

Questions and Answers:

About the Warning Letter Issued by the Churches in Mexico Concerning the Work of Dong Yu Lan

The churches in Mexico issued a warning statement in January 2009 concerning the work and ministry of Brother Dong Yu Lan. Since that time a number of misrepresentations have been made by Dong Yu Lan's co-workers, and some questions have come to our attention concerning the activities of Brother Dong and his co-workers related to Mexico. For simplicity and clarity, we have prepared this series of responses in a question-and-answer format and have divided our answers into three sections:

- General questions related to the churches in Mexico and the warning letter;
- Questions about the activities of some who are associated with Dong Yu Lan's work, particularly in Toluca, Mexico; and
- Questions concerning Bruno Frossard, a brother whose presence in Toluca formed part of the pretext for Brother Dong's workers to work in Mexico.

General Questions:

- 1. Is it true that Brother Dong's co-workers claim that there are no churches in Mexico?** In the fall of 2008 during the CEAPE training in Foz de Iguacu, Brazil, Amir Silva and others who were training young people to serve in Brother Dong's work stated publicly and privately that there are no churches in Mexico. They also contended that the North American co-workers asked them to send workers to Mexico to help carry out a training. Both statements are false and were used to entice young believers to go to Mexico to carry out a divisive work.

On November 16, 2008, during a meeting in Sao Paulo, Brazil, a co-worker of Brother Dong and others who had been in Toluca, Mexico, strongly encouraged the saints to go to Mexico. In their report, they declared that "Mexico is a virgin land." In January 2009, a group of young people was sent from Brazil to work in Mexico. One young person reported that the group was being sent to Mexico because there are "no churches in Mexico." Those who have been told that there are no churches in Mexico or who have been told that their being sent to Mexico is in response to a request from co-workers in Mexico or the United States have been deliberately misled.

- 2. Are there churches in Mexico?** There have been churches properly standing on the ground of oneness in the Lord's recovery in Mexico for over thirty years. There are presently 77 churches with nearly 4,000 saints.
- 3. Did Brother Dong and his co-workers know that there are churches in Mexico?** Brother Dong and his co-workers are well aware of the existing work and churches here. In our letter of September 30, 2008, we strongly told Brother Dong and his co-workers of our desire to maintain the one accord in the work through proper fellowship and coordination. Our fellowship was completely disregarded.

In the warning letter of January 2009, we mentioned a conversation that took place before 2005 between a co-worker from Mexico and Dong Yu Lan concerning the unwanted introduction of Brother Dong's literature to the churches in Mexico. In his recent speaking in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, on March 29, 2009, Brother Dong admitted his prior knowledge of the churches in Mexico, mentioned that he had visited the churches in Mexico, and spoke of the training center in Mexico City. Dong Yu Lan has even made the false claim that he started the churches in Mexico.

- 4. Did the brothers who signed the warning letter read it before signing?** It has been widely reported that Ezra Ma claimed publicly at the recent 2009 conference in Sumaré, Brazil, that the co-workers from Mexico who signed the letter of warning did not know its contents and only signed a blank sheet of paper. It has further been alleged by Ezra that the signatures were kept on file and affixed to the letter without the knowledge of the brothers.

All of Ezra's accusations are untrue. The letter was the subject of fellowship among signers of the letter for a period of several weeks. All of the brothers who signed the letter read it prior to signing it and agreed with its contents. The letter, in its entirety, was then reviewed in a gathering of co-workers in Mexico City before a regional conference, and it was publicly read in that conference by almost all of the brothers who signed it. Further, many brothers chose to add a strengthening and confirming word after the public reading of the letter. Both the public reading of the letter and the testimonies of the brothers were recorded on video and posted on our website. The video of the reading of the letter is posted at <http://www.afaithfulwitness.org/warnings/Advertencia.html> and the video of the testimonies is at www.afaithfulwitness.org/warnings/Testimonios.html. Anyone who views the video of that reading can realize the strong one accord among the brothers in issuing this warning.

