

5 Principles I Learned From My Friend Myles Munroe

Like you, I was shocked to learn that my long-time friend Myles Munroe, his wife, and others were killed in a tragic plane crash in the Bahamas on Sunday.

I knew and admired Myles since we first met at Oral Roberts University in the 1980s. He was a recent grad, but his Bahamas Faith Ministries International that he founded only a short time earlier already had become successful.

I last saw him in January when he spoke at Morris Cerullo's huge conference in Orlando. I told him I was having a procedure for prostate cancer in the Bahamas later that month. He was a great comfort to me during that time.

Over the years, I brought him in as a consultant for our media company, published several of his many books (three are still in print), had him as a guest in my home, visited his church on numerous occasions in the Bahamas and spent hours talking about the things of God.

He's what I learned from Myles Munroe before he was tragically taken from us:

- **He loved his wife, Ruth, and theirs was an example of what a healthy Christian marriage should look like.** One of the first times I heard him speak, he called her to the podium and told the audience how beautiful, smart and beloved she was, using flowery poetic language that made me wish I could be that romantic in such an elegant way. I learned that saying the right thing at the right time inspires other husbands in a positive way to do the same. Of course my wife is very private, so I'd never invite her to the podium. But, I think Myles' example made me more conscious of how to be more expressive in

how I articulate my deep devotion as a husband. Myles and Ruth seemed to have a wonderful marriage during the three decades I knew them. How sad that they died together in this crash.

- **He taught me about leadership and transition.**

Ironically, Myles was on his way to a conference talking about that very subject when the plane went down. I remember a meal we had at the Atlantis Resort in Nassau in 2001. We sat and talked about how to pick a successor like Jesus. I had never really given any thought to who Jesus' successor would be because Jesus is alive. But as a successor on earth, I suppose I would have said Paul. But Myles said Jesus' successor was Peter—the one on whom Christ built His church. Myles said Jesus asked Peter: "Do you love me?" Always pick someone who loves you to succeed you, he said. Otherwise, your successor will beat your life's work into the ground—something I've never forgotten.

- **He was an example of using his leadership skills to influence.** It inspired me to realize I could also influence those in power—something I had not seen modeled. He brought unity by founding the International Third World Leaders Association, and I have taken steps to work for unity in my own spheres of influence. And I saw that he was well known and respected by the highest levels of leadership in the Bahamas. On two trips, I visited the Bahamian Prime Minister with him. I traveled there with Myles to present a copy of his book *Burden of Freedom*, which I had just published. Since he did everything first class, we had two copies bound with an expensive leather cover to present to the Prime Minister. I remember the date—September 10, 2001. I flew home that night and realized that had my trip been one day later, I would have had to stay in the Bahamas a week when the airports were closed due to the terrorist attacks. In later years, I have been more comfortable as I've visited the White House and other national leaders

because of the model I saw in Myles Munroe.

- **He was an amazing communicator.** Not only did he write more than 40 books, but he also was sought after internationally as a speaker. And when he spoke, he held the audience's attention for long periods of time. I'll never equal him as a speaker, but I learned from what I saw and believe I am a better communicator as a result. (I remember one service I attended lasted four hours, and his message was probably nearly half of that time. One of my friends said there was a reason he was named Myles because his sermons went on for miles and miles).
- **He was a keen thinker with deep insights.** He taught on leadership in practical ways. He emphasized knowing your purpose in sermons and several books. He also understands "the Kingdom of God" in a way few Americans could. As a Bahamian, Myles was used to a system that respected the role of the King and Queen and how the population was subject to them. He felt Americans sometimes felt the church was a democracy like their government. It's not—it's a kingdom and Jesus is King. That has impacted the way I look at the Kingdom.

Please pray for the family he left behind. Imagine the horror of losing not one but two family members in this tragedy. And his ministry must move on, too. The people must be reeling from shock and grief. But, Myles Munroe left a firm foundation. He left leaders in place.

I believe his ministry will go on. His influence will continue for years to come due to the many books he left behind as well as his teaching videos, but mostly by the thousands and perhaps millions he influenced in a very deep way, including me.

Steve Strang is the founding editor and publisher of Charisma. Follow him on Twitter @sstrang or Facebook (stephenestrang).