

Looking to Jesus

Looking to Jesus for my salvation; Looking to Him for pardon and peace; Looking to Him to guide me and keep me Until life's trying journey shall cease.

Looking to Jesus who upon Calvary; Died to redeem me, His own to be; All that I need I find it in Jesus, Jesus is all sufficient for me.

Did it not please the heavenly Father, That in him all our fullness should dwell? If we will just be loyal to Jesus, All will be well, yes, all will be well.

Looking to Jesus, He is our Captain; Looking to Jesus, He is our Way; Looking to Jesus for our protection, When His pure Word we trust and obey.

Words and Music by

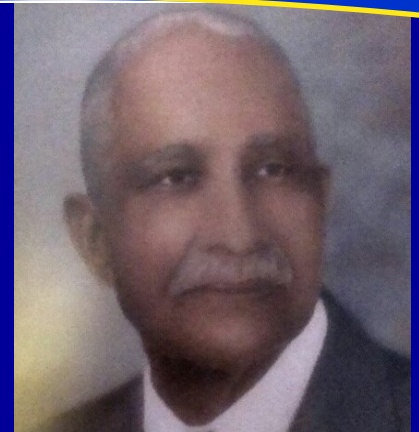


Bishop Charles Price Jones

BISHOP CHARLES PRICE JONES: A HISTORICAL CONTEXT

By

Dr. Leonard N. Moore, Ph.D.



As we celebrate the 150th birth of our founder Bishop C.P. Jones, it is time that we acknowledge his life and contribution to the African American freedom struggle. Born at the end of the Civil War, his formative years were spent in an unprecedented period of institution building for African Americans. During the period of emancipation former enslaved African-Americans did five immediate things:

- moved off the plantation
- changed their names
- acquired property
- built schools
- established mutual aid societies
- created independent churches

While African Americans were able to vote, hold elective office, and have a measure of freedom during the Reconstruction period (1865-1877), by 1890 many of those gains had been lost with the rise of Jim Crow, segregation, and violent white resistance. Indeed, white Southerners were not willing to extend any power to the formerly enslaved and they used any and all tactics to remind black folks of their position in life. Several tactics were used to maintain white supremacy:

- violence and intimidation
- sharecropping
- convict leasing
- White-capping
- lynching

When the Supreme Court issued its decision in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court case in 1896,

the doctrine of separate but equal would set racial policy in the South for the next eighty years. But this racial oppression was just not a problem endemic to the United States. Globally, Africans were in the midst of rapid colonization. Between 1870 and 1914 European countries literally took over the entire African continent and proceeded to exploit all of the natural resources for their own use. This process of invasion, occupation, colonization, and annexation would forever change the lives of our people on the continent of Africa.

In this climate there arose a need for a new breed of black leadership to address this crisis now that the federal government had agreed to let the South handle its "Negro problem." Thus during the late 19th and early 20th century, African Americans created many of the civil rights organizations that we still support today such as:

- National Association of Colored Women
- NAACP (1909)
- National Urban League (1910)

From a leadership perspective there were vigorous debates about what specific path African Americans should take during this period of political retrenchment. Some such as Booker T. Washington suggested that we should eschew political activism in favor of economic nationalism, while W.E.B. DuBois argued that political activism combined with a

continued on page 4

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| <i>Historical Context</i> | 1 |
| <i>SWD Music Workshop</i> | 2 |
| <i>Celebrate the Founder</i> | 3 |
| <i>In Memory of . . .</i> | 4 |
| <i>Winning Souls . . .</i> | 5 |
| <i>Medically Speaking . . .</i> | 6 |
| <i>Our Founders Legacy Continues</i> | 7 |
| <i>Equipping the Saints . . .</i> | 8-9 |
| <i>2015 NBM Retreat Information</i> | 10 |
| <i>Reflections - F.L.O.W.</i> | 11 |
| <i>TRUTH Subscriptions</i> | 12 |

