

Titus House Newsletter

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

JANUARY
2024



New Year, Let us use our time, wisely for Him. Pray First!

By "The Encourager"

Trust you are a believer in Jesus as your personal Savior and Lord.

I would encourage you to talk to the Lord Jesus first thing in the morning, ask Him what He wants you to do today?

A good start would be to read God's Word and see what His powerful Word will say to you today, a word of encouragement, to guide you, to correct you or to cause you to rejoice with joy, peace and hope for your new day!

We may ask the Lord to help us in a very difficult situation and we are pleased for His help and we thank Him for hearing our prayers for help.

This reminds me of

Philippians 4:13 "I can do ALL things through Christ Who strengthens me." and in verse 19 "and this same God who takes care of me will supply ALL your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus. (NLT)

Is it wonderful to have a Heavenly Father Who is able at any time to meet our needs if we ask Him.

Have you notice that when we struggle with a situation or a person, it is because we think that it is something that we can handle alone and don't need the Lord Jesus to guide and help us with it!

We as Christians know that God has a personal plan for each one of His children. We know that He loves us and desires that we do His will as we trust Him and obey Him knowing it will help us to grow to know the Lord more and know that we can always trust Him.

Come with me to

1 Thessalonians 5:16 -18 "Always be joyful. Never stop praying Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus."

God has a plan for you! What you are going through, God is using this as His will for you to help you to lean more on Him. You don't have to do it alone! When God wants you to do something for Him, He always gives you the ability to do so if you will trust Him and obey Him.

Is what you are doing right now, working for you?

Are you letting the Lord have His will in your life by trusting and obeying Him?

You say that you are tired of waiting for God to change your circumstances.

Have you ever got impatient waiting for something to happen or end? Remember it pays to wait, like when you bake a cake and cannot wait that long for it to bake so you pulled it out of the oven too soon. Now you've learn it pays to wait for the cake to be done at a certain time! This is the same way as the Lord's plan for our lives, when we wait on Him. we find the Lord's timing is ALWAYS on time, and ALWAYS at the RIGHT time too! Both we and the Lord are pleased that we waited on Him.

Have you ever experienced a time when you either gave up praying to the Lord for a certain situation or person and thinking that the Lord didn't care or was no longer concerned about your prayers?

Yes, I have too and I was so thankful that I did NOT quit praying, but prayed more fervently for my dad's salvation so much so that I asked the Lord to do whatever it takes for him ask to accept the Lord as his personal Savior and Lord! And indeed my dad was saved before he died and we had almost three years to see a change his life! We know a prayer for someone's salvation is always one that God wants to answer is it is always the person's decision to accept or reject the free gift of eternal life!

Have you ever encouraged a Christian who was going though a difficult situation or with a difficult person maybe a similar situation that you were going through or at least you were have a rough time and the Bible verses that you were using to help that person was helping you at the same time? That gives you a double blessing doesn't it?

If you have never done it, it will seem hard or almost impossible, but remember God can do the impossible when He knows it is the right solution and the right time. I would challenge you to try with the Lord's help to strengthen another believer and see if you are enriched by it too!

I want us all to be encouragers.

Let us take a look at Acts 11:22-24 (KJV) and see how we can be encouragers to our fellow believers.

He saw God's grace, he was glad, he exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they should cleave unto the Lord, he was a good man, he was filled with the Holy Spirit, and a man of faith.

I like the rendering of this passage from the NLT (New Living Translation) vs.23 "When he (Barnabas) and saw this evidence of God's blessing, he was filled with joy, and he encouraged the believers TO STAY TRUE TO THE LORD."



The unintended victims of sexual crime hysteria

Source: NARSOL

By Sandy . . . It is seldom that the morning newsfeed offers not two but three pieces dealing with the same topic, a topic that piques my interest and warrants some consideration.

Some states structure their sexual offender registry so that a technical violation is punishable by a jail or prison sentence and in some states is considered a new sexual offense. This may be tied in with a violation of sexual offense probation. Granted, when on probation or parole, restrictions are more rigid and expectations of autonomy are fewer, but the question remains: Is incarcerating a person for a year or longer the best solution for a technical violation that involves no new attempt at committing a crime against a person?

[In Cumberland County, Tennessee](#), a 79-year-old man, John, was given a year's sentence for “. . . technical violations of the sex offender registry law . . .” The media source does not identify what the technical violations were. They could be anything from accidentally being a digit off in a submitted telephone number to moving without registering the new address. But even if it were the later, he didn't go far; law enforcement apparently had no trouble finding him. At the time of this sentencing, John had already been in jail for three months for a probation violation, which, as best as I can decipher the verbiage, was for the same offense. Tennessee imposes lifetime community supervision—probation—on a significant number of registrants, and failure to comply with registry requirements can be charged as a probation violation. Further investigation shows that John's one sexual offense conviction was in 2015 for possession of illegal images.

