

## A Toronto Brother's Response to Soan-Lin Liu's Letter

February 23, 2007

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Please forgive me for the style and order of this letter as I have written this as a response to our brother Soan-Lin Liu's letter of February 19, 2007 which appeared on the lastadam.com website. In responding I follow the sequence of Brother Liu's letter in order to address the same points from a different perspective. Obviously my perspective contrasts with his even though we have been in the same church life in Toronto for these many years. Please read this letter and then re-examine Soan-Lin's letter and let the Lord speak to you personally as you do so.

I have been in the church life in Toronto since 1974, and I have treasured these many years in the Lord. Looking back I realize that around ten years ago I started hearing saints saying that they did not like Titus. Around that time it also became manifest that the "blended co-workers" did not want to come to Toronto to minister, even though they were invited. I am particularly grieved that over the past decade some of the saints began to show a rebellious attitude towards the elders and co-workers who labour in Toronto.

I have not seen such bitterness and hostility towards the elders as currently expressed in the meetings since the rebellious situation we encountered around 1992. It is hard to believe that a letter such as that from 77 (so-called) "local saints" would ever be written to the elders disagreeing with their decision contained in the "Determination and Recommendation." Many of the 77 saints probably never even read the letter they signed and/or are not meeting with the church in Toronto. I know of one sister who, in my presence, stated that she had not read the letter even though she had signed it. It is increasingly obvious that the main goal is to overthrow the elders at any cost. This is more than shameful.

Many outsiders have come to the area to assist in instigating this rebellious attitude. However, instead of stating their real purpose for visiting, they claim to have come to 'visit relatives in the church here' or because they 'have a burden for the saints.' When asked about the "Vital Living trainings" held in Brampton, Richmond Hill and Markham by the "blended brothers," some respond, saying 'what's wrong with having life trainings or prayer groups?' May I ask, since when did the Lord change the authority in the church such that elders are no longer the overseers of the flock? Since when have these functions been transferred to the so-called "blended brothers" and their supporters here? For years the church has invited some of these "blended co-workers" to come to minister in Toronto and they have almost always declined. Now when they observe that the Toronto elders are not willing to let the church become subservient to their ministry these co-workers flock to the area in droves contacting many of the saints in Toronto. These workers come, not only uninvited by Toronto, but without even a word of fellowship to let the Toronto elders know of their (so-called) "burden for the saints." When did the so-called "blended co-workers" demonstrate an ounce of care for the neighborhood churches in these past ten years? Why do the LSM supporters now telephone saints they have never talked to for years and threaten them with the judgment seat of Christ? I personally know some saints who were told that Titus is wrong and they need to follow the 'blended brothers.' The conversation ending with 'you will have to stand before Christ at judgment day.'

These LSM supporters like to use all kinds of spiritual terms to convince us that their objective is not control or taking over the church affairs. At the same time they are drumming up enough voting members of the corporation to elect directors who will change the direction of the church according to their divisive view. The elders' responsibility is to protect the church from such persons. The responsibility of the directors of the corporation is to protect the assets of the Corporation. This may be seen as "seeking control" by some saints. However in my view, it is being faithful to what the Lord has put into their hands. The elders have the responsibility to ensure that the meetings are conducted in good order. If this means setting up a video camera and taping the meetings, (as was done in 1992) I say a loud "Amen"! On the other hand, may I ask, who has made audio recordings of the meetings on a hand-held recorder allowing them to be posted on the Internet? Who has been taking photographs of the equipment and meetings and for what purpose? Is this not the same group which complains of video-recordings?

One elder has disagreed with the decisions of the eldership for years. Rather than respecting the elderships' decisions, or resigning (if his conscience has not borne witness with these decisions) he has instead helped to raise up a party and supported those who have been against Titus and/or the elders for years. The letter says people have "maneuvered to remove" this brother as Secretary of the Board. Of course such a brother should not be Secretary! It also says people are "seeking to remove" another brother as Director. Of course a director who has publicly declared he no longer supports the eldership should not be nominated by the elders to remain on the board. Perhaps more to the point – where in the Bible is there justification for divisive parties in the Church? Where in the Bible does the church receive directions from a ministry or remote group of workers, rather than the elders? In the church life, we have always been taught that authority is of the Lord, and in proper order according to His ordination. Moreover, the order in a local church is under the oversight of the elders. It does not belong to a group who disagree with the elders, nor to a remote group of workers who mandate a specific ministry or special teachings upon the local churches.

The LSM supporters say the by-laws should not be changed by the current directors. They say this so that they can continue to attack the church year after year. The truth is, many of the by-laws **are** 14 years old and some of them do not reflect current government regulation and must be revised. The main point, however, is that they need to be changed in order that the interests of the church and the Corporation are protected from outside attack. These LSM supporters will say or do anything they feel is necessary until they get their way. If the Bible does not support them, they will resort to any means to try and convince us that the elders are wrong by trying to apply "spiritual principles" to secular law. The Lord looks at the heart. The secular law looks at the law of the land and this law requires **proof** of financial support (e.g. for tax deduction of offerings to the Church). In this light, the directors' requirement of proof of financial support and proof of service is only reasonable. If we really believe "hidden service" and "hidden giving" is so crucial, we have the right to withdraw from the organizational requirements of the law of the land and keep our service wholly for the Lord. It is a fact that many of the saints who have ceased offering to the church in recent years, requested income tax receipts when they were offering a few years ago. Hence to say they desire anonymity now that they don't offer is just a "smoke screen." They did not seek this anonymity when they were offering a few years ago. These are the facts!

