

# Titus House Newsletter

OCTOBER  
2017



## I Can't But We Can

By Dr. David L.

Almost thirty years ago, I was forced into treatment, by my family and business associates, because of disruptive behaviors due to alcoholism. I was in total denial, but it didn't take long for me to realize that I really did have a problem. That intervention saved my life and also gave me the chance to live again. Addiction to alcohol, other mind-altering drugs or emotionally unwanted behaviors can slowly destroy your life without you being aware of the pain and consequences of such behaviors.

I went to treatment, with great reluctance, but my wife and kids, said either give this a try or don't bother to see any of us again. They were serious and I was devastated having no idea that this was in the works, but they had really done their homework and I was stuck with either going to treat-

ment or losing my family, which was the most important thing in my life. I accepted the treatment center, but resolved to learn the program, set out, and change nothing in my life. After about two weeks in treatment, and having all of my fellow people in treatment, extolling my great progress, and right after having made an oration about alcoholism, our group leader, looking me right in the eye, and with the entire group present, said "David, you are one phony @#%!&% and you are not going to get well, you will die of your disease. I was devastated, a successful professional, supporter of church, wife and seven kids, I didn't know what to do. I started to smack him, but when I drew my fist, he said, "Go on and hit me, then we will break both of your legs and set you on the street. I went to my room in a fog, and fell to my knees.

My recovery started at that point. I opened my ears, shut my mouth and begin to take an objective look at life without booze and emotional dependencies. I started to do what I was told to do and even went to AA meetings with great interest in learning how to live without booze and an addiction driven life.

Leaving treatment, I was told to attend 30 AA meetings in the next month. I attended 90. Since that time 30 years ago I have attended meetings in many countries and even when the language was foreign to me, the aura and the ambience was helpful and gave me guidance. The fellowship in AA, NA, SAA, OA and GA are all filled with the same spirit, a spirit of wanting to help the recovering addict. There are almost never any judgmental attitudes, but always arms open to help.

Please, I plead with you to give these programs a try. God is in each of these rooms where men and women with greatly dissimilar addictions bind with the help of their HIGHER POWER to live a life of serenity and unforeknown peace with GOD and their fellow man. We do not have to be slaves to our addictions. WE can with the help of our fellow man and the God of our understanding be happy, joyous and free. In February of 2018, on the Big Island, in a park by the ocean I will celebrate 35 years of recovery and that celebration will be with 40 or 50 people who are living happy lives. I know I can't, but God and my fellow drunks, sex addicts, junkies, and food addicts can show me how to be joyous, happy, and free at last. David L.

## Dear Titus House

By Landon L.

Dear Titus House Mentors, I am writing to you again to thank you for your monthly newsletter and to share with you the same testimony I have shared with other sex offenders around the United States. Before I came to prison I was a slave to sin. The work of the flesh in Gal. 5:19-21 and I Cor. 6:9, 10 describes the man I used to be. I was self-centered, perverted and headed straight to hell, but God saved me. Of course com-

ing to prison separated me from most of my addictions, but it was the healing through the power of prayer and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that changed me. Before I turned my life over to God I fought to cease my addictions on my own, but I was unsuccessful. I am certain that the real cause of my addictions was spiritual because once I admitted I was a sinner, confessed my sins to God and accepted Jesus as my savior, all of my

selfish desires began to fade away. Since then God has delivered me from my selfishness and made me into one who has compassion for others and desires to do His will. I am now a changed man, ready to make amends and help others at all costs.

I believe it is important to follow Jesus and to practice His life of prayer, ministry, fellowship, fasting and love. These five practices have helped me to remain free from the snare and bondages

of sin and addictions.

Since I have accepted forgiveness from God, and forgiven myself, I have recovered from a guilty complex and have begun working on restoration with God through faith in Jesus Christ. I believe He died on the cross to heal and free me from the guilt of my past sins and addictions! Landon Lott



## Reflections: How does God see me: by Bro. Mark P

In my readings and studies of the bible I have come to realize that God sees me in a different light than I see myself. Where I might see myself as powerless, He sees me as a conqueror. I may look at my past and experience regret or feelings of unworthiness. God looks and sees a new creation, cleansed of any wrongs. The apostle Peter wrote in 2nd Thessalonians 2:13 "we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren BELOVED of the Lord."

I am loved by God. I find it difficult to consider myself unworthy when I am loved by the God of the universe!

I look at my life and consider the difficulty I have in living up to my Christian principles, wondering what I need to do to be in right standing with God. God looks at my life and says, you can never do enough to attain right standing on your own, that is why I sent my son to pay the price for you. He has paid the cost in full, for now and forever. Through His grace He has provided the free gift of salvation. Not only has He paid the debt that I owe, He adopted

me into His family! In John 1:12 the apostle John tells me "But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, [even] to them that believe on his name"

When feelings of regret or un-worth creep in I consider those words, and try to look at my life as God sees me. I ask myself, if God, the creator of the universe sees me as worthy, loved, debt free, when He has chosen to adopt me into His family, how can I look at myself as anything less than a conqueror?

