

J. MAURIER2—SUBMISSION TO TORONTO REVIEW COMMITTEE
Summary of Written Submission
Regarding the "Letter of Quarantine" dated October 1, 2006

Summary: Thank you for being open to and seeking the fellowship of the saints regarding this quarantine matter. I believe this process to be in accordance with biblical and spiritual principles.

I have received much help from attending the semi-annual trainings in Anaheim when Brother Witness Lee was alive. However, I was always bothered by the young people's session in which young people were asked to make a commitment to come to the "full-time training in Anaheim, CA" (FTTA) as I felt there was a lot of peer pressure to make such a commitment without due attention to the Lord's individual leading of each young person.

The Lord eventually led me to give Him some time, and I attended a "10-month labour" with brother Titus and a term of the FTTA. I benefited greatly from the "10-month labour" and, for example, college trainings with Brother Titus. I appreciate his detailed and personal care for people. I also benefited from the FTTA although I do have some reservations about some aspects of the training.

I have always appreciated the ministry of Brother Lee and the semi-annual trainings, but in the years since Brother Lee's passing, I have felt and observed a troubling shift in the tone and emphasis of the ministry of the "blended brothers." As a result of this shift, I have been struggling in terms of receiving the ministry of the blended brothers, and have felt somewhat lost and betrayed. I can testify that Brother Titus' ministry has always encouraged me and brought me to Christ and the Church, has always made me see and appreciate Christ more, and has always inspired me to give myself to Christ and the Church.

I note that am fearful that I am making myself, Brother Titus and his co-workers vulnerable through my honest and admittedly imperfect description of my current struggles. I fear that this will be seized upon by some (as others' testimonies have been) and become the source of yet another accusation against Brother Titus and his co-workers that they are "poisoning the saints" and turning them against the ministry of the blended brothers. I feel that I am in a difficult position as I desire to express my genuine feeling, but know that the prevailing assumption is, and conclusion of many will be, that if one does not wholly and unreservedly subscribe to the ministry and edicts of the "blended brothers," one is either "damaged" or "dissenting". I fear that my struggles will be immediately taken as "evidence" of the alleged damage that has been allegedly caused by Brother Titus and his co-workers, rather than the motivation for an honest evaluation of the items which I cite as troubling. Nevertheless I want to be faithful to express my genuine feeling and feel that the risk is necessary in light of the current situation.

Despite my current personal struggles in receiving the ministry of the "blended brothers," I feel that other saints are able to benefit from their ministry and should be able to continue receiving it. Similarly, I have received much benefit from the ministry of Brother Titus, although I acknowledge that others have difficulty with his style of ministering and are less able to receive his ministry. However, I feel that this should not be a basis for quarantining Brother Titus and depriving the saints of his ministry. I am not aware of any heretical or divisive speaking of brother Titus or his co-workers. If I were to be deprived of the ministry of brother Titus and his co-workers, I would feel even more lost and would be distressed beyond words.

October 31, 2006

The Church in Toronto Elders Review Committee
671 Sheppard Ave East
Toronto, Ontario

Dear Brothers,

Re: Written Submission Regarding the "Letter of Quarantine" entitled "A Warning to All the Saints and All the Churches in the Lord's Recovery Concerning Titus Chu and Those Who Promote and Disseminate His Divisive Teachings, Publications, Practices and Views" and dated October 1, 2006.

First, I would like to thank you for, as always, being open to and seeking the fellowship of the saints before making this decision regarding the quarantine matter. When I first heard about the process, my initial reaction was that it seemed a bit strange – that is, it is not "the way we do things" in the church. I quickly realized that it was just a "formal" way by which the elders were seeking the fellowship and feeling of the saints in Toronto before making this important decision. I appreciate that in accordance with spiritual and biblical principles, the elders have retained the decision-making authority, but as always, the elders will be making an informed decision based on knowing the needs of the church. The process just facilitates the saints making known their feelings to the elders – and based on that, the elders can assess the situation and ascertain the needs of the church.

I would like to express some of my thoughts on this matter by focussing on the help I have received from the ministry of brother Witness Lee and by extension the ministry of the co-workers in Southern California (a.k.a. the "blended brothers") and the ministry of brother Titus Chu over the last several years. I have spent some time immersed in these ministries.

I began attending the semi-annual trainings in California in my teenage years, when brother Witness Lee was still alive. I received much help from his expounding of the Bible. I may be mistaken, but I believe I attended some of the last "Life-Study" trainings, before the "Crystallization-Study" trainings began. I know that I attended several "Crystallization-Study" trainings and enjoyed the messages and then diving into the outlines and the Word to understand where the outline points came from (i.e. which verses etc.). The way brother Lee put the Bible together was enlightening, rich and nourishing.

