

COMMITMENT

Jesus has called us to a life of commitment to him and his kingdom. The life of Billy Graham was honored in a most dramatic way for almost a week after his passing on to glory. Several times in the week I got misty eyed as I thought of the great impact he had on so many lives around the world. On my 16th birthday my godly mother gave me a book by him entitled, *World Aflame*. Billy was like a John the Baptist who sought to prepare the world to meet Jesus by preaching repentance.

In the autumn of 1982 I received about 10 orientation tapes from the mission group (Operation Mobilization) that I was planning to join the following summer. One of the tapes was by Billy Graham on the subject of commitment. It was from a message he gave to college students in 1955 at an Urbana Missions Conference. I rate it as a top contender for the most powerful sermon I have ever heard. (other contenders on my list: *Crossing God's Deadline* by Dwight Thompson and *A Christless Pentecost* by David Wilkerson)

Billy Graham lived a life of total commitment to Jesus Christ. He heeded the admonition of the apostle Paul:

Watch your **life** and **doctrine** closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

- 1 Timothy 1:16 NIV

Billy Graham walked honorably in both areas....his life example, and in his teaching. Early on he made sure that his finances were handled honestly and openly. He received a salary and lived modestly, unlike far too many preachers today who brag about their houses, planes etc. One TV evangelist lives in a 30,000 sq. ft house, mainly for show and not for kingdom purposes. Billy lived humbly and sought first the kingdom of God and not his own comforts and pleasure. He sacrificed much as he traveled to over 180 nations to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

Billy not only lived in a Christlike manner, he also stuck to the Bible in his messages. While preaching, he trusted God's Word and often proclaimed... '**The Bible says....**'. He was not guilty of spiritual malpractice as some preachers are today, who only preach what is appealing to satisfy the ears of their hearers. Billy took heed to the apostle Paul's example. 2 Timothy 4:1-5.

I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. - Acts 20:26-27

People sometimes ask me what I think of certain preachers on TV. In regards to some of them, I reply that I have no problem with what they preach but with what they don't preach. They would rather be popular and pleasant rather than prophetic.

Billy Graham did not seek the applause of man but sought to live a life approved unto God.
- 2 Timothy 2:15, Matthew 22:16.

As Billy entered the gates of heaven.....multitudes of people from various tribes around the world were there to welcome him as he entered the glorious city. They were there because they had committed their lives on earth to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord through the preaching of Billy Graham, who was faithful to God's call on his life. He preached commitment and lived it.

All of this transpired, because nearly 2000 years ago, Jesus Christ fully committed himself to do Father God's will in his life, teaching and even unto death on a cross.

Prayer: God, we thank you for the commitment you made to us through Jesus Christ and for the life you lived you through your humble servant Billy Graham. He served his generation well with faithfulness to you. Raise up more leaders who will carry your presence and your Word with boldness to our generation through the power of the Holy Spirit. Work in my life too that I may more fully submit my life to you and your purposes. Thank you Jesus. Amen.

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