

Obituary: Bishop Samuel Louis Holder, Sr.

Bishop Samuel Louis Holder, Sr. transitioned into eternal glory on May 13, 2025. A beloved husband, devoted father and grandfather, gospel preacher, and gifted singer, he was a true servant of the Lord. During his 67 years, he touched numerous lives, and his impact will never be forgotten.

Born on December 31, 1957, in Gary, Indiana, to Nathan Alvin Holder, Jr. and Martha Ruth Holder (Lowery), Samuel Holder was one of twelve siblings. From an early age, it was evident that God had chosen him to make a difference. As a young boy, music captured his heart. During his time as a student at Roosevelt High School, he was voted “*Most Talented*” amongst the black and gold Roosevelt Panthers.

As a teenager, Samuel joined a local singing group called "The Ripples and Waves" under Steel Town Records. As the group's 5th Tenor, Lead Vocalist, Dancer, and Choreographer, Samuel brought passion, charisma, and energy to every performance. Later, he also sang with the group, “Future Shock.”

Throughout his life he learned that music wasn't just his talent, but it was also ministry. He often made up songs and jingles on the spot that perfectly matched the moment, sparking joy, laughter, and praise. His songs became the soundtrack of family gatherings, church services, and everyday life. Whether through soulful melodies or heartfelt worship, Samuel used his voice to glorify God and bring light into dark places. Music was how he praised, how he comforted, and how he connected with others.

Even though he loved music, it was his unshakable love for Jesus Christ that defined his life most. After giving his life to Christ in September 1979 at Bible Way Church of God in Christ under Pastor Rufus Nelson, he never turned back. Whether behind a pulpit or in casual conversation with a stranger, his mission was always clear: to help others come to know Jesus and be saved. He became a Deacon in 1982, then an Assistant Pastor in 1986, and by 1988, he became the senior pastor at Old Landmark Church of God Holiness in Christ #13 in Hapeville, Georgia. In 2013, he was ordained Bishop during the Holy Convocation in Chicago, Illinois. His ministry was built on the foundation of holiness. He is known for sayings and singing songs like, “*God's got a hook in me, and I don't want to get loose.*”

Bishop Holder built his ministry with his lovely wife by his side. On August 18, 1979, Samuel married the love of his life, Frankie Mae Holder, in Gary, Indiana. She was his pride and joy, his badge of honor, his prize possession. Their marriage was a beautiful testament to God's faithfulness and a model of commitment, joy, and unity. In 1985, he and his wife made a courageous decision to move from Indiana to Georgia, with their three children; Samuel Jr. Tammy, and Richard. He took great pride in being their teacher, protector, provider, and spiritual guide. He instilled in them a deep love for God, and reverence for salvation. He taught them to

live with faith, to value family, and to build a life rooted in stability, integrity, and God at the center. His guidance wasn't only spoken; it was evident in the way he lived his life. His five grandchildren; Kentrell, Samuel III, Tyree, Alivia, and Zoey held a precious place in his heart. His face would light up in their presence, and his playful spirit would come alive. Whether making up a silly song, or telling a story that had them giggling. "Granddad" brought joy and excitement to every moment.

Professionally, he was a trailblazer. From his early days at Inland Steel to owning Save Brother's Cooling & Heating, he poured his heart into his work. He became a mentor in the HVAC industry, training others, encouraging excellence, and modeling the rewards of hard work and faith-led business. His impact extended beyond his own success, he empowered others to become leaders.

Bishop Holder Sr. was the glue of his family and the spiritual rock of every circle he entered. He brought people together, spoke life into weary hearts, and never passed up an opportunity to point someone to Christ. His presence was magnetic, his words uplifting, his prayers powerful, his spirit contagious. He could brighten a room with a story, lighten a burden with a song, and remind anyone that God still had a plan for their life. His laughter was infectious, his heart was pure, and his life was a reflection of the God he served.

He leaves behind a legacy rooted in love, faith, and truth. He is survived by his devoted wife, Frankie Mae Holder, and their children; Samuel Louis Holder Jr. (Akiyah Chafree Holder), Tammy Ann Holder (Eric Gerard Stephens), and Richard Alvin Holder (Michelle Renee Ross.) Grandchildren; Kentrell Jeremiah Holder, Samuel Louis Holder III, Tyree Amare Stephens, Alivia Gabrielle Holder, and Zoey Renee Holder. He is also survived by his siblings: Evelyn Holder Jones (George Jones, Jr.), Mary Harris, Barbara Mathews (David Mathews), Carletha Holder Valladares (Ralph Valladares), Garion Holder, Joyce Standifer (Lydell Standifer), Nathan Alvin Holder III, Anthony George Holder, Sr., and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, spiritual children, and cherished friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents Nathan Alvin Holder Jr., Martha Ruth Lowery Jones and siblings: Kenneth Holder, Marty Holder, and Richard Holder.

As it is written in 2 Timothy 4:7-8:

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day."

Bishop Holder has finished his race. He has entered into eternal glory, received his crown, and heard the words, *"Well done, thy good and faithful servant."* His legacy of love, leadership, and holiness will echo for generations to come.