The Civil Rights Movement owed its spirit, resolve, and courage to the revolutionary religious leadership that helped create and guide it. One of the most influential figures to rise from that struggle is Dr. Gardner C. Taylor, a founding member of the Progressive National Baptist Convention along with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. For over six decades, this world-renowned African American preacher has been celebrated and recognized for his deep understanding of the Christian faith and theology, his moving sermons, engaging eloquence, and commitment to social justice.

In *FAITH IN THE FIRE: Wisdom for Life* (SmileyBooks, August 2011, ISBN: 978-1-4019-2962-6, $21.95, hardcover with CD), the 93-year-old legend has once again teamed up with his longtime collaborator Reverend Edward L. Taylor to share a lifetime of his observations and insights on a wealth of topics—from Christian faith and love, to culture and politics, to everyday wit and wisdom.

On August 10, 2011, Dr. Taylor will be interviewed by Tavis Smiley and Dr. Cornel West in Washington, D.C. in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Progressive National Baptist Convention and the debut of *FAITH IN THE FIRE*. 

Praise for Dr. Gardner Taylor

“The dean of the nation’s black preachers.”
— TIME

“... If anyone made a list of the five or six greatest preachers in America, Gardner Taylor would always be at the top.”
— former President Bill Clinton

“One of the greatest preachers in American history.”
— Ebony

“Poet laureate of American Protestantism.”
— Christianity Century

*FAITH IN THE FIRE* 
Wisdom for Life

By Gardner C. Taylor
Edited by Edward L. Taylor
Poignant, deeply moving, and beautifully rendered, Dr. Taylor’s words remind us of the power of African American preachers and their fearless mission to boldly proclaim a message of hope to all.

“We have won our faith in fire. When the structures of our lives are destroyed by flames, and the hungry flames of life seem to devour that beauty like a starving man before a laden table, we know that we are not alone. Faith still lives! Faith is not burned. Promises are not scorned. Faith guides us, holds us, and sustains us. By faith, the impossible will come to pass. By faith, defeat can be turned into victory and sorrow into laughing. Faith will see you through and make us more than conquerors,” says Dr. Taylor.

If you wish to schedule an interview with Rev. Edward Taylor to discuss Dr. Taylor’s philosophy and legacy, please contact Leshelle Sargent at lsargent@tavistalks.com or call 646-484-4963.

For more information about FAITH IN THE FIRE, please visit www.faithinthefire.com.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR:
Civil rights activist and social justice pioneer Dr. Gardner C. Taylor has been called one of the 12 greatest preachers in the English-speaking world by Newsweek. At age 30, he became the pastor of Concord Baptist Church—and nearly 13,000 people joined during his tenure. Dr. Taylor has preached around the globe, receiving more than 13 honorary degrees and countless awards, and has taught at the country’s most esteemed institutions and divinity schools. Leadership, Christian Century, Time, Newsweek, Christianity Today, The New York Times, Newsday, and Ebony have recognized his contributions. In 2000, Dr. Taylor received the Presidential Medal of Freedom presented by President Bill Clinton.

ABOUT THE EDITOR:
The Reverend Edward L. Taylor, a native of Ville Platte, Louisiana, was educated at Louisiana College, New Brunswick Seminary, and the University of London, and has been a Resident Fellow at Harvard Divinity School. He is the editor of The Words of Gardner Taylor, The Gardner C. Taylor Preaching Library on CD-Rom, and the Essential Taylor audio series. Rev. Taylor and his wife, LaTrice, have one son, Paul “Bishop” Taylor. Over the past 14 years, he has served as the pastor of several parishes. He currently resides in San Jose, California; and London, England.

FAITH IN THE FIRE: Wisdom for Life
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Edited by Edward L. Taylor
Publication date: August 2011
ISBN: 978-1-4019-2962-6
6-1/2” x 6”
Hardcover-with-CD and photos
240 pages $21.95
Excerpts From

FAITH IN THE FIRE
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“On God”

Forgiveness is a part of the nature of God. Individuals and our nation can receive this forgiveness. In these trying and difficult days, all should bow to ask God for grace and humility, that forgiveness may be extended. God will not regard us with favor if we are forever flexing our muscles and proclaiming our richness and greatness. We need admit our failures and confess our faults and ask for understanding as we strive to make up our delinquencies. A glad God will forgive. Therefore, let us also forgive one another. Remember, an ugly look, a harsh word may pour salt into an already aching heart. On the other hand, a kind word may be a salve and balm to that poor, broken spirit. God will forgive as we forgive each other.

“A God Worth Serving”

. . . In the Lord’s presence, high and lifted up, the Holiest creatures felt humility and reverence and unworthiness and so hid their faces as they shielded their countenances behind the pinions of their mighty wings. We must stop preachers and people, this palsy-walsy sentimentality about the God of Creation’s morning. We ought to stop prancing and mincing into God’s House at the time of worship with a lot of loud clap-trap and cheap gossip on our lips. “The Lord is in His holy Temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him” . . . God says, “Be still and know that I am God.” . . . Let us be done with frivolous and flippant notions of the God we serve. I like old Isaac Watts’s words: “Before Jehovah’s awful throne, Ye nations, bow with sacred joy; Know that the Lord is God alone; He can create, and He destroy.”

