

Translator's Note: Concerning the warning letter of quarantine on Oct. 1st 2006, that was publicly announced to the world, and its call for the saints not to be neutral in this matter, eleven (11) district responsible brothers of Hall 4 of the Church in Taipei have signed the following open letter of suggestions.

The Suggestions with Regard to Today's Situation by Some Brothers from Hall 4 of the Church in Taipei – December 29, 2006

Stepping into the year of 2007, which is rapidly approaching the return of our Lord, “a tragedy of brothers quarantining brothers” happened among the churches. We are deeply concerned and feel that the damages to the churches and the saints caused by this action will be beyond measure. Since a church is a “church of the saints,” we, being part of it, hold crucial and sole responsibility of the interests of the church. Therefore, we, being commissioned by the Lord, feel the need to give constructive suggestions with regard to today's situation in order to protect the interests of the church.

First of all, we need to make a clear declaration again that “we revere the Bible as our unique and divine standard.” Just as what Brother Nee declared and practiced: “The Bible is our only standard. We are not afraid to preach the pure Word of the Bible, even if men oppose; but if it is not the Word of the Bible, we could never agree even if everyone approved of it.” (Watchman Nee, Collected Works, Vol. #7, p. 1231) This is the declaration published in the first volume of the journal “The Christian,” which concludes Brother Nee's unshakable belief towards the Word of God. This statement represents the fundamental principle of the Lord's recovery, and it is also “the very great, particular characteristic in the Lord's recovery *which* is to do everything according to the Bible.” (Witness Lee, Elders' Training, Book, #7, p. 107) Bible must be the unique criterion in our assessment of all the teachings or practices. It was our practice before; it is even much more so today.

Facing the international letter of warning and quarantine on Oct. 1st 2006, we, as the recipients of the letter and members among the saints in the churches, all need to come before the Lord, with sobriety and discernment based on the Scripture, to examine whether or not this letter is according to the Bible and uses the Bible as its criterion? If so, we all should closely follow; if not, we should never agree with it one bit. Otherwise, the churches would certainly repeat the same footsteps of the history and fall into the tide of degradation.

The following are some questions and the corresponding scriptures regarding the letter of warning and quarantine: Having read through the entire content of the quarantine letter, we

have found the following points that are related to the Biblical truth:

Point 1, “Different opinion” and “Different teaching”:

To teach different things was to teach myths, unending genealogies (v. 4), and the law (vv. 7-8). All such teaching was vain talking (v. 6), differing from the apostles’ teaching, which was centered on Christ and the church, that is, on the economy of God. (Footnote from 1 Tim.) We feel that the application of “different teaching” can not be extended without a proper boundary to different opinions or views about things that are not the basic truths. The letter of warning and quarantine did not list the Biblical teachings and the different teachings with necessary references from both sides; and a letter of such importance must not have any room for ambiguity.

Point 2, concerning the questions of ministries and ministers:

In the book of first Corinthians, it is very clear to us that these points should not become the focal point of argument. “What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Ministers through whom you believed, even as the lord gave to each one of them. I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth. So then neither is he who plants anything nor he who waters, but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s cultivated land, God’s building.”

“As far as the growth in life is concerned, all the ministers of Christ, whether planters or waterers, are nothing; God is everything. We must turn our eyes from them to God alone. This delivers us from the divisiveness that results from appreciating one minister of Christ above another. (Footnote from 1 Cor.)

Paul also emphasized that, “Now these things, brothers, I have transferred in figure to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us the matter of not going beyond what has been written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one, against the other.”

Here is a strong indication that a church should not have the situation of “puffing up of one minister, against the other” among the ministers. The church should not puff up Paul, against Apollos, and vice versa. This is also the practice of the New Testament ministers. There has never been a single New Testament minister who claimed that he is the unique minister, and there is not such revelation in the New Testament either. The New Testament ministry is always apportioned and taken up by many people. The following verses also clearly illustrate this point. “Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant,” “Therefore having this ministry as we have been shown mercy.”

