

precise? The Local Church can use the same words as orthodox Christianity, but without the same meaning^{s b}

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Spiritual Authority

Witness Lee ^a The problem of authority--its authorship and who wields it--is a significant litmus test for healthy, particularly biblical, communities.

← While Witness Lee decries church hierarchies, the Local Church is not a model of democracy. Lee's voice has always been far weightier than anyone else's. in the organization

Reliable sources tell us that Lee himself does not rule with an iron rod. ~~Here, rules~~

Exercising deference to all of Lee's requests, ^{the} an inner circle ~~has thus~~ become a model for the obedience and submission encouraged among the Local Church congregations at large. Although the Local Church claims that Lee is not "the Pope" or an autocrat and that Scripture is their paramount authority, we have reservations concerning this proclamation. Stream Publications ⁿpredominantly produces editions of Lee materials, with minimal contributions from other Local Church figures. The non-Lee material is generally apologetic, presenting a defense of Local Church positions. ~~The Lee?~~

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The publication of Lee's interpretation and exegesis of Scripture constitutes the ^{total} exclusive reservoir of Local Church instruction. Although the Local Church ^{publ. of} supports the supremacy and authority of Scripture, Witness Lee's persuasive argumentation and spirited theology are the accepted, ^{pre-emptive} ~~peremptory~~ interpretation of Scripture, ^{making Lee the "power behind the throne."} ~~this yielding Lee a "second wind" authority.~~ Any opportunity to exercise biblical leverage on questionable issues by a member of the Local Church is preempted by Witness Lee's authoritative interpretation, irrespective of its accuracy. It is this style of authority which prompted Max Rapoport to resign his post as the president of the Local Church in Anaheim. In The Los Angeles Times (December 11th, 1978) edition, Rapoport is quoted

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