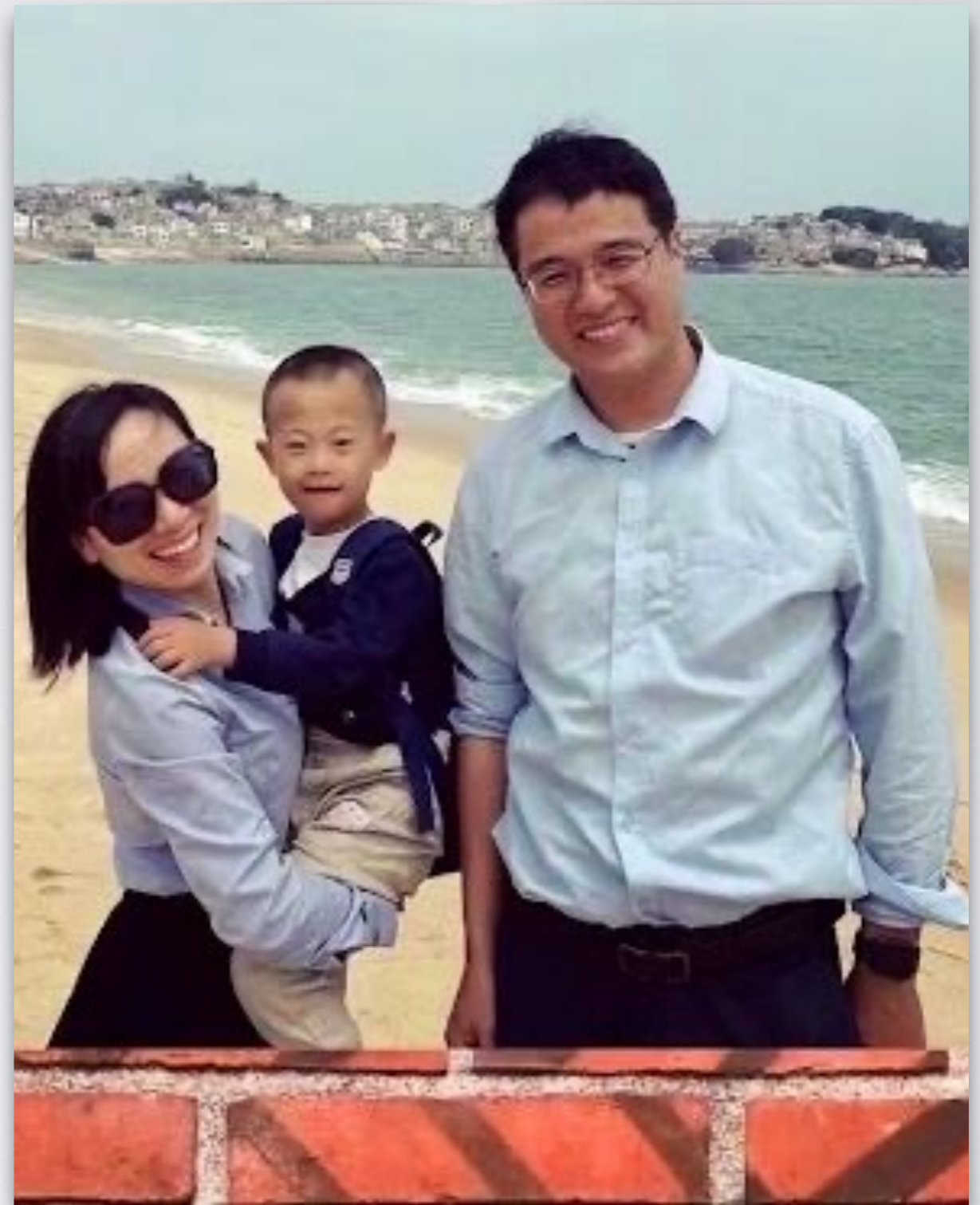


Chinese authorities have doubled a previously imposed fine on Pastor Yang Xibo and his wife, Wang Xiaofei, leaders of the Xunsiding Church, which is the largest house church in Xiamen, known for its hundred-year heritage. The couple, now face a combined fine of about \$55,100 for organizing religious activities.



ChinaAid

Pastor Yang Xibo and family

House churches in China are Protestant Chinese churches. They are not home churches. Some may have many, many members, and the label *house* church is misleading. They are churches that refuse to join the government-controlled Three-Self Church. The majority of Chinese Protestants belong to these house churches. They are increasingly persecuted under the new Regulation on Religious Affairs because they are labelled as *xie jiao* or as hostile to the Chinese Communist Party.

The Xunsiding Church was banned and fined 25,000 yuan (about \$3,400) on May 19, 2019, and police surrounded the church building for 30 days, surveilling members.

Following these actions, the church frequently changed meeting places to avoid further raids and bans. However, the authorities continued their attempts to disband the church, damaging private property and coercing members to send their children to public schools.

The Chinese government only recognizes five religious groups, leaving Christians from unregistered churches to face harsh penalties and fines. One of the state-sanctioned churches is the Three-Self Church, and Seventh-day Adventists have been part of the Three-Self Church since 1951.

According to a report released by *ChinaAid* in February, the Chinese Communist Party increased its persecution of churches and Christians ahead of the 20th Party Congress in 2022. Charges of “fraud” against house church pastors and leaders have grown in frequency. Traditional church activities such as tithing and offerings are portrayed as illegal.

In addition, *ChinaAid* reported that the government was intensifying its restrictions on religious content online, impacting the freedom of Christians also in the digital sphere. The “Administrative Measures for Internet Religious Information and Services” implemented in 2022 has caused “unprecedented” online censorship, effectively seeking to “remove Christianity from cyberspace,” the report said.

According to the 2023 Open Doors World Watch List, China is ranked as the 16th worst country when it comes to Christian persecution.

Open Doors noted in a factsheet: “Tightening restrictions and increasing surveillance are putting Christians in China under intensifying pressure, as the Communist Party seeks to limit all threats to its power.”

<https://www.christianpost.com/news/chinese-authorities-double-fines-for-pastor-and-wife.html>



PASTOR QUON  
PUDONG, SHANGHAI