However, one thing about the semi-annual trainings always bothered me: the inevitable session where one of the FTTA trainers would come to address the young people and ask them to make a commitment to come to the Full-Time Training. Inevitably, the trainer would ask everybody to raise their hand or stand up as a sign of their commitment. On one occasion, I recall that the trainer said the camera was panning the room and he would be checking as to whether people fulfilled their commitment. I repeatedly told the Lord that I would not make a commitment unless He told me He wanted me to go to the FTTA. So at those sessions, despite feeling "left out", peer pressured and uncomfortable, I resolutely refused to stand up. The peer pressure was strong – I felt one had to stand up in order to be "part of the club". However, during the last year of my university studies, the Lord did lead me to go to the FTTA. (I recall being able to stand up during the semi-annual training young people's session and feeling happy that others would now accept me.) Due to

my personal circumstances, I felt to give the Lord only one term in the FTTA as I did not think it was practical or realistic for me to be away for more than 5 months. However, as my love for the Lord and my consecration grew that year, I felt I wanted to give the Lord some more time. It so happened that brother Titus was going to hold a "10-month labour" for the saints in the area. I felt the Lord had opened a way for me to give Him more time while allowing me to stay closer to Toronto.

My time in the 10-month labour was extremely beneficial to me. We read the Bible extensively and intensively. As teams, we grappled with the meaning of the Word by preparing "outlines", verse by verse and chapter by chapter, by reading Greek interlinear versions of the Bible, the Life-Studies of Brother Lee and other sources. Each corporate week, the teams presented their labour in the Word to the other participants; in that way, we received the benefit of each other's labour. Brother Titus also shared with us in the afternoons and the evenings on different lines. One line was focused on the Word (I seem to recall it was Philippians) and the theme of the other line was more general. We were also assigned to read ministry books by brothers Lee and Nee. Through my time in the "10-month labour," I learned to read the Bible – to really read it, chew it, enjoy it, get milk and solid food out of it. My appreciation for the Life-Studies and other ministry books also grew and I began to learn to serve.

During my college years, I always attended college trainings in the Midwest with brother Titus. Every college training was always so rich, full of brother Titus' rich sharing from the Word, learning helpful spiritual practices and developing companionships with other young people. Many young people, myself included, broke through in many ways, individually and in our times of small group fellowship with our serving ones. It wasn't always pretty, but it was real. The Lord spoke to each one of us – each one's need was met. Many young people consecrated themselves to the Lord. One thing that I have always appreciated about brother Titus is the way he knows people, and the way the saints and their particular situations are on his heart. Brother Titus has a unique way of working with people. To those who do not know him well, his methods may seem offensive. But he knows people, and he knows how to help them specifically. During the 10-month labour, despite there being around 120 participants, it seemed brother Titus was aware of everyone's situation. In my case, I was struggling with a number of things, and although I tried to hide it, somehow brother Titus knew and invited me for a time of fellowship with him. That time was very helpful and I felt cherished knowing that he also cared about the struggles of a young sister and not just the older brothers (elders and "full-timers") who were participating in the labour. Another thing I appreciate about brother Titus is the way he encourages us (especially as young people or young ones learning to serve) to explore, discover and develop and even to make mistakes (as the best way to learn), all under the covering of the older brothers.

After the "10-month labour," I went to the FTTA. This was also a beneficial and enjoyable time for me. I felt that the 10-month labour had somewhat prepared me for the FTTA because I had started to learn to labour in the Word and in the ministry books of brother Lee. It was a different experience than the 10-month labour, in that it was much more focused on the ministry books rather than the Word, and somewhat less "personal". I recall spending a lot of time studying the ministry books in an individual way. It was a struggle to study in a spiritual way and not treat the ministry books like textbooks. This struggle was compounded by the fact that we had an "exam" in each class at the end of the term – I ended up memorizing "facts" from

