

Calvary Chapel Founder Chuck Smith Loses Lung Cancer Battle

Pastor Chuck Smith, who initiated the rise of Calvary Chapel movement of “Jesus People” that was featured in *Time* magazine in the 1960s, passed away Thursday at age 86 after a long battle with lung cancer.

Smith began pastoring at Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, Calif., in 1965, and was known for his less formal and contemporary approach to worship and church services. His ministry continued to grow until his death. In 2012, after he announced to his congregation he had been diagnosed with lung cancer, Smith established a 21-member leadership council to oversee the Calvary Chapel Association, a fellowship of more than 1,600 congregations in the U.S. and worldwide.

He was lauded for bridging the “generation gap” that existed during the Vietnam War era and was popular among the “hippie” culture, embracing the teachings of Christ and the Bible while shunning the traditional denominational ideology of the church.

Smith often conducted outreaches on the beaches of California and performed baptisms in the Pacific Ocean.

He was the author of several books, including *Why Grace Changes Everything*, *Charisma vs. Charismania*, *Effective Prayer Life* and *The Final Act*.

Smith’s ministry didn’t come without controversy. In his 1978 book *End Times*, Smith predicted that the world would end by 1981. In his book *Future Survival*, he said, “[I] could be wrong, but it’s a deep conviction in my heart and all my plans are predicated on that belief.”

When the world didn't end in 1981, many followers left his church.

In 1971, Smith helped to launch Maranatha! Music, a nonprofit outreach of Calvary Chapel composed of hymns and worship songs with a folk-rock style. Maranatha! is still alive today and distributed under Warner Music Entertainment.