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CELEBRATE THE FOUNDER

Bishop Emery Lindsay

The 2014 Christmas Season is behind us and we are doubly blessed that during this season, we are not only grateful to God for the indescribable gift of his one and only Son but also for having the opportunity to reflect on the birth of the founder of this denomination, Bishop Charles Price Jones. He was born in Texas Valley, near Rome, Georgia December 9, 1865 and was reared in Kingston, Georgia. This man was God's gift to the church with a burning passion to communicate this great truth of God **"the call to holiness"**. We owe our denominational existence to his obedience to this calling of God that he was unable to escape. We are all aware that Charles Price Jones did not start holiness; for it was holiness that started Bishop Jones and remained his lifelong aspiration and passion.

As I look at our present cultural and moral landscape and recall the words of the founder that religious people "were not toting fair with God", a rural expression that means they were not carrying their share of the responsibility; how much the more in our day! Once again, we live in a time where many who profess Christ do not tote fair with God. Our profession of faith is so far removed from our practice of the faith. It seems like; once again, men have forgotten that we who are hearers must also be doers of the word. There should be no contradiction between our lifestyle and the scriptures which call us to lay aside every weight and sin which doth easily beset us in the race we are called to run.

Mankind seems to have forgotten the call is still to come before God with clean hands and a clean heart. Our world is doing everything possible to squeeze us into its mold and make us conform to the present age. Unfortunately, we are likely to find ourselves among the number who have a form of godliness but whose lives deny the reality of a genuine relationship with the God of the Bible who is still holy. The God of the Bible, the God of CP Jones, is still issuing a clarion call, **"Be ye holy; for I am holy."**(1 Peter 1:16) A church without holiness has very little to say to this dark and benighted generation. Therefore, we must look back and remember from whence we have come. I cannot surrender to the gods of this age, as enticing as

they may seem, because I know God still calls me and my generation to walk in the light as He is in the light.

I think it is time we renewed the call to get the experience of the fullness of the Spirit; the experience whereby we have the mind of Christ. Bishop Jones, I am told, seldom preached without reminding his hearers that **"which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."** (Col. 1:27) We need to seek for the renewal of the power of the Holy Spirit so that we might go forth with holy boldness and enjoin this generation to seek the Lord while He may be found. Once again, it is time to seek the Lord with fasting and prayer that God will visit His people as He has done in years gone by.

O, that we might, once again, know His healings, deliverances, and His saving grace as revealed in the person of His Son Jesus the Lord of the Church. This one thing I know and herein I take my stand, if we draw near to God, He will draw near to us and He will show forth His glory. As Bishop Jones has said "O, the glory of that exalted state". It is not just the presence of our God we hunger to know, but as God's people, we long for his presence because we know that He is still faithful to reveal himself and his mighty power as we seek Him and walk in the holiness of life. Then, we can speak to our generation with new authority and demonstrate a changed life that rings with authenticity. I have been with Jesus and He has transformed my life, my home and my eternal destiny. Let us be faithful to this holiness heritage because it is not only ours by denominational identity but it is by the call of God who says **"be ye holy for I am holy."**

(continued from page 1 - **Bishop Charles Price Jones**)

liberal arts education was the more accurate route. Women such as Mary Church Terrell and Ida B. Wells reminded black men that black women were a part of the struggle as well and that they should not be excluded from these debates. In later years Marcus Garvey suggested that since we would never get justice in America that our efforts should be placed on returning to Africa, our homeland.

In the midst of this period historians call “The Nadir,” or lowest point, Charles Price Jones emerged with his own version of racial advancement, holiness. As a pastor, biblical scholar, institution builder, and thought leader, Jones understood that the key to black liberation was holiness. Pastor Eugene Rivers of Boston argued at a Harvard Divinity School conference in 2005 that holiness was not a conservative movement centered on theological legalism. Rather, it was a revolutionary response to a corrosive and capitalist culture. Thus he stated, “there was a revolutionary practice involved in the wearing of long dresses and a deeper logic around not wearing pants.”

