

We Remember Don Nori's Life and Passion to 'Publish the Prophets'

Don Nori Sr. had a single mission when he started Destiny Image Publishers in 1983: "to publish the prophets." He never varied from that vision, and now his son Don Jr. is carrying it on. Don Sr. died Tuesday at age 66. His funeral is Saturday in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.

Don and I had been friends since the mid-1980s. Even though some might say we were competitors in the publishing business, we were never competitive, and he was always honorable in all my dealings with him. (Destiny Image has also been a good customer with advertising for their books in both *Charisma* and *Christian Retailing*.)

He left a great legacy, not only in the Christian publishing industry, but also in the kingdom of God. He would "publish the prophets" when no one else would take a risk on writers such as:

- **Bishop T.D. Jakes**, who wrote the huge best-seller that launched his writing career, *Woman, Thou Art Loosed*. The book presented a vision of deliverance, freedom and empowerment for women that is absolutely timeless.
- **Tommy Tenney**, who was unknown until he wrote *God Chasers*, a book you could not read without becoming deeply stirred to pursue more of God at any cost. The book gave generational permission to pursue His presence above all else.
- **Bishop Bill Hamon**, whose books Don published before there was a stream formally recognized as the "prophetic movement." Hamon's initial books on the subject matter drew controversy, yes, but even more so, they gave

believers permission to prophesy, operate as prophets and, later on, function as apostles.

- **Bill Johnson**, who wrote a book published by Destiny Image called *When Heaven Invades Earth* that dared to suggest that all believers, filled with the Holy Spirit, could operate in lifestyles of signs, wonders and miracles.
- **Dr. Myles Munroe**, whose radical message of rediscovering the kingdom reshaped how a generation understood the gospel. Yes, it's a gospel of salvation, but it's also the gospel of the kingdom.

Don died unexpectedly after emergency heart surgery the same week he was planning a mission trip to Africa.

Last week, six days before he died, Don mentored Larry Sparks, publisher of Destiny Image, at a restaurant near their Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, headquarters, by “lovingly confronting me with how a servant of the Lord could not help but see beyond where we were presently operating,” Larry wrote in a touching tribute:

One functioning in the New Testament office of a prophet ever hears the roar of the ‘not yet,’ and summons the body of Christ to cry out for, explore and, ultimately, enter these new realms. ...

Don Nori was not simply interested in Christians getting to a ‘place’ with the Lord. Granted, the places we go to are important and play valuable roles in shaping us. For Don, that was not the end goal, though. Buildings, events, conferences—all good, but not the goal. He so yearned to see sons and daughters of God become the place of habitation for the Spirit’s manifest presence. Book after book, message after message, one of the resounding cries of Pastor Don’s heart was for the body of Christ to ‘behold who you have become—and become who you already are!’ He called us to really catch a glimpse of what we had become through the

redemptive work of Jesus—sons and daughters of God and heirs of an increasing, advancing kingdom. Furthermore, Pastor Don challenged us to step out and actually live like the sons and daughters God said we were.”

In that last conversation, Don also counseled Larry “about identifying new authors, the prophetic pioneers and forerunners who are carrying a message that is, perhaps, slightly ahead of its time.” Larry added: “I am grateful to serve as publisher for Destiny Image and do whatever I can to help steward Pastor Don’s vision. I love the fact that since its inception, Destiny Image has intentionally pursued unknown authors who carried a message from heaven.”

The day his father died, I reached out to Don Jr. to give my condolences. He sent me his own wonderful tribute to his dad.

“My father, Don Nori Sr., was a man filled with love for others. Love flowed into him, through him, and out again in a magnified way,” Don Jr. wrote me. “He exemplified the love of Jesus. Loving God and others is what life is really about. No matter who you are or what you do, it comes down to whether you’ll live a life of love or not. And there is a big difference between these. One is priceless and one meaningless. Jesus said that life’s greatest command is to love God with all you are and to love your neighbor as yourself. Don Nori Sr. embraced a life of love. It is his example that taught me what real love is and helped me to become a loving person.”

The last time I saw Don Sr. was at one of the Christian galas the week of Donald Trump’s inauguration. Interestingly, Don was one of the first people I personally knew who had supported Donald Trump. I even wrote about him in my book *God and Donald Trump*, quoting an op-ed I had invited him to write for Charisma online in October 2015.

Someone had sent me link to a YouTube video in which several

Christian leaders were praying for candidate Trump, including Don. I contacted him and asked if he would be willing to write about why he supported Trump. Even though it would be more than six months before I got on the Trump train, I felt our readers needed to know why these Christian leaders were backing the New York billionaire—who most people thought had no chance of winning the nomination, let alone the presidency.

The words Don wrote were strangely prophetic: “We the people have found our voice, and we intend to use it to shape the conversation, not to conform to another’s view of our country or our faith.”

He went on to list what he saw as evidence of Trump’s belief in Jesus Christ, not because of the litmus tests many denominations employ but because of his simple faith. “He believes Jesus is His Savior, reads his Bible and prays every day. He is pro-life, wants to defund Planned Parenthood and will stop the persecution of believers here in America.” He wrote that his favorite quote of Trump’s was “Christianity is under attack. It’s time for Christians to stand up for themselves. I’ll stand up for Christianity.”

Don’s family has put together a wonderful tribute video that is worth watching.

I thank God for the life and legacy of Don Nori Sr. I hope when you read a Destiny Image book that blesses you, you will think of Don and thank God for him too.