

Jews for Jesus Responds to False Assertion That Billy Graham Opposed Jewish Evangelism

In a Religion News Service story yesterday, A. James Rudin, senior interreligious affairs adviser for the American Jewish Committee, included Billy Graham as a prominent Christian leader who stood against the evangelization of the Jewish people.

"This could not be further from the truth," responded David Brickner, executive director of Jews for Jesus.

Jean Graham Ford (Billy Graham's sister) in response said, "My brother believed that the gospel was for everyone."

Brickner commented, "I think it's fair to assume that 'everyone' includes my Jewish people."

The RNS piece also cited the recent (July) removal of a prayer in the liturgy of the Anglican Church of Canada calling for the conversion of Jewish people as evidence that this is a trend among Christians. This particular synod is not representative of Anglicanism worldwide. Rev. Dr. Stephen Abbott, former church consultant for evangelism and discipleship for the Anglican diocese of Sydney, Australia, said, "I am disheartened to hear that there are denominations and churches closing off evangelism to the Jewish people. As an Anglican, I'm totally committed to the work of evangelism including Jewish people, for Jesus is their Messiah."

Other noted Christian leaders have publicly stated their support for Jewish evangelism as well:

Joni Eareckson-Tada, Christian author and founder of Joni and Friends: "God loves the Jewish people, and the best way to show His love is to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with them."

John Piper, well-known evangelical preacher and writer: "I see it (sharing Christ with Jewish people) as obedience to Jesus and as the very embodiment of the love of Christ for lost sinners like me. 'Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life' (1 John 5:12)."

Brickner concluded, "While some would like to portray Jewish evangelism efforts as 'inappropriate' or at best 'futile,' we are seeing more and more Jewish people seriously considering Jesus as their Messiah."