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The Chinese Church's Delicate Dance

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It is difficult to imagine by looking at him that Presbyterian Ji Jianhong gets flustered by much. Even when his mouth is turned down in thought, his calm, round face exudes a steady smile. His diplomatic demeanor—as chairman of the national committee of the Patriotic Movement of the Protestant churches in China (TSPM)—can't mask a joy that etly about him. That's why any flash of irritation is noticed immediately.

asked him to explain how, exactly, Western Christians were intruding into Chinese . That momentary flash of anger revealed a tension he lives with as chairman of the email of many tensions at the heart of emerging Chinese Christianity.

has only been in his position a couple of years, and he has not given many interviews to Western journalists. My opportunity to interview him came unexpectedly, and not in the best circumstances. I was on a small Christian Heritage Tour with Living Stream Ministry, and we had arranged to greet Presbyterian Ji while in Shanghai. After touring TSPM's new headquarters on a humid September morning, we were escorted into a reception room and took seats around the perimeter. A translator sat next to Ji, and two or three other TSPM officials were there as well.

I expected the conversation to be formal and brief—official greetings, exchange of gifts, goodbye. But after opening remarks, Ji invited me to ask him questions. We talked for more than an hour. Given the circumstances, the conversation proved more revealing about Ji and the official Protestant church than I had originally hoped for.

Politically Incorrect Heritage

It is an understatement to say that the Protestant Chinese church is complex. (Catholics in China ...

ARTICLE PREVIEW

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Sammy Rhodes's @prodigalsam is self-deprecating, observant—and hilarious.

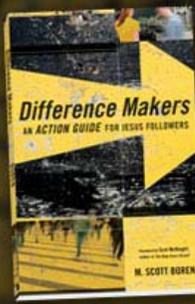
QHZ V
Z k | Fkubwldq JurxsvRssrvh Dp hulfd* DqwlSuvwlvwlrq Vwdqfn
As the Supreme Court prepares to weigh in,

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Wkh Odhwlvq P rylh Qhz v/P d| 64/5346
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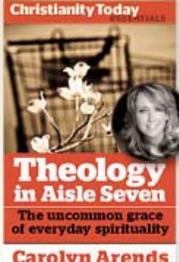
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