Brother Nee also pointed out in his teaching that “Bible says that first we have the establishment of the church in a locality and then it would be enriched by various ministries. Bible does not allow humans to establish a church according to one’s ministry. The teaching of the Bible is to utilize the special characteristics of a ministry to contribute to the church. It is not that the grocer and the florist each seek to open as many branches as they possibly can in order to sell their respective commodities, but that the grocer or the florist, arriving in any place, opens a department store, and having duly established that, he contributes his goods to it, and other tradesmen coming along contribute their wares to the same store. A department store does not just deal in one line of goods; it has a varied stock. The thought of God is not that we should open branch florist shops or branch grocery stores, or stores that specialize in other lines, but department stores. His plan is that His servants should just establish a local church, and then contribute their different ministries to that church. The church is not controlled by one ministry but served by all the ministries. If any company of God's people are open to receive one truth only, then they are a sect.” (Watchman Nee, Collected Works, Vol. #30, the Normal Christian church life)

Point 3: Concerning one publication and publisher:

Those who agree with one publication publicly admit that "... it is not a matter of right or wrong, biblical or non-biblical. It is a matter of whether there is one sound or more than one sound." (The Ministry Magazine, Vol. 9, issue 1, p. 186) Brother Nee admonished us that “whatever the Bible does not have, the church must by all means reject. Otherwise, all those who follow the Lord faithfully will leave when they see the church having what the Bible has not.” (Watchman Nee, Further Talks, p. 64)

The Scripture does not explicitly teach such a practice, nor teach the saints to be restricted in reading the materials from only one publisher, nor the writings of only one New Testament minister. Therefore we cannot add another “one publication” besides what was taught in Ephesians that we should be diligent to keep the seven “one’s” and use it as the basis of acceptance and quarantine. Otherwise, we would not be receiving according to God. Rather, we would be falling into a religious organization.

From our explanation according to the Scripture above, [on the one hand, we consider that the “letter of warning and quarantine” has insufficient Biblical ground; on the other hand, we cannot quarantine brothers on such a basis. Therefore, we beseech the brothers, the authors of the “Warning letter”, to retract this warning letter, to truly practice receiving the saints according to God, and practice brotherly love according to the commandment of the Lord Jesus before His departure. “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one](#)

another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35) “For this is the message which you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another,” (1 John 3:11) “We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brothers. He who does not love abides in death.” (1 John 3:14) “And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, even as He gave a commandment to us.” (1 John 3:23) Brother Nee also talked about this: “having frequent contact with the ones that do not have the same opinions with us in expounding the Scripture always makes our ‘flesh’ feel abnormal, but it benefits our spirits. We might have the correct understanding of the Scripture, but God would use this opportunity to show us the proper attitude of our hearts. We might believe correctly, but God would test us to see whether or not we love properly. How easy it is for us to have a mind to be equipped with the pure teaching of the Bible but to lack a heart that is full of true love. Oh! How we need the Christian tolerance! Oh! How we need a heart with tremendous magnitude and capacity! Unfortunately, many children of God would be zealous over the light they attained and cause them to mark out those ones who deviate from them in opinions with regards to expounding the scripture as ‘Outsiders’ without any hesitation. God wills us to manifest our loving heart even to those who hold different opinions toward us on the most precious truth. When a person who expounds the Scripture is opposed on the truth, such opposition would most easily manifest his spiritual condition.”

We proclaim:

1. We desire to follow the Scripture to receive all the children of God according to God.
2. We do not despise or judge anyone’s teaching and practice according to the viewpoints of doctrines, religious practices and anything that is unrelated to our basic truth, that is, the most important and fundamental truth, which is concerning our salvation, Christ, His person and work.
3. We ought to receive the saints according to God, not to be narrower than God, to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace and to live in the Body of Christ so that the fellowship of the Body of Christ would be maintained in a situation that is absolutely smooth, without deviation and disharmony. (Rom. 14:3, 15:7)
4. We receive all the gifts that Christ has given to the church and their perfecting for the building up of the Body of Christ.

5. We desire to live a church life like the one in Philadelphia, practice brotherly love, keep the Lord's Word, and exalt the Lord's name until the Lord comes.

Signatures of the 11 brothers:

