

The Truth About Hip-Hop

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PRAYER

Thank you for that song ... the person leading was of course my Mrs., the person that helps me keep it real, the sugar in my kool-aid, the gravy on my rice. She's the butter on my grits -- the one God kept for me. And most of you have probably figured out or heard by now that she is carrying our third child ... who by the way we found out on Wednesday will be another Griffin boy. He is scheduled to see the light of day around Thanksgiving.

The song I would really like for my wife to have sung today is Before I Tell Them. However, I wanted a little time to settle my nerves before I spoke and didn't think playing would be the best location to do that from. But the song says:

Before I Tell Them
Lord, please tell me
Before I serve them
Lord, please serve me
How can I lead
Where I've not been
How can I show
If I don't know
Before I tell them
Lord, please tell me

Before I teach them
Lord, please teach me
Before I reach out to them
Lord, reach out to me
How can I lead
Where I've not been
How can I show
If I don't know
Before I tell them
Oh Lord, please tell me

Before I tell them my way
Sit me down and make me silent

And give it to me your way
Please don't let the things I do
Distract me from hearing a word from you

Before I tell them
Lord, tell me
Before I serve them
Please serve me
Before I say one word or sing one word
Say it or sing it in me
Before I tell them
Oh Lord, tell me
Teach me; show me; reach out to me;
Tell me

I thank the Lord for the opportunity to be here today. I didn't plan on being here but, God through our pastor saw this as a good Sunday for me to speak. And I can say that the Lord has been speaking to me.

This month is dedicated to our young people. God Loves Children and the subject I've been asked to speak about today is important to all of us and very relevant to our young people.

If you come to the Griffin house to visit on any given day, you will probably be asked to play a game. We like to play games. And we've got quite an assortment of them. I'd like to start off today playing a little game that we'll call Pictionary. Now, if you've played this game before, we're not going to play the exact rules, we're going to play Griffin house rules.

Team A – Ages 30 and under
Team B – Ages 31 and older

Team A Pictures

[slide 1](#) - Shirley Chisholm
[slide 3](#) - Diahann Carroll
[slide 5](#) - Leslie Uggams

Team B Pictures

[slide 2](#) - Young Joc
[slide 4](#) - Rihanna
[slide 6](#) - T-Pain

Now the next three bonus pictures are open to everybody

[slide 7](#) - Justice Stephen Breyer --He is Jewish
[slide 8](#) - Justice John Paul Stevens
[slide 9](#) - Chief Justice John Roberts – At 51, he could be around for quite a while.

These three men make up one-third of the Supreme Court of the United States.

According to judicial activists like Breyer, it doesn't matter what the Founding Fathers said, it only matters what they meant, or would have meant if they were 21st century liberals. Breyer sees the Supremes as "the boundary patrol," charged with the duty of making sure that "no one gets too powerful" — that is, no one other than themselves.

Here's what Breyer has to say about freedom of speech:

Do you know what it means? Basically. But you don't know its entire content, and it doesn't tell you itself. Those words, "the freedom of speech," "Congress shall pass no law abridging the freedom of speech." Neither they, the founders, nor those words tell you how to apply it to the Internet.

Since the Founding Fathers didn't know about the Internet, the Constitution doesn't apply to it, except to the extent Breyer says it does.

He was confirmed by the Senate by a vote of 87 to 9 and was sworn into office on Aug. 3, 1994. He was appointed by Clinton.

slide 10 - I John 2:15-23

15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

The bible tells us not to love the world, but it doesn't tell us to be ignorant of the things going on in the world..

Now the point I was trying to make in that game is that we're living in two different worlds ... even as Christians.

The second point is that in the arena that has a chance at making changes, we, as Christians are missing ... we no nothing about it.

slide 11 - Last week in his message, Pastor Mac spoke of Madalyn Murray O'Hair. Now she is responsible for prayer and the bible being removed from schools, but in order for that to happen she had to receive an audience with the right people. Now we can say what we want about the woman, but she had knowledge of how to obtain her goal. She never practiced law, but she had a law degree. She knew what it would take to get what she wanted. She studied to show herself approved. She got a case before a Supreme Court that in 1963 voted 8-1 in her favor, effectively banning "coercive" public prayer and Bible-reading at public schools in the U.S.

slide 12 - "Abortion is not a litmus test. Roe v. Wade is not a litmus test. No particular case is a litmus test. That's not the way to appoint Supreme Court justices or any judge," – Presidential candidate Rudy Guiliani made this statement on Wednesday.

slide 13 - Several months ago, I was asked to prepare a seminar for the FBFA Conference that took place last week in Atlanta, The seminar was entitled the truth about Hip Hop. I was given no parameters, no objective, just do a seminar on the Truth About Hip Hop. I prayed and let the Lord order my steps. On my way back to Virginia, Pastor Mac called me and said I want you to do what you did in Atlanta Sunday at Calvary ... well what do I say. I prayed and again am letting God lead.