If we look at the Holiness movement as a form of oppositional culture and a form of black resistance to white oppression, then our theology takes on a whole new meaning. The idea of resisting conformity, being transformed, presenting your body a living sacrifice holy and acceptable unto God, had a political purpose as well as it being a theological mandate. In a culture that promotes the created over the Creator, Jones understood that moral order was the pretext to pursuing racial justice.

Bishop Jones’s life exemplifies that of a 19th century race

man: Born in the shadows of slavery; adolescent years spent during reconstruction; and early adult years spent during the emergence of Jim Crow. These broader events shaped his relationship with God, his theology, and his commitment to institution building. After establishing the Church of Christ Holiness, Bishop Jones quickly created the following structures within COCHUSA to advance the race:

- a publishing house
- creation of the Truth Paper
- establishment of the CWWW
- the founding of a school (CM&I)
- launching of the foreign mission board

Jones perhaps understood that I Peter 2:9 had a particular meaning for Black folk: *But you are a chosen race, A royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.*

If Bishop Jones were living today, I think that he would remind us that yes, we are indeed, a chosen race. Let us remember that as we remember the life and legacy of Charles Price Jones, the ultimate “race man.”

Leonard N. Moore, Ph.D.

*Senior Associate Vice-President/
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Professor/Department of History
The University of Texas at Austin*



In Loving Memory

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L. C. Swims

Winning Souls by Winning Hearts

"To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means win some..." 1 Corinthians 9:22

God's call for the church to "Go ye" in the Great Commission implies a desire for us to spread the Gospel in areas other than those we find familiar or comfortable. It's a call for us to go to those places where the gospel is needed most and to share it with people who may not necessarily resemble those we are used to encountering. They may not dress like, act like, look like or talk like those we tend to associate with in the church and they may have issues, both apparent and hidden, but does this not make them prime for evangelistic outreach? You would think so. So, why does it seem that the church is doing such a sub-par job of both fulfilling our commission and seizing the opportunity? Maybe it's because they are NOT like us. Maybe, just maybe their pants sag a bit ... or, they haven't mastered the church lingo. What if there's an ear ring, or nose ring, or God forbid a tongue ring. How about if their music didn't come from the Blue Book or the Red Book or if the creator of said music had a name that begins with "J" but it wasn't J-O-N-E-S, but rather J-a-y-Z? Oh, wait...what if they were...okay...look out...hold your hats...GAY? What if they struggle with homosexuality? Prime for a little salvation you would think? In desperate need of a dose of the Holy Ghost?

So why then are we not effectively evangelizing them? Why then are we losing the battle for their souls? See, I used to think that it's because we are not trying or that we didn't care. That we were simply closing our eyes and pretending they would somehow straighten themselves up. I no longer think that. The reason is not that we aren't trying to evangelize them. The reason is that we are trying to evangelize them without engaging them. You see, my grandmother used to tell her girls that the quickest way to a man's heart is through his stomach; well the quickest way to win a man's soul is to first win his heart.

The Apostle Paul realized something in his evangelistic method that many of us have missed over the years...there must be engagement for effective evangelism. There must be compassion for effective conversion. In order to be successful in putting them at the cross, you've got to be willing to put yourselves in their shoes. Paul knew that the key to effective soul winning was not necessarily a mastery of the word or a proficient division of scripture, but rather a

cultivating of relationships and he knew that the desired result, the ultimate outcome was to SAVE them...but first you got to WIN them.

When Paul writes about his desire to WIN some, I believe he desired not just to build the church with them but to build a relationship with them. In Philippians 3:8 he says, *"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may WIN Christ."* Paul, in using the word WIN definitely is not talking about SAVING Christ, but rather having a relationship with Christ. Jesus fellowshiped with sinners. He felt a need to go to Zaccheus' house. He was often criticized by the religious leaders for the crowd He was found with. He went to social gatherings with tax collectors; He even went to a party or two and I was told on one occasion, He even supplied the wine. He knew the importance of engaging to evangelize.