## A letter from Daniel

Dear Don and Alice,

I want you to know that when I read your letter to me, I cried! Because you don't know me, I'm a nobody, but yet you have offered to pick me up from the bus station and drive me around town to get my food stamps and to apply for social security. And now on the 22<sup>nd</sup> take me to register. I'm choking up now. For 20+ years the only kindness I've known is from fellow convicts. I have to be honest with you. I've always thought that while we are in

prison you guys do a lot to help inmates but I thought that that "help" would stop at the door. I am truly sorry! I was wrong in assuming. I humble myself before you and ask your forgiveness for my stupidity. It's just that acts of kindness is the last thing I expect to receive from anyone once I get out, and then here you are waiting to help me. I've just been asking myself, "Why me?" And it may be just a simple gesture of kindness to you but it means so much more to me! It actually makes me feel human, like maybe I'm not this

"monster" that all of society has labeled me. And I say to myself maybe there is still good out in the world. And in you two I do believe I've found not just "good", "kindness" but "love." And for that I really do thank you from the bottom of my heart.

NOTTE: We also helped Daniel to get registered, find some clothes, belt, wallet, backpack and etc., set up a bank account, get him a bed for 30 days at A.O.C., show him where he can eat, and get free medical service

## Grow Where You Are Planted: by Andres Mata

The one thing that I do believe we all struggle with is understanding our circumstances. Maybe we are looking for work at the moment and have been doing everything correctly to properly disclose our offense to prospective employers, and they either have denied us out right or said the infamous "We'll give you a call if something opens up". Maybe we are facing time in prison and have decided to be honest with the courts and God and plead guilty, and a sentencing date just cannot seem to come fast enough. Some of us incarcerated reading this letter have years left on their sentences and time seems to slow every time they try and think about the future. To all of us, wherev-

er we are in our lives, I challenge all of us to hold true to Jesus's words in Matthew 6:31-34: "So do not worry saying 'What shall we eat, drink or wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has trouble of its own." Despite it feeling like God may not be present, especially in the ostracization with being labeled as SO's, I also challenge us to have a spirit of faithfulness as Job did in the midst of the feeling of God's absence: "When he is at work in the north, I do not see Him; when he turns to the south, I catch no glimpse of Him. But He knows the way

that I take; when He has tested me, I will come forth as gold" (Job 23:9-10) Finally, for those of us who have accepted Salvation and made Jesus LORD of our lives know that despite us being forgiven for our sins, past present and future, many of us still have to face the consequences of the past today. I challenge us all to remember Hebrews 12:11 "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it." God truly loves us, enough to want us to avoid the flames of hell, to where He put you in a place in life to read this newsletter and read these words, and change the trajectory you were on, upwards toward Eternal Life.



## Colorado to Appeal ruling against offender registry

By Associated Press September 13

DENVER — Colorado has decided to appeal a federal judge's ruling that the state violated the constitutional rights of three men by requiring them to register as sex offenders, the state's attorney general said Wednesday.

Cynthia Coffman said she'll appeal in coming weeks to the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on behalf of the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, which maintains the state's registry.

U.S. District Judge Richard Matsch ruled Aug. 31 that the Colorado registry exposes offenders to punishment from the public and inhibits their ability to find work or housing long after they've completed their sentences.

In Colorado, offenders' names, addresses, photos and other identifying features

are posted on a state website, based on offenders' registrations with local law enforcement.

Matsch's ruling had no immediate effect for three offenders who are plaintiffs in the case who want to remove their information from the registry. But their attorney, Alison Ruttenberg, has said Colorado offenders can use Matsch's decision to ask state judges to remove them from the registry or to defend themselves against charges of failing to register.

Ruttenberg also said an unsuccessful appeal to the 10th Circuit by the state could be cited in other states.

"This is an important issue where the law is rapidly changing, and I look forward to the opportunity to brief these issues to the Tenth Circuit," Ruttenberg said Wednesday.

Coffman said the U.S. Supreme Court has found that sex offender registration laws protect the public, especially victims, and are not cruel and unusual punishment of offenders. She noted that the three plaintiffs in the Colorado case had committed sexual assault against minors — one against a 3-year-old child.

"Colorado, its forty-nine sister states, and the federal government all have sex offender registry laws in place to inform the public and protect them from sexual offenders who have been found guilty of sexual crimes," she said in a prepared statement.

The offenders' lawsuit argued that the public information makes it difficult for offenders to find jobs and housing. Routine visits by police and flyers posted on doors clearly identify them as registered sex offenders, the suit said.

## Sex Offenders face housing maze after prison release By Citylimits.org

A combination of prison policies, restrictive laws and a lack of housing support has kept many New York sex offenders in prison conditions for months or years after they've served their time.