I will tell you the truth about Hip Hop in two sentences and then go backward with a little history lesson before coming forward again.

The truth about Hip hop is that it is a multi-billion dollar all encompassing culture that is embedded in society and going nowhere soon. Hip hop is not music, it's a lifestyle.

Culture is defined as "the system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, and artifacts that the members of society use to cope with their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning." It can be also said that culture is the way people live in accordance to beliefs, language, history, or the way they dress.

Now with that said, I will tackle two questions in the remainder of my time.

- 1) Why is hip hop affecting Christians so much?
- 2) How can Christians affect the Hip Hop culture?

slide 14- In the movie Cars, that I've had the privilege of watching no less than 100 times, one of the characters Tow-Mater makes a statement. "Ain't no need to watch where I'm goin', just need to know where I've been." Well in reality, we need to watch where we're going, but it always helps to know how we got to where we are in order to make the future clearer.

The semi-learned Hip-hop historian will tell you that the movement has its roots in the early 70's and throw out names like Grandmaster Flash and Afrika Bambaataa.

The advanced historian will tell you that the movement's roots and cause date back to the 1930's and beyond and I will agree with that camp.

slide 15 – Marcus Garvey

How many of you are familiar with Marcus Garvey ... if you've studied black History a little, you'll know that there were three camps of blacks in the early 1900s. There were the Garveyites, those in the camp of W.E. B. Dubois and those in the camp of Booker T. Washington, who advocated the talented tenth.

Well Garvey was a Jamaican advocate of black pride. He in fact was a leader in a movement known as Back-to-Africa, which encouraged all people of African descent to return to the motherland. He inspired the Nation of Islam and Rastafarianism.

Rastafarians, in fact, consider Garvey a religious prophet, and sometimes even the reincarnation of John the Baptist. This is partly because of his frequent statements uttered in speeches throughout the 1920s, usually along the lines of "Look to Africa, when a black king shall be crowned for the day of deliverance is at hand!"

slide 16 – Tafari Makonnen

Rastafari developed among an oppressed people who felt society had nothing to offer them except more suffering. Many Rastafari believe that Ras^[3] Tafari Makonnen, who was crowned Haile Selassie I, Emperor of Ethiopia on November 2, 1930, is the living God incarnate, called Jah, who is the black Messiah and he will lead the world's peoples of African origin into a promised land of full emancipation. Rastafari is not a centralized organization. Individual Rastafari work out their religion for themselves. The individual is given tremendous importance in Rastafari, and every Rasta has to figure out the truth for himself or herself.

Further, they believe that Selassie is in the direct line of King Solomon, through the birth of Menilek. They based this on I Kings 10: "13 Now King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all she desired, whatever she asked, besides what Solomon had given her according to the royal generosity. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.

We could get more deeply into Rastafarianism, but what I want you to see is the connection between hip hop and Rastafarianism. Rastas have an African approach to "naturalness". This is seen in the [dreadlocks](#), [ganja](#) (marijuana), [ital food](#).

Dreadlocks have also come to symbolize the Lion of Judah, which they claim that Selassie is or was. Rastafari associate dreadlocks with a spiritual journey that one takes in the process of locking their hair. It is taught that patience is the key to growing dreadlocks, a journey of the mind, soul and spirituality.

slide 17 – Rastafari colors

Also common in Rastafarians is a color scheme. Each color has its own meaning, and they are very significant for many Rastafarians. The black is for Africa because it is considered the homeland. The red is for the blood of all living things in the world. The yellow is for all the gold, jewels, and treasures. The green is for the Earth that people walk on, and that Rastas feel a special connection to.

