

**WARNING: Contains Graphic Content related to sexual violence.**

# Abigail, a Sexual Abuse Survivor's Mistreatment at a Southern Baptist Institution of Higher Education



*Out of respect for the survivor who bravely came forward to share her nightmare with us, the name in this report has been changed. Each survivor who shared their story was given the choice as to how they would be identified.*

Abigail was a student at a Southern Baptist institution of higher education when she was raped on campus by a male student. When Abigail went to the administration to report the heinous crime and seek help, she was forced to meet with male leadership from the school. Through sobs, Abigail detailed the attack and explained that she had been anally raped. The school leader told Abigail that what happened to her was not in fact rape, because it was not a vaginal penetration. The leader explained that anal rape isn't rape at all so Abigail had nothing to worry about and had no need to report the incident to the police. He said, "Don't worry, he didn't take anything from you. Your future husband will still think you are a virgin." Abigail was told not to tell her pastor or anyone else as they wouldn't understand. Abigail walked out of the leader's office broken and confused, truly believing that she had not been raped.

Recalling the meeting years later, Abigail says, "I can't remember the facial expressions of the male leadership, but I can tell you every detail about their shoes. I couldn't bear to lift my eyes to meet theirs. I felt so much shame."