I don't believe that "the church is under attack" just because the Church in Toronto website says so. The facts speak for themselves. The church is under attack by LSM. LSM has written articles directly attacking the Toronto elders. LSM supporters have posted articles on websites that attack the elders and co-workers in Toronto. These are verifiable facts. We thank the Lord that He blesses whenever and whoever preaches the gospel. Not only has the Lord blessed those sent out by LSM, He has also blessed the church in Toronto, as well as hundreds and thousands of Christian workers and churches all over the world. LSM boasts about 30,000 followers in the US. Many other denominations and groups can boast of large numbers as well. However, the fruit we see in Toronto is clear. His blessing on the young peoples' work is clear. The condemnation doled out towards the young people by LSM supporters is also clear. There is good fruit and there is bad fruit. Let the Lord be the real judge, lest we destroy the wheat with the tares.

This attack is clearly not from the co-workers. Yes! This attack is from the enemy, Satan! He has sown dissention among the saints for years on at least three fronts, those who have no regard for Titus, those who have no regard for the elders, and those who believe LSM is the one and only ministry. Satan has arranged that these three parties are now co-operating together because he sees the blessings from the Lord in Toronto. The co-workers and elders in Toronto are also honorable brothers in Christ, serving the Lord their whole lives, and doing so with a pure heart with much fear and trembling lest they stumble those whom they serve.

In recent years I know of only one troublesome Toronto brother who was disciplined by the elders. However, no saint has been "purged" from the Toronto church meetings by the elders. In contrast, there are families among us which have been torn apart because of the insistence of following LSM and the "blended co-workers." In fact, some of the 'blended brothers' and other LSM followers already consider the Church in Toronto as no longer a proper local church. Make no mistake, if they ever get control of the corporation they will exercise their power to remove the co-workers who have poured out their lives for us just as has been done in other places, such as Chicago.

The current by-laws, in fact, do give the directors the authority to remove saints from the corporation of the Church of the Torontonians. The by-laws must also ensure that unruly or divisive members of the corporation are not allowed to work works of darkness so that the church in Toronto is kept in a tranquil state. Removal from the list of voting members of the corporation protects the corporation and its assets. This concerns a secular organization. In contrast, the unrighteous quarantine from the church affects the ability of the worker to exercise as a gift given to the church by the Lord. This is wholly a spiritual matter. To be 'kicked out' of a secular voting membership is much less severe than to be 'quarantined' from the saints and churches I serve. At most, the bylaws allow the former. What LSM and its supporters are practicing is the latter, quarantine.

Sadly, the "blended brothers" and LSM supporters care more for their ministry and practices than for the saints themselves. They make uniformity sound like oneness, even though it divides families, forms divisive parties, damages the youngest members of the church, prevents us from exercising our faith freely, and sears the consciences of the saints by supporting lies and unrighteous acts in the pretense of "keeping the oneness" at all costs. It is obvious that the by-laws must reflect the will of the saints, including the elders. This may well mean that those who hold the LSM ideology (who really are the minority amongst the Church) do not control us. Can anyone imagine a scenario where the elders are no longer allowed to decide which apostles the church

should accept, which ministries the church should receive, what material we can and cannot read?

Imagine if those in Jerusalem controlled the work on the entire earth, what would the New Testament look like today? Imagine if Paul was subjected to 'one publication,' decided by James, what would be written in the four books that comprise the 'heart of the divine revelation?' Imagine what John would have written to the seven churches in Asia if he had to have his ministry writings approved by all the co-workers who were working among the churches in those days. Now, imagine what the church in Toronto will look like five years from now if a minority group among us is allowed to control the actions of the elders because they have control of the Board of Directors!

The elders do serve the saints in Toronto. Yet two of the elders have decided that their portion is nobler than that of the other elders. They have concluded that there is no problem spreading division, forming parties, and releasing confidential fellowship to others. Is not this proof enough that if the local eldership is not in control of the Church, who would be? It is obvious that Steve, Jonathon, and David Lio are supporting the eldership. These three, as directors, will ensure that the eldership is able to operate freely as the Lord leads. Any other choice will result in further division and unrest amongst the saints.

Dear saints, I love the Lord, I love His recovery, and I love His Body. I also love the church in Toronto, which includes all the believers in Toronto, not just those who follow a specific ministry. I do not write lightly. I have purposefully written in the same manner, using the same phrases as our brother Soan-Lin Liu, in order to prove that it is easy to speak many words but not all of us have the same point of view. I do believe Brother Soan-Lin is sincerely concerned. However others, (including myself), who have a different viewpoint are also concerned. We have to be very clear before the Lord, who are the elders and where does the Lord entrust His authority? We have to have a proper understanding as to the relationship between Board of Directors and the elders. We have to consider what the effect would be on the church if the operation of these two groups were not synchronized.

It is easy to use words like 'power', 'control' and 'authority.' But we must be clear, the church operates under the principle of 'theocracy' while the corporation operates under the principle of 'democracy.' These two principles must both be satisfied for there to be harmony in the church. If democracy is allowed to override theocracy, there will be no theocracy and hence no real Church. But if democracy is controlled by theocracy there can be the real church and there can be the reality of 'giving to Caesar the things that belong to Caesar.'

Brothers and Sisters, if the directors of the corporation determine the future of the church then I would much rather have the directors controlled by the eldership, rather than the elders controlled by the directors. We must stand with the elders in Toronto and elect Steve, Jonathan, and David Lio as directors of the corporation of the Church of the Torontonians. Moreover, we must adopt the new bylaws to allow the Church here the liberty to function as a genuine local church among the many local churches.

Please take these things to the Lord, your brother,

Dennis Clarkson