



## Pastor Xu Shuangfu Country: China

A well known house church leader since the 1980's and leader of the Three Grades of Servants group with an estimated half a million members, Pastor Xu Shuangfu has been arrested more than 20 times, and to date has spent a total of over 20 years in prison.

Earlier this year on February 28, the trial began for Pastor Xu Shuangfu and sixteen other church leaders falsely accused of murder and fraud. The trial ended on March 3, but not before defendants were able to tell the court about the horrific abuse they faced while in custody. Xu Shuangfu told the courts that, in order to get a confession from him, he was hung in the air for five hours and completely deprived of sleep for five days and nights. Xu and another defendant, Li Maoxing, told the court that electric shocks had been applied to their fingers, toes and genitals. Li claims that he was also wrapped in a thick blanket and, when he became wet with perspiration, he was electrocuted. According to Xu's daughter, in his final remarks to the court, her father *'urged everyone in the court to believe in Jesus otherwise they will one day face eternal judgments in heaven. He also urged his children to continue to follow Christ without fear.'* During the trial the chief judge disrupted the proceedings 20 times as the defence made the case for Xu's innocence. Xu denied all accusations in the court.

The frequent use of torture by Chinese police against detained Christians remains extremely disturbing, and over the years several Chinese believers have died as a result of such mistreatment. When Xu was initially detained in April 2004 one of the members of his group arrested at the same time was beaten to death in custody the day after being detained on April 26. His parents were given compensation of £16,400

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**EMAIL ALERT**  
for prayer & action

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and ordered not to speak about the situation.

It is not unusual for unregistered Chinese church leaders to be accused of criminal offences as a pretext to imprison them for their religious activities. Such false criminal charges against Christian leaders are also a way of discrediting their reputation and a method by which the Chinese authorities try to avoid accusations of religious persecution. In July 2006, more than four months after the trial concluded, lawyers representing Xu were informed that he, together with two others, had received the death penalty for the alleged offences.

### PLEASE PRAY

- ▶ That God will give courage, boldness and strength to persevere under immense pressure.
- ▶ That he will be exonerated and free to return to his family.
- ▶ That those falsely accused and imprisoned in China may be able to rejoice in the Lord.
- ▶ For wisdom and protection for the Chinese church.

*'But while Peter was in prison, the church prayed very earnestly for him'*

**Acts 12:5**



In the case of Pastor Xu Shuangfu we do not know the exact location where he is being held. We still believe however that it is entirely appropriate and helpful to write to the authorities on his behalf.

**Please write a short polite letter of protest to the following asking for the release of Pastor Xu Shuangfu.**

Sample letter to Government officials

I respectfully request your attention to the case of Pastor Xu Shuangfu.

I respectfully ask on behalf of Christians in China, and worldwide, for your government to release Pastor Xu Shuangfu, so that he might continue his peaceful duties as a respectful citizen of your country. In addition he may have the right to freely choose and practise his faith in accordance with Article 18 of the UN Declaration on Human Rights. It seems apparent that, based on the evidence presented, Pastor Xu Shuangfu is not guilty of the alleged offences.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

**Please do not mention RI when you write.**

His Excellency Zha Peixin, Ambassador,  
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England  
Fax: 020 7636 2981 / 5578  
(Salutation: Your Excellency)

His Excellency Hu Jintao  
President of the People's Republic of China  
The State Council General Office  
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(Salutation: Your Excellency)

Ms Wu Aiying  
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