

# Titus House Newsletter

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

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## Florida, make better choices

By Sandy from NARSOL

By Sandy . . . [A young man was sentenced to prison in Florida last week](#). The charge, following his arrest last year when he was 19, was 30 counts of possession of child pornography. The materials to which he entered an open plea are disturbing as the children involved were very young. Clearly intervention and appropriate punishment were called for.

However, a sentence that makes no allowance for his young age when the activity was occurring nor for the non-contact nature of the conviction seems inappropriate. Florida, since 1978, has had [a youthful offender act](#). The young man who was sentenced, Anthony by name, seems to be a tailor-made candidate for this option. He appears to meet all the criteria. Whether or not it was considered for him is unknown to all but a very few, but if it was considered, he was denied that opportunity to be held accountable for his crimes; quite possibly serve some prison time; and, most importantly, be evaluated for underlying issues and receive treatment judged appropriate for them and for his offending behavior.

Young people, primarily males, seek out pornography for a variety of reasons. One of these reasons has been identified by the [National Health Institute](#) as underlying mental health issues. In a study involving college students, they found that depression as well as high levels of stress and anxiety were precursors to pornography use in these students.

In a study even more specific to Anthony's case, the National Health Institute concluded that young males with a history of possessing child pornography would most benefit from specific treatment. They found, ". . . [juvenile possessors of child pornography need a specific target intervention focusing on dysfunctional Internet use and sexually deviant arousal](#)." If Anthony had been managed in the youthful offender program, his screening and diagnostic implements may well have reached the same conclusion. It is unlikely he will receive this type of intervention sentenced and incarcerated in the adult system in Florida.

Another possible reason adolescents partake of child pornography is to help them understand sexual abuse of which they themselves were victims. Pornography addiction is one of the latter expressions of victimized children, according to the [National Children's Alliance](#). In agreement, another organization, in an unpublished study, identified coping with their own prior abuse as [one of seven reasons](#) why teens turn to pornography. As far as the public record goes, there is no indication of whether or not any of these issues apply to Anthony. Again, this type of diagnosis and subsequent related treatment would only have been available to him as part of the youthful offender program.

How long was Anthony sentenced for? The answer is shocking. His sentence is for 68 years in state prison, followed by lifetime sex offender probation. And of course, if he survives his prison time, of which 85% must be served, and gets out, he will have sex offender registration as well as sex offender probation.

To put that sentence a bit more in perspective, the U.S. Sentencing Commission shows that for Anthony's conviction, [the average sentence given is 95 months](#), which is a month shy of eight years.

Another perspective can be had with this. In hunting for the longest sentence given for a non-contact pornography conviction, [the case of Stephen Chase](#), 58, also of Florida, stands out. Stephen, in 2014, created an illegal child pornography website on the dark web. Stephen himself is identified as ". . . creator and lead administrator of what was believed to be the world's largest child pornography website—with more than 150,000 users around the world." His conviction, in 2017, was for ". . . engaging in a child exploitation enterprise and multiple child pornography charges." He was sentenced to 30 years.

Why was Anthony's sentence so extreme? Any answer will be speculative. However, it is interesting that several of the media articles about his arrest and his conviction say that law enforcement "suspect" him of hands-on molestation of children and put a call out for anyone who had contact with him during the past five years—that would be when he was 14 to 19—to get in touch with law enforcement. The absence of any media or of any new charges indicate there was no one.

We all make choices. We do not know what demons drove Anthony, but he still chose to engage in illegal behavior. The county of Volusia and the state of Florida chose to prosecute Anthony in the adult legal system. As a youthful offender, there is a good chance his problems would have been identified and treated; he would still have served a sentence, but he would have been released with most of his life left. He would have been able to take advantage of rehabilitation and enter his society as a productive, tax-paying citizen.

Now, if he manages to stay alive through the six decades (85%) he will be in a Florida penitentiary, he will emerge, having cost the state at the current rate of \$24, 265 per year close to a million and a half of its tax dollars, either a broken and ruined man, dependent on welfare and costing the state even more, or a hardened criminal.

Choices are important.



## The Importance of Legislative Elections

By Larry Neely

Many of us facing draconian laws frequently bemoan the harshness of the punishment and registration requirements that flow from being convicted of a sexual offense. While the laws can be too harsh and disproportionate considering the underlying conduct, the laws originate from we the people and how we the people choose to cast our votes. In addition, those we elect tend to vote consistently with the views of their constituents.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, 44 states will be holding legislative elections this year. This means that the voters will be choosing their senators and representatives for a total of 4,712 legislative seats. ([NCSL Legislative Races](#)) Since the United States is actually 50 separate sovereign jurisdictions, each state decides what the appropriate amount of punishment should be as well as their registration requirements. This means everyone should listen very carefully to those on the campaign trail who wish to represent you in your state capitol. When candidates campaign on a law-and-order platform and promise that they will be tough on crime, it should not surprise us when they vote to make penalties more extreme. Examples would be surgical castration and imposition of the death penalty for those who commit certain sexual offenses. A few states have already enacted such harsh laws, and more are likely to do so in 2025 unless we choose not to elect them.