As previously reported by the Marshall Project in a story that appeared at City Limits, a lawsuit filed by a group of offenders last year contends that the state is illegally detaining sex offenders beyond the end of their sentences. In addition to detaining offenders beyond the terms of their sentences, the complaint alleges that the state is mislabeling parts of its prisons as "Residential Treatment Facilities." Ideally an RTF is a sort of halfway house between prison and community supervision. But in fact, the lawsuit says, the state is holding offenders in the same conditions and restrictions as prison.

The problem, however, runs deeper than the detention policies themselves. A mix of legal, political and fiscal constraints make it extremely difficult to find a place for sex offenders who have paid their debt to society to live.

"The New York corrections law requires that a Residential Treatment Facility be a community-based residence in or near a community where employment, educational and training opportunities are available for persons

on parole or conditional release. These facilities are simply not by any stretch of the means community based residences," says Matthew Freimuth, a lawyer for the offenders. Lawyers from Prisoners Legal Services, New York Legal Aid; and Willkie, Farr and Gallagher LLP represent the offenders.

The lawsuit alleges that New York State has, without legal authority, declared sections of several correctional facilities, including Fishkill and Woodbourne Correctional Facilities, as Residential Treatment Facilities (RTFs) in order house offenders after they have served their time.

"Fishkill houses 1,900 inmates," he says. "It has a razor-wire topped fence, cell blocks. These petitioners who are supposed to be in RTFs wear the prison green, share the same exercise hall. They're treated as if they were the same as the general population."

New York State law allows for sex offenders to be housed in RTFs for up to six months following the completion of their prison sentences. Following that period of six months, the state does not have the authority to continue to detain offenders. It must release the offenders to community supervision. The lawsuit alleges that the state of New York is unlawfully holding these men beyond the "maximum expiration date" of their

sentences. The suit alleges that in two cases, offenders were unlawfully detained for more than a year.

In *Alcantara v. Annucci*, the petitioners allege that the state has overstepped its legal boundaries by converting correctional facilities into RTFs and that the state and New York City have failed to adequately provide legally mandated assistance to offenders who are looking for housing as they approach and are held beyond their release dates.

"The petitioners are given no programs that really allow any sort of meaningful interaction with anybody from the community. Requests that they've made to work outside the facility are routinely denied. They don't have any opportunity to leave the facility," says Freimuth. "It's not really meaningfully community based."

Both sides of the dispute estimate that 85 to 100 sex offenders are currently held in RTFs at state corrections facilities. While the state would not comment on pending litigation, a spokesperson for the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) says the men are not being held indefinitely, only until they can find a bed in a compliant shelter.



## 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](http://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



### ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY

Saturday December 23

12:00 to 3:00 PM

2004 Wyoming NE, Alb. NM

Titus House is paying the bill.

Come and eat and have fun.

Let us know you are coming (505) 286-8807.

Hint: We could use sponsors for this project.

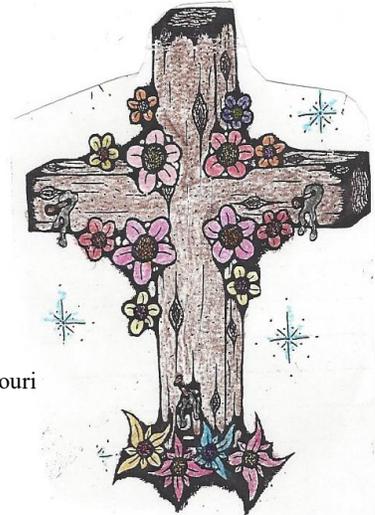
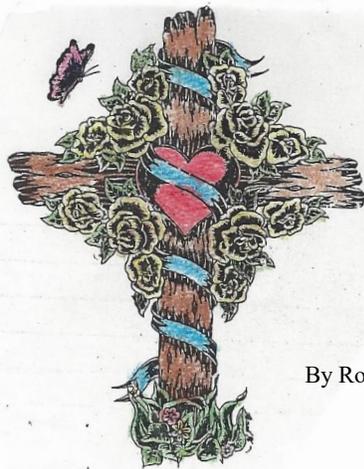
Please pray for the family of Joe Carabajal Sr. He passed away in August due to bone cancer. He rented our RV and stayed at our place. I'm sure some of you remember him.

Pray for the needs of inmates pursuing Bible Studies and other education classes.

Pray for those who cannot afford stamps.

Pray for those in prison that have no family support.

Editorial by Alice: It has been a good year this far. Financially we have squeaked by with bills and appreciate all you can do. We would like to do more, like accept collect phone calls from other states. I am really concerned about several women we know in Texas who have no air conditioning who endure temps over 100 in their cells. I would like to be able to chat and pray with them. Until we have more designated funds coming in we can't take on that expense. I am also sure you know Don and I don't take any salary for the hours we spend.



By Roger in Missouri

## Circle of Concern

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 offenders, family and friends that meet together on the 2nd Sunday of each month. We are meeting this month on October 8th, 2017 at 6 pm—8 pm. We will be having a potluck. We

meet at Foothills Fellowship Church, corner of Tramway and Candelaria on the far east side of Albuquerque. 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.