



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on July 29, 2011

## Evangelical Leader John Stott Dies at 90

While he was ordained by the Church of England in 1945 and served [All Souls Church](#) in London for more than 60 years, the impact of his thinking and leadership were felt widely throughout evangelical Christendom. “He was an intellectual pioneer who in the years following World War II spearheaded an evangelical revival in England at a time when evangelical Christians had almost no influence and were often derided as uneducated,” reported the [Associated Press](#). “Stott, who studied at Trinity College at the University of Cambridge, took a rigorous approach to Scripture that moved beyond the largely emotional appeals commonly used by preachers of his era.”



CBN recalled that with other evangelical leaders of the time, Stott “helped craft the 1974 [Lausanne Covenant](#), helping define the evangelical movement.” In 2005, *Time* magazine included Stott as one of the [100 most influential people in the world](#), with the Rev. Billy Graham, a close friend and associate, authoring the piece on the evangelical leader.

As reported by the [New York Times](#), before becoming one of the chief leaders in the spread of the evangelical faith, Stott “led a revival of evangelical Christianity in Britain,” largely through the Anglican Church, “exhorting Britons to find personal salvation by repenting sin and accepting Jesus as their savior.”

Stott was somewhat unique in his call for evangelicals to move their faith beyond the four walls of the church, “to take more responsible attitudes toward economics, the arts, politics, and culture in general,” recalled Mark Noll, a University of Notre Dame professor and scholar of the evangelical movement. Perhaps most importantly, Noll told the *Times* in a 2007 interview, Stott served as a “patron, mentor, friend, and encourager of thousands of pastors, students, and laypeople from the newer Christian parts of the world,” becoming a link “between the West and the rising Christian world.”

Also unusual for evangelicals of his era, Stott was closely involved in helping those throughout the world who were economically disadvantaged. “Using royalties from his books, he set up trusts to help gifted students from the developing world earn doctorates abroad and then return to their native countries to teach in theological seminaries,” reported the *Times*.

While Stott was well known, respected, and loved by lay people as well as Christian leaders the world over, his “travels and appearances were remarkably devoid of pomp, befitting his simple message of reason and faith and his unassuming demeanor,” recalled the *Times*. “In his later years, he lived in a two-room apartment over the garage of a London rectory, and for many years he kept a small cottage on the Welsh coast, where he did much of his prodigious writing in longhand and, until 2001, without electricity.”



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Said Stott in a 2006 interview: “Pride is without doubt the greatest temptation of Christian leaders. And I’m very well aware of the dangers of being feted and don’t enjoy it and don’t think one should enjoy it.”

He was also an uncompromising spokesman for the power and importance of biblical truth in the lives of Christians. “I declare myself an impenitent believer in the power of preaching,” he said. “The pew cannot rise higher than the pulpit.”

In addition to being generally recognized as the framer of the Lausanne Covenant, “regarded as a 20th-century milestone of evangelicalism,” noted the *Times*, Stott was the author of one of the modern classics of evangelical faith, [Basic Christianity](#), which has been translated into scores of languages and has sold more than 2.5 million copies, according to [John Stott Ministries](#).

Leaders throughout the evangelical community recalled Stott’s friendship and influence. “The evangelical world has lost one of its greatest spokesmen,” said the Rev. Billy Graham, who had worked closely with Stott throughout the years. “And I have lost one of my close personal friends and advisors.”

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams, said that Stott’s death would be mourned “by countless Christians throughout the world. During a long life of unsparing service and witness, John won a unique place in the hearts of all who encountered him, whether in person or through his many books.”

The Archbishop recalled that while remaining an unwavering champion of evangelical Christianity, Stott nonetheless “showed himself willing to challenge some of the ways in which that faith had become conventional or inward-looking.” While helping to change the face of evangelicalism, the Archbishop recalled, Stott would be remembered “most warmly as an expositor of Scripture and a teacher of the faith, whose depth and simplicity brought doctrine alive in all sorts of new ways.”

Bob Fryling of [InterVarsity Press](#), the evangelical publishing house that released a majority of Stott’s books, said that the company was “deeply grateful” for its long “partnership and friendship with one of the most influential and beloved evangelical leaders of the past half-century.” Recalled Fryling: “John Stott was not only revered; he was loved. He had a humble mind and a gracious spirit. He was a pastor-teacher whose books and preaching not only became the gold standard for expository teaching, but his Christian character was a model of truth and godliness.”

Hugh Palmer, rector of London’s Alls Souls Church, where Stott ministered throughout most of his life, recalled that Stott’s “preaching drew many to Christ and kept many on track in their Christian thinking and living. His books did the same for millions more and equipped pastors and lay people to become Bible teachers themselves on every continent.”

According to the All Souls website, at his death Stott was surrounded by a “number of good friends,” who were “reading the Scriptures and listening to Handel’s Messiah when he peacefully went to be with his Lord and Saviour.”



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