

From time to time, I come across neat articles such as this one I'd like to share with our membership
Bradley Fry

Billy Graham and Oprah

Last year I watched Billy Graham being interviewed by Oprah Winfrey on television. Oprah told him that in her childhood home, she use to watch him preach on a little black and white TV while sitting on a linoleum floor.

She went on to the tell viewers that in his lifetime Billy has preached to twenty-million people around the world, not to mention the countless numbers who have heard him whenever his crusades are broadcast. When she asked if he got nervous before facing a crowd, Billy replied humbly, "No, I don't get nervous before crowds, but I did today before I was going to meet with you."

Oprah's show is broadcast to twenty-million people every day. She is comfortable with famous stars and celebrities but seemed in awe of Dr. Billy Graham.

When the interview ended, she told the audience, "You don't often See this on my show, but we're going to pray." Then she asked Billy to close in prayer. The camera panned the studio audience as they bowed their heads and closed their eyes just like in one of his crusades.

Oprah sang the first line from the song that is his hallmark "Just as I am, without a plea," misreading the line and singing off-key, but her voice was full of emotion and almost cracked.

When Billy stood up after the show, instead of hugging her guest, Oprah's usual custom, she went over and just nestled against him. Billy wrapped his arm around her and pulled her under his shoulder. She stood in his fatherly embrace with a look of sheer contentment..

I once read the book "Nestle, Don't Wrestle" by Corrie Ten Boom. The power of nestling was evident on the TV screen that day. Billy Graham was not the least bit condemning, distant, or hesitant to embrace a public personality who may not fit the evangelistic mold. His grace and courage are sometimes stunning.

In an interview with Hugh Downs, on the 20/20 program, the subject turned to homosexuality. Hugh looked directly at Billy and said, "If you had a homosexual child, would you love him?" Billy didn't miss a beat. He replied with sincerity and gentleness, "Why, I would love that one even more."

The title of Billy's autobiography, "Just As I Am," says it all. His life goes before him speaking as eloquently as that charming southern drawl for which he is known.

If, when I am eighty years old, my autobiography were to be titled "Just As I Am," I wonder how I would live now? Do I have the courage to be me? I'll never be a Billy Graham, the elegant man

who draws people to the Lord through a simple one-point message, but I hope to be a person who is real and compassionate and who might draw people to nestle within God's embrace.

Do you make it a point to speak to a visitor or person who shows up alone at church, buy a hamburger for a homeless man, call your mother on Sunday afternoons, pick daisies with a little girl, or take a fatherless boy to a baseball game?

Did anyone ever tell you how beautiful you look when you're looking for what's beautiful in someone else?

Billy complimented Oprah when asked what he was most thankful for; he said, "Salvation given to us in Jesus Christ" then added, "and the way you have made people all over this country aware of the power of being grateful."

When asked his secret of love, being married fifty-four years to the same person, he said, "Ruth and I are happily incompatible."

How unexpected. We would all live more comfortably with everybody around us if we would find the strength in being grateful and happily incompatible.

Let's take the things that set us apart, that make us different, that cause us to disagree, and make them an occasion to compliment each other and be thankful for each other. Let us be big enough to be smaller than our neighbor, spouse, friends, and strangers.

Every day, may we Nestle, not Wrestle!