



Dr. Ray O. Brooks

March 7, 1923 - March 26, 2026

In 2 Cor. 5:8, the Apostle Paul wrote by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord". Ray O'Dell Brooks claimed that promise on March 26, 2026 at the age of 103 years and 19 days.

He was born in Emhouse, TX outside of Corsicana on March 7, 1923, to John T. (Jack) Brooks and Lalia Ray Brooks. He was the second of four children and the only son. He grew up on a series of cotton farms in and around Barry, TX. He graduated from Barry High School in 1939...there were only nine students

in his graduating class. He left for college at the age of 16 to attend the A&M College of Texas, now Texas A&M University. He paid for his first semester (tuition, room and board) by selling calves he had raised on the farm. That first semester cost \$23!

In 1942, after the outbreak of WWII, he, like so many in the greatest generation, enlisted in the service of his country. His chosen branch was the Naval Air Corps. He eventually graduated from blimp school at Lakehurst, NJ, on Dec. 7, 1943. He was stationed for most of the war in Maceo, Brazil, engaged in U-boat reconnaissance.

While at home on leave in 1944, he walked into Daiches Jewelers in Corsicana and spotted a pretty young salesclerk wearing a fuchsia pink

sweater. Her name was Mickey Evans. He approached her and after some small talk he asked her out. She declined saying she was already engaged to a US Army sergeant. Ray asked, "Is he here now?" She declined again reiterating that she was engaged to someone else. Outside he told the friend he was with that he was going to marry that girl. Ray continued to pursue her through the US postal system. They were married on Sept. 8, 1945. To this union were born a daughter, Patty Christian in 1946, and a son, Jack, in 1951.

After the war, he completed his studies at A&M earning a degree in Agricultural Education in 1946. He taught high school in Blue Ridge, TX, before returning to Navarro County to pursue his first love...cotton farming. He also taught veterans' agriculture during that time in Navarro County.

In 1950, Ray accepted Jesus as his Lord and Savior. This would perhaps not have happened had it not been for the friendship and testimony of his good friend, M.G. McNeill. That decision was to lead to his accepting God's call to full-time ministry in 1951 which would eventually move him and his family to Henderson where he enrolled at Texas Baptist Institute and Seminary. Early in his ministry he felt that God wanted him to become a church planter in the DFW area. However, God had other plans. He became pastor of Mt. Hebron Missionary Baptist Church in Longbranch, TX. This was a decision that would have long term implications for his life, as well as the life of his family, the life of Longbranch church, and the life of Texas Baptist Institute. He would be pastor of the Longbranch church for 71 years before his retirement at the age of 100. And his association with Texas Baptist Institute would last for an even longer period of time as he went from student to instructor, to registrar, to dean, and eventually to president of the school...a position he held for 50 years. The trajectory of his original plans for ministry changed from church planter to the education of young ministers. However, the earlier dream of church planting became one of the main ministries of the

Longbranch church, for that congregation has been instrumental in starting churches in Texas and Vermont, and their spiritual and financial support has been felt throughout the world.

He has had many titles in his lifetime...

To the world in general he was Dr. Brooks; to his wife of 67 years he was Bro. Honey; to his children, grandchildren, great grand-daughters, and great-great-granddaughter he was Papa Ray; to his dear church members and students at TBI, he was Bro. Brooks; to his nieces and nephews he was Uncle Ray and Uncle Buddy; but, most importantly IS his title as child of God, saved by grace.

Ray is survived by his daughter Patty Christian of Henderson; son Jack and wife Betsy Wallace Brooks of Henderson; grand-daughter, Amanda Brooks Kahrsch and husband, Ramon, of Ludswigsburg, Germany; grand-son, Craig Christian of Henderson; great grand-daughters Raimey Christian and Maria Kahrsch; and great great grand-daughter, Bryanna Brown; and many beloved nieces and nephews throughout the state of Texas and a host of friends as shown by those in attendance today.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 67 years, Mickey Evans Brooks; his parents, Jack and Lalia Brooks; three sisters, Tommye Hall, Elvice Barr, and Vida Hughes; son-in-law, Johnny Christian; and-dear friends M.G. and Jackie McNeill.

Private graveside services will be held on Monday, March 30, at Lakewood Cemetery in Henderson. The service will be at 2:00 pm with Rev. Steve Owen, pastor of Longbranch Missionary Baptist Church officiating. A service of celebration will be held on Saturday, April 11, at Calvary Baptist Church in

Henderson under the direction of Crawford-A. Crim Funeral Home. The service will be at 2:00 pm. Speakers will be Rev. Dwain Knight, Rev. Donnell Wright, Dr. David Proctor, and Ron Hall, nephew of the deceased. Music will be provided by Jon Starling. A reception will follow in the church fellowship hall.

Pallbearers will be Craig Christian, Rodney Cariker, Gene Giles, Heath Cariker, John Worley, Steve Whittenberg, and Clay Whittenberg. Honorary pallbearers will be the members of Longbranch Missionary Baptist Church.

Bro. Brooks' life was dedicated to proclaiming the name of Jesus as Lord and Savior, "Who was and is and is to come". His life may be summed up in the words from Paul in Phil. 1:21, "For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain".

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to Texas Baptist Institute and Seminary, P.O. Box 570, Henderson, Texas 75653.

Words of comfort may be shared with the family at www.crawfordacrim.com.

Cemetery Details

Lakewood Memorial Park

1001 Van Buren St.
Henderson, TX 75652

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

APR 11. 2:00 PM (CT)

Calvary Baptist Church
410 N. Marshall St.
Henderson, TX 75652

Visitation following service

APR 11 (CT)

Calvary Baptist Church
410 N. Marshall St.
Henderson, TX 75652

Reception will be held in the Fellowship Hall

Tribute Wall

PL

“ *I'm so sorry about your dad's passing. He lived a good long life. My heart is with you all Paulette*

Paulette Lee - April 07 at 08:38 PM

CC

“ *Chris & Liz Cross lit a candle in memory of Dr. Ray O. Brooks*



Chris & Liz Cross - April 07 at 03:52 PM

SC

“ *Sharon Reeves Collins lit a candle in memory of Dr. Ray O. Brooks*



Sharon Reeves Collins - April 04 at 10:23 AM

BR

“ *We are praying for the family and sending our condolences. We are so thankful for his long life of love and investment in so many over the years. He worked hard to expand the kingdom of the Father and did just that through those he taught and disciplined. We are thankful for all he did to prepare us for a life of ministry around the globe. I will never forget his diligence and instruction.*

Bro Rusty - April 03 at 05:04 AM

CW

“ Carolyn White Whitwell lit a candle in memory of Ray O. Brooks



Carolyn White Whitwell - April 02 at 08:14 AM

HE

“ Helen lit a candle in memory of Ray O. Brooks



Helen - April 01 at 05:26 PM

DC

“ Bro. Brooks was a wonderful man of God. Patty, Jack and Betsy & Craig Thinking and praying for the whole family. Just think of the many people he has added to the Kingdom of God. Now ask me what 1 person can do?



David & Kathy Chapman - March 31 at 10:34 PM

DS

“ Jack, Betsy, and Patty, I'm thinking of you and your sweet families. Your Mom and Dad were both the kindest and most caring people. They will never be forgotten. Love ya'll, Debbie and David Stafford



Debbie Stafford - March 31 at 10:32 AM

JE

“ To all the family of Bro Ray: my husband, James R Eddins & family loved Bro Ray & Mickey so much. They held a special place in our lives. My husband attended TBI. Our family will always remember and hold them dear. May God bless you all with wonderful memories and sweet peace. Joy and family

Joy Eddins - March 31 at 12:56 AM

DC

“ David And Jan Crow lit a candle in memory of Dr. Ray O. Brooks



David and Jan Crow - March 30 at 11:47 PM

JN

“ To all who loved this sweet man...

What a lovely gentleman he was indeed! I last saw Rev. Brooks a couple of years ago when I was in Henderson. I had the pleasure of having lunch, seated next to him, at Jack and Betsy's home.

I was amazed that a person of his age remembered me and was so astute and articulate. We had a lovely visit and I was honored to be in his presence .

I still chuckle when I think of his comment about what an enormous piece of cake I had on my plate. We both had a good laugh about it....as I polished it off.

Obviously, his "powers of observation" remained intact along with his sense of humor.

Godspeed to Rev. Brooks on his journey.

With fondness,

Judy Romer Nutter

Judy Nutter - March 30 at 10:24 PM

JB

Bless you Judy...Jack

jack brooks - April 01 at 05:57 PM

MH

“ Patti and Jack so sorry for your loss. I will remember Dr. and Mrs. Brooks as wonderful people and neighbors. Your family will always hold a special place in my heart. I can still see Dr. Brooks walking briskly from your home to TBI each day always on a mission - but always had time for a smile and a wave.

MARTHA SUE HARPER - March 30 at 07:37 AM

GW

“ Gary Wilkerson lit a candle in memory of Dr. Ray O. Brooks



Gary Wilkerson - March 29 at 08:45 PM

KG

“ Bro. Brooks was a remarkable man who left behind an outstanding career and life full of examples for others to follow. He is now in Heaven free of pain and suffering. The family will have so many memories to cherish. God bless the family!
Keith & Debra Hriffith



Keith & Debra Griffith - March 29 at 07:23 AM

KC

“ Kyle and Kenna Cole lit a candle in memory of Ray O. Brooks



Kyle and Kenna Cole - March 29 at 02:51 AM

RH

“ Jack, Patty, Betsy, and family

I am holding you in my heart and love and praying for you. May you receive peace at this time.

Roxann Honeycutt

Roxann Honeycutt - March 28 at 11:15 PM

JW

“ My parents were still considered newlyweds when Bro. Brooks accepted the call to be pastor at Long Branch. He and his family quickly became family to them. What a blessing to have him as our pastor! I have a lifetime time of good memories from church and many meals and much laughter shared with my parents and Bro. and Mrs Brooks. We also shared our beloved Texas A&M. Bro. Brooks always said that he wanted to wear out, not rust out, and that is exactly what he did. His was a life well-lived!

John Worley - March 28 at 06:08 PM

CW

“ What a blessing your dad was to many people, Jack and Patty. Perfect and lovely obituary for the life of a man who loved God. Prayers of peace and comfort for the family. Cyndy Willard

Cyndy Willard - March 28 at 06:08 PM

SC

“ scott & Dawn crawford lit a candle in memory of Ray O. Brooks



scott & Dawn crawford - March 28 at 05:09 PM

KH

“ *Kurt Hunt lit a candle in memory of Ray O. Brooks*



Kurt Hunt - March 28 at 03:49 PM

JC

“ *jim cowart & family*

jim cowart - March 28 at 12:49 PM

DJ

“ *Danny and Rena Jordan lit a candle in memory of Ray O. Brooks*



Danny and Rena Jordan - March 28 at 11:41 AM

PS

“ So very sorry for y'all's loss of such a dear Christian man. I have so many memories and stories of Bro Brooks told to me by my grandmother Thelma Minter from Longbranch. Bro. Brooks would come by the house and pick up my grandmother, my Daddy Melvin “ Buddy “ Minter and his four sisters and brother. Bro. Brooks said that when he picked up the Minter bunch he would look back there and all he would see was petty coats. Bro. Brooks let me video him when my Daddy was turning 60. Then we surprised my parents with a wedding renewal on there 30th anniversary and Bro. Brooks performed the ceremony. He was such a dear man. Thank you Bro. Brooks for being such wonderful man to my family. God bless you all. Sending lots of thoughts and prayers for comfort and peace 🙏❤️



Paula Sparks - March 28 at 09:49 AM

AM

Rest in peace , you fought a good fight ❤️🙏

Anisia Mawa - March 28 at 04:22 PM

DB

“ Damon Bassett lit a candle in memory of Ray O. Brooks



Damon Bassett - March 28 at 06:55 AM

CE

“ A Great man of God. His ministries continue...

Charlie Ellison - March 28 at 05:33 AM

CW

“ I am currently pastor of Smyrna MBC in the Oak Flat community of Rusk County. But I have been pastoring Churches for over 56 years. I, like so many others, have benefited from the graciousness, kindness, and knowledge of Bro Brooks through those years. Only eternity will truly reveal the scope of his faithfulness and influence throughout his career in service to Our LORD! I am one of the many beneficiaries of his Faith, Knowledge, and tutelage in HIS Service. We have all been enriched and blessed to have known Bro. Brooks and we offer our heartfelt condolences and prayers for his Family and loved ones.



