

Christian Ministry Claims Victory in 4-Year Legal Battle

Last month, six Christian organizations won a religious freedom case after a four-year legal battle to defend operating their ministries according to their deeply held Biblical beliefs.

One of the groups was Samaritan Ministries International (), one of the leading health care sharing ministries in America.

On Dec. 11, a federal district court issued an order that “permanently prevents the federal government from enforcing the Affordable Care Act’s abortion-pill mandate against six Christian organizations,” reported Alliance Defending Freedom, which represented the group. The order also declares that the mandate violates the organizations’ rights protected by the federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

“For our 25 years in existence, Samaritan Ministries has respected the sanctity of life and has never asked our members to share in the medical expense of an abortifacient that would end the life of a pre-born baby,” said Anthony Hopp, Samaritan’s vice president of external relations. “Millions of Americans can’t control where their health care dollars go and don’t have a say if they are indirectly funding ungodly practices like abortion. But Samaritan members can know they will not be asked to send any of their monthly shares to help pay for anything that dishonors God.”

According to the ADF, the previous administration’s mandate forced most employers, regardless of their religious or moral convictions, to provide abortion-inducing drugs through their health plans under threat of heavy penalties. The current administration’s Department of Justice abandoned this flawed

mandate.

“Religious organizations have the freedom to peacefully operate according to their beliefs without the threat of punishment by the government. (This) order fully affirms that freedom and provides permanent protection from the mandate,” said ADF Senior Counsel Gregory S. Baylor in a statement. “These faith-based organizations no longer have to fear being forced to pay fines for simply abiding by the Christian beliefs that they teach and espouse.”

Samaritan was joined for this case by the Association of Christian Schools International, Taylor University, Indiana Wesleyan University, Asbury Theological Seminary and ADF in the specific objection to sharing in expenses or providing coverage for abortifacients.

For 25 years, Samaritan Ministries has enabled more than a quarter of a million members to honor God through their health care, which also means Samaritan’s 80,000-plus member households do not dishonor God by funding abortion or other unbiblical practices.

Each month, Samaritan’s growing biblical community shares approximately \$28 million in medical needs person to person, yet the monthly share has never exceeded \$495 for a family of any size and is even less for two-person and single-person households. This direct-sharing approach also allows members to not only help fellow believers with their medical financial needs, while connecting monthly through prayer, personal notes and cards of encouragement. {eoa}

Learn more about Samaritan Ministries International here; visit the Samaritan website at [samaritan.org](#), or follow the ministry on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter.