

December 13, 1959

From Crime To Christ,
The Story Of A Student

By Anne Washburn McWilliams

JACKSON, Miss.--(BP)--Doug Chatham, pastor of Sulphur Springs Church, Newton County, Miss., can, like the Apostle Paul, testify that his life has had two very distinct divisions, "Before Christ," and "After Christ."

Because Christ came into his life, Chatham recently received a full pardon for a crime committed prior to his conversion. The pardon and restoration of citizenship was granted by Acting Gov. Frazar of Louisiana.

Doug says, "It's wonderful to know that I have been pardoned by society, but God pardoned me long time ago."

A self-assured young "man of the world," Doug Chatham entered Louisiana State University to study law. Having grown up on a farm in north Louisiana, he was now a college man and one of the crowd. This in itself might have been fine--except that he chose the wrong crowd.

Doug and his gang were not Christians; they didn't belong to the Baptist Student Union; they didn't go to church. They were in college to have a good time and they were going to have it.

One of their pastimes was "gassing up" with "weeds" or "reefers." Minds befogged by this marijuana led them to steal an automobile. Boy, this was the greatest!

But the wailing cry of a siren, a short, quick trip to jail, and a cold, hard bunk in a pewter-gray prison cell immediately put an end to the "joy" of riding in a stolen car.

Staring at the formidable bars, Doug sat in his jail cell day after day waiting for a hearing. A need stirred deep within him and he borrowed a Bible. Eagerly seeking the truth from its pages, he found Christ, the answer to his need. He was convicted of his sin and his lost condition, and surrendered his life fully to the Lord.

Despite the jeers of fellow prisoners, Doug began to witness to those about him. He wrote to the judge, stating that he did not have a lawyer and that he did not want one. He explained that he had found Christ and pleaded for a chance to prove that he wanted to live for God.

Doug prayed that he might be released soon so that he might witness to others. God answered his prayer and in a few days the judge released him on parole.

The young man made a public profession of faith at Bethany Baptist Church, New Orleans, the following Sunday. He became an active and enthusiastic member.

Two months later Chatham felt that God was calling him to the ministry, and at Christmastime, 1957, while still only 19, he was licensed to preach.

The genuineness of his Christianity shone forth as he became a student at Clarke College, Newton, Miss., in January, 1958. A far different type of student he was than he had been at L S U! He became chairman of missions for the ministerial association, missions chairman in BSU, a member of the Clarke College choir, and a member of the mission band. He preached in youth revivals and did supply work. And in September, 1958, he was ordained when he accepted the pastorate of the Conehatta Baptist Church, Newton County, Miss.

On June 5, 1959, he and Miss Jacqueline Reed of Jackson, Miss., whom he met at Clarke, were married. Recently he accepted his second pastorate at Sulphur Springs Church, Newton County.

A. C. Miller Noted
As Faithful Servant

By Adiel J. Moncrief
Chairman, Christian Life Commission
Southern Baptist Convention

The retirement of Dr. Acker C. Miller, executive secretary of the Christian Life Commission, at the end of January closes a fruitful and progressive chapter in the Commission's history of over 50 years. Dr. Miller has served with distinction and devotion since Jan. 1, 1953.

During his administration the nation has passed through a critical period of social change and moral testing. He has given a clear witness to the demands of Christian living in the light of the soul-searching ideals of Christ and shown vision and courage in seeking to apply Christian principles to the life of the nation.

Dr. Miller has worked tirelessly and effectively to make the agency a stronger instrument of God's justice and peace. He has prayed, planned and labored for the advancement of research, educational promotion, and practical projects in the churches which aim to make Christ Lord as well as Savior in the hearts of the people. His work is bearing fruit and the promise of a greater future is brighter than ever before.

We bid a grateful farewell to Dr. Miller, thanking him for a task well done, and wishing for him every blessing of the Lord in a fruitful ministry in retirement.

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11 States Talking
About New Offices

By the Baptist Press

Eleven Baptist state offices have moved into new quarters or plan to do so within the near future.

Florida Baptist Convention moved from an older, downtown building to a new building across the St. Johns River in south Jacksonville recently. The building cost about \$900,000 and a fourth and fifth floor will be completed soon. The formal open house is set for Jan. 13.

