Jan. 21, 2018—I never met Dr. Billy Graham, but so many of my friends and former colleagues have that I feel like I have. I certainly have in spirit.

In 1945, my father as a 19-year old U.S. Army soldier in the occupation force, helped start a Youth For Christ (YFC) orphanage for Japanese children who had lost their families after the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs. Billy Graham had become YFC’s first evangelist the year before.

In late 1973, my wife Nancy and I joined the Gospel music group Living Sound. Living Sound had just completed a concert tour in South Africa a few months earlier where they had sung in Dr.
Graham’s groundbreaking Durban, South Africa Crusade. They also toured with Andrea Crouch and the Disciples. The tour with Andrea Crouch helped break the stranglehold of apartheid. It was the first fully integrated Gospel concert tour in South Africa’s history. No doubt Billy Graham’s influence was instrumental in making it happen.

The day after the Durban rally, the city’s main newspaper ran the headline, “APARTHEID DOOMED.” Graham wrote of the trip in Just As I Am, “I left South Africa convinced that apartheid was un-Christian and unworkable. ... A start had been made, and for that we thanked God.” https://youtu.be/HTHxivBCahA

From The Billy Graham Story by Revd Dr John Charles Pollock. Zondervan (1985)
The father of one of our dearest friends, the late baritone Tim Hoover (Indianapolis, IN), attended seminary with Cliff Barrows, Billy’s lifelong music director.

After our groundbreaking openings in the Soviet Union (1979-1983) when I was Living Sound’s European Director, Dr. Graham followed up on our work with a 12-day visit to Moscow, Leningrad, Tallinn, and Novosibirsk. He worshipped with Russian Orthodox Patriarch Pimen I in a Moscow liturgy, and preached in a number of the churches with whom we had worked.


https://singingrevolution.com/

Dr. Graham’s faithfulness to a simple, straightforward Gospel message was unmistakable. It has been a
clarion call for me my entire life.

We pray that Dr. Graham’s family will be comforted at this time of Billy’s passage, but know that their sorrow is certainly also joy, since Dr. Graham’s passing is just a transition in his eternal journey where he now joins the Great Cloud of Witnesses who are cheering us on as we run the race of life:

Hebrews 12 New International Version (NIV)

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.

God bless you all,

Michael McKibben
Founder and CEO
Leader Technologies, Inc.

https://americans4innovation.blogspot.com

https://aim4truth.org/

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