See, for years, we have been told to "Stay away from around them;" "Don't dress like them;" "Don't speak like them;" "But WIN them." Try building a friendship with someone you don't spend time with, talk to, find any common ground with; yet you do all you can to imply that you are somehow better than him. Good Luck. Jesus, like Paul, knew that people receive the gospel best when they are comfortable with you. When there is common ground...be it in speech

or interests or dress. Listen, if being Holy means dressing different than everybody else, then why when they came to capture Jesus, did Judas have to identify Him with a kiss? Surely he would have said. "He won't be hard to recognize. He's Holy. He'll be dressed unlike the rest".

Get this...Jesus had a crown. Yet He chose not to wear it on earth and Jesus had a glow (yes he could glow... certainly a sign of holiness) yet he chose not to wear it either. Why? Because He knew that the key to saving their soul was to win their trust. The key to redemption and restoration is in relationships.

Continued on page 6

(continued from page 5 - Evangelism)

Paul knew that in building relationships you don't focus on the differences but rather the commonalities; therefore he said, *"to the Jews I became a Jew, to win the Jew. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak."* Paul determined that for the sake of building relationships, winning hearts and ultimately saving souls, he would forego seizing on the petty differences (as Paul called them "disputable matters) and forge a relationship based on what they could find in common.

Here's a novel idea...if you see a young man that you desire to evangelize and he has an earring in his ear, resist the desire to fire first with a condemnation of the earring and just concentrate on common ground. If you aim your witness at a young lady whose skirt may be a little tight, bite your tongue and begin with something pleasant. If you encounter a gay person and don't know quite what to say, do as Paul did, engage them by discussing something other than how their lifestyle will cause them to burn in hell. What about this...try loving them. Try befriending them. Try WINNING them. The Word is always received best when there is a trusting, cordial relationship. When there is a history. See, at the end of the day, evangelistic success is not determined by whether you won the church's approval or whether you theologially or philosophically waxed eloquently. It matters not if the people received you with wild applause, screamed your name or wrote it across the sky. As Paul so plainly stated, evangelical success is determined by whether you WIN SOME.

Elder Chris Perkins
National Evangelism Committee

Medically Speaking. . .

Epilepsy or seizures is the fourth most common neurological problem. Only migraines, strokes and Alzheimer's disease occur more frequently. Each year an estimated 150,000 or 48 out of 100,000 people will develop epilepsy. There is already an estimated 2.2 million people diagnosed with epilepsy in the United States. The incidence of epilepsy is higher in young children and older adults meaning that it starts more often in these age groups. This is a touchy subject that usually no one wants to talk about, but should be understood.

Epilepsy is a syndrome of two or more unprovoked or reoccurring seizures on more than one occasion. This means that the seizure will occur at any given time and usually there seems to be no reason for it. Seizures are generally described in two major groups. The first one is primary generalized seizures and the second one is partial seizures. The difference between these types is in how and where they begin. Primary usually involves both sides of the brain and sometimes hereditary factors play a part in this type.

The causes vary but the most common causes are strokes, dementia, traumatic brain injury, and several more. The symptoms are different from person to person and again the type depends on the portion of the brain affected. After some testing by your physician, he/or she can be more specific about the type you have. The specific test you will receive will be an EEG (electroencephalogram), a cat scan of the brain or an MRI of the brain to be more definitive. Different blood tests will be required too.

Treatment for epilepsy includes medications, lifestyle changes and sometimes surgery. The medication to prevent seizures is called anticonvulsants and usually reduce the number of future seizures but does not completely stop them. You will always have blood tests to monitor the amount in your system to reduce any side effects. Your medicine should always be taken as prescribed. Missing a dose can sometimes trigger you to have a seizure. Do not stop taking or change medications on your own. Talk to your doctor about ANY changes in diet, stress, other medications, sleep habits, or pregnancy.

