

Titus House Newsletter

Titus House Ministries, PO Box 2376, Tijeras, NM 87059

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An Extraordinary Man

by Don R.

My friend's name is Bob. He taught at the college where I worked when my life fell apart. My arrest was a seismic shift, from which I am still learning and healing. Curiously I had never met Bob when I worked at the college. He was in a department that had essentially no connection with my teaching area. He was, and is, a man of distinction having written important books and articles related to his area of teaching of which I am quite ignorant. But he was not only a man of books, he was also a man of The Book. He reflected a deep spiritual commitment by extending friendship almost immediately after my fall.

He met with several students who prayed for those who needed help within the broader college community. Technically I was outside that circle because of my dismissal from the school. But he and the students sent me a card with short notes from each student every few weeks. This began while I was in jail the first time, and has continued regularly since then. Of course they were not the same students in the group for all those years, but Bob was the leader and guide in the process.

Months after my first time in jail, I met Bob in person for the first time. He was a kind and supportive man in his 80s. I was astonished as he did what no one else on the campus had done for me: he brought me a sense of re-connection with students. I believe they even met one time in my home.

Whenever we met, Bob was always full of encouragement. He rarely spoke of what I had done, although I would have gladly answered any of his questions. I believe I offered to answer questions, but he shook his head. "Not needed," he told me. Probably he did not want to risk discouraging me. But he did hear me speak of the struggles I had with my immediate family. I felt I could share almost anything with him, without criticism.

When I went to prison, he continued to maintain contact. During those years he was the only person to visit me. For a man in his 80s to drive four hours to be with me for a couple of hours, and then drive four more hours back home, is amazing to me. I treasured every minute I was with him.

When I was finally released from prison he offered to come and get me, but for some reason that didn't work. The decision was made to send me by train to Chicago, and from there I would go to the airport and fly to Florida. Bob offered to pick me up at the train station and drive me to the airport. Then I was told I had missed the train near the prison. I wondered how I could contact Bob and let him know what was happening. But with discharge I no longer had phone privileges. I had to trust that it would somehow work out.

I was escorted to the Chicago train station by a police guard in an unmarked car. We stopped just outside the station, and simply waited at the curb. But why? Then I saw Bob walk in front of the officer's car as he crossed the Chicago street. Perfect timing! I waved and told the officer that he was the person who was to pick me up. At first the guard was skeptical, but I think my excitement at seeing Bob, and Bob's response when he recognized me, may have influenced him. Not yet unlocking the door, the officer rolled down his window and asked him if his name was Bob. He readily agreed, and called out my name. With this confirmation, the officer allowed me to leave the car. Bob and I crossed the street together, and he showed me some pieces of luggage he had bought me. They appeared to be brand new, although he said they were used. Perhaps he meant he had used them by bringing them to me!

It took a few minutes to move my things from a couple of prison boxes to the luggage, but soon I was ready to make my way to the airport. Bob booked a taxi for the 45 to 60 minute trip. We made the most of that time by talking about everything that happened that day, and many other topics. At the airport we had a meal together, and he insisted upon paying for it as well as the taxi fare. I tried to protest, but he insisted. That was Bob. Then we hugged and said our goodbyes, as I walked toward the boarding area. I believe that Bob paid for the airline ticket.

In Florida, we talked regularly by phone for some months, and we continue to speak with one another occasionally. He is always ready to talk and pray with me. Now retired, he has been hesitant to give up the student group. He knew it would be one of the things he would miss after retiring.

Whenever I call, he is always ready to talk. He is a very dear friend. I miss seeing him. He is like family to me. But I continue to be astonished that a person who did not know me when we were colleagues at the same school, would spend so much time and make so much effort to communicate and extend his help. I am very grateful for Bob.



The Need for a New Mexico Risk Assessment

by Matt

It's time we step up to fight for a risk assessment in New Mexico. For those of us on the registry for life, we have painfully endured its degrading punishments since its inception in 1995. Of the 3030 men on the registry, how many of us have led crime-free, decent lives, striving to find meaning for ourselves and our families?

Let's look at the statistics of those offender that reoffend over time. Sex crimes researchers R. Karl Hanson (others) have conducted a large-scale meta-analysis of recidivism rates among adult sex offenders who have found a rate of 14 percent over a period averaging five to six years. (1) What can we conclude from this study? Do the math. 86 percent of men have gone crime free since they've been on the registry. There are many other statistical studies on recidivism that show, again and again, a large percent of men who do not offend over time.

These statistics provide a convincing argument that there is a high number of New Mexico registrants, on the registry for life, who have also been leading a crime-free life.

What do we want from New Mexican legislators about our being "clean" on the registry for many years? Redemption... as described in this passage.

"When has someone paid enough for a crime committed long ago? What if years pass and that 17-year-old kid becomes a husband and father of young children, a productive member of society, and moves on with his life without any further trouble with the law?"
In essence, when do we as a society finally declare someone rehabilitated?" (2)

It not a question of declaring someone rehabilitated, *but how we determine his rehabilitation*. There are over 31 states that have risk assessments, which provide a mechanism for evaluating sex offenders. (3) With this assessment, based on criteria used over the years, a state can determine a registrant's rehabilitation and whether it is justified for his removal from the registry.