Charles and Betty Williams - March 28 at 12:33 AM

HS

My prayers are for the family and church. May the Lord richly bless you through this difficult time

Herman Strickland - March 28 at 06:51 PM

SK

“ Sincere condolences to the family of Bro. Ray O. Brooks. My family and I are deeply saddened by the news of his passing. I want to share a picture of us visiting him in 2013. We love and pray for you as you grieve your loss and celebrate in his promotion to heaven.



Shin Kamoda - March 27 at 10:41 PM

JR

“ To the family of Bro Brooks I send condolences. Bro Brooks was a great man of God and he loved sharing the word. My deceased husband, Bro Dale Reed thought so much of Bro Brooks. He loved having a conversation & teaching from Bro Brooks, always! 🙏

Joni Reed - March 27 at 09:17 PM

GI

“ What a beautiful life! I loved joining my dad and Bro. Brooks for lunch over the years. It was an honor to be at their table! He felt like family.
My sincere condolences and prayers of comfort as you say your earthly goodbye and await that reunion that we as believers long for!
Gina Miller
Bro. Jim Slocumb's daughter

Gina - March 27 at 08:48 PM

JH

“ Jerry and Carol Phillips Harris lit a candle in memory of Ray O. Brooks



Jerry and Carol Phillips Harris - March 27 at 08:28 PM

CR

“ Bro. Brooks meant so much to our family. He was a beloved mentor to our dad, Bro. Sammy Eldredge, and a lifelong friend. Our prayers for his family, church family, and TBI. But praise God he is home!

Cindy Eldredge Rhodes - March 27 at 08:00 PM

CH

“ I always enjoyed hearing his stories of his time at A&M when we had Muster.



Cathy Hooper - March 27 at 06:45 PM

PH

“ Peggy Hunt lit a candle in memory of Ray O. Brooks



Peggy Hunt - March 27 at 06:44 PM

SO

“ Where would I be if not for Br. BROOKS? I cant imagine. But for his great instructions and directions I am where God wants me to be. I remember I was taking a vacation in Colorado and he sent me a message, it read something like" your pastor says for you to get back to Texas, there is work for you to do here." So God saw to it that I did. Br. BROOKS was my pastor for 13 years. And then I was his pastor for 2 years. Amazing! Amazing what God can do through such a man as Ray O. Brooks. Thank you Lord and family, you all are so wonderfully blessed and may God comfort you with His great comforter.

steve owen - March 27 at 06:03 PM

DR

“ Donald and Donna Reynolds lit a candle in memory of Ray O. Brooks



Donald and Donna Reynolds - March 27 at 05:46 PM

RM

“ I can remember when I went to TBI the first time. I met Brother Brooks and he sat down with me and immediately sat down with me and encouraged me and calmed my nerves. I am forever grateful for him. He is missed. We am praying for his family.

Ronnie Mutina - March 27 at 05:10 PM

JJ

“ Jake & Sherry Jordan lit a candle in memory of Ray O. Brooks



Jake & Sherry Jordan - March 27 at 04:31 PM

 Connie Denton

“ Connie Denton lit a candle in memory of Ray O. Brooks



Connie Denton - March 27 at 03:49 PM

SL

“ Brooks family. I am so sorry for your loss. He was such an amazing man. He blessed those lives he touched in the name of our Lord. He’s in Glory with the Father, and his Loved ones. Lots of memories for those left behind.
I love you all.
Susan Russo. Lingle



Susan Lingle - March 27 at 02:25 PM

RW

Jack and Patty so sorry for your loss! He was a wonderful testimony to God!

Rhonda Whitley - March 28 at 03:40 PM

CJ

“ I will never forget as a seven year old girl, 54 years ago, arriving at TBI with my mom and dad, Betty and Sammy Eldredge and sister. We were all excited but scared to death in this new phase of life God had called us to. Bro. Ray and Mrs. Mickey and Doc. Kirkland and Mrs Kirkland were there to greet us and welcome us to our new temporary home at 103 Garden Lane, on campus. Bro. Brooks has been a wonderful friend and mentor to all our family. Carroll said just the other day that he was the only one living who was at TBI when he started in 1961. Three of our boys, Scott, Joe and Sam all had many classes under Bro. Brooks and they loved him so much. Our oldest so. Stacy lived across the road from him for a while and loved being his neighbor. He has touched my family in so many ways and we appreciate the life and stand he took for Christ. We are so proud he is now with His Saviour, his wife and all those wonderful preachers who have gone in before. We look forward to the day We can all be together again in God’s presence. Love are prayers for all his sweet family.

