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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS DELIVERS REMARKS AT A CELEBRATION  
OF LIFE FOR REVEREND DR. CALVIN O. BUTTS, III**

**Mayor Eric Adams:** I was sitting here looking at the photo and thinking about how of good heart Dr. Butts had. And I don't know if it's lost on you, but this is a good looking brother. (Laughter.) 73 — he personified what we say in the community, good black don't crack. And in my brevity, I only think of one story that just really personifies the moment. I start this ritual every morning. I have a cup or bowl of oatmeal and put a little cream in it. And I thought I forgot my grocery shopping, so I ran to the fridge and to my happiness, the cream was there in the fridge, grabbed it, it was half full.

Then I looked at the expiration date. It was spoiled. It's an analogy to our lives. We all have an expiration date. We're all going to reach a moment where we're going to transform from the physical to the spiritual. Nothing is more tragic of a Shakespearean proportion than to be half full. To leave your best game in the carton and hope on that day that you would have used all of you. There's only one thing I'm sure of, there wasn't a drop left in Dr. Butts.

And some will say, but only seven three, 73 — that's so young. Jesus was 33 by some scholars, and he commanded that we split history into B.C. and A.D. So this is an A.D. moment. What are we going to do after the transition and death of Reverend Calvin Butts? We are eight days A.D. How are we going to treat each other differently? How are we going to be Butts-like? How are we going to use our lives, so when someone comes and give us our eulogy, they won't have to be creative or a creative writer?

They could just tell the truth. I remember in my darkest moments, during the days of 100 Blacks in Law Enforcement Who Care fighting to end police abuse. I remember studying to become a lieutenant, and someone pulled up next to my car and shot out my car windows after calling out my name. And I remember speaking to Reverend Butts and he said, "Now it is time for you not just to read but to believe." I remember going to testify in federal court to stop police misconduct and over-proliferation of stop-and-frisk and hearing Dr. Butts.

I remember when music was demonizing Black women in our community, and he came with that big construction roller and rolled over the CDs. And long before people were talking about "Don't advertise alcohol and cigarettes in our community to harm our community," he had a

white roller brush painting over the posters and said, "Lock me up if you want to, because I'm going to stand on truth."

But let me conclude with this, I hope it wasn't lost on all of you. It is one thing to talk about what you did individually, but did you hear all the places the disciples have gone inside the city and country and the roles they're playing? You might as well call my administration Abyssinian. Sheena Wright, my deputy mayor. David Banks, my chancellor. Deputy Mayor Anne Williams-Isom. All I did was look down the directory of Abyssinian and found the best.

I love him and I'm going to miss him. I'm going to miss him. There's a hole in my heart that I don't think will heal for a long time.

**Audience:** Amen.

**Mayor Adams:** Sister Butts, we're going to lift you up in prayer. We know how challenging this moment is. It is for all of us, but nowhere in the contract of life does it say immortality is part of the deal. We're all mortal. And I can rest assured in all my heart, all of the elected officials in this room, he loved. But he adored me. (Laughter and applause.)

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