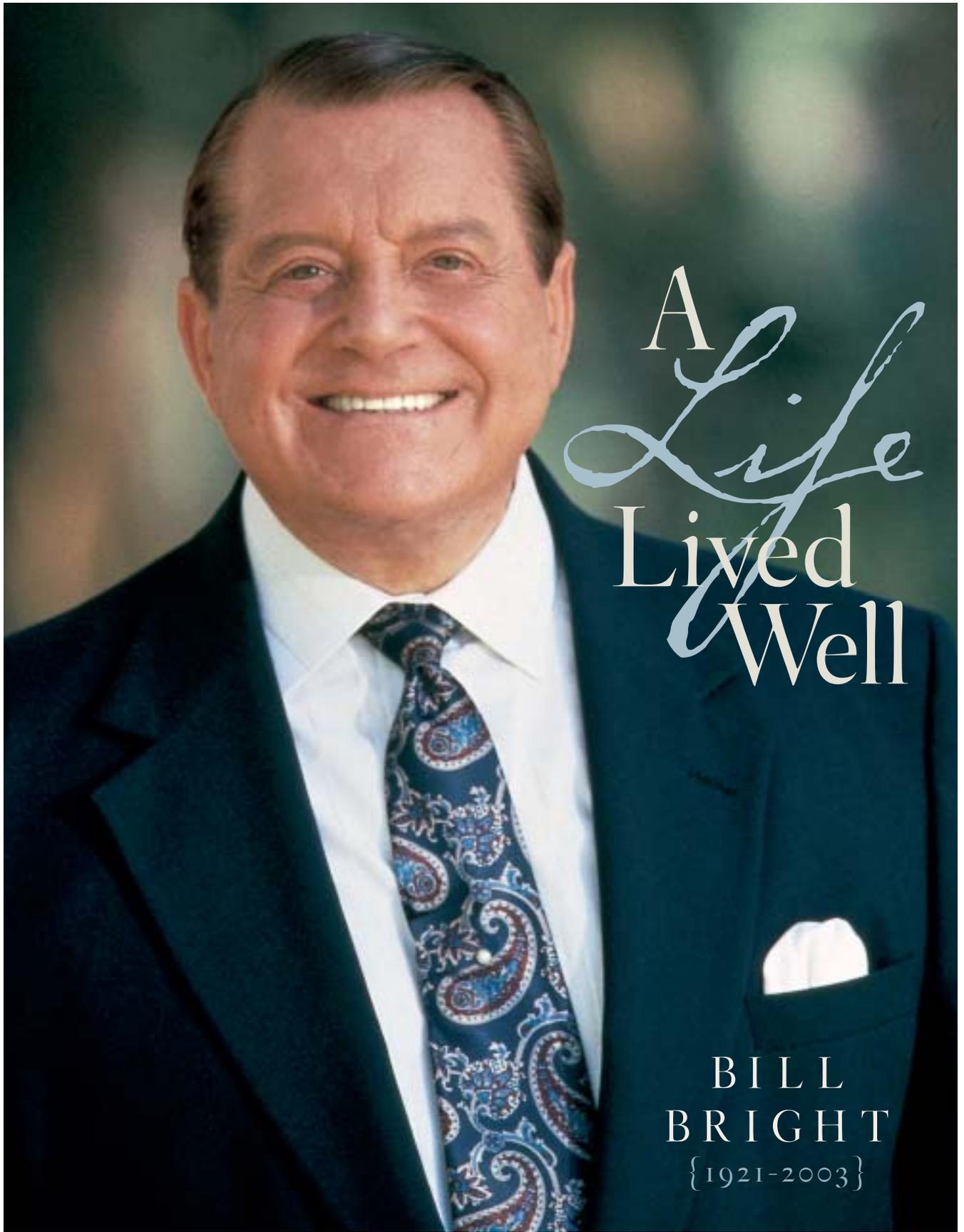


A F A R E W E L L T R I B U T E



A  
*Life*  
Lived  
Well

BILL  
BRIGHT  
{1921-2003}

“Bill has carried a burden on his heart as few men that I’ve ever known—a burden for the evangelization of the world. He was a man whose sincerity and integrity and devotion to our Lord have been an inspiration and a blessing to me ever since the early days of my ministry. In international leadership circles, [Bill and Vonette] have been the hands who held high the Christian’s challenge to fulfill the Great Commission. I do believe if that is fulfilled, it will be due in significant measure to the vision and obedience of Bill Bright.”

**REV. BILLY GRAHAM**

BILLY GRAHAM EVANGELISTIC ASSOCIATION

“We have deeply appreciated the consistency and dedication of Bill and Vonette Bright, who have never wavered in their love and commitment to Jesus Christ. They have kept their lives above reproach and have been marvelous role models for us all.”

**SHIRLEY DOBSON**

CHAIRPERSON, NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

“During my term as President, I often said that there can be no definition of a successful life that does not include service to others. As founder and president of Campus Crusade for Christ, William Bright has done so much to show the invaluable beauty and importance of faith to countless devoted Christians. He truly is what I often refer to as ‘one of a thousand points of light.’”

**GEORGE H.W. BUSH**

FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

“When the history of the 20th century is written, Bill Bright’s name will loom large. He has clearly been one of the leaders of the great evangelical renewal that began after World War II. Within evangelical ranks, there is no one who has been a greater influence, nor provided greater visionary leadership.”

**CHUCK COLSON**

PRISON FELLOWSHIP

“A few months after ‘Stand in the Gap: A Sacred Assembly of Men’ in the fall of 1997, Promise Keepers faced serious financial stress. The entire staff had been put on volunteer status. We couldn’t pay salaries, and had to put all our energy into making the 1998 conference happen. That’s when Dr. Bright called with an amazing offer. He wrote a letter to Campus Crusade supporters, and appealed to them on our behalf. We received hundreds of thousands of dollars in support at a critical time, and never lost a step on making those conferences happen for men across the United States.”

**BILL McCARTNEY**

PROMISE KEEPERS

“It would be difficult to name another individual [besides Bill Bright] whose contribution to the spiritual progress and growth of mankind can be more suitably described as original, innovative and dramatically effective.”

**DR. JAMES C. DOBSON**

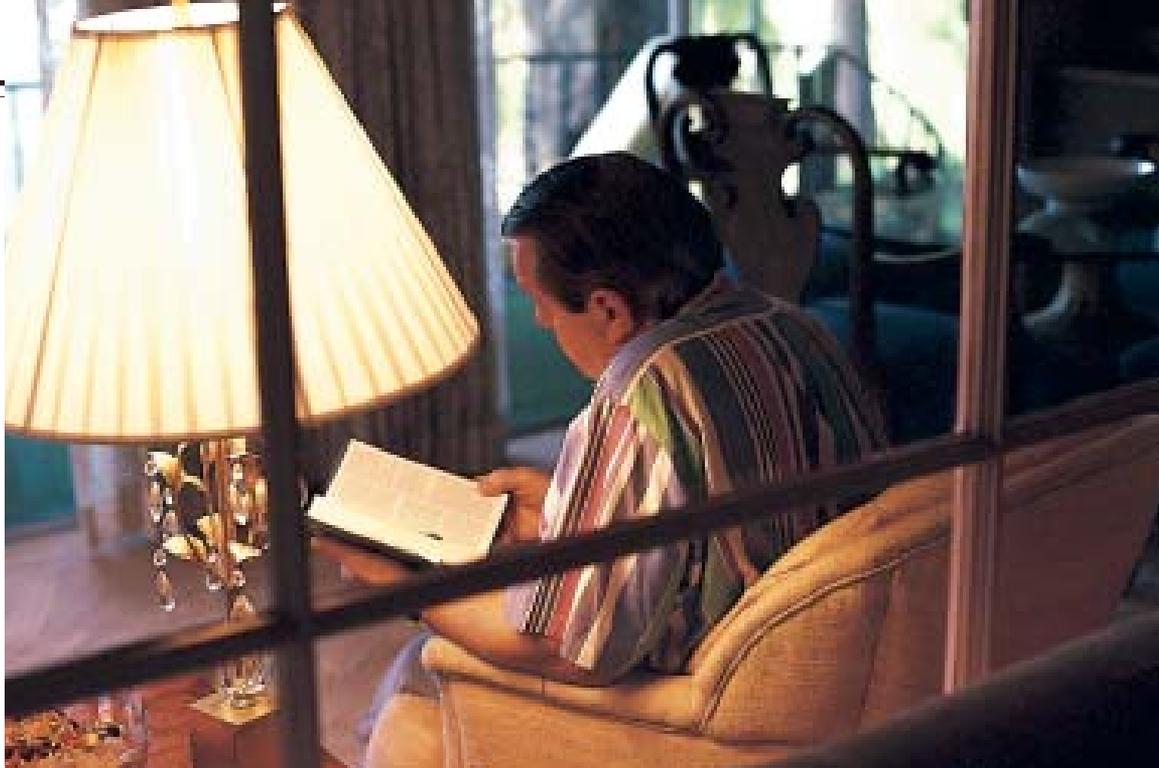
FOCUS ON THE FAMILY

“Bill not only was a proven, strong, internationally recognized leader in the Christian community, but a gentleman who exemplified personal integrity, living out moral values which governed his life.”

**TED W. ENGSTROM**

WORLD VISION





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## WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW GOD PERSONALLY?

In lieu of flowers, the Brights have requested that friends honor Bill's memory through the William R. Bright Legacy Trust to further the work to which he gave his life.