For many people, epilepsy is a lifelong condition but can be managed through scheduled doctor visits and medication management.

Awaiting His return,
Deaconess Joi Adams, RN

OUR FOUNDER'S LEGACY CONTINUES . . .

On Sunday, November 16, 2014, at 4:00 PM, Minister Charles Price Jones IV delivered his initial sermon, continuing the legacy of his great grandfather, Bishop Charles Price Jones, Sr., in preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. Members of First Church of Christ Holiness USA, Norfolk, Virginia, along with the sister churches in the Northern and Southern Districts of the Eastern Diocese, family and friends witnessed this auspicious occasion with joy and gladness. Out of town guests included Bro. Michael Bond from Houston TX., Sisters Beverly Latson, Betty Dyson, Belinda Hubb, Shelia Rahming and Mattie Porter from Washington, D.C.

Minister Jones gave special thanks and tribute to his father, Charles Price Jones III and his mother, Mary Watkins, for raising him to be the man of God that he is today. He also gave thanks to his wife, Jeanette; his sons, Charles V., Chavez, and his daughter, Marysha, as well as other family members, who support him in his ministry.

"Minister C.P" as he is known to us, was born in Washington, D.C. to Charles Price Jones III and Mary Geraldine Jones. He grew up in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area where he attended school in the Prince George's County Public School System. Charles worshipped at First Church of Christ Holiness in D.C. until he joined the Marines where he served for 11 years. He and his family have been faithful members of First Church Norfolk since 2005. He has served as a trustee, chairman of the Trustee Board, Brotherhood president at the local and diocese level, Male Usher Board, Male Chorus, Security Ministry at the Diocese and National level and in numerous other capacities. Minister Jones accepted his call to the ministry in March, 2013.

Elder Quinton Smithers served as Master of Ceremonies for the evening. The Male Chorus from Mt. Olive Church of Christ Holiness, Portsmouth, VA gave a rousing devotional period of old fashioned gospel singing. The special selection from Emmanuel Chapel Church of Christ Holiness, Hampton, VA's Male Chorus featured Deacon John Walker, Sr., using his strong voice, even at 95 years old, as soloist, singing

"When We All Get to Heaven."

Minister Jones' subject was taken from Acts 12:1-12. "Where Is Your Faith?" God can remove the shackles that bind us and He can remove all obstacles that may hinder His will from being done. Just as God brought Peter through his storm of impending execution by Herod, because of his faith, He can bring us through our storms. We can rest assured that God will not lead us to a storm and not take us through the storm, but we must have faith. It was God that delivered him from the hands of Herod and from what the non-believing Jewish leaders had planned for him. God can do anything but fail. We must pray and ask, trust and obey and above all, have faith. We must remember that along with our faith, we must work. James 2:20 says "faith without works is dead." Now that we have the faith to believe that God will do what He said He will do, we must go out and do what He tells us to do. Saints, it's time to work. "Have faith in God. Have dauntless faith in God."

*Submitted by
Sister Shirlee Dunbar*

Equipping the Saints for Evangelism: Do We Have The Power?

(Reprinted from The Truth, Summer, 2007)

EACH ONE, WIN ONE

The vision for the church as presented by President Vernon Kennebrew and Senior Bishop Emery Lindsay is to increase our national membership by 11% this year or 1500 new members. In accordance with this goal, the Truth will print a series of 3 articles that will address this initiative in order to encourage, support, and empower our churches, both pastors, leaders, and lay persons, in evangelizing and reaching the lost: those who are unchurched, backslidden, or new to our communities. EACH ONE, WIN ONE!!!!!!

Many churches have recently begun to take an enlarged interest in evangelism. New steps are being taken to experience success with both a sense of urgency and chastened humility. The new urgency arises partly from the nature of the Gospel itself. The Gospel calls for reaching those who have not been reached and desperately fulfill the need of sharing the message of redemption with the world. The chastened humility stems from our candid recognition that we have not made much progress. We must realize that equipping ourselves to evangelize must come through the power of the Holy Spirit. Our efforts to reach those who need the Gospel message has remained stagnated. Here and there good results may be pointed out, but the overall picture is one of gradual success. Still we know that we cannot give up, and so in many places fresh efforts at evangelism are being realized.