the books. However, I did have many real and deep experiences of the Lord during my time in the FTTA – as in the 10-month labour, I had thousands of conversations with the Lord. I do feel that studying the ministry books is valuable and I did appreciate that pursuit. As I expected that I would only be in the FTTA for one term, I treasured my time there and tried to make the most of it. However, I found that in the FTTA, every moment is scheduled, and there is very little contact with the outside world – and in that way the rigid and insular framework makes for a somewhat artificial experience in some respects. It is an atmosphere in which everything is heightened, at times as a result of the framework rather than anything real. Moreover, in some ways it was also easy to go through the motions while maintaining the appearance of “being with the program”. I often had to resist the temptation to manufacture “experiences” in order to be as apparently “spiritual” as the other trainees. I felt that there was a subtle competitiveness among the trainees, stemming from a desire to be noticed by the trainers and to be appreciated as a “good trainee”. Perhaps that is a function of the fact that many trainees are recent college graduates and therefore relatively immature. I found it more difficult to be “real” and I felt that others were not always so “real” in the FTTA. I also missed labouring with others in the Word, as our studies were individual and focused on ministry books. I was not necessarily able to pin it down in words at the time, but by the very nature of the way the FTTA was structured, I feel that there was not much freedom, encouragement or ability to explore and discover. I felt we were being taught the “right” and acceptable biblical interpretations and the “right” and acceptable way to do things, without much opportunity to discover for ourselves or even receive new light or try new things. It seemed that all that was required was to learn what was in the ministry books and repeat them both in words and in actions. Nevertheless, I continue to appreciate my time in the FTTA and my precious experiences of the Lord there – again, there were many things that were real in my experience (and surely in others’ experience). After I left the FTTA I told the Lord that I would return (perhaps with my husband) if He so led me (us). For several years I kept this in my heart, and would periodically ask the Lord whether He would lead us to the FTTA. One day I had the clear speaking from the Lord that it was not our portion to return to the FTTA.

As I mentioned, I have always appreciated the ministry books and the semi-annual trainings. In fact, my spouse and I went down to several live semi-annual trainings in Anaheim despite the fact that one or both of us were “poor students”. However, in the years since brother Lee’s passing, I feel that things have changed in terms of the focus of the ministry of the “blended brothers.” I feel that brother Lee’s focus was on the Word itself (he always urged us to digest his Life-Studies and Crystallization-Studies by going back to the Word), and Christ and the Church. Based on the semi-annual trainings that I have attended since brother Lee’s passing, my impression is that the blended brothers’ have focussed excessively on brother Lee’s ministry rather than on the Word, and on their relationship with brother Lee rather than our relationship with Christ. I am bothered by the constant refrain of “brother Lee said ...”; I would rather hear what the Bible says. I am not very interested in their relationship with brother Lee; I am interested in my individual relationship and our corporate relationship with Christ. I felt that while their many anecdotes about brother Lee were presented as innocent anecdotes, they were an attempt to shore up the saints’ perception of the blended brothers’ purported authority in the Lord’s recovery. Further, the constant repetition of “stock phrases” that represent deep and weighty truths has somewhat cheapened them in my ears – it is now difficult for me to appreciate some of the deep truths due to the way they are glibly repeated. In addition, I find that while I do gain a certain appreciation for the Lord (i.e. I see Him, He is revealed to me) through the ministry of the blended brothers, I also come

away feeling pressured to do and to be something different. There is an emphasis on "we must" and "we should" – what we must do, what we should be – rather than "He is", "He has done" and "He is doing". I feel discouraged because I have no way to do and to be such things. It is more helpful for me to see Him, and to see what He has accomplished and what is mine by virtue of me being in Him. Then I can do and can be what I should, without trying. And when I see the onus is not on me, then I am inspired to just give myself to Him and let Him make me do and be what He wants me to do and be. I have experienced the latter (this help and encouragement) through the ministry of brother Titus and his co-workers. I have also observed that many saints who adhere closely to the ministry of the blended brothers are also prone to repeating the stock phrases in a way that robs them of meaning, and that their sharing also tends to put pressure on people by the repetition of "we must" and "we should".

Although I did continue to attend LSM semi-annual trainings after brother Lee's passing, I found that increasingly I was bothered by the emphasis of, and certain statements made by, the "blended brothers." I sensed a shift in tone and emphasis (which I have tried, in an incomplete way, to describe in the preceding paragraph). What was most disturbing was that certain statements were not consistent with the Bible. While we must exercise discernment with respect to anything we receive, I found that increasingly, the result of my exercise of discernment was to reject some of what the blended brothers were saying. At one semi-annual training meeting, the message (both in tone and content) was so offensive to my spirit and my being that I was brought to tears and had to fight the urge to vomit in the meeting. I apologize for the graphic description, but I am not exaggerating the intensity of the reaction that it provoked in me. The message was just not in accordance with the Bible or biblical principles and I was dismayed that we were being asked to accept it from the podium, which I suddenly felt I could no longer trust or take at face value.

The blended brothers' shift in tone and shift in emphasis away from the Bible, Christ and the Church has made me feel betrayed and lost. I feel that the ministry of Brother Witness Lee, which I have studied and treasured, has been cheapened, twisted and abused by them or those that claim to be "of them". I feel that it has been stretched beyond recognition in the hands of the blended brothers, and used to manipulate and "beat up" the saints. I hope you do not misunderstand me. In my heart, I am still open to the ministry of brother Lee as recorded in the ministry books produced by LSM during brother Lee's lifetime. Neither is this a blanket rejection of the ministry books produced by LSM after brother Lee's passing (putting in written form brother Lee's previously unpublished ministry spoken during his lifetime); nor is this a blanket rejection of the ministry of the blended brothers. I am merely expressing my current struggles in receiving this material in practice due to recent events. Due to the way the written ministry material has been used, I feel it has become somewhat "loaded" and the effort required to receive it properly, with the proper exercise of discernment, just exhausts me.

