

BREAKING: Prominent Writer, Publisher Neil Eskelin Dies

Neil Eskelin, a prominent writer and publisher who was well-known in charismatic circles, died Aug. 21. He was 80 years old.

“He never had a hint of scandal, and he was a real role model,” says Stephen Strang, founder of Charisma Media, which owns this website. “Neil was one of CBN’s first employees and a key executive at PTL in the mid-1980s. He made a huge impact with his many books. When I last saw him in Jerusalem in 2015, I had a wonderful time reminiscing with him and his wife, Anne, who has a crazy sense of humor. I considered him a close friend and in my own way, I’m grieving his passing.”

Eskelin was involved with more than 200 books with more than 4 million copies sold. Major publishing houses including Thomas Nelson, Fleming H. Revell, John Wiley & Sons, Hachette Book Group and Penguin/Random House published the books.

“So many of God’s greats are going home. One of our closest friends passed last night,” televangelist Jim Bakker says.

“Our good friend, kingdom warrior Neil Eskelin, went to be with the Lord today at 5:31 p.m. in Charlotte, North Carolina. He had a stroke in May and struggled ever since,” Ossie Mills, executive director of Empowered21, says. “Neil had a way with words. As an author he used the pen to lift the spirit of millions. He was a kingdom warrior, and the body of Christ will benefit from his manuscripts and nuances to Scripture for generations to come. As my friend, he was a present mentor in the center of life’s storms. I will miss him.”

Eskelin founded LifeBridge Books in 2003. His own books, including *Yes Yes Living in a No No World*, *The 24-Hour Turn-Around*, *Leaders Are Lovers* and *101 Promises Worth Keeping*, have sold more than 1 million copies and have been translated

into many languages.

He served as Benny Hinn's writing consultant for more than 15 years.

Eskelin was born in Detroit in 1938. He graduated from Ohio State in 1961 with a master's degree in communications.

In 1963, Eskelin joined Pat Robertson's CBN as the first employee, where he directed and hosted on-air programs.

Eskelin also spent time in academia, serving as a faculty member for multiple universities, including Evangel University, North Dakota State University and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

In 1966 he married Anne Brewster in Cardiff, Wales. They have one son, Ian, a Grammy-nominated Christian music producer who lives with his family in Nashville, Tennessee.

One of Ian's songs—"Just Say Jesus," which 7eventh Time Down recorded—was playing on the radio at the hospice Eskelin was taken to last week. The hospice worker asked Anne and Ian to listen to the words. Ian said, "I wrote that song."

"Neil Eskelin had a huge impact on my life when I was a neophyte writer," says Strang. "I knew his parents and knew him since I was a teenager. They were wonderful people, and Neil was one of the most positive people I've ever known.

Recently, Eskelin wrote a new history of Oral Roberts University titled *The New ORU*.

"I felt it was important to capture this crucial cornerstone of ORU's rich legacy," Eskelin said in January. "It was a work of love for Oral Roberts, for the university he built and for the future of this great institution."

ORU President Dr. William M. Wilson praised Eskelin and his work on *The New ORU*.

“Neil Eskelin was a wonderful ambassador for Christ’s kingdom on earth,” he says. “His gracious spirit and exceptional giftedness as a writer and editor will be missed by us all. Neil was a true servant who worked in anonymity for many years helping others produce amazingly successful books while he rarely took any of the credit. His contributions to the Spirit-empowered movement around the world will long outlive him and surely be rewarded in abundant ways throughout eternity. One of Neil’s last significant works was his book published earlier this year called *The New ORU: Empowered for the 21st Century*. He did an exceptional job of capturing the miraculous story of ORU’s redemption and resurgence over the last decade. Neil’s thorough research into our recent history and his upbeat writing style make this a volume that will be highly treasured in the ORU community for many years to come.”