

Slain pastor laid to rest

by [Bob Allen](#)

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ARLINGTON, Texas (ABP) -- Mourners filled First Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas, March 9 to celebrate the life of a young mission pastor cut short by murder, while more than 500 others watched live on the Internet.

Clint Dobson, 28, was laid to rest six days after his suffocation death during a robbery at NorthPointe Baptist Church, a satellite of First Baptist Church and part of the congregation's expansive mission outreach to the poor.

Dennis Wiles, pastor of First Baptist Church in Arlington, reminded worshippers the funeral service fell on Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent celebrated for centuries by Christians worldwide to turn from worldly concerns to focus on 40 days leading up to remembrance of Christ's death on the cross.

"This year my journey will be deeper and richer because of Clint Dobson," Wiles said. "My life will be more closely linked with Jesus as I journey to the cross this year, because of the sacrifice of a servant of God."

Friends, family and mentors in ministry remembered Dobson as a fun-loving and gifted young minister devoted to his young wife, Laura.

"I take great hope in the promise of eternal life in Jesus Christ," said Robert Creech, Dobson's former pastor for 15 years who now [teaches](#) pastoral ministry at George W. Truett Theological Seminary. "I believe in the resurrection of the dead. I believe in life everlasting. I mean that. But honestly I have to say ... we feel robbed, pillaged to have Clint taken out of our world. The church and the world feel poorer for it, and many in our seminary feel the same sense of loss that the people

of NorthPointe Church surely do and his family most of all."

Dobson graduated from Baylor University in 2004. He enrolled at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, but after Hurricane Katrina temporarily closed the school, he transferred to Baylor's Truett Seminary. Professors there described him as a star pupil not only sharp enough for doctoral studies but also rare in his love for others demonstrated in ministry to the poor.

"Clint Dobson's life was lived well. Whatever he did he gave his all and his best," said Jeff Waldo, associate pastor for discipleship at University Baptist Church in Houston who supervised Dobson as a ministry intern working at a low-income apartment complex in 2005. "In what time he lived he got it right. He loved people and he loved God and he communicated God's love with clarity."

After earning his master's degree from Truett in 2008, Dobson joined the staff of First Baptist Church in Arlington as mission pastor of NorthPointe Baptist Church.

"I remember his excitement about coming to NorthPointe and the excitement that sustained during his time here," Waldo said. "He was very thankful and appreciative for the opportunity that was extended to him."

Others said between his ministry and marriage, the last few years were the happiest of Dobson's life -- a life cut short by a senseless murder allegedly committed during a robbery of items including credit cards later used to buy jewelry at a nearby mall.

"We're not going to talk about why," said Dobson's father in law, Philip Rozeman. "Why is too hard. We really want to talk about the question 'who?,' who Clint is."

"Clint's a man who lived God's word, a man whose life had tremendous impact, even if it was only 28 years," Rozeman testified.

Wiles make a similar point. "Since Thursday afternoon our minds have been filled with questions," he said. "That is true of all of us. We

have asked hard questions and they have challenged each one of us. Why? How? How could anything good come from something so evil? Those questions will haunt us for a while. In fact it just may be that they are so deep and profound for us that we might live out our entire lives with those questions unanswered."

Wiles encouraged mourners to move forward living in faith and not by sight.

"This world is fleeting," Wiles said. "Sometime it goes by in only 28 years. God has created us for eternity."

In his closing prayer Wiles thanked God for "a life well lived" and "a gospel that is sturdy enough for days like today."