I do not purport to have the "correct" perception of all of these matters – I am merely expressing how I feel based on the present situation. I would also like to say that my feelings have not been influenced by any input of others – the items that I mentioned above as things that bother me are my own feeling, based on my own observations. I am fearful that I am making myself, brother Titus and his co-workers vulnerable through my honest and admittedly imperfect description of my current struggles. I fear that this will be seized upon by some (as others' testimonies have been) and become the source of yet another accusation against brother Titus and his co-workers that they are "poisoning the saints" and turning them against the

ministry of the blended brothers. I feel that I am in a difficult position as I desire to express my genuine feeling, but know that the prevailing assumption is, and conclusion of many will be, that if one does not wholly and unconditionally subscribe to the ministry and edicts of the blended brothers, one is either damaged or "dissenting". I fear that my struggles will be immediately taken as "evidence" of the alleged damage that has been allegedly caused by brother Titus and his co-workers, rather than the motivation for an honest examination of the items which I cite as troubling. Nevertheless, I want to be faithful to express my genuine feeling and feel that the risk is necessary in light of the current situation.

Despite my current struggles with receiving the ministry of the blended brothers, I still feel that their ministry can be of benefit to some saints. I feel that just because I am struggling with a source of ministry, if others are receiving a benefit then they should be able to continue to receive it and my difficulties should not deprive other saints of such a ministry. Thankfully, brother Titus' ministry and the ministry of his co-workers have so far remained available to me and the other saints as a source of rich nourishment, and I hope that these will continue to be available to me and the other saints who are receptive to them. Brother Titus' ministry has always brought me to Christ and the Church, has always made me see and appreciate Christ more, and has always inspired me to give myself to Christ and the Church. I acknowledge that brother Titus has a unique style of ministering that involves a lot of stories and does not appear to adhere to an outline. However, every story is an illustration (albeit sometimes oblique) of his point. I do not see any problems with not adhering to or completing an outline – it just means brother Titus mined more deeply into one point or one verse and the saints still benefit from a rich message. I feel I am able to "get" brother Titus' "poetic" (less rigid or linear) style and I receive much cherishing and nourishing from his ministry. However, I can understand how brother Titus' style might be frustrating to some saints – they may not "get" him or his style (or just have less tolerance for it) – perhaps just as I am currently struggling with the blended brothers' style.

I do not think that differences in style or semantics are a justifiable basis for quarantining brother Titus and cutting off his ministry and the saints' access to his ministry; that would be akin to choosing style and form over substance. As a matter of substance, although brother Titus may not always use the terminology frequently emphasized by the blended brothers, my view is that the content of his ministry is consistent with and confirms the essential items of the faith. Further, I am not aware of any heresy or divisive speaking in brother Titus' or his co-workers' ministry, including brother Titus' teachings, publications, practices or views. In my view, it has not been shown that brother Titus' teachings are heretical or divisive – any arguments to that effect lack foundation. In contrast, I feel that the blended brothers' insistence on certain non-essential items of the faith are potentially the source of any division we are currently experiencing, and their apparent lack of rigorous attention to supporting their views with the Bible (and a straight interpretation thereof) and to maintaining consistency with biblical principles and the spirit of the Bible is disconcerting to me. I feel that brother Titus has tried to work with the blended brothers within the ever more rigid frameworks they have been imposing.

In conclusion, I think that saints should be free to receive any ministries that are beneficial to them, so long as they are not heretical, divisive or otherwise harmful. As a result of my current struggles with the ministry of the blended brothers, I feel that I am currently less able to look to such a ministry as a source of supply. In my eyes, this source of supply and my confidence in it have been damaged and as a

result, I feel somewhat lost. I earnestly hope that one day what was once a rich supply to me, and my confidence in the blended brothers, will be restored in my experience. However, if brother Titus and his co-workers were now quarantined, I would feel even more lost and betrayed. I would truly be lost, as I would have no trusted ministry of the Word that I could look to as a source of nourishment. I consider brother Titus to be a real spiritual father to me and I would be distressed beyond words if the elders in Toronto were to affirm and adopt the quarantine letter.

Again, thank you for being open to receiving my fellowship and the fellowship of the other saints. May He be your wisdom and your guide, for His testimony's sake. Amen.

In Him,
J. Maurier