*Gifts may be sent to:*

William R. Bright Legacy Trust (account #2747894)  
100 Lake Hart Drive  
Orlando, FL 32832



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# A Life Lived



In the early 1960s, Campus Crusade for Christ surveyed college students across the nation regarding spiritual matters. Staff member Ney Bailey presented the sobering results to Bill Bright: Students did not know how to become Christians. Bill looked at survey after survey,

repeating to himself, “They don’t know how. They don’t know how.” Finally Bill put the surveys down and sobbed.

That deep compassion for people without Christ, coupled with an equally deep passion to know God, explains much about Bill Bright. He wanted every person in the world to have an opportunity to know the Savior he loved so much.

On July 19, 2003, Dr. Bright completed his mission and was called into the Lord’s presence. He died of complications of pulmonary fibrosis, a degenerative lung disease. He leaves his wife, Vonette; sons Brad and Zac; four grandchildren; one brother, Forrest Bright; and one sister, Florence Skinner.

Born near Coweta, Okla., in 1921, Dr. Bright attended a one-room schoolhouse until eighth grade. In high school and college he distinguished himself as an achiever in academics, student government, journalism, oratory and debate, all of which would serve him well in his mission. It was in Coweta that he met his wife of 54 years, the former Vonette Zachary. After graduating with honors from Oklahoma’s Northeastern State University in 1944, Dr. Bright moved to Southern California and

began Bright’s California Confections. While studying at Princeton and Fuller theological seminaries in 1951, Dr. Bright felt God calling him to leave his budding business empire and embrace the scriptural command to “go and make disciples of all the nations” (Matthew 28:19).

He and Vonette began Campus Crusade at UCLA that fall. Under the Brights’ leadership, the ministry spread to campuses around the world, and grew to include ministries serving such diverse spheres of society as the inner city, the athletic community and the military.

Over the years, Dr. Bright harnessed numerous communication vehicles for the cause of Christ, including television, radio, telephones, movies and video. During the I Found It™ campaign in the 1970s, Dr. Bright even used bumper stickers to communicate the life-changing message of God’s love.

He was also responsible for rallies of immense proportions. In 1972 he organized a weeklong event in Dallas for 85,000 youths. Officially known as EXPLO 72, the press called it the “Religious Woodstock.” Two years later, EXPLO 74 in South Korea drew nightly



*Bill Bright invested  
his time on Earth helping  
to fulfill the Great Commission.*

has sponsored seven prayer-and-fasting gatherings, enlisting tens of thousands of believers throughout the world to join via satellite and the Internet.

In 1996 Dr. Bright received the prestigious Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion, worth more than \$1 million. He donated all his prize money to causes promoting the spiritual benefits of fasting and prayer.

Recently Dr. Bright helped launch the International Leadership University, housed in the Empire State Building and which aims to equip tens of millions of students with a biblical worldview.

Over the years, Dr. Bright authored more than 60 books and booklets, including *Witnessing Without Fear*, winner of a Gold Medallion Book Award.

Despite all the accomplishments, Dr. Bright never lost his sense that they were all due to the hand of God. He often referred to Campus Crusade as “a leaf on the twig of the branch of the body of Christ,” and required all staff members to be vital members of the local churches of their choice.

Nor did he ever lose his passion for explaining the gospel to those who didn't know how to follow Christ. Whether talking to a taxi driver in Asia or meeting with royalty in Britain or training thousands of students in the basics of the faith, Bill Bright wanted everyone to know his Savior.

And due to his legacy, hundreds of millions in his generation, and in generations to come, will have just that opportunity. ■

# Well

crowds of up to 1.5 million. And in 1980 crowds from 2 to almost 3 million attended the '80 World Evangelization Crusade also in South Korea.

In 1989, Dr. Bright saw the realization of a long-time dream: the opening of the Soviet Union. For more than 40 years, he had prayed for the Russian people, who were reaping the consequences of their government's anti-God policies. Later, Dr. Bright helped open the doors to train thousands of Soviet teachers in Christian-based ethics and morality.

In the early '90s, Dr. Bright began sensing the modern church's need to put more emphasis on prayer and fasting. He led the way by embarking on a 40-day fast, and asked God to raise up 1 million people to follow in his footsteps. Since 1994 Campus Crusade



# What I've Learned



I had the immense privilege of working beside Bill Bright for more than 30 years. I knew him to be a man of unquestionable integrity. He hid the Word of God in his heart that he might not sin against Him. He was committed to doing everything with excellence—to the glory of God.

The very first time I saw him, his appearance, his speech—everything about him—spoke of excellence. I was impressed! I often heard him say, “You only have one chance to make a good first impression,” and “It doesn’t cost that much more to do it right.”

He believed in doing things right. As Colossians 3:23 says, “Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men.” Bill did that himself and he expected it of others.

For example, Bill once beckoned me to a window overlooking the front lawn at Arrowhead Springs, our former headquarters in California.