Some key points to understand when you cast your votes in November are that those who espouse extreme views on the campaign trail are exceedingly difficult to compromise with once they have won their election. Our two-party system needs balance rather than lopsided control by a single party. The party that holds the majority in each legislative chamber is the party that largely controls the legislative process. The majority party names the committee chairs and controls the legislative calendar. In addition, committee membership is awarded based on the makeup of the overall membership of the body. As a hypothetical example, a state that has a senate with 50 total members would be organized under the control of whichever party has 26 or more members in that chamber. The next important factor is the ratio of members in each party. If one party controls 40 of those 50 senate seats, that party will have the same ratio on the legislative committees as well. For example, in the hypothetical example, 80% of the committee seats would be awarded to the majority party. A committee of ten would be comprised of eight members of the majority party and two members of the minority party. Committees are of major importance because that is where the public is permitted to have the most input. Most states accept public comment at committee hearings.

Legislatures that are extremely lopsided are very difficult to work with because super majorities feel no need to compromise with the minority because they don't really need to. Keep this in mind when you vote in the upcoming election in your state.

### **TX: The 'Lights Out' program makes trick-or-treating safer by rounding up sex offenders** Source: [msn.com/KTXS](https://www.msn.com/KTXS)

Halloween is rapidly approaching and a top priority for parents is keeping their children safe. For over 20 years Taylor County has hosted a program called Lights Out to make trick-or-treating safer.

"Everyone that's on probation who is a sex offender they have to come that night from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.," Rikki Flores said. "Doesn't matter what day Halloween is on they are required to be here during those hours."

The licensed sexual offender treatment provider said approximated 140 sex offenders will be at the Taylor County Courthouse on the night of Halloween.

"We'll do UA's, drug testing, and a Think It Over video," Flores said. "The main idea of it all is so they won't be home getting these incidental contacts with children if they were to come over their house and do trick-or-treating."



## The Belt of Truth

By Sandy Zalecki

This month we will start our discussion on the tools we need to fight spiritual battles. Just to recap, last month we discussed the fact that all battles we face are spiritual. In the next months we will learn about the tools we are given to fight those battles.

There are six different tools God has given us in our arsenal to fight our spiritual battles. The first is the belt of truth. Ephesians 6:14 says, "Gird up your loins with truth." Why is truth the first weapon and why is it so important?

Think about why we wear a belt? The belt is foundational for particularly a man's wardrobe. It the stabilizing force of his wardrobe. It holds up a man's pants and keeps his shirt from going all over the place. It brings his attire into order. Many women use belts for the same thing. Belts are also used to hang tools on in many professions. Think of police officers. Their gun, their handcuffs, their tasers, and many other tools hang on their belts. You won't see a construction worker without a tool belt.

The same was true with Roman soldiers. Their belt was foundational. Their swords and many other tools for war hung on their belt. Most men and women wore long tunics or dresses back then. They would gather them up and tuck them into their belt when they were going into battle so they would have more maneuverability. The belt was an essential part of their uniform.

So why is the belt of truth so important for us as Christians? First, what is truth? We have so many different truths today. Everyone thinks they can have their own truth, but there is only one truth and that's God's truth. Truth is not in a word or an ideology, it's in a person, the person of Jesus.

Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. <sup>7</sup> If you really know me, you will know<sup>[a]</sup> my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him." John 14:6-7

John 1:17 says, "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." Without going into a long theological explanation, Jesus is the truth. In order to have the truth we must go back to it in its original form. God is the fixed standard of what is true and the original reference for truth. In order to properly fight we must not leave home without our belt of truth on.

Without the original truth of God, Satan can flip you upside down and make you think you are right side up. Whenever you accept a lie demons will ride horseback on that lie, and you are inviting a demon into your life. Demons will have you thinking you're okay when you only have a distorted truth.

How do you get the truth in your life? We don't know enough to have independent truth. We can't go by feelings because feelings aren't always real. We can't go by intelligence, because we don't always get good information. We can't go by moral standards because every culture has a different moral standard.

Truth is in the word of God and revealed by the Holy Spirit. Any other truth is distorted and needs to be torn down. In order to leave home every day with your belt of truth, you must be studying God's word and getting it in your spirit and soul. Let me ask, how much time do you spend each day in God's word? It's key to fighting the spiritual battles of life.



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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



## A Message from Don & Alice

Hello Brothers and Sisters in Christ. I hope you all are doing good. Alice and I are doing well up here in the mountains of Tijeras New Mexico. We have been getting ready for winter by closing down our air conditioners. We are also cutting and splitting wood for our wood burning stoves. Goldie our dog is well and barks at the wild animals up here. Goldie is our faithful guard dog. She is 6 years old. She weighs about 112 pounds. She is part Great Pyrenees and Bernese Mountain Dog. We have a family of squirrels living in our giant outside dog house. We are surrounded by large pinon trees.

Alice says she writes about 6 letters a day. Some are very sad with 15 to 20 years still in prison. Our purpose for doing this spending many hours a day is to share the love of God. We deal with very needy and some that are confused persons. We appreciate

your letters. Although we do receive some long letters that are 15 pages long! We do not have the time and resources to read and answer your letter. We do not have all the answers to your question. We do want to pray for you and your problems. Please send us 1 or 2 pages. We need testimonies for the newsletter. Where God has brought you from and where you are now. Everyone has problems and God has the answers.

In order to get close to God read your Bible, pray and fellowship with other believers. You who are able to join us for our daily morning devotion of the Daily Bread. You can join us by joining us by phone for a free conference call by calling: (605) 475-4092. They will ask you for an access code which is 278954# We hope you will join us. We will be praying for you all.

Blessings,  
Don & Alice



**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 **October 20**, 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](mailto:donmagicjohnston@gmail.com)