Concerning Toluca:

- 1. Did any of Brother Dong's workers claim to have held "the first meeting of the church in Toluca"?** Ezra Ma claimed during the recent conference in Sumaré that we falsely accused Bruno Frossard of "starting the first church meeting in Toluca." He further claimed that there was no such meeting. However, we did not accuse Bruno of starting this divisive meeting. What the warning letter says is that a team of workers came from South America to be with Bruno and that this team "began a meeting of their own which they proclaimed as 'the first meeting of the church in Toluca.'"

This sectarian activity was boldly announced in a letter sent by Dong Yu Lan's co-worker Anibal Arancibia to André Dong, Amir Silva, Mungi Chung, Alex Vallejos, Benjamin Prieto, and Manuel Arancibia. The email, dated November 2, 2008, has been circulated within Brazil and beyond. In the email, Anibal listed those with whom he met and stated that they met in the home of a couple who lived in the city of Toluca. Attached to this e-mail were three pictures, one of which was labeled "first meeting of the church in Toluca." The photos and their captions appear below:



1 Jose y Margarita.(Ciudad de Metepec)

2 Casa de Edgar (de rojo, su esposa con el chico) donde fue la primera reunión. Manuel en la punta de la mesa y su esposa Clarisa de blusa morada.

3 Primera reunión de la iglesia en Toluca.

This e-mail was forwarded by André Dong to Pedro Dong, Roderick Wilson, Ildeu Rodrigues, Ezra Ma, Miguel Ma, Roberto Graner, Nelson Matos, Reinaldo Rodrigues da Silva, and Cezar Menegucci. Thus, Brother Dong's co-workers were well aware that such a claim was made in the name of Brother Dong's work and that we did not invent it.

- 2. Did Brother Dong's work establish a second table meeting in Toluca?** We do not know, and the warning letter does not say that this had been done in Toluca. What the letter did say is that we were aware of other places where Dong Yu Lan's work had established second table meetings and that we did not want to see the testimony of the oneness of the Lord's Body damaged in Mexico as it has been elsewhere.

We are aware that Brother Dong's workers have started second "tables" in over thirty cities, including: Barcelona, Spain; Johannesburg and Roodepoort, South Africa; Tuluá, Colombia; at least seven cities in Chile; as many as 20 cities in Ecuador; and other cities in Peru, Bolivia, and Brazil. This divisive practice has become a pattern of Brother Dong's work.

- 3. Did Brother Dong's work send workers to Toluca?** Bruno and others have claimed that Brother Dong's workers were not sent to Toluca. However, the following facts testify otherwise:

- The November 2, 2008, e-mail sent from Toluca by Anibal Arancibia, a long-time co-worker of Brother Dong, lists six brothers as "THE TEAM SENT BY THE LORD TO MEXICO." Anibal left for Mexico from Chile soon after a conference in Concepción, Chile, in October 2008 (see the next point).
- In a meeting on November 16, 2008, several co-workers of Brother Dong reported to the church in Sao Paulo concerning Brother Dong's fellowship in Concepción, Chile, in October. The main subject of that report was their intent to send workers

to Mexico based on Brother Dong's "orientation" given in Concepción. In that meeting, Brother Sun Mo Han, a co-worker of Brother Dong, said, "In January, the month of vacation time, we are thinking to send many young people who have a burden, who would be willing to pay their own expenses and also to offer for Mexico. Let us go there, let us pray, and let us offer." The other speakers in that meeting also spoke of Brother Dong's and his co-workers' desire to spread their work into Mexico.

- On January 27, 2009, a picture of the 25 young people sent to Mexico from Brazil was posted at <http://stadtlober.multiply.com/photos/album/133/133#1> under the heading "México: Cidade do México, Toluca, Xochicalco, Iguala e Acapulco." Three of these cities have existing churches: Mexico City, Toluca, and Acapulco.



