

Gospel Singer Remains in Critical Condition After Car Accident

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Founding pastor of Grace Tabernacle Christian Center in Brooklyn, N.Y., Wright was returning home from a Church of God in Christ convention in Detroit when he was hit head-on by a car traveling in the wrong direction. His wife, Betty, 58, who is also the church's co-pastor, died at the scene. His 14-year-old grandson, D. J. Wright, was airlifted to Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, Pa., where he died July 5.

Members of his church gathered for praise and remembrance Sunday, praying for Wright's recovery, the Associated Press (AP) reported. Wright was in critical condition at Geisinger Medical Center, but a hospital spokesman said that he was conscious.

New York music agent Will Bogle told the AP the news was "completely deflating."

"He's been a mentor to me in ways he probably doesn't even know," said Bogle, whose clients include gospel artist Ricky Dillard. "He's a giving man; I've not seen a person more tangible to his church, to his community, to his friends. Everyone I know is deeply touched and saddened."

Considered by many to be the "godfather of gospel music," Wright, 61, has released more than a dozen gospel recordings, including *Jesus, Jesus, Jesus*, which was released last year.

Along with The N.Y. Fellowship Mass Choir, Wright was nominated for a GRAMMY award for best traditional soul gospel album for 1994's *Come Thou Almighty King*.

The couple has five sons.