

## AN OPEN LETTER TO CHRISTIAN WORKERS IN CHINA (1997)

*“How long will you waver between two opinions?  
If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.”  
(1King 18:21)*

Dear Christian teachers and workers in China,

As a Chinese Christian, I want to express – in behalf of all the believers in China – our deepest appreciation for your labor of love. We understand it’s tough to leave your home, it’s tough to bring your family and kids to this “queer” culture, and it’s tough for some of you singles to endure the loneliness in this land. Maybe, the toughest of all is to learn our language and it seems to take forever before you master it. I am reminded of our Lord Jesus who, being in the very nature of God, left his splendor in heaven, was born in a dirty manger, and learned “alpha and omega” from scratch. Oh! The self-abasement of Deity! From what height of glory and to what depth of shame – even the death on a rugged cross! “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty, might become rich.” (2Cor. 8:9)

C.T. Studd, one of the Cambridge Seven who came to China one century back, put it succinctly: “If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice is too great for me to make for him.” You and I are but rendering our “reasonable service” to Him who alone well deserves our very best. These light and momentary losses are achieving for you, dear fellow soldiers, an eternal weight of glory! As one hymn goes, “It’ll be worth it all, when we see Jesus. Life trials will seem so small, when we see Christ. One glimpse of His dear face, all sorrows will erase. So bravely run the race, till we see Christ.”

However, dear ones, we want to tell you that it grieves us when we see some of you befriend the TSPM (“Three Selves Patriotic Movement”) official church in China, which is in fact no church at all, but a hypocritical “wolf in sheep’s clothing”. Now I realize that you as “foreigners” might not fully understand the history and background of the official TSPM “church”. And there’s also a diversity of opinions with regard to this issue. Even well meaning Christians, both foreign and Chinese alike, disagree. However, we house church Christians believe in the separation of the State and the church. For the Word declares “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers...” (2Cor. 6:14). The top leaders of the official church are unmistakably unbelievers. (Yes, some of the local pastors might know the Lord, yet they have compromised their faith by yielding to the rule of an ungodly power.) What do we, true followers of Christ, have in common with unbelievers? It breaks our hearts to see that even Dr. Billy Graham joined hands with Bishop Ding, a liberal theologian and the figure head of the official TSPM church. Like King Jehoshaphat, Dr. Graham was helping the wicked and loving those who hate the Lord (2Chron. 19:2). Sadder yet, many of you in the West are blindly following suit and making unholy alliance with the official TSPM “church”.

The most popular slogan that hangs in the official “church” is: “Love your State and love your religion” (爱国爱教). Don’t you realize, dear brothers, that this is an altar to the Baals? (Baal means master, however, it’s a master other than the only Master Jesus Christ.) He said, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.” (Mat. 22:37-39) The words inscribed on the church altar should have been, “Love your God and Love your fellow-men” (爱神爱人). And the order must be absolutely straight: God first and always first, and then men second.

Please don’t misunderstand me. It’s not that we don’t love our State, nor that we don’t love our country-fellows. Of course we do! But to reverse this God-ordained order is to commit idolatry. For Jesus said, “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters – yes even his own life – he cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14:26) Here of course Jesus is not teaching us to hate people (which would be contrary to other Scriptures), but He is teaching us to love the Lord our God supremely. Nobody else, however dear to us (including our State) could substitute that first place reserved for Christ alone. Otherwise, it’d become an idol, which is detestable in the sight of God! For He is a jealous God. Jesus must be the Head, no one can usurp His rightful throne. No!

Some might say that the official TSPM “church” is not all-bad. There’s still some “faithful Christians” within it. But, we answer, “Christians, yes, there’s some; but faithful, definitely not!” These are either naive believers who don’t know the facts, or “jelly fish” Christians who have bowed their knees to the Baals out of fear. Worse yet, the seminaries of China are “liberal” enough to embrace both the orthodox and the “Modern” theology. And they are producing many Baals’ prophets who prophesy in the Lord’s name.

Should we try to save the naive ones who are caught in the official “church”? Of course! But we can help them only by calling them to come out of Baals’ temple, not by going to it ourselves. Would you help saving an unbeliever by marrying him (or her)? Surely not, nobody would be so foolish! But some of you, I’m sorry to say, are doing exactly that by joining the worship at Baals’ altar in the official TSPM “church”. “Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord.” (2Cor. 6:17)

These are strong words. But I trust, dear ones, we’re speaking the truth in love, and in the dear Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. He said, “I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first. Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel (the queen who promotes and protects Baal worship), who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants...” (Rev. 2:19-20) Please take these words to heart.

Yours faithfully In Christ,  
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