- In a recent CEAPE in Foz de Iguacu there was much talk of workers going to Mexico since it allegedly is a virgin territory without churches.

- 4. Are Brother Dong's workers seeking to establish a rival work in Mexico?** Yes. For workers to carry out their work in an independent manner without fellowship, separately and apart from the other workers and the existing churches, is a strong indicator of rivalry. The principle in the New Testament that has always been followed in the work in the Lord's recovery is that the increase gained through the workers must accrue to the local churches:

The one aim of the work in any place is the building up of the church in that place. All the fruit of a worker's labors must go to the increase of the church. The work in any place exists for the church alone, not for itself. The apostle's goal is

to build up the church, not to build up his work or any group of people that may have sent him out....

When an apostle comes to a place where a local church already exists, he must never forget that no church authority rests with him. Should he desire to work in a place where the local church does not wish to have him, then all he can do is to pass on to some other part. The church has full authority either to receive or reject a worker. Even should the worker in question have been used of God to found the very church that rejects him, he can claim no authority in the church on that account.

Should he know unmistakably that God has led him to work in that place, yet the local church refuse to welcome him, if they persist in their attitude, then he must obey the command of God and go and work there despite them. But he must not gather believers around him, nor must he on any account form a separate church. There can only be one church in one place. If he forms a separate company of believers where a local church already exists, he will be forming a sect and not a church. Churches are founded on the ground of locality, not on the ground of receiving a certain apostle. Even if the local church refused to receive him, and his work had to be done without its sympathy and cooperation, or even despite its opposition, still all the results of his labors must be for their benefit. Despite its attitude toward the apostle personally, all the fruit of his labors must be contributed to that church. The sole aim of all work for God is the increase and up-building of the local churches. If they welcome the worker, the result of his labors goes to them; if they reject him, it goes to them just the same. (The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, Volume 30: *The Normal Christian Church Life*, pp. 109, 111).

However, Brother Dong's work establishes separate meetings in localities where there are existing church, takes saints from existing churches to form separate meetings nearby, or takes over a church and casts out those who will not follow the work's dictates. In our September 30, 2008, letter we asked that Brother Dong and his co-workers work with us in the way of fellowship if they were going to come to Mexico. Ezra Ma responded, "...we cannot accept what you are asking us in the letter."

In Anibal Arancibia's November 2, 2008, report from Toluca, he listed seven "new saints in the fellowship." Of these, two are from Mexico City, two are from Metepec (a suburb of Toluca), and three are from Toluca. The ones gained by Brother Dong's work were declared "the Lord's first fruits in Mexico" in complete disregard of the saints already meeting in local churches in Mexico. None of those gained through Anibal were brought into the fellowship of either the church in Toluca or the church in Mexico City, but a number of Mexican believers were taken by Brother Dong's workers to Estancia Àrvore da Vida in Brazil and presented to the gathering there (see photo below taken at the February 2009 conference in Estancia and showing not only some brothers from Mexico but also Bruno Frossard and Amir Silva). It is clear that these "first fruits" were fruit of and for Brother Dong's separate and independent work, not fruit for the building up of the churches. This reflects the view of Brother Dong's workers that those gained through his work belong to that work and not to the local churches as was succinctly stated by Ezra Ma in his October 1, 2008, email referenced above.



5. **Were Brother Dong’s workers forbidden to come to Mexico in your September 30, 2008, letter?** The answer to this question is, “No,” even though it has been portrayed otherwise by Brother Dong’s co-workers. Ezra Ma, in his email response to our September 30, 2008, letter, wrote, “...you are asking us not to send any workers to that city, or any city in Mexico.” This was not true. We simply asked them not to send workers without fellowship and not to start a separate work in Mexico. In fact, when Bruno Frossard attended some meetings of the church in Mexico City, he was received in fellowship and also invited to join the meeting of the saints in Toluca.

