

Billy Graham Saw Decline in Our Country in 1952

Today is Billy Graham's 95th birthday. We congratulate him by sharing with you some things we've written about his ministry over the years.

Shown here is Billy Graham on the cover of *Christian Life* magazine in November 1952, in which he urged Christians to be involved by voting in what he said was one of the most important presidential elections in history because of the moral decline of our country.

It was the first time Billy Graham was on the cover of *Christian Life* magazine. He was 34 at the time. He was interviewed by 40-year-old Robert Walker, the founder of *Christian Life* and Graham's lifelong friend. Robert "Bob" Walker was my mentor, and I continued the work of *Christian Life* magazine and its other publishing entities in 1986. For many years, our magazine was called *Charisma and Christian Life*. In many ways, our media company is a continuation of Bob Walker's work. (He died in 2008 at age 96.)

In going through the archives, it was interesting to see what Billy Graham told *Christian Life* in 1952: "I do not believe there has ever been a time even in the days prior to the Civil War that we as Americans have gone to the polls with greater issues than those at stake in the upcoming election."

Later he said, "In our foreign policy we have forgotten that men are spiritual and moral creatures. Hence, when we make a materialistic approach, we will get only a materialistic answer. ... Instead of sending only material aid to foreign countries we should send spiritual help as well. There is this great spiritual vacuum abroad that we are doing nothing to fill."

Later he said, "The reason the Western world is failing now, in my opinion, is because the church has failed. If the church had been aggressive and dynamic and strong and members of the church had been living holy, satisfied, separated lives, producing the fruit of the Spirit, we would not be in the economic mess we're in today."

You can read the entire text article by clicking [here](#). You can see a PDF of what the black-and-white layouts looked like back then by clicking [here](#). It's a glimpse into the past, and it shows that the moral decay we face today is really a continuation of something that's been going on a long time.

In 2005, we put Billy Graham on the cover of *Charisma* and did a story about his career at a time he was winding down his ministry in terms of large outdoor crusades. You can read that [here](#).

However, this month the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association is having one of the greatest evangelistic outreaches in its history. It's called My Hope With Billy Graham, and you can read about it [here](#). It is timed to coincide with Graham's 95th birthday, but it is an outreach they believe will have a greater impact than ever before. I urge you to participate.

I am proud of the long connection we have had with Billy Graham and his ministry, going all the way back to Robert Walker and *Christian Life*. We have cooperated on many things with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and have covered their ministry many times. If you are a history buff, as I am, you will enjoy reading not only our 1952 article but also the one in 2005.

Thank God for the life and legacy of Billy Graham. Leave your comments on how Billy Graham has impacted your life.

Steve Strang is the founder and publisher of *Charisma*. Follow him on Twitter at @sstrang or Facebook (stephenestrang).