



EMAIL ALERT
for prayer & action

JUNE 2007

Pastor Li Ming

Country: China



Pastor Li Ming is recognised as a key national leader of the Chinese house church movement. Born in 1954, he became a Christian in 1990. Following his conversion Li Ming's life was radically transformed. Now, instead of being involved in petty theft and street brawls, Li Ming dedicates himself to preaching the gospel.

In the sixteen years since becoming a Christian Li Ming has been detained by the authorities on three separate occasions. Each time he was released Li Ming became even more zealous and grew both in his witness and in his faith. He recently completed a theology course. His wife Song and their children are all active members of house churches in China and seeking to follow Jesus wholeheartedly.

On June 27 2006 Li Ming together with three fellow house church leaders from Sichuan Province were arrested by local Public Security Bureau (PSB) officers. Li Ming, Jin Jirong, Wang Yuan and Li Mingbo had visited the local police station to try to secure the release of 14 of their church members who had been arrested on their way home from church.

According to eyewitness reports, 66-year-old Pastor Jin Jirong was beaten by the police. Soon after, more police arrived and Pastor Li Ming was also assaulted. When Li Ming cried out '*You are killing me*' the police tried to choke him in order to get him to be quiet. They then bundled him into a police car and transferred him to a detention centre. Pastor Wang Yuan was also beaten until he was not able to move. He could not stop vomiting and needed medical treatment. However, the police said he was feigning illness and sent him to the detention centre.

Through our international network of missions, Release International serves persecuted Christians in 30 countries around the world by supporting pastors and Christian prisoners, and their families; supplying Christian literature and Bibles; and working for justice.

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In July, the four pastors were sentenced to two years '*re-education through labour*'. They are currently imprisoned in Langzhong Detention Centre. The Director of the detention centre has been reported to have said that it was '*built for Christians*'. The four men are denied Bibles and forbidden to mention the name of Jesus not unlike Peter and the Apostles in Acts 5:17-42. While in prison all four men are likely to face twelve to eighteen hours hard labour each day, as well as mental and physical punishment.

PLEASE PRAY

- ▶ Pray that these men will be a powerful witness to fellow detainees and prison authorities
- ▶ Pray for their safety and their health
- ▶ Pray for the respective spouses and children of all four men
- ▶ Pray for the release of all four men and pray for the leaders of the house churches in China

'But while Peter was in prison, the church prayed very earnestly for him'
Acts 12:5

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THE VOICE OF THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

Hebrews 13:3 'Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow-prisoners, and those who are ill-treated as if your yourselves were suffering'

Please write a short, polite letter to the following asking for the release of Pastors Li Ming, Jin Jirong, Wang Yuan and Li Mingbo.

Sample letter to Government officials

I respectfully request your attention to the case of Pastors Li Ming, Jin Jirong, Wang Yuan and Li Mingbo who are currently imprisoned in Langzhong Detention Centre, Sichuan Province.

All four men are much loved and respected leaders of the Christian church in China and are known to thousands of Christians around the world. It is widely believed that the charges laid against them were unjust and designed to punish them for legitimate practice of their Christian faith.

I respectfully ask on behalf of Christians in China and worldwide, for your government to release these Christian pastors, so that they might freely practise their religion in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights. In the interim, I respectfully request that they would be granted permission to read the Bible and to meet together with other Christian prisoners for regular Sunday worship in accordance with the regulations contained in the 36th Article of the Chinese Constitution: 'To protect normal religious activities'.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Please do not mention RI when you write.

**Chinese Ambassador to the United Kingdom
Madam Fu Ying, Ambassador
Chinese Embassy to the United Kingdom
49-51 Portland Place
London
W1B 1JL
UK
Fax: 020 7636 2981 / 5578
(Salutation: Your Excellency)**

**Ms Wu Aiying
Minister of Justice of the People's Republic of China
No.10 Nandajie, Chaoyangmen
Chaoyang District
Beijing 100020
People's Republic of China
Fax: 00 86 10 6472 9863
Email: pufamaster@legalinfo.gov.cn
(Salutation: Your Excellency)**

**Mr Li Zhaoxing
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China
Waijiaobu
No. 2 Nandajie, Chaoyangmen
Chaoyang District
Beijing 100701
People's Republic of China
Fax: 00 86 10 6596 1109 / 2660
E-mail: webmaster@fmprc.gov.cn
(Salutation: Your Excellency)**

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