In our letter of September 30, 2008, we made it very clear to Brother Dong and his co-workers that a strong factor of the one accord in the work in Mexico has been our use of only the publications of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee and that we did not want his publications in Mexico. We pointed out that Brother Dong and his co-workers (including Ezra Ma) had agreed in a letter written in August 1997 “that there should be only one publishing work in the Lord’s recovery.” Rather than respect that agreement or the feeling of those leading the work and the churches in Mexico, Brother Dong’s workers declared their intention to buy vans and to send colporteurs to begin to peddle Brother Dong’s books and spread his work in Mexico.

Concerning Brother Bruno Frossard:

1. **Did we say that Bruno Frossard was sent to Mexico or that he came to Mexico as a worker?** No, our letter of September 30, 2008, said clearly that Bruno “moved from Brazil to Toluca, Mexico State, Mexico, for his job.” The warning letter of January 2009 similarly stated, “Recently a brother who has been active in Brother Dong’s work moved to Toluca from Brazil for the purpose of employment.” We did not say that Bruno came to Mexico as a worker or a co-worker of Brother Dong.

2. **Was there a concern that Brother Dong’s workers would use Bruno to begin a competing work?** Although Bruno was not a co-worker per se, he had been involved in Brother Dong’s sectarian and rival work in other places. Brother Dong’s workers did indeed capitalize on his presence in Mexico to bring their rival work here, and Bruno offered his cooperation to them. Our concerns stemmed in part from the history of division in which Bruno Frossard has been involved. For example:

- On December 10, 2007, a promotional piece entitled “Projeto Arca: notícias do leste da África!” authored by Bruno Frossard was posted on the Internet (<http://tulliomf.multiply.com/journal/item/7/7>). This article reported on the progress of Brother Dong’s work in Africa and stated that the center of that work is in Johannesburg, South Africa. Dong Yu Lan’s work in South Africa was established after Heclio Almeida and others failed in their attempt to bring Brother Dong’s publications into the churches in South Africa and after some of Brother Dong’s workers had drawn saints away from the church in Johannesburg to begin a separate and rival meeting (see Acts 20:28-30). There have been churches in the Lord’s recovery in South Africa for over thirty years. The work of the Lord’s recovery began in Johannesburg in 1996. Photos of a rival 2008 conference held by Helcio Almeida in Johannesburg show a young man posing with a sign that says “The Meeting Hall of the Church in Johannesburg” (see below) and also show the breaking of bread (e.g., <http://talityaraujo.multiply.com/photos/photo/91/55>). The genuine church in Johannesburg has never met at that hall. Not only is it divisive to establish a second “church” and a second “table” in Johannesburg; it is also troubling that Bruno would lend his name to promote and support that divisive work.



- A document dated December 31, 2007, entitled “Testimonies from Africa and Portugal” included an announcement written by Bruno Frossard while in East Africa. In it he said, “Brothers, thank the Lord because today the King’s table has been established in Kampala, Uganda’s capital. Thank the Lord that there is a testimony of the table here and now this city can be blessed.” Actually, this was a separate, divisive “table.” At the time this announcement was made, saints had already been meeting and breaking bread as the church in Kampala for some time. Two couples from the United States went to labor in Kampala in 2003, and the church had taken a clear stand as early as 2005. Thus, the “testimony of the table” established and promoted by Brother Dong’s workers was actually a testimony of division.
- The same document states that Bruno was traveling in East Africa as a part of a team of workers carrying out Dong Yu Lan’s work. In a portion of that report written by Davi Feo, another of Brother Dong’s workers, it is clear that Bruno had traveled in Kenya and Uganda and intended to go to Rwanda, Burundi, and Sudan as a part of Brother Dong’s work.
- We also know that as early as August 2008, Bruno Frossard knew there were saints already meeting in Toluca and being cared for by the church in Tlalnepantla (a city near both Toluca and Mexico City). Later, Bruno was active in the arrangements made to bring Anibal and other workers to Toluca.
- On October 18, 2008, while Dong Yu Lan’s co-workers were preparing their trip to Mexico, Bruno Frossard sent out a group email on behalf of Brother Dong’s work: “With joy we want to let you know of the creation of a site developed under the coordination of the brothers that coordinate in the work of the Lord in Europe.” This website encouraged those affiliated with Brother Dong’s work to go to Germany, France, Italy, England, and Portugal to support his work in those places. By the admission of Brother Dong’s leading co-workers in Europe, their work there has intentionally been carried out in isolation and kept separate from the one work of the Lord’s recovery that has long been active in Europe. As demonstrated by warning letters issued to the churches in Spain and the churches in Germany, Italy, and Switzerland (see <http://www.afaithfulwitness.org/warnings/index.html> for the texts), the work Bruno promoted in Europe has proven to consistently cause division.