[A case in Albany, New York](#), raises even more concerns. Jason, age 43, the registrant in this case, has been sentenced to 28 months imprisonment for “. . . failing to update his sex offender registration information.”

When released, he will serve five years of post-release supervision. His one prior conviction was in 2011 for receiving child pornography—different language meaning essentially the same as the Tennessee case, possession of illegal images consisting of child pornography. This new conviction is for failing to update his residency address on the sexual offender registry. According to the media source, in New York this conviction, for a registrant, is a new crime as it is in violation of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act.

[Finally, a 43-year-old Coldwater, Michigan](#) man has been sentenced to from 17 months to ten years for parole violations and from 17 months to four years for not complying with the sexual offender registry. Travis was given an additional sentence, to run concurrently, of 16 months to two years for not complying with reporting duties. His sexual offense conviction was in 2020 for 2nd degree criminal sexual contact.

NARSOL has frequently said that we are not attorneys and we do not give legal advice. There is one bit of legal advice, however, that we have been known to give: If it's the law, obey it. If you are on probation, your responsibility is to follow the terms of your probation. If you are on the registry, you are responsible for knowing the registry requirements for your state and following them. If you believe they are excessive—such as counterproductive residency restrictions—or illegal—such as sheriffs requiring Halloween yard signs without legal authority—beg or borrow if needed and find an attorney.

When individuals do not follow supervision requirements or registration stipulations, they must expect consequences. But shouldn't the consequences fall to the person who is in violation rather than to the state, its taxpayers, and the innocent?

Jason and Travis are mid-forties in

age. With any luck, they were working; they were earning, supporting at least themselves and quite possibly families. They were renting or buying, spending, contributing to the economy. They were paying taxes. And now? How much does it cost to incarcerate a man for a month? A year? Ten years? Will their families need public assistance now? Lose their homes? How much more is lost over and above their wages and all that a wage-earner contributes?

And what of John? He is 79 years old. In addition to the base cost of incarcerating him for a year, what are his medical needs? Is there an elderly wife at home who can manage—or not—without him?

Whatever lessons these incarceration terms are intended to teach, would it not be reasonable to try a few months instead of a year, two years, possibly ten years? John's criminal record shows that this is his third conviction for registry and supervision infractions, and were it not for his age, a year's sentence might be appropriate. Perhaps the question in his situation is will the cost of his incarceration be offset by what he learns in a year behind bars.

The criminal records of both Jason and Travis indicate that these convictions for parole/registration violations (Travis) and failing to update registration information (Jason) are the very first of the sort that either of them have accrued. Would not a few months in the county jail be a reasonable and much more cost-effective attempt at correction? A second, more subtle concern that must be raised in connection with registration violations is this: Failing to comply with registry requirements is an offense applicable to no category of crime except those that trigger an obligation to register. This is an often-overlooked fact among the plethora of discriminations that make up criminal registries.

Is it not time to give these issues some serious thought?



Sex offenders on probation challenge Illinois policy on contact with children

Source: Courthouse News Service

CHICAGO (CN) — Sex offenders on supervised release argued before a Seventh Circuit panel Thursday that Illinois' policy limiting when they can see their children is unconstitutional and should be overturned.

The parolees filed a class action against the Illinois Department of Corrections in 2018 over a policy that forbade sex offenders from contacting their children in any capacity for at least six months after their release from prison.

A federal judge found the policy violates the parolees' right to due process and granted them a preliminary injunction in June 2018.

The Department of Corrections then implemented a new policy, which the class said still operates as a presumptive ban on sex offenders seeing their children. The federal judge disagreed and upheld the new policy.

The new policy stipulates that people on supervised release can request to see their children, but they must first see a sex offender therapist within two weeks of their release from prison. The class appealed to the Seventh Circuit.

“Within 21 days of the initial appointment, the therapist and the parole agent ‘will determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that the parolee’s child(ren) would be endangered by parent-child contact with the parolee,’” the parolees say in their appellate [brief](#). On Thursday, the parolees' attorney Adele Nicholas told a three-judge panel that the new policy still prevents parents from seeing their children for months or years at a time. She said this is partially because the Department of Corrections does not have any way to guarantee therapists can see people on supervised release in 14 days, as it can't control therapists' schedules.

“Even for the four therapists em-

ployed directly by IDOC, demand for therapy outstrips the therapists' capacity to see patients, and as a result it 'typically' takes around two months to even have an initial intake appointment,” the class says in its brief.

And while waiting for a decision from their therapist, the parolees still can't contact their children via phone calls or letters — despite having been able to see them and talk to them while they were in prison.

“To cut people off for such lengths of time is such a drastic step,” U.S. Circuit Judge Diane Wood, a Bill Clinton appointee, said during Thursday's proceedings. She asked assistant Attorney General Kaitlyn Chenevert: “Why does a telephone become dangerous the day you walk out of prison?”

Chenevert said former inmates could behave differently when they are not being watched as they are in prison.

Woods asked why the department hasn't considered monitoring telephone calls from people under supervised release, like they do when they're incarcerated. Chenevert answered that monitoring those phone calls would create too many administrative burdens for the department.

She also noted the plaintiffs never suggested a reasonable alternative to the policy, to which Wood responded, “They didn't ever reach a point where they could do that.”

The class also say the department's deference to the therapists is unconstitutional. One class member who maintained consistent contact with his teenage son while he was incarcerated was strictly prohibited from seeing his son after he was released, despite being in therapy for over a year, with no explanation as to why.

Nicholas said that therapists can't operate as neutral parties in these

decisions — and a neutral party at every level of this process is important.

“I think therapists would disagree with you,” U.S. Circuit Judge Thomas Kirsch, a Donald Trump appointee, said.

But in the brief, Nicholas noted therapists have no consistent timelines and requirements as to when sex offenders are considered ready to see their kids. One therapist might say an offender needs six months of treatment before they can be reunited with their children, and another might require a year of treatment before a reunion is possible.

Nicholas also said that once an offender is told they can't see their children, there's little they can do to appeal that decision. One man couldn't appeal his denial to see his children because it was never formally documented.

U.S. Circuit Judge Candace Jackson-Akiwumi, appointed by President Joe Biden, asked Chenevert if the appeal process is reasonably available to parolees. Chenevert said it is, but she could not provide details outside of an appeal form that parolees can ask their parole officers for.

The panel did not say when it would rule.

We at Titus House hope you had a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Thank you for all the cards, stamps and donations that you have showed upon us. May God richly bless and keep you. May God's face shine on you. May God be good to you and give you peace.



Titus House Ministries

PO Box 2376
Tijeras, NM 87059

Phone: (505) 286-8807

Alice's Cell (505) 259-0867

Don's Cell: (505) 315-7940

Email: donmagicjohnston@gmail.com

We're on the Web

titushouseministries.org

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



What is Church?

By Sandy Zalecki

I was talking with a friend a few months ago. I was interested in possibly getting a grant to help people who the government had kicked off their health care because they don't have the money to pay the premium. The friend directed me to someone she knows who writes grants for churches. I was excited to meet with this person and get information on grant writing to help others. But, when I asked her what she was getting grants for she explained she worked with Homeland Security to get grants to help churches put up bigger fences, have more security monitoring, and put special security locks on their doors. My thought was, "Where in the Bible does it say we need to protect buildings?"

What exactly is church? Is the New Testament Church a building we meet in every Sunday to hear praise music and get preached at? Or is it something more? To explain the New Testament Church let me backtrack a bit and explain it from the Old Testament. When the Israelites were set free from Egypt God instructed them to build a Tabernacle. When the Tabernacle was dedicated, the Bible says, "Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." (Exodus 40:34 NIV) This was when the glory of God came down from heaven and dwelled among His people. At that time His glory dwelled in an actual building

This, however, was just a foreshadowing of Him filling our hearts with His glory. The Lord's ultimate goal was to "put the law in their minds and write it on their hearts" (Jeremiah 31:33 NKJV). He did just that on the Day of Pentecost. In Acts 2:2-4, "suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, ... and they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them

utterance." (NKJV) The glory of the Lord no longer dwelled in a building, but now dwelled in our hearts. We became Kingdom people.

What should the New Testament church look like? According to James 1:27, "Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." Acts 4-6 gives us a great representation of what the first New Testament Church looked like. The believers sold everything they owned and laid their possessions at the Apostles' feet. There were no needy among them. The Apostles were teaching, their love for one another increased, and the widows were being served.

How many churches in America look like this today? We are living in the mega-church era where churches are filled with thousands of people, but are they serving or being served like they should be? Church isn't supposed to be a spectator sport. We all have gifts that we can give to one another. Church should be a place where we feel free to operate in those gifts. Church should be a community of people who are dedicated to helping each other and exploring who we are in Christ. Church should be a place where we bring the hurting in and nurse them back to health. I have a friend that calls church a hospital for the hurting. It should be open 24/7 not just on Sunday morning.

In closing we see in the Lord's prayer, "Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." (Luke 11:2 NKJV). According to that the Kingdom of God should be on earth as it is in heaven. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit we become kingdom people and we are commanded to do our part (what we are called to do) to bring the Kingdom of Heaven to earth.



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 **January 21, 2024** 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