

LSM's Attack on the Toronto Eldership [Part 2]

SUMMARY:

LSM continues to attack the Toronto eldership via a series of anonymous Internet articles. They try to use the Toronto's quarantine of "Brother X" in the early 1990's to undermine the elders' stand regarding LSM's quarantine of Titus Chu. LSM's latest accusations are false:

- The LSM-brothers accuse the Toronto elders of "*deviating from the practice...built up through the ministry of Brother Nee...*" Yet, both in the 1990's and currently, the Toronto elders fellowshiped with other churches their stand on discipline. This applies Watchman Nee's teachings.
- The LSM-brothers allege the Toronto elders have "*rejected 'the principle of the One Body' ...'what one church does, all the churches should do.'*" Yet the quarantine of Titus Chu was not initiated by any local church. It was instigated by the "blended co-workers." The LSM-brothers' appeal to, "*What one church does, all the churches should do,*" is hypocritical. The "blended co-workers" were the first to violate that principle. In contrast, their *modus operandi* is "What the blended co-workers say all the churches should do."
- The LSM-writers accuse the Toronto elders of "*rejecting the testimonies of elders and co-workers from... throughout the earth.*" They claim the Toronto "*elders made no attempt to confirm the facts...presented...in Whistler.*" Yet, the Toronto Review Committee considered all the evidence presented, including Whistler. The Whistler testimonies were not rejected as false reports. Rather, the Committee judged that, even accepting the Whistler testimonies as 100% credible, they provide insufficient grounds for quarantine.
- The LSM-brothers suggest the Toronto brothers are "*cutting themselves off from the fellowship of all of the churches.*" However, in recent months, we received "*brothers in the Lord's Recovery outside of our locality.*" Brothers Titus Chu, Norm Monahan, Keith Miller, Vern Yoder, Dave Shields and Paul Neider (among others) have visited Toronto and ministered here. We also enjoyed traffic between various churches, especially those nearby—Montreal, London, Ottawa, Buffalo, Cleveland & Detroit. Toronto has not isolated itself from other genuine local churches.

[Full Text Follows]

Introduction

The LSM-brothers continue to attack the eldership of the Church in Toronto. Their Internet offensive was launched via a series of anonymous articles entitled,¹ "*Has the Truth Changed or Have Some of the Metro Toronto Elders?*" Part 1 of LSM's attack was quickly followed by parts 2 and 3. In these writings the LSM-brothers try to use the Toronto's quarantine of "Brother X" in the early 1990's as a means to undermine the elders' current stand regarding LSM's quarantine of² Titus Chu, Nigel Tomes and other workers. They charge the Toronto elders with,³ "*rejecting the testimonies of elders and co-workers ...throughout the earth,*" exercising "*their own preference and feeling,*" rejecting "*the principle of the One Body*" "*taking a different direction,*" "*straying from the path,*" "*deviating from the practice in the Lord's recovery,*" and "*cutting themselves off from the fellowship of all of the churches.*"

LSM's attack is based upon private correspondence between the elders of the churches in Vancouver and Toronto. Several of these letters were clearly marked, "Confidential." We wonder how this confidential correspondence was disclosed to LSM. Moreover, we question the integrity of those who would use these materials to attack the overseers of the Church. Under these circumstances we aren't surprised the writers chose

to remain anonymous! Here we briefly address LSM's latest accusations against Toronto's elders.

Watchman Nee's Teaching—Persuasion and Exhortation of other churches

Concerning receiving or rejecting a believer, Watchman Nee taught:⁴

"If any one is received or refused by a local church, its judgment... must be regarded as absolutely decisive. Even should the decision be wrong, all that can be done is to appeal for a reconsideration of the case. The local church is the highest church authority. If other churches object to its decisions, all they can do is resort to persuasion and exhortation. There is no alternative course...."

