

Legendary Preacher Charles Stanley Dies At 90

Founder of In Touch Ministries and senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Atlanta for nearly 50 years Charles Stanley died Tuesday at 7:30 a.m. peacefully at his home, his website reported.

Stanley spent 65 years in the ministry, and his website said he modeled his ministry after the apostle Paul's message in Acts 20:24: "Life is worth noting unless I used it for doing the work assigned by me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about God's mighty kindness and love." (TLB)

Stanley is survived by his son, Andy, and daughter, Becky. Andy Stanley is the senior pastor at North Point Ministries, a nondenominational evangelical Christian church with several campuses across the north metro Atlanta area.

The church released a statement on Stanley's death, saying:

"Our hearts are deeply saddened by the passing of Dr. Charles Stanley. In this time of loss, we are comforted in knowing that his faith has now become sight. The glories of heaven are now his, a reality he taught us and millions of others around the world throughout his years of faithful preaching."

On Facebook, In Touch Ministries posted:

"Dear In Touch Family, this morning at the age of 90, God called our beloved pastor, Dr. Charles Frazier Stanley, home to heaven. Dr. Stanley lived a faithful life of obedience, dedicated to teaching others how to have an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. Now he is receiving the joy of his soul—seeing his Savior face-to-face.

Stanley received his call to ministry at age 14, and received a Bachelor of Divinity at Southwestern Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He later went on to earn the distinctions of Master and Doctor of Theology from Luther Rice Seminary in Atlanta.

Before coming to First Baptist Atlanta, Stanley served as pastor of several smaller churches, including: Before joining the staff of First Baptist Atlanta, Stanley served as pastor of Fruitland Baptist near Hendersonville, North Carolina (1957–1959); First Baptist of Fairborn, Ohio (1959–1962); First Baptist of Miami, Florida (1962–1968); and First Baptist of Bartow, Florida (1968). Stanley would become associate pastor of First Baptist Church of Atlanta on Oct. 1, 1969 according to his website.

Two years later, on Oct. 1, 1971, Stanley assumed his longtime role as senior pastor of First Baptist Atlanta. The following year, he launched his foray into broadcast ministry with a 30-minute program, “The Chapel Hour,” on two local television stations.

“The Chapel Hour” was renamed “In Touch with Dr. Charles Stanley” and went nationwide in 1978. The broadcast grew from 16,000 local viewers to a national audience in just one week and led to the expansion of Stanley’s ministry in 1982, called In Touch Ministries.

Stanley’s messages were heard in more than 1 million households and were translated into 127 languages around the world. Stanley was America’s longest-serving pastor with a continuous weekly broadcast program.

Stanley served two terms as president of the Southern Baptist Convention, in 1985 and 1986. In 1988, he was inducted into the National Religious Broadcasters Hall of Fame for the consistent excellence of his broadcast and leadership in the realm of Christian TV and radio.

 The long-time preacher focused his messages on practical, Christ-centered, biblically based principles for every day life. He believed, as he often said, that people are to “obey God and leave all of the consequences to Him.”

Greg Laurie, senior pastor of Harvest Christian Fellowship in California, posted this on Facebook Tuesday: “Charles Stanley went to Heaven today. He made his mark on this world for the gospel and his incredible teaching of God’s Word. I like so many others was blessed by hearing his messages on the radio and TV and he was a trusted voice we have all been encouraged by. It was my privilege to meet Dr. Stanley in person in Charlotte, North Carolina at the funeral for Billy Graham. He was warm and gracious. No doubt, he has already heard Jesus say, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your Lord.’ Charles Stanley will be greatly missed.”

Please join us in praying for the entire Stanley family. {eo}

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