

Move of God:

How Billy Graham's legacy in the workplace is fuelling the Church's mission

*Billy Graham has preached to more people, in more countries, and seen more converts, than anyone else in history. He has also gathered the largest live audience of any preacher: 1.1m in Seoul. In this article, **Peter Heslam** and **Eric Wood** consider his work, and that of business leaders like Nigerian Paul Ubwe, in suggesting a sustainable model of mission.*

It is often assumed that Billy Graham's sole focus was on the need to be 'born again'. If he had another agenda it was only to generate more professional preachers, evangelists and missionaries to help carry this message. He has indeed, for more than 70 years, consistently emphasized both these needs. He has also given them robust institutional form, such as in his co-founding of Gordon-Conwell, one of the world's leading seminaries.

But when Graham's vast publication output is considered as a whole, he places far more emphasis on what today might be called 'whole-life discipleship'. Indeed, living the Christian life in whatever sphere of work we find ourselves is a constant theme throughout his ministry. He writes, for instance:

God wants to use you right where you are. Every day you probably come in contact with people who will never enter a church, or talk with a pastor, or open a Bible – and God wants to use you to point them to Christ.

In numerous other writings he stresses the dignity of work, the need to live the

Christian life 24/7, and that there should 'no discrepancy between our walk and our talk'. 'Becoming a Christian', he writes, 'is the work of a moment; being a Christian is the work of a lifetime'. He challenges people to pray for their colleagues and to empathise with them in tough times. They should also model integrity: 'Christians should be known in their neighbourhoods or places of business as honest people'.

Some missionaries, after catching a vision of the all-encompassing nature of Christ's call, have decided to pursue a wider mission in so-called secular employment. Despite the misgivings of some of those around them, they have seen this as an opportunity to enhance the effectiveness of their witness.

One such person is Paul Ubwe in Nigeria, who we interviewed as part of our international survey of

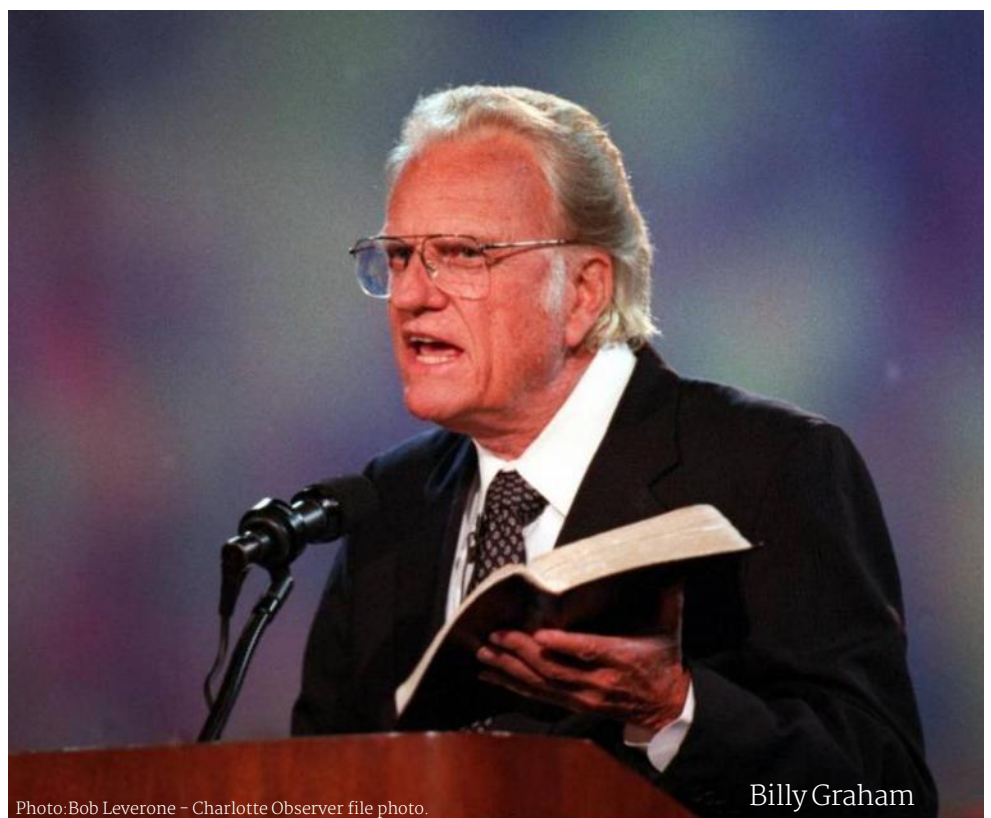


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Billy Graham