In this situation I would urge the importance of doing some basic thinking about the Holy Spirit and evangelism. I am convinced that it is a fundamental area that needs careful reflection. This has been so since the church first began to bear witness to the Gospel. Let us look to the New Testament record where the first proclamation goes forth and examine the connection between evangelism and the Holy Spirit.

It is apparent that the Holy Spirit and evangelistic witness are closely related. This close relationship is evident both on the basis of the words of Jesus, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8), and the fact that after the Holy Spirit did come (according to Acts 2) the witness of the early church was effective. The connection is quite clear: only the coming of the Holy Spirit to those who were to be witnesses for Christ made the work of evangelism possible.

Only by using the Word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit can the work of the kingdom become a reality. We must not limit the Holy Spirit's effects by analyzing its impact or attempting to measure its results. It is apparent from the record that what the Holy Spirit supplied was power: "You shall receive power...." This, the disciples were told, they had to have; they could not proclaim the message in their own strength or even with a heightening or deepening of their own capacities. They had to receive power from "on high" (Luke 24:49) transcendent and supernatural power to do the job. The necessity for this is undeniable, for the task of evangelistic witness was that of bringing people to genuine repentance and to a new life in Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38). Natural means were insufficient; only the power of God could break through human self-sufficiency and create a new beginning. So it was with the early church: there is no difference today.

This brings us to a matter of specific concern. Do we as a church today have the power? It is a question that ministers, laymen, and individuals should ask themselves. This question by no means tends to minimize many other important matters, such as the most adequate means of communicating the message, the connection between word and deed, evangelism and its relationship to the total mission of the church. However, let's focus on what is essential. Do we have that power, or, to use the words of Acts 1, have we

"received" it? Surely if we are lacking here, everything else: no matter how sincerely, vigorously, even relevantly done, our efforts could very well be compromised.

To return to earlier remarks about "chastened humility": I believe that we could possibly come to admit that we are wanting in that power. What happened on the Day of Pentecost was that they were "filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:4), and thereby empowered. I believe that perhaps this is where we may have a serious need.

Now let us briefly re-examine the record in Acts and raise three basic questions: first, *who* were they who received the Holy Spirit, *what* was required for this to occur, and *what* was it like when it happened? These, I believe, are important matters that point the way to a new power. If so, we need to grapple with them, and ask how the answers apply to us today.

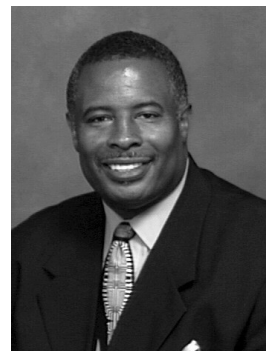
In reply to the first question: those who received the Holy Spirit were true believers in Jesus Christ. According to Acts 1, it was the eleven apostles, later supplemented by over a hundred others, to whom the promise was given. The gathering was wholly of "brethren" (v. 16) in Christ. They all were waiting for the promise to be fulfilled. It is important to note that the gathered disciples had lived through the death and resurrection of Jesus. This meant death to the old and the rising of the new. Peter may symbolically represent all, for in his bitter tears of repentance the old proud self was broken through and a new Peter of true repentance and faith was born. To *such* a Peter- -and the others with him- -now forgiven by God's grace, the Spirit was promised. The Spirit, the Holy Spirit, could thereupon be received.

