Profile: Bill and Vonette Bright, founders of Campus Crusade for Christ International

In 1951, Bill and Vonette Bright pursued their passion for ministry by starting Campus Crusade for Christ at the University of California at Los Angeles. What began with college students has since grown into one of the largest international Christian ministries in the world, reaching beyond students to serve inner cities, the military, athletes, political and business leaders, the entertainment industry, and families.

The Brights spent more than half a century building and leading Campus Crusade for Christ to its current size of more than 25,000 staff members and a ministry presence in 173 countries. However, their influence has reached far beyond the ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ.

Bill Bright

Bill's unique blend of Christian commitment and communications insight was at the heart of his success. His *Four Spiritual Laws* booklet—a four-point outline written by Bill in 1956 on how to establish a personal relationship with Jesus—has been printed in some 200 languages. Although religious tracts have been published for centuries, Bill's booklet has become what is considered to be the most widely disseminated religious booklet in history, with more than 2.5 billion distributed to date. Bill effectively employed other communications vehicles over the years as well, including books (he authored more than 100 books and booklets), TV and radio, the internet, billboards, phone banks, movies, videos, and international training conferences reaching hundreds of millions.

Bill was considered a major catalyst for the modern-day resurgence of the disciplines of fasting and prayer in the Christian church. In 1996, Bill was presented with the prestigious Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion for his work with fasting and prayer. Worth more than $1 million, the Templeton Prize is the world's largest financial annual award. Bill donated all of his prize money to causes promoting the spiritual benefits of fasting and prayer.

Bill also co-founded (with Dr. James Davis) the Global Pastors Network, an internet-based training center at www.globalpastorsnetwork.org, designed to equip pastors and ministers worldwide with interactive resources, events, and networking opportunities.

Bill Bright died in 2003, from complications related to pulmonary fibrosis, at the age of 81.

Vonette Bright

Vonette's commitment to help reach the world for Christ was fueled by a desire to help others develop a heart for God. Vonette served as chairwoman of Bright Media Foundation, which strives to make the writings and teachings of Bill and Vonette Bright available to each generation. Vonette authored more than a dozen books, most highlighting the themes of prayer, evangelism, walking with God and hospitality. In 1993 she launched Women Today International, a ministry responding to the needs of women as they grow in their relationships with Jesus Christ.

Vonette’s passion for prayer led to the founding of the National Prayer Committee, a group of leaders who seek to motivate other Christians to unite in prayer for spiritual awakening in America. In 1988, she successfully petitioned Congress to designate the first Thursday of every May as the permanent day for the National Day of Prayer. Unanimously approved by both houses of Congress, President Ronald Reagan signed the legislation into law. She then served for nine years as chairwoman of the National Day of Prayer Task Force. The movement today includes more than 2 million people in 30,000 observances around the country.

Vonette Bright died in 2015, due to complications from acute leukemia. She was 89.

Bill and Vonette—Honored for Their Achievements

Over the past three decades, Bill and Vonette Bright received numerous honors for their dedication and commitment to Christian ministry. In 1988, the Brights were inducted into the Religion in Media International Communication Galaxy of Fame at the International Angel Awards. Additionally, Bill received the Lifetime Achievement Award from both the National Association of Evangelicals and the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association, and in 1992, he was inducted into the National Religious Broadcasters Hall of Fame. In 2000, Bill and Vonette were given the Lifetime Inspiration Award from Religious Heritage of America Foundation.

After Bill died on July 19, 2003, in Orlando, Florida, Vonette was given the Robertson McQuilkin Award (presented by FamilyLife), an award which honors couples who exemplify their commitment to a covenant marriage in an age of divorce.

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