

Pastor Jack Hayford Was the Pentecostal Gold Standard

Read Time: 3 minutes

I was interviewed once about Jack Hayford and made the comment that he was the Pentecostal Gold Standard. Christianity Today put Hayford on the cover and to my surprise they used my phrase in the headline. It was true in 2005 when Hayford was 71.

It was even more true in the years since. When he passed away on Sunday, Jan. 6, 2023, it's true that he finished strong. There was never a hint of scandal. He left a legacy of founding The Kings University, he wrote dozens of books and composed 500 songs including "Majesty," one of the most sung songs of our generation. He was widely known and admired and best known Foursquare pastor since the founder Amie Semple McPherson.

Many leaders are writing tributes because he impacted the entire charismatic church but he also touched many leaders on a personal basis. I was one of them. I was very close to him and I'm grieving his passing.

We had a professional relationship that developed into our publishing five of his books; he was "senior editorial advisor" for Ministry Today magazine for more than a decade and I served on the board of The Kings University (which he founded) for nearly 20 years.

Over the years he became a mentor and in many ways my pastor even though he lived 2500 miles away. My wife and I considered he was the "spiritual covering" for Charisma Media. We ran all major decisions by him. (Today I was reflecting that during the 30-year period we considered Hayford "pastor" that my wife and I attended four different churches locally. Two of those pastors left the ministry and two of the churches ultimately closed. We are glad that Pastor Jack gave stability to our lives as we led this publishing media ministry.)

Obviously we had a very close and long relationship.

I met Hayford in passing at the huge charismatic conference in Kansas City in 1977 when he was just emerging as a national leader and Charisma was two years old. I arranged to meet him between services at his Church on the Way in Van Nuys, California a year or two later when I was on a business trip. Later, Hayford was on the cover of Charisma telling the incredible story of how a small Foursquare church in the San Fernando valley outside Los Angeles had exploded to where it attracted movie stars and thousands of others who were hungry for the fullness of the Holy Spirit and sitting under Hayford's incredible teaching gift.

On my "Strang Report" podcast, I tell stories about my relationship with "Pastor Jack" and even how that first meeting between services was in a small room where he had a chair and small refrigerator and he could rest waiting for the next service. It was also where they kept the brooms. That let me see that he was humble. (He also confronted me about something one of my editors did that he didn't like. But he did it graciously and I was able to correct the problem).

Fast forward five years. We started Ministry Today magazine. Hayford wrote in the first issue and interacted with me in many ways over the years. When Jamie Buckingham who was the editor passed away prematurely in 1992 of cancer, Hayford agreed to step into a leadership role for 18 months just to help me and the magazine with the transition. Ministry Today became a platform for Hayford, and he stayed in the role 18 years.

As time passed, Hayford felt the Lord tell him to found a seminary, which he did, and he invited me and others to serve on that first board. The Kings Seminary morphed into The Kings University and has moved from Los Angeles to the Dallas, Texas area and is connected to Gateway Church, pastored by Robert Morris. When I was on the board I saw Pastor Jack when I

attended two board meetings a year. But he also visited our offices in the Orlando, Florida, area at least annually. We also helped start what became the School of Pastoral Nurture.

Our obituary lists his many accomplishments. My “Strang Report” podcast was my paying him tribute and also sharing memories.

Not only was he one of the greatest men, but he was one of the greatest leaders of the Pentecostal movement. He influenced many people and was considered a mentor and powerful force within the church. From the Roman Catholic church all the way to traditional Pentecostals he was well-known and respected.

Hayford ministered all over the world and I had the privilege of ministering alongside him in Israel and other places around the world. I’m grateful to have the opportunity to say a few words about his life. Everyone has a story about how Jack Hayford has affected their lives. Thank you for reading mine.

To take a look at some of Pastor Jack Hayford’s books click [here](#). {eo}

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