

Franklin Graham: Pastor Chuck Smith Was My Friend

Editor's Note: Franklin Graham, president and CEO of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Samaritan's Purse, has issued the following statement:

Pastor Chuck Smith was my friend. He preached his last sermon from a wheelchair this past Sunday. Physical death ushered him into God's presence for eternity on Oct. 3, but his earthly ministry will be remembered as impacting generations since the 1960s. He taught the Bible from cover to cover—Genesis to Revelation—and verse by verse multiple times. He believed the Word of God and lived by it.

For the last several decades when I traveled to Southern California, Pastor Chuck always took time to share a meal with me and fellowship over what the Lord was doing. I was with him this summer and had the privilege of preaching for him at his pastors' conference and in a special crusade sponsored by Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, Calif.

He will be missed, but for those who know Christ as Savior, we have the same hope Chuck wrote about in his book *Comfort for Those Who Mourn*, when he stated, "One day I will move out of my body and into God's dwelling that Jesus has prepared for me—this is Living Hope." There is no greater comfort than to know that my friend's incredible journey through life led him to heaven.