North Carolina Baptist offices, in a choice location only a few blocks from the state capitol in Raleigh, were dedicated in November, 1957. The quarters were built at a cost of \$630,000.

The General Association of Baptists in Kentucky left its downtown Louisville site and built in the country at Middletown, a short distance outside Louisville. The new building was opened July 1, 1957, and cost \$421,000.

The need for more space and new buildings are felt now in Arkansas, South Carolina, Virginia, Kansas, Alabama, and Colorado.

Louisiana Baptist Convention is scheduled to enter its new office building in spring, 1960. The \$1.3 million, three-story structure is located on the main highway bypass at Alexandria.

Arkansas Baptist State Convention has authorized borrowing \$200,000 to acquire a building site in Little Rock. South Carolina Baptist Convention voted to spend \$65,000 for a two-acre lot in Columbia.

Progress is termed "steady and gratifying" as the Baptist General Association of Virginia negotiates for property, hoping to launch construction sometime in 1960. It is in Richmond.

The executive board of Kansas Convention of Southern Baptists has approved spending \$4850 for a two-acre tract on a main thoroughfare in suburban Wichita. Zoning and other requirements must be met.

Alabama Baptist State Convention executive board has over \$277,000 set aside in an account for a new building at Montgomery. It expects the new offices will cost over \$700,000.

Executive Secretary Willis J. Ray of Colorado Baptist General Convention said his state convention, serving a six-state region, urgently needs a new site within a year. Offices will continue to be in Denver.

Mississippi Baptist Convention several years ago approved a new office building, located one block from the present state Baptist offices. Property has been bought, but no date has been set for construction.

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3 Speakers Emphasize
Teaching, Training Role

(12-13-59)

NASHVILLE--(BP)--Three speakers here emphasized the role that teaching and training plays in the educational program of Southern Baptists.

J. M. Price, Sr., of Abilene, Tex., emeritus director of religious education at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, said that the great growth of Southern Baptists during the last third of a century could be attributed to teaching and training.

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Chester L. Quarles of Jackson, executive secretary, Mississippi Baptist Convention, declared that some "Christian people know chapter and verse in the Bible but don't know how to use them."

He said that teaching and training must be practical, real to life.

James L. Sullivan, Nashville, executive secretary, Baptist Sunday School Board, stated that only one generation separates savagery from civilization--or civilization from savagery. He emphasized that teaching and training is a constant task, one that must be repeated with every generation.

The occasion was a joint meeting of executive secretaries and department secretaries from state Baptist conventions and associations co-operating with the Southern Baptist Convention. They were in Nashville for group meetings sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Price said that teaching and training is badly needed in a day when there are a large number of "personal evils" in America. These, he described as increased drinking of liquor, immorality, loss of religious tone in education, breakup of the home, absentee church membership, and mounting disregard for personal and public (government.) debt.

Quarles said if Christians aren't "projecting themselves into the lives of others, teaching and training them, and standing by them," these Christians "just aren't growing."

He added, "We teach and train in order that we might grow and in order that other people might grow."

The emphasis on teaching and training was due to the forthcoming 1960 year of the Baptist Jubilee Advance, being observed by seven Baptist groups in North America. The 1960 emphasis or theme is on "teaching and training."

Sullivan, host to the secretaries, explained that his heart "thrilled" at the "glorious history" of Baptists, their fellowship, the depth of world need and the commandment of the Lord to meet it, and the soundness of the program "we're trying to project as a denomination."

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Florida Board Meets In Its New Building

(12-13-59)

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.--(BP)--The Florida Baptist Convention board of missions held its first meeting in the new Baptist state office building here.

At cornerstone ceremonies, a collection of current convention material as well as historical material was placed in a receptacle within the cornerstone.

Baptist workers have moved into the new structure, although workmen are still busy finishing its fourth and fifth floors. It will have an open house Jan. 13.

The cost of the building, lot, and equipment to furnish it was \$900,000.

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Bean-Denny Wedding Event for Dec. 19

(12-13-59)

NASHVILLE--(BP)--Wedding bells will ring here Dec. 19 for Miss Jane Ray Bean and Robert S. (Bob) Denny. Both are well-known student and youth workers among Baptists.

