

Vernon County should beware of wolf in sheep's clothing

To the editor:

I recently moved to Vernon County, so I have an unbiased opinion of the situation between Mr. Stinson and the Church of Israel. I have come to these conclusions after reading the Joplin Globe, the Nevada Daily Mail, and the Internet. I am a Christian and have been for 25 years. I feel like the truth is extremely evident if you read between the lines. I would like to share some thoughts which I find highly questionable.

Mr. Stinson claims the Church of Israel is shrouded in secrecy, but I think Stinson has neglected to tell you some of his own. First of all, I would like to know why Stinson's personal time line of his life, 1975-1993, have been quietly shoved under the carpet. He states he went to the Army and was honorably discharged after 18 months. He states he went to several different colleges and graduated from his final one in 1990. Why did it take until 1993 to finally have two jobs pending? He stated that he came from a family with money. How was he supporting three children and a wife during your college years? How could he afford two Volvo cars valued at over \$30,000 when he arrived in 1993? It looks to the public that he has always depended on other people for his livelihood, such as his father and now the Church of Israel's \$20,000 severance pay he demanded.

I do not know of another minister who would try to gain \$20,000 severance pay upon his leaving! That is ludicrous and unheard of! If he's so highly accredited, why didn't he find another ministerial position and support his family honestly instead of off the labors of other people's tithing? I personally will raise a ruckus in my own church if he steps foot into it. I doubt he will, though, because we're too small to afford a \$20,000 salary for even our primary minister, much less \$20,000 extortion.

Stinson should stop whining about how he deserves it because of what he had to put up with. Any other minister would just find another church. As this story unfolds, it reminds me of the fable of the grasshopper and the ants. While the grasshopper refused to work, he sat back and sang, "The world owes me a living," while the ants (his father and the Church of Israel) provide him with a home, vehicles, and a living. Maybe instead of slandering the Church of Israel, Stinson should be thanking them for the eight years of steady salary and a \$100,000 home, which was more than he'd ever had, obviously. I know of no other minister with these benefits.

Thirdly, I would like to remind everyone that a church cannot be held responsible for what goes on in our private home lives. They are there to advise, admonish and instruct us when we ask for guidance. They are not the police. They cannot make us pay taxes. They cannot chaperone every teen-ager on a date. They cannot monitor what we do in our spare time. These are the adult's responsibility, not the minister's. The charges that Stinson thinks are so extraordinary and different from that of America should be taken up with the families involved with his accusations, not the church.

I personally think if we imprisoned every American who supposedly has evaded taxes, everyone would be in jail. Everyone is guilty of not paying taxes on cash they received from someone, whether it's \$5 or \$100,000. Sin is sin no matter how big or small. You say a member has committed adultery. The Bible says adultery has been committed even if we look at another person with lust in our heart. Almost everyone has looked at the opposite sex and had thoughts about how pretty or handsome they are. "He who is without sin cast the first stone."

It appears the victim and her family have forgiven this man, so biblically speaking, we must too. Before Stinson tries to take out a church, he should remember the warnings throughout the Bible of doing this type of demonic action. He is placing the souls of his family and himself at stake. I am ashamed that there is a man in our community that has the audacity to demand \$20,000 from any church in extortion money. No church is perfect. God can and will destroy a church if it needs to be done. He doesn't need help from the community or members who bear grudges against them. To the residents of Vernon County, beware: A wolf in sheep's clothing is among us.

DON FASSEL
Nevada