Finally, common to Rastas is the use of marijuana. For many Rastas, smoking cannabis (known as *ganja*, *marijuana*, *herb*, *kali*, or *lamb's bread*) is a spiritual act, often accompanied by Bible study; they consider it a

sacrament that cleans the body and mind, exalts the consciousness, facilitates peacefulness, and brings them closer to Jah. The burning of the herb is often said to be essential "for it will sting in the hearts of those that promote and perform evil and wrongs." Many believe that cannabis originated in Africa, and that it is a part of their African culture that they are reclaiming.

slide 18 – Bob Marley

When you bring Rastafarianism to the arts, of course the most well-known artist would be Bob Marley, a reggae artist. Reggae developed in Jamaica in the 60s. It is based on a rhythm style characterized by regular chops on the off-beat. (The **Off-beat** is a musical term commonly applied to rhythms that emphasize the weak beats of a bar. According to Grove Music, the "Offbeat" is [often] where the downbeat is replaced by a rest or is tied over from the preceding bar".) The downbeat can never be the off-beat because it is the strongest beat in 4/4 time.

Reggae song lyrics deal with many subjects, including faith, love, relationships, poverty, injustice and other broad social issues.

The toasting style of Reggae first used in the 60's involved talking or chanting over a rhythm or beat.

slide 19 – DJ Herc

This influenced Jamaican-born DJ Kool Herc (born Clive Campbell in 1955) who is largely credited with being the inventor of breakbeat technique; he is considered to be "the father of hip hop culture".

Herc became aware that although he knew which records would keep the crowd moving, he was more interested in the break section of the song. At this point in a song, the vocals would stop and the beat would just ride for short period. His desire to capture this moment for a longer period of time would be a very important one for hip hop.

Rapper's Delight – Sugar Hill was the first hit rap record –

slide 20 – The Truth

Hip hop has gone through phases: Old School hip hop [prior to it becoming mainstream] (1970-1985); golden age hip hop (1985-1993 which ended with the consolidation of East and West Coast styles) to the current style which includes gangsta rap, G-funk and hardcore hip hop. Even in death, two of the most well-known rappers continue to [Tupac Shakur](#) and [The Notorious B.I.G.](#) They were killed 1996 and 1997 respectively.

From the get-go, if you look at the lyrics of Rapper's Delight, you can see that the lyrical content has been about money and women and image and injustices of society.

Rapper's Delight lyrics

I said by the way baby what's your name
said i go by the name of lois lane
and you could be my boyfiend you surely can
just let me quit my boyfriend called superman
i said he's a fairy i do suppose
flyin through the air in pantyhose
he may be very sexy or even cute
but he looks like a sucker in a blue and red suit
i said you need a man who's got finesse
and his whole name across his chest
he may be able to fly all through the night
but can he rock a party til the early light
he cant satisfy you with his little worm
but i can bust you out with my super sperm

slide 21 – West, T Pain, Yung Joc

However, during the modern period of hip-hop lyrical content has reached a new level of vulgarity, misogyny and focus on bling. Top current names include: Kanye West, T Pain, TI, Common and Yung Joc (It's Goin Down – New Joc City).

slide 22 – The Truth

Of course the allowance of this lyrical content goes back to the thought of who is in leadership of what and how they get there. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is an independent United States government agency, directly responsible to Congress. The FCC was established by the Communications Act of 1934 and is charged with regulating interstate and international communications by radio, television, wire, satellite and cable. The FCC's jurisdiction covers the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. possessions.

The FCC is directed by five [Commissioners](#) appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate for 5-year terms, except when filling an unexpired term. The President designates one of the Commissioners to serve as Chairperson. Only three Commissioners may be members of the same political party.

When I was in grad school, I did a study on the effects that watching sex on television had on teens. The numbers didn't say exactly what I thought they would, I think it was partially because folks who took part in the survey lied. But I didn't need a study and still don't to know that you emulate and become what you watch.

Ten years ago, a teen in the middle of Wyoming would have had no clue about walking around with his pants hanging down, driving around with some 26's on a car that jumped up and down with hydraulic shocks. He saw it on VH1, BET or MTV and saw that it seemed like something women liked and it looked good.

slide 23 -- Bartender Video –

Please don't get offended, let's be real. I'm sure its nothing our kids haven't seen. A couple of weeks ago, that song was at the top of the hip hop charts. It's a song about nothing. But it shows much of what today's hip hop music is. Half naked ladies, big houses, big cars, big wheels, lots of money, little message.