First Baptist Church will be scene of the wedding, with the pastor, H. Franklin Paschall, joining G. Kearnie Keegan, secretary of student work, Baptist Sunday School Board, in officiating.

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Miss Bean is employed in the international student ministry here by the student department, a position she has held since 1955. Denny is associate general secretary and youth leader of the Baptist World Alliance in Washington.

Both are natives of Kentucky. Denny was with the student department of the Baptist Sunday School Board here until he joined the Baptist World Alliance staff in 1956.

The three children of the Denny family will serve in the wedding---Bob, Jr., as his father's best man, and the two daughters, Allie Webb, and Julia Gunn, as bridal attendants. Denny's first wife, Mary Gunn Denny, died of cancer.

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Windham Joins Group On Religious Liberty

CHICAGO--(BP)--James M. Windham, Maryville, Tenn., Baptist minister, will assume leadership of the Chicago office of Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State (POAU) on Jan. 1.

The announcement was made by Louie D. Newton, pastor of Druid Hills Baptist Church, Atlanta, Ga., president of the religious liberty group. Newton stated that in addition to his duties as the organization's executive in Chicago, he envisaged an active role for Windham as liaison man with the nation's Baptist conventions.

He has served for 10 years as pastor of one of the great Baptist churches of Tennessee," Newton said. "He has given active and capable leadership to many Baptist enterprises. The close association between Baptists and Protestants and Other Americans will become closer still as a result of Windham's selection for this responsible post."

Windham, a native of Georgia, and educated at Mercer University, Macon, Ga., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, has served for the past 10 years as pastor of the 2000-member First Baptist Church of Maryville. His previous pastorates were in Georgia, Kentucky, and Indiana.

He is currently serving as a member of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention and also is a member of the executive committee of Tennessee Baptist Convention. He has been active in the leadership of many commissions and committees of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Windham has been for more than a decade a member of the national advisory council of Protestants and Other Americans and has appeared on the programs of its national conferences. He has served the board of trustees as a speaker on numerous occasions.

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Mississippi Seeks \$100,000 For Assembly

JACKSON, Miss.--(BP)--Mississippi Baptists will have a statewide campaign during January, February, and March to raise \$100,000 from churches and individuals for the new Gulfshore Baptist Assembly.

Money will be used to get assembly grounds, located at Pass Christian, Miss., ready for the summer, 1960, season. The assembly, former maritime base, was bought in 1959.

W. Douglas Hudgins, pastor, First Baptist Church here, will direct the campaign, W. L. Meadows, Quitman, Miss., minister who is president of Mississippi Baptist Convention board, will assist him.

The \$100,000 raised in the special campaign will be added to the \$100,000 of convention board reserve funds already earmarked for the project.

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Wider Participation
In Affairs Sought

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.--(BP)--A committee is at work in Florida Baptist Convention seeking to find ways to increase rank and file Baptist participation in convention activities.

The committee is known as the committee on promotion of democracy. Robert G. Witty, Jacksonville minister who urged the convention to study the matter, was named chairman of the group.

Added to its duties are those of being a public affairs committee for the convention.

One suggestion was that, through the establishment of "service committees," pastors and laymen who do not ordinarily have committee appointments could be drawn into the convention's work more closely.

The committee surveyed executive secretaries of state Baptist conventions around the Southern Baptist Convention. They found the secretaries about evenly divided into three categories---for the widened participation as proposed, uncertain that the plan would work, and either opposed or non-committal.

The study, begun after the 1958 Florida Baptist Convention session, will continue through 1960 with a report to that year's convention.

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BAPTIST EDITORS:

If you have not mailed in your ballot for the "Top 10" Southern Baptist Convention stories of 1959, please do so immediately. We will tally them very soon, but we want as many replies as possible before tallying.

BAPTIST PRESS, NASHVILLE OFFICE

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University Of Illinois
Teaching Plan Praised

NASHVILLE--(BP)--A prominent Baptist educator speaking here commended the University of Illinois plan for Bible teaching to college students.

Doak S. Campbell, retired former president of Florida State University, Tallahassee, said the University of Illinois plan offered Bible and religion courses off-campus under the sponsorship of various denominations.

