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London (Europe)	£10.00
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## Preacher's £700,000 fasting crusade

By Victoria Combe

THE £700,000 Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion is to be spent on reviving the Christian discipline of fasting.

The winner, Dr Bill Bright, an American evangelist who founded Campus Crusade for Christ, is planning a world-wide campaign.

Prince Philip will present the award at Buckingham Palace in May. Previous winners include Mother Teresa, Lord Jakobovitz, the former Chief Rabbi, and the evangelist Billy Graham.

Dr Bright, 74, a former grocer, was selected for his vigorous evangelising, which he claims has reached two billion people.

But after two fasts of 40 days and 40 nights, Dr Bright said he had changed his view and now believed fasting and prayer, rather than travelling and preaching, was the best way to carry out God's work.

He said he would use the money to train laymen and clergy in the "lost discipline" of fasting, by running workshops, distributing leaflets, and broadcasting lessons on television and radio.

"To the uninitiated, fasting may seem like a waste of time," said Dr Bright in New York yesterday. "But it is the first discipline of Christian life and is incredibly liberating. It has been forgotten yet it is the most tremendous of all disciplines."

Christians will be urged to keep healthy during the fast by drinking water, vegetable and fruit juices. "There is no merit in mutilating the body," he said. "It is a time to humble oneself, to pray and to seek God."

Donald Lehr, a spokesman for the Templeton Prize, said Dr Bright had been chosen for his original methods of evangelism. "He has employed every kind of communication possible to spread the word."

The Crusade for Christ, which began as a tiny ministry at the University of California in 1951, now has 40 ministries in 165 countries. It centres on college campuses, but also has projects in prisons and inner cities.

Dr Bright evangelises via the Internet, satellite down links, billboards, bumper stickers and videos.