



-- FEATURES

produced by Baptist Press

SBC Executive Committee
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355
W. C. Fields, Director
Robert J. O'Brien, News Editor
James Lee Young, Feature Editor

April 4, 1975

75-53

"Crossroads" Traveler
Finds Christ by Radio

By Bonita Sparrow

ARLINGTON, Tex. (BP)--Doug Stroud figured he had life by the tail with a downhill pull.

He was proud that his brand new Mark IV could outrun local policemen bent on slowing him down as he hurtled through the night, sometimes driving 3500 miles a week, "at 90 miles an hour, listening to the radio to keep awake and praying to the spirits to keep me safe."

Stroud, president of Trans Texas Leasing Inc. here, drove at night to keep business appointments in 13 offices across the country.

He was convinced that a preacher "was the lowest thing on the earth, a missionary was something that crawled under him, and the WMU (Woman's Missionary Union) was just a bunch of cackling old hens," opinions that have since changed.

By his own admission he had a vicious temper and foul mouth.

Today he's equally convinced that "preachers are the finest people in the world, missionaries have a marvelous opportunity, and the WMU is a fabulous organization--my wife is a member and she wouldn't miss a meeting for the world."

His life has changed so drastically that a business friend he hadn't seen in six months stopped in his tracks to demand, "What's happened to you? You're different!"

"God has happened to me," Stroud said. He then gave "Country Crossroads," a Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission radio program major credit for bringing him, and his entire family, to God.

"I had always figured that anybody who was a Christian couldn't make it on his own," Stroud told the Radio and Television Commission's board of trustees recently.

Stroud had come to that conclusion after recognizing at an early age that there is a stronger power.

"I studied a lot of other faiths, looking for a religion. I ended up denying the entire Bible. Then I started working in palm reading, the zodiac, horoscopes, still looking for something."

Horoscopes led to crystal ball gazing--"Satan uses this tool more than anything else"--and Stroud ended up with a Ouija Board that overnight left the fun and games stage and became very real to him and his wife.

"The spirits talked to us through that thing, told us things that came to pass, told us names we had no way of knowing. My wife and I both believed in them, We were through with God."

But God wasn't through with the Strouds.

"It started on those long nights when I had to listen to the radio to keep awake driving," Stroud said.

"I'm a country music fan. When you travel at night in Texas, about the only radio station you can get is WBAP, a country station in Fort Worth. And WBAP has Bill Mack and 'Country Crossroads'."

"Country Crossroads" is produced by the commission and Mack, a regular WBAP disc jockey co-hosts the show with Nashville's LeRoy Van Dyke and Mississippi funnyman Jerry Clower.

--more--

DARGAN-CLEVER LIBRARY
S. B. C. HISTORICAL COMMISSION
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

"I listened to 'Country Crossroads' regularly for more than a year. I'd hear a grown man, like Jerry Clower, and singers that I admired--like Connie Smith and Jeannie C. Riley--telling everybody they were Christians, and glad of it.

"At first it didn't mean much, but after awhile it sank in that these were professional people, like me, who had to wait for the public to make them a living. I never thought you could mix Christianity and business and here these people were, at the top of their professions, not only mixing Christianity and business, but putting Christianity first.

"I decided if they could do it, then there had to be something more to Christianity than just a crutch to lean on."

Receptive, but not convinced, one afternoon Stroud ran into two businessmen in his office building.

"They asked me what I believed and I told them about the spirits. One of them said he didn't believe like that, but he loved me anyway, and he would pray for me.

"About a month later I ran into him again and, in what seemed like 15 minutes but was really 45, he told me how simple it was to be a christian."

That polished the diamond that 'Country Crossroads' had dug from the rough.

"A few nights later I dreamed about my brother--who had died in 1951--and my wife's grandfather who had died recently. They both came to me saying, 'My God is real.' That was 2 a.m., January 24, 1974, and if it was a dream it was as real as looking at someone in the room with you.

"I knew that was my very last chance. I got out of bed and down on my knees and I didn't accept Jesus. I asked him to accept me. And he did. And if it hadn't been for 'Country Crossroads' I never would have given those guys the time of day and I would not be a Christian now.

"Right now, God is chairman of my company's board of directors and I try to go to him with every decision I make. He's led me to a spirit-filled church (Northside Baptist Church in Arlington) where people tell you they love you and they mean it."

Stroud's wife, Carolyn, was not interested in being a Christian. "She didn't speak to me for two weeks because she didn't want to give up the spirits."

Stroud's wife later became a Christian as did their two daughters--Melinda, 10, and Renee, 7.

"There's no way I can ever thank God enough for a show like 'Country Crossroads.'" Stroud said. "It's meant more than life to me and my family and I think it will be a sad day if it's ever taken off the air."

"Country Crossroads" one of six radio programs that Baptists produce through their Radio and Television Commission is aired on 532 stations across the country.