One of the denominations participating in the University of Illinois plan is the Southern Baptist Convention, through what is known as a chair of Bible. The Illinois Baptist State Association recently voted to enlarge facilities for this teaching program, conducted at Champaign where the university is located.

Campbell said that the Illinois plan allows elective credit for courses taught at the religious foundations off-campus. Teachers of courses, however, must meet academic qualifications equal to those of regular university faculty. The course taught must be as strong as comparable level courses taught in the regular university curriculum.

The university, however, does not dictate the content of the course, according to Campbell, as long as these conditions of its scholastic standing are met.

He spoke to secretaries of Baptist student work from states which have affiliation with the Southern Baptist Convention. They assembled in Nashville for a three-day conference conducted by the student department of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

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"Huge numbers of students take these courses," Campbell continued, "usually from a teacher of their own faith." Getting the regular college faculty to accept the program as part of university education activity was cited by Campbell as the "most difficult part."

Before heading a state university, Campbell was an executive of a Baptist college and dean of a leading private university. He is now doing educational consultant work, and recently assisted Louisiana College (Baptist) in a survey of its future student potential.

Campbell described as "not very satisfactory" a plan tried by other state universities for offering religion in their curriculum as a department. "This tends to become sterile," he said. "Some attempt to keep it factual and non-sectarian is maintained by selecting a teacher who has no denominational connection. The men who are most qualified to teach such a course are members of some religious body," he observed.

He said he hoped to initiate at Florida State University a religious foundation program similar to that at the University of Illinois before he retired, but was unable to complete his plans.

In discussion after Campbell's address, student secretaries described similar programs in which Southern Baptists are active at state universities in Missouri, Texas, and New Mexico.

Illinois Baptist State Association has participated in such a program at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale since 1938. Its pattern is very similar to the University of Illinois plan, since both are state-supported schools. The Champaign chair of Bible is relatively new.

New Mexico Baptists have courses available at all their state universities. Neither Illinois nor New Mexico has a Baptist junior or senior college, and both base their entire higher education program on chairs of Bible.

Campbell said there is a distinction between separation of church and state and religious liberty. "These two concepts do not wind up saying there is nothing of religion in the (public) school," he added.

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World Said 'Unmade'
By 'Wrong Teaching'

(12-13-59)

NASHVILLE--(BP)--A global tour has convinced Gaines S. Dobbins, Southern Baptist seminarian, that "wrong teaching and wrong training have unmade our world."

He described his experiences to 350 Baptist state leaders attending a conference sponsored by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board here.

He pointed out that in an age when atheistic materialism has captured half the human race, we face "Christian education or annihilation."

Southern Baptists have a "deep moral obligation to share what we have with the whole world." Baptists in other parts of the world are "eager" to learn of methods and techniques which have made Southern Baptists strong, according to Dobbins.

His global tour was on behalf of the Baptist World Alliance, a fellowship linking the world's 22 million Baptists. For many years, Dobbins headed the school of religious education at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

After retiring from the Louisville seminary, he was asked to teach at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Berkeley, Calif., where he offered courses in church administration.

W. L. Howse, director of the education division of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, offered evidence--by tape recorded messages--of the advance of religious education among Baptists in other countries.

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A New Zealand Baptist leader returned to his country after six months in the United States, saying, "I have found a new way of evangelism and it requires adults to go to Sunday school." Since then, 16 Sunday schools with classes for all ages have been organized.

Australian Baptists said Baptists of America had furnished inspiration and leadership which enabled them to move forward in religious education. "All churches which have used the complete plan have doubled their Sunday school enrolments in one year," a leader said of work in Australia.

The Southern Baptist Convention joins six other Baptist conventions in North America in a year of emphasis on teaching and training starting Jan. 1.

In 1961, these same seven groups will have a year of emphasis on stewardship and enlistment. Merrill D. Moore, Nashville, secretary of stewardship promotion, Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, outlined 1961 plans.

He said the 1961 emphasis will be launched with watch-night services in Baptist churches Dec. 31, 1960. The January, 1961, Bible study week observed in many Southern Baptist churches will be on the theme "I will be faithful." The book of II Corinthians will be studied.