

Voddie Baucham Jr. dies at 56

September 26, 2025

(RNS)—Voddie Baucham Jr., a conservative Black pastor, author and seminary leader known for advocating for restricting women's roles in the church and critiquing what he saw as "woke" influence on Christianity, has died at 56.

"We are saddened to inform friends that our dear brother, Voddie Baucham Jr., has left the land of the dying and entered the land of the living," the Founders Ministries announced Thursday (Sept. 25).

Baucham had been leading the ministry's new seminary in Florida.

"Earlier today, after suffering an emergency medical incident, he entered into his rest and the immediate presence of the Savior whom he loved, trusted and served since he was converted as a college student," the announcement said.

A graduate of Houston Christian University, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Baucham pastored churches in Texas for years before moving to Zambia in 2015 to lead a missionary seminary there.

He returned to the United States in 2021 after dealing with serious health issues.

Earlier this year he was named president of Founders Seminary under the auspices of the Founders Ministries, a nonprofit with ties to Southern Baptists.

"What a privilege it is to invest your life in training the next generation of pastors. And that's what this is about," Baucham said in a video announcing

the new school.

"We're committed to training men with sharp minds, warm hearts and steel spines."

A lion in the pulpit

Tom Buck, pastor of First Baptist Church in Lindale, Texas, called Baucham "a dear friend, a faithful brother and a lion in the pulpit."

Buck said he was devastated to hear the news of Baucham's death. The two had found common cause in conservative theology but also were friends.

"He was kind, he was generous, he was just a faithful brother," Buck said.

Buck said despite his renown as a preacher, Baucham was the same person in the pulpit or talking one to one.

"There was no pretense about him," said Buck. "He loved the Lord. He was a godly man behind closed doors as well as in public. He was kind and generous."

Georgia pastor Mike Stone, a former candidate for president of the Southern Baptist Convention, praised Baucham as "just a stalwart for truth and his loss to the body of Christ could not be overstated in this hour," Stone told Religion News Service.

SBC and CRT

In recent years, Baucham had become allied with a group of conservative pastors who believed the SBC was experiencing a liberal drift.

He ran for president of the SBC's pastor conference, an influential gathering that occurs in the days before the denomination's annual meeting, in 2022, but lost the race to North Carolina pastor Daniel Dickard.

Baucham's 2021 book, *Fault Lines*, made USA Today's bestseller list, peaking at No. 7. The book critiqued critical race theory as unchristian and the leading edge of a "looming catastrophe" in evangelical Christian churches.

Baucham recently gave a lecture about standing up for Christian values in American culture at New Saint Andrew's College, a school founded by the conservative pastor Doug Wilson in Moscow, Idaho.

Baucham quoted from the New Testament's First Letter of Peter:

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect."

As a seminary professor, he told students winning arguments was not enough, gentleness was not weakness and they needed to respect their opponents.

"May it never be they don't hear you because you actually are sinful in your presentation," he said, that "you actually are unkind, disingenuous—because then all of a sudden, the rest of your argument loses its sting."

An announcement of Baucham's death cited Psalm 116: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Baucham is survived by his wife, Bridget, whom he married in 1989, their nine children and several grandchildren.