These principles espoused by W. Nee were applied by the Toronto elders in the 1990's and also currently. In 1992-3 "Brother X" was disciplined in Toronto. The elders of the Church in Vancouver disagreed with that decision. The Toronto elders therefore resorted to "*persuasion and exhortation.*" The Toronto brothers addressed Vancouver's elders:⁵ "*we wrote informing you of our decision to discipline a certain brother and requesting that this brother not be received into the fellowship of the local churches you oversee.*" This was in the spirit of fellowship. This correspondence demonstrates Toronto's willingness to fellowship with other local churches as recommended by W. Nee.

LSM's quarantine of Titus Chu was considered by the Toronto eldership. Their decision, in the form of their⁶ "Determination and Recommendation" (Nov. 5, 2006) was posted on the Internet to communicate with other churches. This was also in the spirit of fellowship. The LSM-brothers accuse Toronto of "*deviating from the practice in the Lord's recovery built up through the ministry of Brother Nee...*" Yet, have Toronto's elders deviated? No! We reject LSM's accusation as false.

Who's "Deviating from the Practice of the Lord's Recovery"?

The LSM-brothers make the serious accusation:⁷ "*the leading ones in Toronto today have abandoned their previous standing.*" Yet, have they? In 1992-3 the Toronto elders wrote to the other Canadian churches exhorting them to support Toronto's decision to discipline "Brother X" due to his divisive activities in Toronto. Now the Toronto elders have rejected LSM's call to quarantine Titus Chu and his co-workers. Are the Toronto elders inconsistent? Have they changed? The LSM-brothers obviously think so. They allege,⁸ "*What the Metro Toronto brothers are doing in rejecting the quarantine of Titus Chu...[is] taking a different direction ...straying from the path... **they are deviating from the practice in the Lord's recovery** built up through the ministry of Brother Nee and Brother Lee.*" Yet who (in fact) has deviated? Is it the Toronto elders or LSM's "blended co-workers"? Both in the 1990's and currently the Toronto elders sought to communicate their decisions (regarding 'Brother X' and Titus Chu) to the other local churches. In this respect the Toronto elders have consistently applied "*the practice... built up through the ministry of Brother Nee...*" The Toronto elders have not deviated. We only regret not engaging in more vigorous "*persuasion and exhortation*" in the current case.

Who's Rejecting the Principle: "What one Church Does, All the Churches should Do"?

The LSM-brothers allege the Toronto elders have "*rejected 'the principle of the One Body' ...'what one church does, all the churches should do.'*" We deny this charge. The quarantine of Titus Chu was not initiated by any local church. It was instigated by LSM's "blended co-workers." Hence this is not a case in which⁹ "*the discipline exercised by one local church should be respected and applied by all local churches.*" We only have to ask--Which was the "*one local church*"¹⁰ that "*exercised discipline*" concerning Titus Chu? Did any single church take this initiative? Instead of this, don't we see regional federations of churches "rubber stamping" LSM's quarantine? Where is the application of Watchman Nee's principles? The LSM-brothers' appeal to the principle, "What one church does, all the churches should do," is hypocritical. The "blended co-workers" themselves were the first to violate that principle, trampling it underfoot. Hence, it's disingenuous of the LSM-brothers to criticize the Toronto elders on this basis.

"What the Blended Co-workers Say All the Churches should Do"

The *modus operandi* of the "blended co-workers" is "What the blended co-workers say all the churches should do." It is not: "what one church does, all the churches should do." Nor is it a matter of: "*the discipline exercised by one local church should be respected and applied by all local churches.*" The "blended co-workers" expect all the local churches to follow them in quarantining Titus Chu. Yet, in adopting this mode of operation, haven't they violated W. Nee's teaching that the local church is the 'highest court'? It seems, under the guise of 'the Body,' a "Supreme Court of global elders (blended co-workers)" has been created. Now this 'Supreme Court' (the 'blended co-workers') seeks to impose its quarantine decisions on all the local churches.