“Do you see those brown spots?” he asked.

“What brown spots?” I replied.

He pointed out some places, nearly out of sight, that the sprinkler had not reached.

“We’ve got to do something about that,” he said. “If we’re going to have a lawn, we need to have a good lawn.”

It’s not surprising that under the leadership of Bill Bright, Campus Crusade for Christ developed a penchant for excellence in every area.

## EXPERT OUTSIDE COUNSEL

Bill always wanted to surround himself with the best advisors he could find. He knew that successful business leaders, for example, could help him keep the administrative side of Campus Crusade on course. He believed that expert consultants could help find and implement the most effective ways to do ministry. He wanted this kind of expertise woven into the fabric of the movement.

During the early years, Bill reorganized the board of directors to include many highly successful businessmen. This strategic makeup of the board has provided

Campus Crusade with excellent oversight. Today, the board is composed of eight outstanding business leaders and two staff members. All are strong Christians, committed to biblical ethical standards, and willing to give of their time and talent to give direction.

I actually joined the staff of Campus Crusade in 1969 very much like a consultant, to help implement the findings of a study. During my final term as a master’s-degree candidate at Harvard Business School, I had to do a research project. My roommates and I were interested in Campus Crusade, so we decided to do a study on how it operated. Of course, we needed the blessing of Bill, which he enthusiastically gave.

As a side note, it didn’t seem a coincidence at all that God had provided us with a great project mentor, C. Roland Christensen, one of the most highly respected teachers at Harvard Business School. This was just the kind of expertise Bill asked God to provide.

When we presented our findings to Bill, along with recommendations for more efficient operations, he asked, “Who will help us implement this?” The four of us said, “We will.” Two of us even joined the full-time staff at that time.

## STRONG LEADERS

Reaching and recruiting leaders was always one of Bill’s priorities. In fact, the very first outreach Bill and Vonette carried out at UCLA focused on student leaders. Campus Crusade has followed that pattern ever since. Not because the souls of leaders are any more valuable, but because they have a larger sphere of influence and can expose even more people to the gospel as their lives change. Also, they can provide leadership within the ministry, bringing about greater excellence.

B Y S T E V E D O U G L A S S

*Campus Crusade's current president recalls 33 years of lessons.*

# from Bill Bright

## **EFFECTIVENESS AS A STANDARD**

Effectiveness is actually a written “value” of Campus Crusade. And it’s a value because Bill Bright made it so. For more than 50 years, Bill never ceased to search out what worked best.

A good working definition of effectiveness is that which brings the best result for the effort and funds expended. Campus Crusade constantly searches for faster, better, less expensive ways to get the good news of Jesus Christ to those who have not heard.

In Bill’s search for effectiveness, he was willing to try new, untested, even unconventional strategies that seemed to promise success.

In 1963, for example, Bill allowed an unusually talented young man to join the staff of Campus Crusade. André Kole was an illusionist, and an outstanding one at that. Though not exactly the mainstream Christian approach for reaching the lost, André Kole has exposed millions of people to the message of Christ over the years, and even influenced others in his profession, such as David Copperfield.

Josh McDowell joined Campus Crusade’s team as a speaker, though not a traditional evangelist. His lectures and books have brought Jesus Christ to millions. His ministry has spanned the globe, and his compelling writings have confounded even staunch skeptics. He has spoken live to more students than any person in history!

Bill wrote the Four Spiritual Laws booklet in the early ’60s to be a tool his staff could use in presenting the gospel consistently. More than 2.5 billion copies have been printed, and it has been translated into more than 200 languages. Using this booklet, a believer can share the message of Christ with confidence.

Bill Bright wanted to be sure everyone was given an excellent chance to know the truth, and he was driven by the desire to help fulfill the Great Commission in every generation.

The relentless search for better ways to do this eventually brought about the *JESUS* film. One-to-one ministry had been the main method used by Campus Crusade, but Bill envisioned more expansive methods. Then, in 1979, the *JESUS* film came along. The potential seemed unlimited.

The film has been translated into more than 800

languages to date, and has been viewed by more than 5.1 billion people in 234 countries.

Today we are continuing the course of effectiveness Bill laid out. For example, Campus Crusade is greatly expanding its Internet presence. Over the next few years, we should have many more Web sites, with opportunities for people to ask questions about their spiritual condition and their relationship to Jesus Christ. Already, Christian Leadership Ministries has a 7,000-topic site ([www.leaderu.com](http://www.leaderu.com)) for college students to use in preparing research papers that reflect a Christian worldview.

## **SETTING A STANDARD OF FINANCIAL INTEGRITY**

Financial integrity affects the reputation of any organization. Bill was always concerned that there be no cause to question Campus Crusade’s financial integrity. Therefore, he began requesting an annual outside audit early in the ministry’s existence.

