

# Phil Sorrells

Tarrant County Criminal District Attorney  
401 West Belknap  
Fort Worth, Texas 76196



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## Man Sentenced to Death for Killing, Mutilating Three

(Fort Worth, TX) – A Tarrant County jury sentenced Jason Alan Thornburg, 44, to death for killing three people, dismembering their bodies, and burning them in a dumpster in 2021.

Assistant District Attorneys Kim D'Avignon, Emily Dixon, and Amy Allin represented the state.

In September 2021, Thornburg said David Lueras, 42, Maricruz Mathis, 33, and Lauren Phillips, 34, needed to be sacrificed for religious reasons.

Over seven days at the Mid City Inn in Euless, Thornburg brought each of them, separately, into the room he was renting. He slit the throats of Lueras and Mathis. He strangled Phillips and sexually assaulted her corpse. He ate some of David's heart and cut off his penis.

"They were all lured to their death in that hotel room," Dixon said.

Once they were dead, he cut their bodies into pieces in the motel bathtub, then stored their remains in trash bags under his bed.

"What he did was methodical and sadistic," D'Avignon said. "Hurting people is something he likes to do."

Early in the morning on September 22, 2021, Thornburg took their body parts, now in plastic storage tubs, to a dumpster on Bonnie Drive. Once all the remains were in the dumpster, Thornburg set them on fire and drove away. He cleaned out and returned the tubs to the store where they were bought.

Firefighters responded to the dumpster fire, extinguished it, and police tracked down Thornburg as the person who put the remains in the dumpster and burned them based on a video that captured his Jeep Grand Cherokee in the area at the time of the dumpster fire.

Before the killings, Thornburg could be seen reading the Bible in a chair outside his motel room.

"He knows scripture well. It's his weapon of choice. He uses it to get vulnerable people to lower their guard," Allin said. "He will be the friend who gives you a place to sleep, right before he cuts your throat."

D'Avignon told the jury that Thornburg did indeed know the Bible well.

"You know who else knows the Bible? The devil," she said. "There is no answer for justice (in this case) other than the death penalty. I will never say that lightly."

DA Investigators Caleb Blank and Scott Giovannelli, along with former DA Investigator Pauline Fitzgerald and Victim Coordinators Elizabeth Garcia and Allison Bowen, worked on this case. Thanks to the Fort Worth Police and Fire Departments for their work on this case and for their commitment to keeping our community safe.

Police say Thornburg confessed to murdering two other people – his roommate Mark Jewell in May 2021 and his girlfriend Tanya Begay in Arizona in 2017.