

Honoring the Honorable

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Today I want to devote my blog post to a great man whom I have only known for the past seven years, since I came to Calvary. Yet, in that time I have heard testimony after testimony of how he has impacted the lives of those around him for many, many years. His name is Howard Collins and he served as the head usher and trustee of Calvary Assemblies of God.

Over the years Brother Howard has served in many capacities at Calvary. This is because of his enthusiastic desire to be used of God in any way the Lord would choose. He was known by all for his willing heart and encouraging words. Of course that does not mean that he was a man of compromise. No, Howard would tell you straight about what the Word of God says, and he would set you straight if he heard something that dishonored his God.

Howard was one of our most faithful people at Calvary. He was a generous tither who also donated in every special offering, supported every project the church was involved in, and contributed regularly to anyone he knew who had a need. Howard always had a listening ear for those who were in need. Howard rarely missed a service at church. If he was in the hospital or unable to get out, he always called or asked someone to let me know he couldn't be at church. He took his commitment to church and his responsibilities as a board member and usher very seriously. Church was no game to him. It was an honor to him to serve the Lord.

Howard passed away in his home Saturday night, September 26th. Howard usually arrives early every Sunday morning to unlock the building and turn on the lights. He then goes into the sanctuary to pray. Afterward he sits in the foyer and greets those who arrive early. When I arrived at church he was not at his usual station and I had not been notified that he would not be there. Nancy immediately said that something was wrong. After church Pastor Sonny and I, after calling Howard's house, went over to see if we could see him at his home. After getting no response, we called his daughter, who let us in, and found that Howard had gone on to be with Jesus in the night. Faithful to the end. It's amazing when someone is so faithful, that when they are not where they are supposed to be, there is a feeling that things have changed.

Yes, things have changed at Calvary. Howard was 89 and the past year had been very difficult for him. It was a struggle to get to church. Sometimes he could not make it through the service and had to be taken home. However, he would always find the strength to arise and walk the aisle to receive the offering. He took his duty to the church seriously and performed it faithfully until his last day. His faithfulness reminded me of the morning Jim Horne got up for church and told Marge he didn't think he could make it. He sat down in his recliner and woke up in heaven. These are testimonies that echo through the lives of those who follow after.

I thank God for having briefly known Howard. He is an example of a believer. He is like so many men in churches across our land who know what it means to be a servant of Jesus Christ. His example blesses our hearts and encourages us to also be faithful to the end. Thank you, Howard. It was a blessing to know you.

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