Due to this view the LSM-brothers attack the Toronto elders' rejection of Titus' quarantine. To them, the "blended co-workers'" presentation at Whistler, BC was conclusive; all the local churches should simply fall in line. The LSM-writers allege: "*In rejecting the quarantine of Titus Chu...they [Toronto's elders] are rejecting the testimonies of elders and co-workers from... throughout the earth.*" They ask rhetorically, "*Do they [the Toronto elders] assert that they have certain knowledge that these reports from...are false?*" They also claim "*The dissenting [Toronto] elders made no attempt to confirm the facts...presented...in Whistler.*"

These false accusations are easily refuted. The Toronto Review Committee considered all the evidence presented, including much of what transpired at Whistler. Contrary to the LSM-brothers' claims, the Whistler testimonies were not rejected as false reports. Rather, the Review Committee's judged that, even accepting the Whistler testimonies as 100% credible, they provide insufficient grounds for quarantine. The LSM-brothers have seriously misrepresented Toronto's position on this matter. May we ask: Have they even read Toronto's "Determination & Recommendation"?

Is Toronto Cutting Themselves off from the Fellowship of the churches?

The LSM-brothers suggest the Church in Toronto is isolating itself from other local churches. They say, "*Today, some of the leading the brothers in... Toronto seem to be cutting themselves off from the fellowship of all of the churches.*" In support of this notion they quote the Toronto elders' declaration in the early 1990's: "*We in the churches in Metro Toronto are happy that we have received help from, are still being supplied by, and remain open to brothers in the Lord's Recovery outside of our localities. This is how we are in fellowship with all the other churches in the Lord's Recovery.*" (Toronto Elders' Letter, January 25, 1993)

It is interesting to inquire: "Who were the 'brothers in the Lord's Recovery outside of our localities' being referred to?" Ironically, chief among those brothers is the person the LSM-brothers are now seeking to exclude from Toronto—Titus Chu. It was mainly Brother Titus Chu the Church in Toronto "*received help from,*" was "*still being supplied by, and remain(ed) open to*" during the early 1990's! The fact is, LSM's "blended co-workers" seldom visited Toronto during that era. The historical record shows that, over the last decade, the "blended brothers" rarely visited Toronto, despite repeated annual invitations. This leads us to ask: why are the "blended co-workers" suddenly desperate to visit the Toronto area? Are they trying to compensate for decades of neglect and indifference? Or do they have a more sinister motive?

Contrary to the LSM-brothers' assertion, the church in Toronto is not "*cutting themselves off from the fellowship of all of the churches.*" We can make the same declaration today that we did in 1993. In recent months, we have received "*brothers in the Lord's Recovery outside of our locality.*" Brothers Titus Chu, Norm Monahan, Keith Miller, Vern Yoder, Dave Shields and Paul Neider (among others) have visited Toronto and ministered here. We have also enjoyed traffic between various churches, especially those nearby—Montreal, London, Ottawa, Buffalo, Cleveland & Detroit (to name the major nearby churches.) Toronto has not isolated itself from other genuine local churches.

It is factually incorrect to assert, "*Toronto seem[s] to be cutting themselves off from the fellowship of all of the churches.*" Perhaps this misconception arises from the LSM-brothers' implicit concept that "*the fellowship of all of the churches*" must be mediated by the "blended co-workers" and is conditional on their participation and endorsement. Or perhaps this comment shows the LSM-brothers don't know the real situation in Toronto. Are they really that out of touch?

Nigel Tomes
Toronto elder & co-worker
February, 2007

NOTES:

