



Human rights attorney Jiang Tianyong was arrested and his wife beaten in November 2009.

This October, 2009, ChinaAid hosted six legal experts on a tour in the United States, speaking out on the treatment of human rights lawyers in China, and the cases they defend. Bringing dark testimonies of torture and detention to light, they spoke of being separated from their families, threatened, fired, and otherwise harassed for taking on sensitive cases, especially in the defense of religious minorities.

Having heard their testimonies, one observer asked, "Why would you ever want to be a human rights defense lawyer in China?"

Indeed, the incentive to defend human rights cases in China remains small. Chinese defense lawyers face the arduous challenge of not only researching and compiling evidence, building the case and defending their clients. They also struggle to work within a complex and corrupt legal system.

Yet each day, Chinese human rights attorneys defend those who would otherwise have no voice of their own. By fighting on the frontlines on behalf of the persecuted, they have seen prisoners freed, new precedents set, and harassment stopped against churches and communities because of their work.

Dr. Li Baiguang, a leading Christian human rights lawyer and the director of the Beijing Gongxin Law Firm describes the urgency of their work. "By taking up cases of persecution in the court, we, as human rights legal defenders, like little ants, may not knock down a huge wall immediately. But every time, bite by bite, bit by bit, we always move forward as a group, by creating more free rooms for us and others until the giant concrete falls."

Through our Legal Defense Fund, ChinaAid helps financially support these brave human rights defenders. The ChinaAid Legal Defense Team networks with independent house churches and Christian legal professionals to research cases, finance the legal fees, and provide counsel to the prisoners of conscience throughout China.

One of the most successful cases defended by ChinaAid Legal Defenders include the release of four male prisoners from their labor sentences in 2008, when the Supervisory Re-Education through Labor Commission overturned the ruling, for the first time in Chinese legal history. Twelve days later, three female pastors were released from their labor sentences in Hubei, after defense lawyers appealed their case.

These legal battles come at a great price - physically, spiritually, and financially. For the Linfen Church case alone, ChinaAid has sent thousands of dollars in legal support for the pastors in prison. Having received severe sentences, all ten pastors have begun the long and expensive process of appeals.

We will be launching the Help Linfen campaign this January 2010 to raise awareness and support the pastors and their lawyers as they bring their appeals to court.

you may contact us by calling at 888-889-7757 or go to chinaaid.org web site.