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"The LEADER'S EDGE" by drmichaelbell

What are the two biggest factors most pastors pinpoint when they're confronted with questions about why the church isn't growing like it ought to? "I don't have the budget" or "I don't have the right people."

Someone has said, "One of the most common objections to developing leaders is the lack of budget, and it's easy to think that without sufficient funds, you can't afford to invest in leadership development." "I don't have the budget" is a spiritual problem. It's roughly calculated that 25-50% of those who attend church give nothing or next to nothing. In God's eyes, the paucity of giving isn't a financial problem but a spiritual one. Giving is a spiritual issue and in fact, a relational issue with God. Our willingness or unwillingness to give reveals the adjacency our relationship to God.

This month's article isn't about the "I don't have the budget" concern, which, of course, is a legitimate one. But I do want to delve into the "I don't have the right people" quandary. At first glance it appears to be a leadership issue. What if your church doesn't have a sizable pool of potential lay leaders? I'm talking about leaders who have the capacity and commitment to lead. What if your church doesn't have "the right people" to assume leadership posts?

Confession. One of my biggest challenges as a pastor and avid student of church growth is finding good lay leaders. Lay leaders are non-congregational staff or non-clergy who are serving in some form of volunteer leadership within a congregation or faith community. Lay leaders are leaders within the church who don't receive a paycheck.

One way to address "I don't have the right people" dilemma is to start looking to see if there are laypersons in the pews who are leading somewhere else in life. Chances are, there are already people in your church who are leading somewhere else. Are there any entrepreneurs, go-getters who are faithful church attendees occupying the pews but aren't engaged in doing ministry?

Frankly, I learned a lot about leadership recruitment and cultivation as a result of having to lead a congregation through the thick of the



nate in implementing a leadership

development strategy or we just

ignore the issue altogether.

If you are facing an "I don't have the right people" issue start looking to see if there are laypersons in the pews who are leading somewhere else in life. Then, look at who is naturally leading without being asked. Thank God. there are almost always some persons in your congregation and my congregation who are natural "bell cows." Pay attention. Who willingly, without prodding, helps maintain the church facilities? Who is leading without being asked?

One more leadership recruitment tip: Consider people who have experience or skills that could be valuable to the church, either as a professional or a volunteer. Do you have a computer geek who is just sitting in the pews? How about an auto mechanic shop foreperson?

These are just a few cues to getting the right people in the right leadership roles.

drmichaelbell is Senior Pastor-Resident Theologian of Greater St. Stephen First Church FtW. a seminary adjunct professor and a certified Life Coach. He conducts leadership seminars and conferences across the country. He is the author of "Finding God in Hard Places" and is a contributor to the book "Justice Looks Like.'



Community Uplift opens Mini Library across the City

29-36% of Hispanic students in Fort Worth ISD were exceed 100%. This alarming disparity underscores the urgent need for action.



The Fort Worth Report highlighted a dire issue: in community library corners (also known as mini li-2021 and 2022, only 20-28% of Black students and braries) in neighborhoods of color. These spaces will (1) bridge the literacy gap by providing free access to reading at grade level. In stark contrast, the com- books and educational resources and (2) rehabilitate bined literacy rates in white and Asian communities the educational landscape, empowering the next generation to thrive.

www.churchinnews.com

Join us Saturday, September 14th at 9 am to unveil the first Community Corner at Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church at 2951 Evans Ave., Fort Worth, TX 76104.

The first mini library will be dedicated to the beloved Dr. Seuss's book "The Lorax."

For more information and to Donate, visit us @ www.communityupliftservices.org

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Speak Life Thought with First Lady & Co-Pastor Yolanda G. Butler

A Life of Endurance

"Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus." 2 Timothy 2:3 NLT

Every month our church distributes groceries to our community. In the spring, we endure the rain; in the summer we endure the excessive heat; in the winter we endure the frigid cold. No matter the season, we know we may have to endure a level of discomfort. However, because we know service is a Kingdom purpose we as a team endure the uncomfortable weather elements with a positive attitude.

Endurance has several meanings. One definition is the ability to stand under a load or pressure. It is having the mindset that quitting is not an option. It is an attitude that says, "I shall persevere no matter what." It is being resolved in your spirit that says, "I refuse to stop." Paul encourages Timothy as a spiritual son to remain faithful and endure any hardships that comes with leadership. This teaches us that no matter your title, calling, or position, you can endure and be strong through the Father's grace.

Endurance is built through test-

ing of your faith in the Word of God (James 1:2 NLT). The Father has a right to challenge His children not for their demise but for their good. Just as you must pass the test to be promoted to the next grade level, so you must pass the test of faith that endurance may grow and patience perfected all for the glory of the Father. One of the greatest opportunities believers have is to teach and train rising generations, which is what Paul encouraged Timothy to do (2 Tim 2:2).

While there are attached to this life some difficulties, some hard times, some sufferings, some challenges, some attacks, some criticisms, some persecutions, some false accusations, some false misrepresentations, some lies, and some hurts, you can live a life of endurance by the grace of God (2 Tim 2:1). You do not have to endure them all by yourself. We are encouraged to endure together and strengthen one another.

