

Calvary Chapel Movement Backs Billy Graham's 'My Hope'

It's been nearly 50 years since the Calvary Chapel movement began in a trailer park in Southern California.

In late 1965, Chuck Smith founded Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, which sparked a movement that is now more than 1,500 churches throughout the U.S., including more than 100 in Southern California.

But another Jesus movement has started to make its way around the U.S., and last month My Hope America With Billy Graham intersected with Calvary Chapel at its annual pastor's conference in Southern California.

And the excitement is starting to swell.

"That is brilliant," was Skip Heitzig's initial thought.

"My Hope is such a natural method of sharing the gospel and bringing people the life-changing message of Jesus Christ," says Heitzig, pastor of Calvary Albuquerque. "I call this method of sharing the gospel message 'natural evangelism.'"

Franklin Graham, president of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, shared with Calvary Chapel pastors the vision of My Hope America, which has seen more than 17,000 churches across the nation get involved.

"My father [Billy Graham] has a burden for this country, and it's called My Hope America," he said. "We're asking people to make a list of their unsaved friends and family and start praying."

Franklin Graham outlined the program, which uses relationship evangelism in a living room setting to share Christ. A special *My Hope America* program will air on Billy Graham's 95th

birthday, Nov. 7, which will feature life-changing testimonies and classic and current messages from Mr. Graham.

At the end of the 30-minute program, the *My Hope* home host—known as a “Matthew” (from Luke 5:27-31)—will share a brief testimony and ask family, friends or neighbors to make a commitment to Christ.

“We’ve done this in 57 countries,” says Franklin Graham of the outreach that has seen more than 10 million recorded salvations. “And it’s the most successful evangelistic outreach in the history of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.”

Bob Coy, pastor of Calvary Chapel Fort Lauderdale, one of the 10 largest congregations in the U.S., was one of the early My Hope America supporters, hosting a training event for South Florida pastors in early March.

“I believe it will be nationally an event where we see hundreds of thousands of people take that step into the kingdom because this tool, My Hope, is an amazing tool,” Coy said in his opening remarks in March.

Coy’s quick endorsement of My Hope America came when he realized it is a relationship evangelism program and about reaching the lost already in a person’s circle.

“One thing that truly fuels my excitement is the fact that My Hope America is leveraging the dynamic of personal relationships,” Coy says. “God works through the medium of relationships, and I know He will work mightily through My Hope America because it’s based on believers in Christ connecting with others on a personal and relational level.”

Heitzig had the same initial reaction about My Hope America. “Scripture confirms that sharing the gospel person to person, house to house is a highly effective method for evangelism,” he says.

As far as a video program being the primary method of sharing Christ? Heitzig can share a firsthand experience.

“One day I was sitting alone in my brother’s apartment in San Jose, watching television, when I felt compelled to stop and watch a Billy Graham crusade,” he says. “The gospel message penetrated my soul.”

But a living room as a place of evangelism?

Absolutely.

“I actually surrendered my own life to Jesus in the living room of my brother, Jim,” Coy says. “So I think it’s right to say that a living room is on par with any church as far as being a place where people can come to Christ.”

[Click here to read the original story at .](#)