Stroud's story is one of thousands that have come to the Radio and Television Commission because of its programs.

May 18 will be Radio and Television Commission Sunday and Baptists across the country will mark the day with prayer for the ministry and work of the Radio and Television Commission.



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee
480 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355
W. C. Fields, Director
Robert J. O'Brien, News Editor
James Lee Young, Feature Editor

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Orville Scott, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Tex. 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996
MEMPHIS Roy Jennings, Chief, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, Tenn. 38104, Telephone (901) 272-2461
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Gomer Lesch, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 254-5461
RICHMOND Jesse C. Fletcher, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

April 4, 1975

75-53

SBC Giving in 1974-75 Tops
1973-74 at Halfway Point

NASHVILLE (BP)--With six months gone in the 1974-75 fiscal year, the Southern Baptist Convention's national Cooperative Program unified budget is running 8.41 percent ahead of the same point last year.

Churches across 50 states, contributing through 33 regional or state conventions, have given more than \$20.54 million in undesignated funds through the Cooperative Program, as opposed to better than \$18.95 million at the same point in the 1973-74 fiscal year.

That amount does not include an additional \$23.16 million in designated contributions for a total of \$43.7 million in total contributions through the first six months of 1974-75. The combined figure represents a 7.69 percent increase over last year.

The \$20.54 million Cooperative Program figure represents about one third of the amount received by state conventions, which receive about one tenth of contributions from some 34,734 Southern Baptist churches across the nation.

Figures for the month of March, show even greater increases, according to John H. Williams, director of financial planning and assistant to the treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee.

National Cooperative Program receipts this March topped \$3.17 million, a 19.63 percent rise over more than \$2.65 million last March. Combined Cooperative Program and designated receipts in March totaled more than \$7.93 million, or a 20.64 percent rise over more than \$6.57 million collected in March, 1974.

-30-

Mississippi Baptists Name
Vaughn To Program Post

Baptist Press
4/4/75

JACKSON, Miss. (BP)--Chester Vaughn of Nashville has been elected to the newly created post of program director for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, effective June 1.

Under an enlarged organizational structure, adopted by the board in 1974, the program director will supervise departments relating to Mississippi Baptists' programs of evangelism, missions and church program organizations. Areas include Brotherhood, cooperative ministries with National (black) Baptists, cooperative missions, evangelism, student work, church music, church training, Sunday School, church architecture and church administration.

The state's Woman's Missionary Union, an auxiliary to the Mississippi Baptist Convention, will cooperate along with the other departments.

Another new position under the enlarged structure, as yet unfilled, will involve church minister relations, according to Earl Kelly, Mississippi Baptist executive secretary treasurer.

Kelly said continuous inquiries from churches, ministers and other staff members, as well as many other factors, indicate an acute need for the church minister relations service. The service, he said, will provide essentially an information center regarding churches which need pastors and other workers and for ministers and other workers who need help in getting located.

-more-

Vaughn, a native of Trussville, Ala., and a former Mississippian, has been a consultant in Sunday School administration with the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, since 1964.

A graduate of Mississippi College and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, he has served as minister of education in two Mississippi Baptist churches and was employed by the Western Union Telegraph Co., 1942-53, serving as manager of the Pascagoula, Brookhaven and Meridian offices in Mississippi.

-30-

A. H. Reid, Former Alabama
Baptist Leader, Dies at 82

Baptist Press
4/4/75

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (BP)--A. Hamilton Reid, 82, executive secretary of the Alabama Baptist State Convention for 18 years, died here Friday, April 4.

Reid, who retired from the top Alabama Baptist post in 1963, had previously served as pastor of churches in Sylacauga, Ala., and Birmingham, and as vice president of Howard College (now Samford University), Birmingham.

Under his leadership, the work of the Alabama Baptist Convention was expanded in missions, evangelism, teaching, training, stewardship and construction of Baptist facilities and educational institutions.

During that time, Cooperative Program missions gifts from churches in Alabama increased from \$349,000 a year to more than \$3 million.

George E. Bagley, who succeeded Reid as executive secretary said that under Reid's leadership, "Alabama Baptists made their greatest advance and foundations were laid which they will continue to build upon in the future."

A native of Jackson County, Ala., Reid was ordained to preach at the age of 19. He was a graduate of Howard College and of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, where he earned a doctorate in theology.

Among many denominational posts, he was a former president of the Alabama Baptist State Convention.

Survivors include his wife, the former Ruby Vardaman of Andalusia, Ala.; a son Hamilton V. Reid, administrator of Baptist Hospital, Kansas City, Mo., and a daughter, Mrs. Lawrence G. Avery of Chapel Hill, N. C.

Funeral services were held at First Baptist Church, Montgomery, where Reid was a member.

-30-



BAPTIST PRESS

460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

APR 7 1978
HO
LYNN MAY,
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
127 9TH AVE. NO.
NASHVILLE TN 37203