Over the years, *Money* magazine has repeatedly ranked Campus Crusade among the top charities of its type for the percentage of contributions spent on programs versus administration and fundraising.

Campus Crusade also helped give birth to the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability—an independent organization to which Christian organizations can subscribe. Members open their finances to inspection, and their entire operation becomes subject to the high ethical standards of the ECFA.

For more than 50 years Bill Bright set a high standard of excellence. He was a faithful, loving husband. A caring, considerate father. An honest, upright citizen. A leader of integrity in the Christian world. And he consistently modeled the kind of life Jesus commanded us to live.

This principle of excellence should apply to every believer. We may have different levels of visibility, but the world is reading our lives to see if Jesus and the Bible make a difference. We can make an incredible impression on these people, and on our world, by following in the footsteps of Bill Bright and seeking to be people of excellence, before both God and man. ■



# Real



ON FRIDAY, JUNE 17, 1972, EXPLO 72 WAS drawing to a close in Dallas. Eighty-five thousand people, mostly students, had come to the week of training and inspiration, meeting together in the Cotton Bowl and then in hundreds of smaller venues for discipleship and training. Two-hundred eighty thousand came to the closing rally with Bill, Johnny Cash and Billy Graham. The entire event broke molds and blasted faith barriers for Christians who attended and for the hundreds of us who had worked to put it all together.

That noon I got to sit in on a luncheon hosted by a Dallas businessman at his club on top of the Southland Life building. It was an opportunity for Bill to say thank you to the city fathers of the Dallas/Fort Worth area for all that the cities had done to welcome the delegates and to make EXPLO 72 possible. About two dozen were in attendance.

Because the purpose of the luncheon was to express thanks, I was both surprised and ministered to by what Bill did. Bill thanked the leaders at the luncheon graciously and meaningfully, but he then transitioned to what was really the heart of EXPLO 72: faith in Jesus Christ. He told his story of how he had come to know Jesus Christ and then clearly explained the gospel.

Bill gave each of those present an opportunity to receive Christ right then, leading them in a prayer (he prayed aloud, giving them a chance to pray silently). What marked me that afternoon? I realized that I would not have been so bold. Fear of man would have made me hesitant to speak so clearly and then give each an opportunity to receive Christ. I learned that Bill didn't hesitate to share Christ in the presence of powerful people! He knew they need Christ as much as anyone.

## SWEDE ANDERSON

*Campus Crusade for Christ staff member since 1959*  
INTERNATIONAL EMBASSY/EXECUTIVE MINISTRIES

IN THE EARLY 1960S, THE CHONGBUK National University in South Korea awarded Dr. Bright an honorary doctorate. While Bill was in Korea to receive the degree, he met with the then 30 Korean staff of Campus Crusade for Christ at a Christian conference center near Seoul.

The staff members were housed for the conference in a dormitory, and the Koreans, by cultural tradition, left their

# lections



shoes in the hallway outside the dorm rooms when they entered for the night.

An international representative of Campus Crusade who was attending the conference went downstairs early one morning. He found Dr. Bright polishing the shoes that were in the hallway. The staff member watched for some time. Finally he approached Dr. Bright and quietly asked, "May I ask what you're doing?"

The scene remained etched in the staff member's mind, and he never forgot Bill's response: "I was hoping that no one would see me, except for perhaps the Lord. But I am so overwhelmed with the quality and the dedication of these Korean staff friends that I just wanted to do something to express my appreciation."

## CARL COMBS

*Campus Crusade staff member since 1973*  
INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

BETTY AND I ARRIVED IN ARROWHEAD SPRINGS in November 1988 on a visit. At one time I was in the parking lot

when I saw Bill Bright. He was immediately ecstatic and shouted "My dear Dela!" We walked towards one another and hugged. He expressed his disappointment for not knowing Betty and I were going to be around so he could arrange a proper reception or meeting. Though his schedule for the day was full, he invited us to his office, and we were chatting as the phone continued to ring. In the midst of the pressures for the day he wanted so much to know how we were doing and how the ministry was getting on.

Over the years Bill and Vonette Bright have demonstrated the priority of their commitment to staff. Bill Bright has started most of his messages at staff gatherings with statements like, "You are the most important people in the world. I'd rather be with you now than anywhere else in the world." The Brights have had a way of making Betty and me feel special. This has motivated us to seek to give of our best to the ministry.

## DELA ADADEVOH

*Campus Crusade staff member since 1980*  
VICE PRESIDENT FOR AFRICA,  
MIDDLE EAST AND CENTRAL ASIA REPUBLICS

# Reflections *continued*



THE FIRST LETTER I EVER RECEIVED FROM BILL Bright was signed, “Yours for fulfilling the Great Commission in this generation.” This was the way he signed all his letters. One of the things Bill Bright consistently emphasized throughout his ministry was the proclamation of the gospel. He made it a personal practice to, whenever he was alone with a person for more than a few moments, seek to share the gospel with that person. He shared the gospel with people on skid row, with sorority and fraternity members, with athletes, with militant radicals, with educators, with the wealthy, with governmental leaders, with taxi drivers, with hotel maids, with the people seated next to him on airplanes. He shared lovingly and sensitively. The message was always basically the same. If a person had questions, Bill simply shared the uniqueness of Jesus.