Furthermore, we are aware of statements made by Brother Dong’s co-workers indicating their intention to work in Mexico. On November 2, 2008, Anibal Arancibia wrote to several of Brother Dong’s co-workers while visiting Bruno Frossard in Toluca. In his message he spoke of “THE WORK OF EXPANSION IN MEXICO” and said, “THE ORDER IS TO MOVE FORWARD.” These and other such statements indicate a complete disregard for the work the Lord has already been doing in Mexico and for the 4,000 saints and 77 churches gained for the testimony of the Lord’s recovery here.

3. **Did you say that Bruno Frossard established the “first meeting of the church in Toluca”?** No, we did not. We do not know what, if any, direct involvement Bruno had in that meeting. We said that this divisive meeting was initiated during the visit by “a team of Brother Dong’s workers,” as Anibal Arancibia’s e-mail reported.

4. Upon his arrival, was Bruno excluded from the meetings of the churches in Mexico?

No. In our September 30, 2008, letter we said, "Of course, as our brother in Christ, Brother Bruno is welcome to join the meeting of the saints." In an e-mail to Ezra Ma, Brother Paul Hon said, "We have no problem with him meeting with the churches anywhere in Mexico; however, we do not want him to make the mistake of starting another meeting in Toluca where saints are currently meeting." The warning letter also states, "This young brother came to some church meetings in Mexico City, where he was received in the church's fellowship." The decision not to participate in the fellowship of the churches in Mexico was entirely his own.

5. Does Bruno Frossard live in Toluca? Bruno has claimed that he was not involved in meetings in Toluca because he lives in Metepec. Metepec is a suburb of Toluca. Bruno's current residence matters little in the history of the divisive work in Toluca. Bruno was living in Toluca in September 2008 and only sometime later moved to Metepec. His relocation to a suburb does not give him the freedom to establish a separate "church" or a "table" meeting in Toluca apart from the fellowship of the other churches. The ground of oneness is based on the oneness of the Body of Christ. This oneness is manifested in the common fellowship of all the local churches as the testimony of the one Body of Christ. If a group claims to stand on the ground of oneness but will not participate in this common fellowship, it is not a local church but a local sect.

Merely crossing a particular city limit, as Bruno claims to have done in moving from Toluca to Metepec, does not sanction division. Concerning a similar divisive situation, Witness Lee said,

The one Body comes out of the one God, the one incarnation, the one Christ in His incarnation, the one crucifixion, the one resurrection, and the one Christ in His ascension. If we have seen this, do we dare to divide this Body, to create any division in this Body? Certainly not. Yet today some who were with us have dared to create division. A brother told one dissenting one that we cannot tolerate division. This dissenting one, who had created a division in Anaheim, then said that he would either dissolve that division or remove it out of Anaheim. When I heard this I said to myself, "If you could move that division even to Mars, it would still be a division." Division is division. Eventually, that division was moved out of Anaheim into a nearby city where a church had already been established. This incident shows how much the dissenting ones are in darkness concerning the Body of Christ. (*One Body and One Spirit*, p. 15)