

Will Graham: Lessons I Learned From My Grandfather, Billy Graham

There are many things that a grandfather can leave for his grandson. For instance, the grandson may carry his grandfather's looks, **legacy** or worldview. He may even receive his possessions.

For me, when I sit and contemplate my grandfather, **Billy Graham**, I think that one of the greatest gifts he has given me in his twilight years is something more subtle. He's given me a lesson.

In Paul's second letter to Timothy, he writes an inspirational sentence that most of us know well: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4:7, ESV). I can't help but think about that verse when I think about my grandfather.

You see, this wonderful and godly man who turns 95 today—not just loved by me, his grandson, but loved by so many around the world—is constantly teaching me an amazing lesson, and that lesson is how to finish well.

For six decades he traveled the world telling people in 185 countries and territories across six continents about the love and hope that can be found in a relationship with **Jesus Christ**. Over the course of his ministry, marathons of **preaching** blended together to the point where he was on the road for months at a time. He'd hold events that lasted week after week, just to pick up and begin another outreach soon after.

My grandfather did all of this for one simple reason: He had a love and a burden for people and has always desperately wanted

them to know the same hope for **eternity** that he has.

About eight and a half years ago, in June 2005, my grandfather held the last of his iconic Billy Graham crusades. At 86 years of age, he took the stage on three blistering hot days at Flushing Meadows, N.Y., to preach his final event.

He could have gone home after that and spent his remaining days contemplating a life well spent. Maybe—if his body was strong enough—he could have returned to some of those distant locations where he **preached** as a younger man, but this time for leisure and enjoyment.

But he's never really done either of those things. Why? It's because that burden and burning that God put in his heart more than a half-century ago still rages today. Though his body has weakened, his passion for the gospel has not.

For this reason, after his "retirement," he has gone on to preach at a couple of my father's events (including one in New Orleans following the tragedy of Hurricane Katrina); he has written multiple books; and he has prepared a new message to share. This message, titled **The Cross**, has already been recorded and was released this week as the focal point of a massive ministry outreach called **My Hope America With Billy Graham**.

To me, my grandfather's urgency to preach the gospel one more time to a lost and dying world is the definition of finishing well, and it's such a blessing and lesson.

While many of us know the verse I mentioned above, it's also worth looking at the verses surrounding it: "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing" (2 Tim.

4:6-8).

One day my grandfather's "time of departure" will come. Until then, we're cherishing him and the lessons he continues to teach us. He's fighting the good fight, he's finishing the race, and he's keeping the faith. He's ready for eternity. He's finishing well.

Click [here](#) to check your local television listings so you can watch Billy Graham's **final message**, *The Cross*.

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