1. The articles appear on the LSM-sponsored website, AFaithfulWord.org. Part 1 was posted Jan. 22, 2007; Part 2 on Jan. 30, 2007 and Part 3 on Feb. 2, 2007. We previously addressed Part 1 in, "[Toronto's Discipline of 'Brother X' vs. LSM's Quarantine of Titus—A Response to LSM's Attempt to Discredit Toronto's Eldership.](#)" Posted on <http://www.concernedbrothers.com/Quarantine/DiscreditTorontosEldership.pdf> Here we focus on Part 2, leaving the final part of LSM's trilogy for the future.
2. It should be clear that LSM's quarantine goes beyond Brother Titus Chu. In Part 3 the LSM-brothers allege that the Toronto elders "*continue to receive and defend Titus Chu and Nigel Tomes. In doing so, they are...not being faithful to deal with a division-maker among them.*" [Part 3, Conclusion]
3. The LSM-brothers charge the Toronto elders with, "*rejecting the testimonies of elders and co-workers from Korea, Taiwan, China, Singapore, Malaysia, Ghana, and the United States.*" *They immediately ask, "Do they [the Toronto elders] assert that they have certain knowledge that these reports from the churches and the co-workers throughout the earth are false?"* For brevity we combine these two statements into one.
4. Watchman Nee, *The Normal Christian Church Life*, p. 64
Brother Nee then gives an example of how this might work in practice: "*If a brother who has been disciplined in Nanking moves to Soochow, and there proves himself to be innocent of the charge brought against him, then Soochow has full authority to receive him, despite the judgment of Nanking. Soochow is responsible for its actions to God, not to Nanking. Soochow is an independent church, and has therefore full authority to act as it thinks best. But because there is a spiritual relationship with Nanking, it is well for the brother in question not to be received before Nanking's mistake in judgment is pointed out to Nanking. If Nanking's relationship with the Lord is right, then it will pay attention to what Soochow has to say. But if it refuses to do so, Soochow cannot press anything against Nanking, because Nanking as a local church is directly responsible to the Lord alone, and has full authority to decide and act independently of Soochow. If the churches are spiritual, there will be no difficulty in their relationship one with the other. But if they are not, and difficulties should arise, we must not seek to solve them by interfering in any way with their independence, for it is ordained by an all-wise God.*" (W. Nee, *The Normal Christian Church Life*, pp. 64-5)
5. Toronto elders' Letter December 14, 1992
6. "[Determination and Recommendation of the Review Committee of the Church of the Torontonians](#)" (November, 5, 2006). See <http://churchintoronto.net/announcement/The%20Church%20in%20Toronto%20-%20Determination%20and%20Recommendation.pdf>
7. Part 3, Conclusion
8. The quote in context reads: "**What the Metro Toronto brothers are doing in rejecting the quarantine of Titus Chu and certain of his co-workers is exactly the same in principle as what they so strongly accused the brothers in Vancouver of doing [in the 1990's]. To use their own words, these dissenting elders are "taking a different direction" and "straying from the path," that is, they are deviating from the practice in the Lord's recovery built up through the ministry of Brother Nee and Brother Lee, a practice they championed fourteen years ago.**" [Portion quoted in the text above is emphasized here]
9. In their "Conclusion" to "Part 2," the LSM-brothers state: [In the early 1990's the Toronto elders] "*appealed to Brother Nee's ministry to show that the **discipline exercised by one local church should be respected and applied by all local churches.***" They then argue that Toronto's current stand, "*cannot be reconciled with their earlier strong rebuke of the church in Vancouver and their subsequent correspondence with all of the churches in Canada.*"
10. In the context of quarantine initiated, not by a local church, but by the "blended co-workers" it is irrelevant to ask: "which was the first church to act?" and then expect the other local churches to follow. The Churches in S. California and the Church in Atlanta issued letters affirming LSM's quarantine in October, 2006. However, since the "blended co-workers" are directly involved with these churches, they are well positioned (given the "blended co-workers'" prior knowledge of what would likely occur at Whistler, BC) to respond quickly to the quarantine call. One of the first local churches to respond to LSM's quarantine call was the Church in Namhae, Korea (Oct. 24, 2006). In this context how should the principle, "What one Church does, all the churches should do," be applied? Should all the local churches around the globe follow Namhae because they were (among) the first? What do the brothers in Namhae know about Titus Chu? Has he ever visited there? In this context isn't the principle "What one Church does, all the churches should do," subject to abuse? Doesn't it give arbitrary power to the first Church which takes action? In fact, weren't the churches in S. California, Atlanta and Namhae, Korea merely

"rubber stamping" LSM's quarantine? Then how does the principle: "*that the discipline exercised by one local church should be respected and applied by all local churches*" apply?