Bill believed that every believer should be trained in how to share the gospel with others. This led to his writing the Four Spiritual Laws booklet, which people can use to explain the gospel to others to help them put their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

A group of us had a meeting with Bill in the closing days of the year 2000. Statistics had been collected that documented in the year 2000 alone that through Campus Crusade for Christ—and the many organizations that have been partnering with us—over 20 percent of the world’s population had heard the gospel. We were rejoicing in the information. Then Bill said to us, “I have recently changed the way I sign

my letters. I now write, ‘Yours for fulfilling the Great Commission every year until our Lord returns.’”

**TED MARTIN**

*Campus Crusade staff member since 1960*  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF LEADERSHIP

GOD HAS ENABLED CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR Christ to provide a legacy of incredible diversity to the body of Christ in many ways: the goal of the fulfillment of the Great Commission in this generation; the Four Spiritual Laws; the concepts of spiritual breathing, win-build-send and initiative evangelism; the high value placed on innovation; the *JESUS* film; and much more. Each of these can be traced, directly or indirectly, to the faith and creativity of Bill Bright.

But a much greater legacy is reflected in his consistent answer when people asked what they could pray for him. Always he answered, “Pray that I don’t lose my first love for the Lord Jesus.” For him, all of this flowed from being a slave to the Lord he loved. That is undoubtedly the root of the growth and fruitfulness of Campus Crusade for Christ.

**JUDY DOUGLASS**

*Campus Crusade staff member since 1964*  
FOUNDING EDITOR, *WORLDWIDE CHALLENGE* MAGAZINE



BILL AND VONETTE USED TO PRAY “THAT EVERY-thing God would do through their own lives would be characterized by the supernatural and the miraculous; that onlookers would realize God was responsible, bringing glory to God instead of to man.”

I remember a time when I was traveling with Dr. Bright visiting several countries in West Africa. We would pray in the morning, during the day, before personal appointments and before speaking engagements. One day we were in an airplane going down the runway for a takeoff when we heard a loud explosion. One of the two jet engines blew just before we lifted off the ground. The airline had to call another country for a replacement aircraft, meaning that we would stay overnight, missing our engagements. As we were giving thanks to God for our safety and the missed engagements he said, “These people are probably very open to spiritual matters right now. Why don’t we share the gospel with anyone who is open?” So we did!

**M. EVERETT DAVIS**

*Campus Crusade staff member since 1964*

PRAYER WORKS

A PRINCIPLE THAT BILL AND VONETTE HAVE demonstrated in their lives is the need to live a holy and pure life before God. Bill continually reminded the staff of the need to choose to live their lives in a way that will bring honor and glory to God. We can appear loving and gracious on the outside, but if

our inner thoughts are not aligned with the Word of God, we will not be pleasing to God.

One way that Bill lived a holy life before God was by filling his life with praise. He got out of bed each morning and dropped to his knees in praise and adoration of his God. Before he went to bed each night, he again got on his knees and worshiped God for who He is and the ways He had worked in Bill’s life that day.

Throughout each day, he meditated on God’s Word so that his inner thoughts as well as outward actions followed biblical principles. He let Scripture govern his walk and talk, thus keeping him on God’s path. With all that Bill experienced day by day—the overwhelming responsibilities of leading a worldwide ministry, the call for decisions from every corner of the world, the conflicts that needed to be resolved—he could have been tempted to think a variety of thoughts about different people and situations. However, because he began his day with God in his inner spirit and aligned himself with God’s Word throughout the day, his thought life was transformed and his mind was renewed.

**THOMAS ABRAHAM**

*Campus Crusade staff member since 1967*

VICE PRESIDENT FOR ASIA AND LATIN AMERICA

All entries except Dela Adadevoh’s are adapted from *Principles of Leadership*, compiled and edited by Ted Martin and Michael Cozzens, © 2001 by New Life Publications. Used by permission.

