



## The Following is a great read taken from the Christian Chronicle.

When a Los Angeles congregation heard Darrell Holt preach on "Being Happy in the Midst of a Storm," they hardly realized that, only moments later, the evangelist would go on to his reward.

"Enough happened on the cross to keep me happy for a lifetime," the pulpit minister told the Figueroa Church of Christ as he concluded the hour-long Sunday sermon Oct. 25.

Then the 59-year-old minister said, "I need to sit down." Looking up to heaven from the front row of the auditorium, he continued.

"Jesus wants his people to be happy. If you're not a Christian, say yes to him," he said as he motioned for the song leader to rise. "You've heard the Word. Believe it. Repent of your sins, confess Christ, be baptized."

As the congregation sang, Holt became unresponsive. Three church members who are nurses administered CPR as they waited for an ambulance. Paramedics transported Holt to California Hospital Medical Center as the congregation held an impromptu prayer service.

Soon, one of the church's elders, Charles Cline, announced that Holt was pronounced dead at the hospital from an apparent heart

attack.

## HARD-CHARGING FAITH

"I'm a hard-fighting soldier on the battlefield," the congregation sang before Holt's final sermon.

It was an appropriate hymn for the minister, who "preached the Gospel and didn't back off the Word" from his baptism in 1978 to his final breath, said Forest Whitaker Jr., another church elder. (Whitaker is the father of Oscar-winning actor Forest Whitaker III.)

Holt, a native of Greenville, Miss., was known among Churches of Christ as a hard-charging, fiery speaker.

At age 21, after completing a Bible correspondence course and reading through the entire Bible at least three times, Holt was immersed by Lloyd Clay Harris. The new convert preached his first public sermon two days later. Harris later founded the School of Religious Studies in Little Rock, Ark., where Holt graduated cum laude.

Holt served Churches of Christ in Mississippi, Tennessee and Michigan before joining the 450-member Figueroa church, established in 1938 after a gospel meeting by evangelist R.N. Hogan, the church's first minister. Holt "did everything with intensity," said Oscar Ward, who has attended Figueroa with his wife, Sylvia, for four decades. In Mississippi, Holt rode on the church bus and preached fervently to those picked up to attend worship. Some riders were ready for baptism before they reached

the building, church members recalled.

“He influenced the lives of everyone he came in contact with,” Oscar Ward said. His wife added that the minister also was a good friend, willing to help people through their trials as he studied the Bible with them.

Holt traveled the globe, preaching in the African nation of Ethiopia and hosting gospel meetings underneath massive tents in Caribbean nations including the Bahamas, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica.

“You don't leave from under this tent without knowing the facts,” he promised attendees during a 90-minute sermon in Kingston, Jamaica, in 2013. The Patrick Gardens Church of Christ hosted the two-week meeting, during which Holt talked about his desire to be a “sent preacher, not a 'went' preacher.” He pounded the pulpit as he distinguished between the two.

Christians, sent by God, must share their faith boldly, using no authority by the Bible, he said.

## **IN EVERYTHING, 'THE LORD'S HELP'**

A recent gospel meeting in Bermuda, where tropical storms threaten, inspired the title of Holt's final sermon. He preached from 1 Peter 4:12-13, in which the apostle urges to rejoice when they are persecuted for their faith. Christians are “partakers of Christ's sufferings,” Holt read from the King James Version, and “when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with

exceeding joy."