“The Way of Love”

Love stays on when everything else has left. Love abides! It keeps its vigil around sickbeds and slips through the bars of prison cells. Love stays on! It defies shame and disdains disgrace and believes in us anyhow. It bears pain and endures sorrow, and climbs dark hills. Love lasts when death is passed and the night is come. Love abides, when life has fled and the pulse is stilled, and our homes are empty. This love is hard to march up to, but it demands that we come up to the hard, crippling facts of life, with deep confidence that this love will never let us go.
“Culture and Politics”

If the historical Jesus were running for our United States presidency, He would be a “Demopublican,” combining what is affirmative in both parties, rejecting shrillness, anger, posturing, and denouncing the corruption made inevitable by the necessary scrounging for money, much to the anger, I am sure, of television and newspaper profit-makers, to say nothing of political hangers-on, and talking heads prostituting their voices for profit. In the case of abortion or the death penalty or war, He would place the work of every individual soul before God above all considerations. I think He would also be assassinated, lynched, or, if you prefer, crucified as before.

“It’s All in the Family”

The parents of the world are proof positive that there are loyalties in us more powerful than our own comfort. The mothers of the world prove that humanity has in it the capacity to take risks for something better than mere cause and painlessness. Something from heaven is breathed into our mothers and fathers who, against all odds, cling to, in the face of contrary evidence, that things will get better for their children. Even in a society that slams doors in the face of some, those who rear us believe that their child will find opportunity. This is the hero in our parents, a heroism that confounds and refutes all the critics of the human soul and detractors of the spirit of humankind.

“Laughter is Good for the Soul”

A man lying in bed all bandaged almost from hand to foot in the hospital said to his friend, “You know I had too much to drink. You shouldn’t have let me try to leap from seven stories across the street to another hotel.” The other man said, “I truly am sorry, but I was so far gone with drink that I thought you could make it.”

“Everyday Wit”

A devout lady went to church hungering for the Gospel. When she came home, she said to someone who had not gone, “I was hungry for the Gospel, but the preacher took so long setting the table that I lost my appetite.”
The Legacy Continues . . .
With Reverend Edward L. Taylor

First became fascinated with Dr. Gardner C. Taylor after listening to the Baton Rouge preacher (borrowed by Brooklyn) on his weekly radio program, and was fascinated by Dr. Taylor’s seamless sermonic tapestry and exceptional gifts.

Met Dr. Taylor while studying at Louisiana College in 1992 and was deeply impacted by his homiletical genius. Although not blood related, they struck a unique brotherhood and partnership that brought forth *The Words of Gardner Taylor*, a multi-volume compilation of Dr. Taylor’s orations and writings.

Chief collector of Dr. Taylor’s writings and manuscripts, Reverend Taylor has catalogued nearly every sermon, manuscript and set of recordings delivered at Concord Church between 1948 and 1990, as well as copies of Dr. Taylor’s other writings, sermons, and speeches.

A trusted source on his life and legacy, Rev. Taylor is the official biographer of Dr. Gardner C. Taylor.

The Reverend Edward L. Taylor, a native of Ville Platte, Louisiana, was educated at Louisiana College, New Brunswick Seminary, University of London, and has been a Resident Fellow at Harvard Divinity School. He is the editor of *The Words of Gardner Taylor*, *The Gardner C. Taylor Preaching Library* on CD-Rom, and the *Essential Taylor Audio Series*. Rev. Taylor and his wife, LaTrice, have one son, Paul “Bishop” Taylor. Over the past 14 years, he has served as the pastor of several parishes. He currently resides in San Jose, California and London, England.
Dr. Gardner C. Taylor, a founding member of the Progressive National Baptist Convention along with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., has been called one of the best preachers in America and one of the 12 greatest preachers in the English-speaking world by *Newsweek*. At age 30, he became the pastor of Brooklyn, New York’s Concord Baptist Church—and nearly 13,000 people joined during his tenure. Dr. Taylor has preached around the globe, receiving more than 13 honorary degrees and countless awards, and has taught at the country’s most esteemed institutions and divinity schools. *Leadership, Christian Century, Time, Newsweek, Christianity Today, The New York Times, Newday,* and *Ebony* have recognized his contributions. In 2000, Dr. Taylor received the Presidential Medal of Freedom presented by President Bill Clinton.
Praise for
FAITH IN THE FIRE:
Wisdom for Life
By Gardner C. Taylor
Edited by Edward L. Taylor

“In his heyday, Gardner C. Taylor was the quintessential preachers’ preacher. Though much has been written about him, this volume filled with his sayings and witticisms on a wide range of topics, gives us an even closer look into the depths of his spirituality and commitment to God. In years to come when people ask what it was like to be in Taylor’s presence, FAITH IN THE FIRE will provide valuable insight into his creative genius, wit, and love of humanity. This is a must read for clergy and lay people alike!”

— Cleophus J. LaRue
Frances L. Patton Professor of Homiletics Princeton Theological Seminary

“For decades the preaching of Gardner C. Taylor has appealed widely to lay persons, clergy, seminarians, and members of the academy. His sermons are treasured for careful biblical exposition, poetic expression, educated imagination, symphonic delivery, contemporary relevance, and a penetrating word from God. These disciplined gifts are masterfully illustrated in this carefully edited book by Edward L. Taylor, an impeccable historian. FAITH IN THE FIRE: Wisdom for Life is a classic to be included in the vintage collection of preaching in the English speaking world.”

— J. Alfred Smith,
Senior Pastor Emeritus Allen Temple Baptist Church Oakland, California, and
Distinguished Professor of Preaching and Church Ministries,
American Baptist Seminary of the West and
The Graduate Theological Union Berkeley, California