{ Bill Bright }

Last

MY BELOVED FAMILY, FRIENDS, STAFF MEMBERS AND PARTNERS IN THE GOSPEL: I embrace you with the love of Christ. I want to share some things with you because I love you. Even in my death the Holy Spirit can use me to glorify the Father. I would be remiss not to share what He wants. So thank you for these moments. ✎ First, I am now experiencing what I have longed for ever since I met Jesus in 1945, when I asked Him into my heart. I fell in love with Him deeply as He revealed Himself to me through His Word. For all these decades my greatest joy has been being in His presence and serving Him alongside Vonette. Today, I am experiencing God face to face in ways so magnificent that they cannot be described in words. For “no eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him” (1 Corinthians 2:9). ✎ So I offer you the same advice that Jesus offered His disciples in John 14:28 when He said they should rejoice at His going to be with the Father. Rejoice with me because I am no longer in this earthly tent. I am in the presence of the living God, satisfied at the deepest core of my being. And rejoice with me because I have finished all He called me to do. It has been a magnificent adventure to serve alongside my precious Vonette for over 50 years. Together we have raised two sons who love God. They, their godly wives and our four grandchildren have been our joy. ✎ God has laid a message on my heart for you all. For you not yet believers: Seriously look at the magnificent offer of love and forgiveness that God extends you. Before this day is over, receive Jesus as your Savior and Lord. Consider that God loves you and offers a wonderful plan for your life. Take seriously that because each of us is sinful and separated from God, we cannot know and experience God’s love and plan. Know that Jesus Christ is God’s only provision for man’s sin. Through Him you

# Words

can know and experience God's love and plan for you. Finally, you must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then you can know and experience God's love and plan. Those four points are the heart of God's good news to humanity. If you do not yet know Jesus Christ personally, please consider those points. ☞ For you who know Jesus Christ personally I have a word for you: Do not settle for mediocrity. You are a child of the God of the universe. Surrender to Him. Become His slave. I can assure you, after more than 50 years of experience, there is no greater adventure than following Him. He cares for you. Take Him at His Word. When Vonette and I signed a contract in 1951 to become slaves of Jesus, we did so with the utmost confidence that "everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for [His] sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life" (Matthew 19:29). It made perfect sense that since He created the heavens and the earth, died on the Cross for our sins, and is obviously far more intelligent than we, His ways are better than ours. So we turned over everything to Him. I can say unequivocally that you will find no greater joy than in total surrender. ☞ Finally, I want to pray for you. For you who know Jesus, I pray you would follow Jesus as a fully surrendered slave. And for you not yet following Jesus but considering the four points I shared earlier, I pray you would invite Christ to forgive your sin so you can begin a relationship with Him. ☞ If someone needed to meet the Savior or be encouraged to walk with Him more intimately, then I didn't want to waste the opportunity. What I have believed by faith I am now experiencing in reality. I now see my Savior with my own eyes and I hear him with my own ears as I worship Him in a way I have never understood. This is a good day for me. I pray it will be a good one for you. God bless each of you. ■

Adapted from the transcript of a video prepared by Bill Bright before his death.

# Would You Like to Know God Personally?

Bill Bright sought to offer as many people as possible a chance to trust Christ. He spread the gospel by speaking to large groups and individuals, and through books, tapes, video recordings and articles. Here is a two-page presentation of one booklet Bill wrote called "Would You Like to Know God Personally?"

## 1 God loves you and created you to know Him personally.

### God's Love

"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

### God's Plan

"Now this is eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent" (John 17:3).

*What prevents us from knowing God personally?*

## 2 Man is sinful and separated from God, so we cannot know Him personally or experience His love.

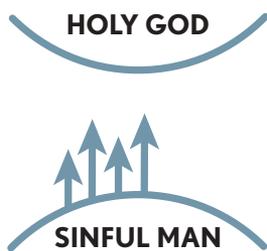
### Man Is Sinful

"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

Man was created to have fellowship with God; but, because of his own stubborn self-will, he chose to go his own independent way and fellowship with God was broken. This self-will, characterized by an attitude of active rebellion or passive indifference, is an evidence of what the Bible calls sin.

### Man Is Separated

"The wages of sin is death" [spiritual separation from God] (Romans 6:23).



This diagram illustrates that God is holy and man is sinful. A great gulf separates the two. The arrows illustrate that man is continually trying to reach God and establish a personal relationship with Him through his own efforts, such as a good life, philosophy, or religion—but he inevitably fails.

*The third principle explains the only way to bridge this gulf . . .*

## 3 Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin. Through Him alone we can know God personally and experience God's love.

### He Died In Our Place

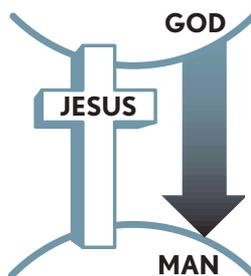
"God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

### He Rose From the Dead

"Christ died for our sins . . . He was buried . . . He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures . . . He appeared to Peter, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred . . ." (1 Corinthians 15:3-6).

### He Is the Only Way to God

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me'" (John 14:6).



This diagram illustrates that God has bridged the gulf that separates us from Him by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross in our place to pay the penalty for our sins.

*It is not enough just to know these truths . . .*

## 4 We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know God personally and experience His love.

### We Must Receive Christ

"As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name" (John 1:12).

