

Topic Eleven

Living Stream Ministry Copyright

I. The history of the publication office:

- A. The publication work began with Brother Nee:
 - 1. In 1927 Brother Nee move his publishing company, the Gospel Book Room, to Shanghai.
 - 2. The publication work did not belong to any church or any work group; in the beginning it belonged to Brother Nee himself.
 - 3. In 1934 Brother Nee felt that he alone could not handle so much work; therefore, he arranged for me to be responsible for editing *The Christian*, but the Gospel Book Room, the publication work, still belonged to him personally.
 - 4. Before 1949 the books that were published were mostly by Brother Nee; other than a few books translated into Chinese and a few that were written by Brother Lee, no other books were published, and there was not another publication work.
- B. Taiwan Gospel Bookroom:
 - 1. Bookrooms were established in Taiwan and Hong Kong in addition to Shanghai.
 - a. In 1949 I went to Taiwan; in the second year I went to Hong Kong to meet with Brother Nee. I mentioned the need for the publication work because I needed his consent before the hymnal and other books could be published.
 - b. Brother Nee decided that there should be a bookroom in Taipei and in Hong Kong in addition to Shanghai and that He would be responsible for the bookroom in Shanghai, I would be responsible for the one in Taipei, and Brother K. H. Weigh would be responsible for the one in Hong Kong.
 - c. He said that these three bookrooms were just one and that copyrights would be shared.
 - 2. There is proof that the three were one and that the copyrights were shared:
 - a. Brother Nee published one thousand fifty-two hymns, which included almost all the hymns contained in the second volume of the Chinese hymnal, which I edited. At the same time, he re-edited my sixty topics of *Crucial Truths in the Holy Scriptures* into fifty-two topics. These proves that the three bookrooms shared the copyrights.
 - b. It was because of this arrangement by Brother Nee that we established a Gospel Book Room in Taipei and in Hong Kong and that we also had the right to publish Brother Nee's books.
 - c. At that time we published many of Brother Nee's books without asking him for the copyright, because he had already arranged for the three bookrooms to be one, and thus they were still his publication work.
- C. Hong Kong Gospel Bookroom:
 - 1. Due to the political situation, we decided that the name Hong Kong Gospel Book Room should be changed to Hong Kong Church Book Room.
 - 2. Nevertheless, it did not belong to the church.
- D. Living Stream and the maintaining of the copyrights:
 - 1. After I went to the United States, I registered the name Living Stream for the publication of *The Stream* magazine. The scope was eventually expanded also to include the ministry in audio and video format.

2. Some have said that Brother Nee's messages are the public property of the church; this is going too far. The messages given by Brother Nee are for the public, but when the books of Brother Nee are published by one of the gospel bookrooms, the copyright belongs to the publisher. Once a book is published by a publisher, the copyright belongs to the publisher.
 3. Even though Brother Nee has passed away, his bookroom is still here:
 - a. Those who translate Brother Nee's books first should contact the publisher.
 - b. I feel sorry that some people, without having a word with us, translated a message given by Brother Nee that was published in one of the issues of *The Present Testimony* in 1934. When they translated the message into English, they changed some of the original speaking concerning Christ being a creature.
 - c. We learned a lesson from this incident and decided that regarding the publication of the ministry of the word, Living Stream would keep the copyrights of the books that it publishes.
 - d. In this way our publication work has been put on the right track.
- E. References: (CWWL, 1981, vol. 2, "The History and Revelation of the Lord's Recovery," pp. 33, 259-261)

**Living Stream Ministry's General Policy
concerning the Use of Our Copyrighted Materials
by the Saints, the Churches, and the Work**

Living Stream Ministry (LSM) policy allows anyone to make up to twenty copies of portions from our publications for use in home meetings, group meetings, Bible studies, etc., and no permission is required. Of course, any such copies should properly cite the source (author, title, page numbers, and publisher) and include the statement: "Do not duplicate." This provision should be applied to each particular event (gathering), and distribution should be limited to those in attendance. The number twenty is somewhat arbitrary, and upon request LSM usually grants permission for larger gatherings that, in principle, fit these criteria.

Concerning the use of our materials by the work or a local church, LSM is more lenient. A church or a co-worker may make as many copies as are needed, and the single event restriction is extended to cover a short series of gatherings, e.g., a short series of weekly meetings with the young adults, a church weekend conference, a series of church meetings held over several weeks covering a particular subject, etc. Again, distribution should be limited to those in attendance and should be done on a week-by-week basis.

Of course, if a group or a church intends to progressively cover an entire publication, copies of the publication should be purchased for those who would attend regularly, but photocopies may be made on a week-by-week basis for newcomers and those who come sporadically.

It is best to photocopy and then "cut and paste" from our printed publications to create a "master," which can then be duplicated as needed. However, if this is not possible, our online publications may be used, but all electronic material must be deleted as soon as a hard-copy master has been prepared. Furthermore, in preparing such a master, the formatting should be kept as simple as possible in order to avoid the appearance of a formal publication. For the same reason, such materials should not be bound like a publication but simply be stapled at the corner.

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These provisions are intended to make it easy to use the ministry publications in the normal church life, while preventing any unauthorized, large-scale reproduction and distribution.