother Lee said that to keep oneself away from anything divisive is to exercise to quarantine the divisive ones. In practice, we need to turn away from those who make divisions (Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10; 1 Cor. 1:13). Even if a close relative is a division-maker, we must turn away from their division. The same applies to our intimate and close friends. Although it is difficult to turn away from those who are our intimate friends, we must realize that friendship is one thing, and the fellowship in Christ and in His Body is another thing. Hence, we should not be overcome by the personal affection in our natural or even spiritual relationship with the quarantined ones and let it get in the way of a proper dealing of the division-makers according to the Scriptures, as this will imperil our own spiritual health and safety as well as that of the flock. When Moses' sister, Miriam, became leprous, she was quarantined from the people in Moses' presence.

A person who creates division in the Body and makes causes of stumbling to the members of the Body sins against the Body and is not worthy of the Body. Brother Lee specifically mentioned that we cannot receive division-makers who have been quarantined by the Body to the Lord's table which represents the Lord's corporate Body in oneness. We simply need to refuse them to the joint-participation of the enjoyment of the Body that they are trying to damage and destroy. Should such a quarantined person

insist on partaking of the table anywhere else or even set up his own table with others, it becomes a table of division. When Brother Watchman Nee was excommunicated [which was wrong and is different from quarantine, but nonetheless resulted in his being similarly kept from partaking of the Lord's table] by the church in Shanghai and his ministry was stopped, he did not do anything to vindicate himself. He would not even break bread during those six years even when invited to partake in other churches.

In another book *The Problems Causing the Turmoil in the Church Life*, Brother Lee also said that regardless of how much help we have received from a certain one in the past, if he does something that offends the Body, we must still practice the truth. We must know the Body and trust in the Body.

As the priests in the Old Testament determined if a person is leprous and decide the quarantine, the apostles and elders, who represent the Body, determine and decide the quarantine of the division-makers and notify the other members of the Body. If we put the notification of quarantine aside and set out to investigate the situation for ourselves, this is an offense to the Body. It is not a matter of whether someone is right or wrong. He might be right, but still he offended the Body. We need to see the Body. What the Lord wants is the Body, not a bunch of saved souls. Soul-winning is right; soul-winning is good; but soul-winning should not be for soul-winning. The work should not be for numbers, and no work can be more important than the building up of the Body by keeping the oneness of the Body. The Lord wants souls for the building up of the Body of Christ.

We must be clear and strong in the truth. We have to practice the truth in Romans 16:17 and Titus 3:10 in dealing with the division-makers. If we do not quarantine them, we are harboring them against the apostles' teaching and in essence condoning them. Brother Lee reminded us that it is not wise to contact the divisive person either to exhort or argue with him or find out how he is doing. Whatever we do involves the Body, so we have to keep the truth. The only remedy to the situation is for the faithful ones to come back to the truth. We want to be the overcomers, the ones who overcome all these situations. We need to come back to the truth to practice quarantine according to the Lord's word, not according to what we think or how we feel. We should honor the Body and not disregard the feeling of the Body.

If we are faithful to practice the truth, then Satan will be crushed under our feet. Brother Lee said:

“In [Romans] 16:17 Paul does not say, ‘These divisive ones are brothers. We need to receive them and love them.’ No, he tells us to keep a watchful eye on them and to turn away from them. To turn away from those who make divisions and causes of falling is to quarantine them.

“In Romans 16:20a Paul says, ‘Now the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.’ It is significant that this word comes after the word concerning the strict dealing with the divisive ones. If we do not have any discernment but instead love blindly, and if we do not quarantine those who make divisions and causes of falling, Satan will be above us, not under us. But if we quarantine the divisive ones, Satan will be crushed under our feet.” (*W. Lee, Life-study of Deuteronomy, Chapter 12, pp. 83-84, LSM*)

May we all be today's overcomers to crush Satan, the father of all lies and the instigator of rebellion and division, who is out to damage His building work, under our feet. Let us all keep a watchful eye on those who make division, turn away from them, and refuse them, in order that we may be preserved in the oneness and one accord in the Body.

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