It is striking to observe that Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost brought people to a deep conviction of sin: they were "cut to the heart" (Acts 2:37). They knew and admitted their terrible guilt of having put to death the Messiah- -and out of that shattering experience they came to true faith in Jesus Christ. The Gospel was sharply spoken by Peter: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins: and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (2:38). Here, again, to those who pass through a life-transforming repentance and faith, wherein the grace of God's forgiveness is realized, the Holy Spirit is promised. Only such truly changed- -or converted- -persons could possibly receive the promised Holy Spirit.

Hence, it is to be emphasized today that those who similarly believe are in a position to receive the Holy Spirit- -and, empowered thereby, to do the work of evangelism. We dare not overlook or disregard this simple but essential fact. What happened to Peter and the others was a passing from death to life. They had come through an overwhelming conviction of sin (Peter weeping bitterly, the multitude "cut to the heart") to a life-renewing repentance and faith. Only this radical and revolutionary change could prepare the way for the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

Surely it is the same today. Only radically changed people who are true believers can receive the power of Holy Spirit and be used by God to change others. True believers are simply not to be identified with church membership. "All that hear the Gospel, and live in the visible church, are not saved: but only those who are true members of the church invisible. If we are to evangelize we must be evangelized; if we are to help others to pass from death to life we must have made the passage ourselves. There is no substitute for this: the conversion of the church must be experienced in order to bring about the conversion of the world.

Submitted By
Dr. George A. Miller, PhD
Pastor, Faith Tabernacle COCHUSA
Louisville, MS
South Central Diocese



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Reflections - F.L.O.W.

Honoring Bishop Victor Paul Smith

ne of the lasting moments of the 2014 National Convention of the COCHUSA held in Atlanta, GA was the “*Celebration of the Magnificent F.L.O.W.*”

The Southeastern Diocese presented a Tribute to Bishop Victor P. Smith on July 23, 2014. This was truly a time of celebration of a man who represented the re-birth of Beulah Church of Christ (Holiness) USA and the pioneer of expanding the boundaries of the Southeastern Diocese. Thus, F.L.O.W.: Faith, Love, Outreach and Worship. All of those words were demonstrated and validated through this night of drama and music. Each phase of the program was so well orchestrated and professionally presented.

The cast walked us through the Introduction – “Let the River Flow” with a Praise Dance and Dramatic Readings. The Beginning: “A Stream” with what other song, “Safe in Beulah.” The Tributary: “A Young Man Finds His Flow” with wonderful life saving songs.

As we met different ones during the course of the National Convention, remarks were made about the soloist and songs that were as much a part of Bishop Smith’s life.

There was a time in the program for Worship in Giving. To God be the Glory, people gave, and gave, and gave. All proceeds went to Bishop Smith and Family.

Then it all Came Together: A Magnificent Flow with testimonials, songs, praise dance, and the Drill team.

Sister Elma Smith was overwhelmed with the love that was shown on this special night. She represented the family with acknowledging words of appreciation for all that everyone had done through this tribute. “I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth” is one of her favorite scriptures.

All thanks to the Tribute Committee, Musicians, Narrators, Drill Team, Tribute Ensemble, and all of the supporting staff and members of the diocese who brought this presentation all together.

We also give thanks to our Board of Bishops, National Coordinating Committee, and the National work for the

support in having this celebration in conjunction with the National Convention.

Above all, we give thanks to the Diocese Representatives who took it upon themselves to coordinate the financial contributions that came in from across the country, and the individuals and churches who gave generously and sacrificially.

As we interviewed the visionary for this event, Pastor Vonzell Castilla, here is what he said:

“I just want to emphasize (1) This was a labor of love, brought to fruition using homegrown talent, in many instances, nurtured by Bishop Smith himself. When the Lord laid the concept on my heart, “FeFe” (Felicia Moore Hairston), immediately came to mind as the best person to pull the production part together. The script was easy to write because I witnessed so much of it myself. “FeFe” made the script come to life, once again, with talent nurtured right here in the Southeastern Diocese.

(2) (2) What we did was just a small gesture to honor in a tangible way one who truly gave us, and more importantly the Lord, his best.”

*Elizabeth Burris Izard, Reporter
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