

# T.D. Jakes Says Zachery Tims 'Unhappy' Before Death

More than 5,000 people attended the Saturday funeral of Zachery Tims, the Orlando, megachurch pastor found dead in a New York City hotel room on Aug. 12.

Bishop T.D. Jakes, founder of The Potter's House, a 30,000-member church in Dallas, offered a eulogy for Tims. Although the media was not allowed inside, the *Orlando Sentinel* reported that Jakes talked about how unhappy Tims was.

"I thought I was the only one who knew how unhappy Zach was, how broken he was, how afraid he was if anybody was to see any flaw in him," Jakes said. "He tried hard to heal himself, to fix himself ... I don't know what happened in that room in New York, but I can only hope that as Zach was dying, Dr. Tims stood up."

Jakes was referring to the two sides of Tims: Zach, an imperfect man, and Dr. Tims, a caring spiritual leader who helped imperfect people.

"Zach had a way of acting like he was your kid," Jakes said. "He would come into your house and go straight for the refrigerator. You couldn't say anything, because he'd bust that big old grin on you."

Jakes eulogy referenced scriptures in which God called Himself the "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." He went on to explain that Abraham and Isaac were known for their good deeds, but Jacob was known as a trickster—widely remembered for stealing his inheritance from his older brother. Even though Jacob was later redeemed and given a new name—Israel— to signify his change, Jakes highlighted that God still said that He was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, not Israel. Jakes also pointed out that God is the God of those whose faithfulness

was publicly acknowledged, such as Abraham, and those whose mistakes were historically recorded like Jacob's.

"If He is a God of Jacob, than He is a God of Zachery Tims," he said.

The three-hour service was held at First Baptist of Orlando. Tims' ex-wife, Riva, also spoke at the funeral. Riva started New Destiny Christian Center with Tims in 1996. The church grew to about 8,000 members. Riva divorced Tims in the wake of infidelity.

"Forty-two years may seem young, but in those 42 years he circled the earth many times. In those 42 years he achieved goals few could imagine," the *Orlando Sentinel* reported Riva saying. "Let us not forget what he has accomplished."

Jakes issued a statement on his Facebook page after the funeral. The bishop said his hope is that believers everywhere will continue to lift the Tims family up in prayer. He also suggested believers pray that the "the right decisions are made" in the aftermath of Tims' death.

Tims' death remains under police investigation. Toxicology reports are pending after police discovered a plastic bag containing a white substance, the *Wall Street Journal* reported.