

In Memoriam: The Life and Legacy of Faith of Dr. Hycel B. Taylor

Michael Jenkins
January 19, 2012



Dr. Hycel Taylor with Rev. Levy Daugherty and ACLC Chairman Emeritus at the DMZ. He was one of the founding 120 pastors of ACLC.

On January 13, 2012, one of the finest leaders that supported Father Sun Myung Moon and the work of the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC) has made his journey home to the Lord. We send our sincerest condolences to Mrs. Phyllis Taylor who is a devoted wife and partner.

It is most appropriate that we celebrate the life of Dr. Hycel B. Taylor as we celebrate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Like Dr. King, Dr. Hycel Taylor put God before all else and walking the way of the cross, he left a legacy of righteousness and a beautiful family of faith. My wife, Minister Reiko, and I have many precious memories of being with Phyllis and Hycel. They are a model couple of faithfulness and love.

Dr. Taylor first spoke at a True Family Values Banquet in Chicago in 1996 under the leadership of Archbishop Ki Hoon Kim. He stood out among the leaders in the nation because of his national prestige, courage and clarity of thought. He would always give written messages and call them "Prectures" because he would so effectively "preach" a lecture. It was spellbinding. We can never forget the historic address he gave at the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) at the founding of ACLC, which he supported. There he said, "Prophets of God must come and call for this damnable, demeaning, demoralizing wall (between North and South Korea) to be torn down, ripped to the ground so that the Children of Korea will study war no more."

He spoke on True Parents' 50-State Tour and was a man who would always stand on his own integrity, conscience and faith regardless of the difficulty. He spoke at the Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace (IIFWP) on many occasions and went to Israel with us for the Middle East Peace Initiative. He was a very respected man of character who stood for what he believed. Minister Farrakhan deeply loves and respects Dr. Taylor, because he was uncompromising to stand for what is right. The stand he took also was very powerful because of his intellect, spirituality and his loving ability to communicate God's Word – both written and spoken.

Our ACLC Founding Pastor, Pastor T.L. Barrett, Jr., counted Hycel as one of the greats that blessed ACLC. He had a great sense of humor. Often when we would have long-winded pastors speak at ACLC, he would come to me afterwards and say, "Michael – less is more!"

He was a close friend and advisor to Dr. Chang Shik Yang, Bishop Kee Hoon Kim, and Bishop George A. Stallings and to me. He was a close friend and colleague of Dr. Frank Kaufmann. He welcomed Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo into his second Baptist Church at the peak of the controversy over the Archbishop's marriage. He and his wife Phyllis participated in a special Marriage Blessing and Holy Wine ceremony in Boston and has been a moral force for family and justice. He was the President and CEO of Operation PUSH and pastored the prestigious Pilgrim Baptist Church in Chicago (The Home of the famed Thomas A. Dorsey who wrote Dr. King's favorite song, "Precious Lord"). He was professor of Applied Theology at Garret Theological Seminary, a Methodist seminary in Evanston, IL.

Dr. Taylor said at one of the IIFWP conferences, "What is it then that Rev. Moon is calling the great religions of the world to bring to the table of the United Nations? It is the vision of a redeemed human being and a redeemed humanity that has overcome its estrangement from the infinite spirit of God. I hear Rev. Moon saying, 'Look at what suffering has done to me and for me. Like Jesus, my spirit has been purified, and I am the representative of a redeemed person, and therefore redeemed humanity is possible. Like Jesus I am the macro-God condensed in micro-man.'"

Dr. Taylor also has been deeply impressed with Rev. In Jin Moon for her message and her leadership. He always felt special affection for her because of her background at Harvard Divinity School, from which his daughter Dr. Chandra Taylor Smith also graduated. His precious son Hycel B. Taylor III is following his footsteps in the doctoral path.

We deeply love and appreciate Dr. Taylor, who supported this movement of ACLC, our founder and our family. Internationally, nationally and locally he stood as a giant man of God bringing messages of peace and hope, and we will never forget his messages as key speaker and regular supporter of the ACLC Prayer Breakfast in Chicago. Mrs. Maria Helena Tonneyek prayed for Dr. Taylor for years and was the one that connected him to True Parents – thank You Maria Helena!

Dr. Taylor, we honor you and love you and know that Jesus has prepared a great banquet for you in our Father's house. We celebrate your victorious life and rejoice in knowing that you now go to the most wonderful place of joy and eternal life.

Our ACLC Pastors congratulate you and lift our voices up to Heaven. Go on Hycel, go onto glory.

Sincerely on Behalf of True Parents, Presiding Prelate and all of our Pastors and Families Worldwide,

Rev. Michael Jenkins
Chairman of ACLC

A memorial will be held for Dr. Taylor on January 21, 2012 at 11 a.m. at the Alice Millar Chapel, 1870 Sheridan Road in Evanston, Illinois.