Carroll and Sandy Jones - March 27 at 10:51 AM

CG

“ Jack so sorry for your loss. He was an amazing person. God bless you, Betsy and family. Candy Duncan Grant



Candy Grant - March 27 at 09:41 AM

PP

“ Pud Patterson lit a candle in memory of Dr. Ray O. Brooks



Pud Patterson - March 27 at 09:38 AM

PW

“ Jim and Patty Witt



Patty Witt - March 27 at 09:06 AM

ED

“ Elaine Davis lit a candle in memory of Dr. Ray O. Brooks



Elaine Davis - March 27 at 08:16 AM

JJ

“ Jason&Susan Jarrell lit a candle in memory of Dr. Ray O. Brooks



Jason&Susan Jarrell - March 27 at 08:02 AM

RW

“ Bro. Brooks was a blessing to me. I was thankful to see him 2 weeks ago. I thank the Lord for that opportunity. May the Lord comfort Patty and Chris and the whole family. - Dale Walker, Pastor of Eastside Baptist church in Gary.

Raymond Dale Walker - March 26 at 10:39 PM

DM

“ Jack, so sorry to hear of the loss of your father. My prayers are with you and your family.

Donna Hudgins Melton - March 26 at 10:18 PM

CF

“ Cliff And Krista Furtick lit a candle in memory of Dr. Ray O. Brooks



Cliff and Krista Furtick - March 26 at 10:01 PM

SC

“ *Suzanne Cross*



Suzanne Cross - March 26 at 09:56 PM

BB

“ *Bobby And Teresa Brady lit a candle in memory of Dr. Ray O. Brooks*



Bobby and Teresa Brady - March 26 at 09:41 PM

GK

“ *Gene Kelsey lit a candle in memory of Dr. Ray O. Brooks*



Gene Kelsey - March 26 at 09:04 PM

CK

“ *Chris And Linda King lit a candle in memory of Dr. Ray O. Brooks*



Chris and Linda King - March 26 at 08:33 PM

RE

“ Robert & Dianne Everitt lit a candle in memory of Dr. Ray O. Brooks



Robert & Dianne Everitt - March 26 at 07:12 PM

JP

“ Patty, I am truly sorry about the loss of your beloved Dad. Sending prayers to you and your entire family.
Janice Allen Pirkey



Janice Allen Pirkey - March 26 at 06:33 PM

DM

“ I was a scared young man from WV in 1979 when I first arrived at T.B.I. in Henderson. I had never been away from home before. Dr. Brooks met with me and prayed with me. I am thankful for him, his leadership at T.B.I. and most importantly, I am thankful for his service to the Lord.

David Minor - March 26 at 04:48 PM

BP

“ Prayers for family. He is at home now happy and healthy
Beth Hale Pope.

Beth Pope - March 26 at 04:18 PM

SH

“ Sue Henderson lit a candle in memory of Dr.
Ray O. Brooks



Sue Henderson - March 26 at 03:28 PM

KH

“ Mollie & Ken Hale



Ken Hale - March 26 at 03:27 PM



“ Patty Warner lit a candle in memory of Dr.
Ray O. Brooks



Patty Warner - March 26 at 03:25 PM

D-

“ Prayers Patty, Jack and family
Donna Dorsey Aaron



Donna J Aaron -Dorsey - March 26 at 03:03 PM

TS

“ We are so sorry for your loss.
Craig and Paula



The Sweeneys - March 26 at 01:31 PM

LC

“ Linda Culp lit a candle in memory of Dr. Ray
O. Brooks



Linda Culp - March 26 at 12:37 PM

MC

“ Milton & Angie Christian lit a candle in
memory of Dr. Ray O. Brooks



Milton & Angie Christian - March 26 at 11:36 AM