New Mexico does not have a risk assessment for the purpose of giving a registrant the chance to prove his rehabilitation although the New Mexico Probation department does have a risk assessment (polygraph and ABEL Assessment) but are only used to determine threat for post-prison supervision, not to show rehabilitation. (4)

Over the years the New Mexico Liberty and Justice Coalition has not made a risk assessment a priority. I am not sure why. I believe that the timing is right to advocate for one in the legislature. New Mexico should develop a risk assessment similar to the ones used in the 31 states that give a chance to registrants to prove their rehabilitation so that they can be remove from the registry.

This article is a first step. We need courage to communicate with legislators to voice the present need for a risk assessment in New Mexico. There is no other way but to convince decision makers that men, who have been crime free for years and years, should be assessed to liberate themselves of the debasing, unconstitutional registry.



Recidivism

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/misunderstood-crimes/>

Redemption

https://www.manchesterjournal.com/local-news/at-what-point-redemption/article_f404731c-a407-11ed-9c48-e7cea6aaba08.html?wallit_nosession=1

States with Risk Assessments

<https://ccresourcecenter.org/state-restoration-profiles/50-state-comparison-relief-from-sex-offender-registration-obligations/>

Post-conviction testing

<https://nmsc.unm.edu/reports/2004/SexOffenderPolygraph.pdf>

ABEL Testing

<https://www.hmichaelsteinberg.com/sex-offender-evaluations-the-abel-assessment-tool.html>

From Neal

I recently would like to share a subtle change in the trend of how former sex offenders and victims are treated particularly in the media, instruction, and society!

In the past there has always been this emphasis of "stranger danger" that was a fallacy from the start!

The majority of transgressions take place from a family member or friend of the family not strangers! Another fallacy was that once an offender always an offender!

These have been pushed a lot even in the TV show Law and Order SVU that there was no hope for offenders, even that have gone through treatment, victim of offenders, or the public population in general! All of these are fallacies and always have been!

The real truth is in Christ that redeems both victimizer and victim from the years that the locusts have eaten!

In addition to that there is secular treatment that even of itself taken seriously by a person who wants to change, (victims and victimizers) also comes alongside!

This has been revealed in the Department of Justice study done as far back as 1994 of treated and untreated offenders having the least recidivism rate of any other criminals by a very great margin!

Also in programs it brings victims and victimizers together in counseling for what is commonly called a type of closure and healing!

What I have finally seen in Law and Order SVU is that the character Olivia that used to say that there was no hope that they will always repeat and that there was no relief for the victims in their lives! They would be destined to a life of horribleness is now having a subtle change to the correct versions of the situation! I even heard the character Olivia quote that "offenders have the least recidivism rate of any other criminals!"

I tried a long time ago to contact the production people of that show and found it hard to do! I wanted to inform them of their fallacies Incorporated in their Law and Order SVU! It seems that maybe someone finally got through somehow or they got up to date to the real truth! Either way it is rewarding to see that some of the real truth message is coming through!



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Hebrew 13:3 - Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

Remember if you change your address you need to let us know if you want to continue to receive this newsletter



Minnesota Supreme Court ruling could speed up release process for State's Sex Offender Program

Source WAYDAYBy Kyle Cornell

(St. Paul, MN) -- The Minnesota Supreme Court is ruling that civilly committed people must be transferred to a community program within a reasonable amount of time after the request is made.

The decision was settled on Wednesday. According to court documents, the Minnesota Commitment Appeals Panel ordered two patients in the Minnesota Sex Offender Program to be transferred to Community Preparation Services.

The two patients in the case

claim the Commissioner of the Department of Human Services and the Executive Director of the MSOP violated their due process rights by delaying transfer to CPS for over two years following transfer orders.

The MSOP is for those who are considered sexually dangerous -- not necessarily criminals. While residing in CPS, the Minnesota Department of Human Services says patients progress through three levels to gradually reintroduce the patient to community activities, and address de-institutionalization.

Update from Don

First, I want to thank you for all the letters, phone calls, cards and for the people who prayed for me. My eye is doing better, therefore, I did not need the surgery. I still need shots of medication administered to my eyes. Alice and I are doing good. The winter up here in the mountains has been mild so far. I have been chopping wood for our 2 wood burning stoves. My rabbit and 2 doves and dog are doing well.



Circle of Concern has gone **ZOOM**

Circle of Concern is aimed at breaking down isolation and fear by providing a safe place for registrants and their loved ones to get together, build community, and learn ways to step out and take charge of their lives and overcome the stigma they face. The Circle of Concern is a group of concerned registered citizens, family and friends that meet together on the 3rd Sunday of each month. We are meeting this month on **March 19, 2023** at 3 pm—4 p.m. MST. (Mountain Standard Time). We will meet on Zoom. We encourage and try to help each other. It is a safe place to share our strengths and struggles. We hope you will join us. If you are planning to attend call Don at **(505) 315-7940**. He will send you the link to join by computer or phone. You can contact him at the number above or email him at donmagicjohnston@gmail.com