Endure in the endowed self-dis**cipline** (temperance) of the fruit of the spirit (2 Tim 1:7). Endure in **self-confidence** for confidence rests first in God enabling you to do His Will (Gal. 6:4-5). Endure in good stewardship of the resources and talents the Father has graciously entrusted to you (Matt



25:14). Endure in courage, be strong, take heart and hope in the Lord (Ps. 31:24). Endure in honesty by praying for others that you may lead a peaceable, quiet, and honest life (2 Tim. 2:2). Endure in love by loving the Father with your whole heart, soul, and mind, and don't forget to love yourself and others (Matt. 22:37-40). And finally, endure in patience through tribulation that leads to experience and hope (Rom. 5:3-4).

So dear hearts, be determined to live a life of endurance by faith in the Father through Jesus Christ.

Dr. Yolanda G. Butler is Co-Pastor and Church Administrator of Praise Center Community Church, where her husband Bishop Donald H. Butler is the Senior Pastor. She is an intercessor, evangelist, mentor, and published author. Follow her on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and www.firstladybutlerministries.net.

The Influence of Black Gospel Hymns on Contemporary Music



Black Gospel hymns have had a profound impact on contemporary music, shaping various genres and leaving an indelible mark on the musical landscape. From their origins in African-American churches to their influence on popular music today, these hymns have played a crucial role in the development and evolution of modern music. In this article, we will explore the rich history of black gospel hymns and their enduring influence.

The Origins of Black Gospel Hymns

Black gospel hymns find their roots in the African-American religious experience, particularly within the context of slavery. During this dark period in American history, enslaved Africans were subjected to unimaginable hardships and oppression. However, despite these conditions, they found solace in their faith and expressed it through music.

The spirituals that emerged during this time served as a form of resistance and hope for many enslaved individuals. These songs often contained coded messages that conveyed hidden meanings about freedom and liberation. As time went on, these spirituals evolved into what we now know as black gospel hymns.

The Characteristics of Black Gospel Hymns

Black gospel hymns are characterized by their soulful melodies, rich harmonies, and powerful lyrics. They incorporate elements from various musical traditions such as African rhythms, blues scales, and call-and-response patterns. These hymns often feature a lead vocalist backed by a choir or congregation that actively participates in singing and clapping along.

The lyrics of black gospel hymns are deeply rooted in Christian theology but also touch upon themes such as hope, resilience, and overcoming adversity. They provide comfort to those facing challenges while inspiring joy and celebration during times of triumph.

The Influence on Popular Music The influence of black gospel hymns extends far beyond the walls of churches or religious settings. Over the years, these songs have made significant contributions to popular music genres such as soul, R&B, jazz, and even rock and roll.

Artists like Aretha Franklin, Mahalia Jackson, and Sam Cooke brought black gospel hymns to mainstream audiences, infusing their own unique styles into the music. Their powerful vocal performances and heartfelt renditions not only captivated listeners but also paved the way for future generations of musicians.

Contemporary artists continue to draw inspiration from black gospel hymns. From the soulful sounds of Alicia Keys to the genre-blending music of Kanye West, elements of black gospel can be heard in various songs across different genres. The passion and emotion conveyed through these hymns have become an integral part of modern music.

The Continued Relevance

Despite the passage of time, black gospel hymns remain relevant today. They continue to be sung in churches worldwide as a means of worship and spiritual expression. Moreover, these hymns serve as a reminder of the enduring strength and resilience of African-American communities throughout history.

Beyond religious contexts, black gospel hymns are celebrated as cultural treasures that promote unity and inspire social change. They bring people together through shared experiences and provide a platform for dialogue on issues such as civil rights, justice, and equality.

In conclusion, the influence of black gospel hymns on contemporary music cannot be overstated. From their origins in slavery to their impact on popular music today, these hymns have transcended time and genre boundaries. They serve as a testament to the power of faith and music in bringing people together while inspiring hope, joy, and celebration in both religious and secular spaces alike.



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Presentation. 3 Recipient received \$1,700.00; Elijah Lamon Zamora-\$1,000.00, Alyssa White

\$350.00, Jadyn Harris -\$350.00; Pic 4; With Judge Clifford Davis Pre-Birthday Celebration

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50 Crossbar system 51 Lamprey, for one 52 Anger 53 Drunk: slang (Exod. 19:13) 56 Amer. Medical Assoc. 57 Duration 58 Prolonged unconsciousness 59 Wyatt 61 Heart and lung protector (Exod. 4:6) 62 Author Leon 63 Floating platform 64 Apple slicer 65 Wool eater 66 Talk back 67 Not neat DOWN

Prophet who cursed Hebrews (Num. 22:5) 2 Carry to excess 3 A crazy person 4 Hard spot 5 Foxy 6 Washbowls 7 One of a number 8 Called gathering, in brief 9 "While we were yet Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8, KIV) 10 Beat with a stick (Isa. 28:27) 11 Wicked

22:48) 42 Surprise attackers (1 Sam, 13:17) 57 Wear it if it fits 60 Motorist's aid assoc. 61 Metric meas



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23 Beer, for example 25 Nothing more or less 26 Street gang member 28 Judas's betrayal act (Luke 30 Crosby or Dylan 31 Ocean: abbr. 32 River in Scotland 34 Drug experiment site 35 Organized crime 36 Tkt. 37 Tavern 38 Personnel or sales, e.g. 39 Convinced 40 Money posted for release 43 Singer George Beverly _ 45 Before sent or serve 46 Solicits to evil (James 1:13) 47 Snakes (Matt. 23:33) 48 Wipes slate clean 49 Guard 50 Grind teeth 53 Worthless person 54 Mower maker 55 Leave out 56 Dog's sounds