### We Receive Christ Through Faith

"By grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works that no one should boast" (Ephesians 2:8,9).

### When We Receive Christ, We Experience a New Birth

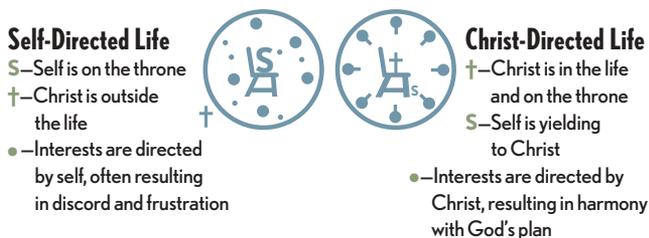
(Read John 3:1-8.)

## We Receive Christ By Personal Invitation

[Christ speaking] “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him” (Revelation 3:20).

Receiving Christ involves turning to God from self (repentance) and trusting Christ to come into our lives to forgive us of our sins and to make us what He wants us to be. Just to agree intellectually that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that He died on the cross for our sins is not enough. Nor is it enough to have an emotional experience. We receive Jesus Christ by faith, as an act of our will.

These two circles represent two kinds of lives:



Which circle best represents your life?

Which circle would you like to have represent your life?

## The following explains how you can receive Christ:

You Can Receive Christ Right Now By Faith Through Prayer (Prayer is talking with God.)

God knows your heart and is not so concerned with your words as He is with the attitude of your heart. The following is a suggested prayer:

*Lord Jesus, I want to know You personally. Thank You for dying on the Cross for my sins. I open the door of my life and receive You as my Savior and Lord. Thank You for forgiving me of my sins and giving me eternal life. Take control of the throne of my life. Make me the kind of person You want me to be.*

Does this prayer express the desire of your heart?

If it does, pray this prayer right now, and Christ will come into your life, as He promised.

## How to Know That Christ Is in Your Life

Did you receive Christ into your life? According to His promise in Revelation 3:20, where is Christ right now in relation to you? Christ said that He would come into your life and be your friend so you can know Him personally. Would He mislead you? On what authority do you know that God has answered your prayer? (The trustworthiness of God Himself and His Word.)

## The Bible Promises Eternal Life to All Who Receive Christ

“The witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:11–13).

Thank God often that Christ is in your life and that He will never leave you (Hebrews 13:5). You can know on the basis of His promise that Christ lives in you and that you have eternal life from the very moment you invite Him in. He will not deceive you.

## An important reminder . . .

### Do Not Depend on Feelings

The promise of God's Word, the Bible—not our feelings—is our authority. The Christian lives by faith (trust) in the trustworthiness of God Himself and His Word. This train diagram illustrates the relationship among fact (God and His Word), faith (our trust in God and His Word), and feeling (the result of our faith and obedience) (John 14:21).

The train will run with or without the caboose. However, it would be useless to attempt to pull the train by the caboose. In the same



way, we as Christians do not depend on feelings or emotions, but we place our faith (trust) in the trustworthiness of God and the promises of His Word.

## Now That You Have Entered Into a Personal Relationship With Christ

The moment you received Christ by faith, as an act of your will, many things happened, including the following:

1. Christ came into your life (Revelation 3:20 and Colossians 1:27).
2. Your sins were forgiven (Colossians 1:14).
3. You became a child of God (John 1:12).
4. You received eternal life (John 5:24).
5. You began the great adventure for which God created you (John 10:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17; and 1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Can you think of anything more wonderful that could happen to you than entering into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ? Would you like to thank God in prayer right now for what He has done for you? By thanking God, you demonstrate your faith.

*To enjoy your new relationship with God . . .*

### Suggestions for Christian Growth

Spiritual growth results from trusting Jesus Christ. “The righteous man shall live by faith” (Galatians 3:11). A life of faith will enable you to trust God increasingly with every detail of your life, and to practice the following:

- Go to God in prayer daily (John 15:7).
- Read God's Word daily (Acts 17:11)—begin with the Gospel of John.
- Obey God moment by moment (John 14:21).
- Witness for Christ by your life and words (Matthew 4:19; John 15:8).
- Trust God for every detail of your life (1 Peter 5:7).
- Holy Spirit—Allow Him to control and empower your daily life and witness (Galatians 5:16,17; Acts 1:8).

*If you have prayed to ask Jesus to enter your life, you may receive free information on getting to know God better at [www.growinginChrist.com](http://www.growinginChrist.com).*



“None of us has a long time here on planet Earth.  
It’s kind of a staging ground. It’s our split second  
in eternity when we have an opportunity  
to invest our lives, our time, our talent and our treasure  
to help fulfill what our Lord came into this world to do  
and commissioned us to do.

In fact, His last words before He ascended  
to be with the Father were: ‘Be my witnesses.’”

—BILL BRIGHT