But there is another side ... not all hip hop is about nothing. Much of it is very conscientious. The question is whose conscience?

slide 24 – Truth About Hip-Hop

I want to revisit a thought that I mentioned a few minutes ago. Hip hop had its early foundings with religious undertones and those undertones continue to exist. Rastafarianism continues to be one of the underlying religions. Perhaps even moreso is the presence of the Nation of Islam. Many conscious hip hop artists, who see their music as a tool for political and social change, have embraced Islam. A short list of Muslim rappers: Freeway, Mos Def, Nas, Ice Cube, Paris, Common, Q-Tip, Lupe Fiasco, Talib Kweli, Chamillionaire, Papoose, Beanie Sigel, and Jurassic 5.

Similarly, many in the hip-hop scene claim allegiance to The Nation of Gods and Earths, commonly known as the Five Percent Nation or the Five Percenters, which was founded in Harlem in 1964. This group is a spinoff of the Nation of Islam. Its most visible members in the world of hip hop are artists such as Rakim, Wu-Tang Clan, Brand Nubian and Busta Rhymes. The members of the NGE view themselves as their own God (both individually and collectively the Original Man). Five Percenters sometimes refer to themselves as scientists, implying their search for knowledge and proof, and not beliefs and theories.

1. They believe among other things that That black people are the original people of the planet earth
[Adam and Eve were God's first creation and the bible does not reveal what the](#)

pigmentation of their skin was. [Genesis 2] Galatians 3:28 states: There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Acts 17:26 says "from one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live."

Recently, we have been having some discussions in my Sunday School class about the war. The comments are along the lines that we are in the midst of a holy war, but fighting it without a true realization of that or at least what that means. The people that we are fighting believe there is honor in their death. They have no fear of it. They believe their God will reward them.

I would say to you we are in a culture war and we don't realize it. As I stated earlier, Hip hop is not music it is culture. It has permeated every area of society that we live in. I would even go further and say that sometimes people are predicating a movement and they don't even realize what they are doing.

I would say that there are many who have no knowledge of dreds and the beliefs of Rastafarianism and they are sporting the look --- the colors. All they are really worried about is the money they're making ... and in reality the money they are making pales in comparison to the money that the real ballers are making.

But see there are those who know exactly, methodically what they are doing and how they are doing it.

slide 25 Jay Z

People like Jay Z, who has a net worth on the plus side of \$340 million. You don't make that kind of money by being unaware of what you are doing. In preparing for the workshop that I did, I looked at part of a series called the Truth About Hip Hop by a man named G. Craige Lewis. He had some very interesting and even disturbing comments and clips. In the footage, he plays one of Jigga's (as Jay Z is known) songs backwards and the rapper appears to say "6,6,6, murda, murda Jesus."

In my research, I've found that Underground DJ Danger Mouse mixed an a cappella version of Jay-Z's The Black Album with the Beatles' The White Album to make The Grey Album. If you play the track Interlude normally it makes no sense; however, when played backwards it includes the lyrics "666..., Murder, Murder, Jesus". The track was made to be played backwards, and DJ Danger Mouse simply samples Jay-Z's voice and edits it to make him say what he wants. The album is not made or endorsed by Jay-Z. But really the fact that someone in this industry has a mind warped enough to do something like this speaks volumes in itself.

Now as I said, Jay Z didn't endorse the albums production. However, his response to the existence was equally disturbing.

According to [Eurweb](#), Jay-Z, was asked to comment on Lewis' allegations during an interview with New York radio jock Egypt of Power 105.1's morning show: Egypt and Ashy in the Morning.

"He should be arrested, seriously," Jay laughed. "My position is not unlike anyone else who ascends to the top of their field. That comes with the [game](#). But that's crazy. That might be the craziest one I've had."

"But do you go to church?" asked Egypt.

"Nah, I'm more spiritual than [having] organized religion. I have a personal relationship with God.I believe in karma, I believe in cause and effect...but religion, I have my opinions about religion.

Those are the words a man that is at the forefront of the world of hip hop.

slide 26 – Roccawear logo

You say you are not supporting Jay Z, but I can't tell you how many times I've seen stuff like this on the chest of our folks. And I mean Christians when I say "our".

It's just clothes. Yeah, it's just the line of clothes from a man who said:

slide 27– quote

- Whoever said illegal was the easy way out couldn't understand the mechanics / And the workings of the underworld, granted / Nine to five is how to survive - I ain't trying to survive / I'm trying to live it to the limit and love it a lot / Life ill's poison my body / I used to say 'F*** mic skills' / And never prayed to God, I prayed to Gotti / That's right it's wicked - that's life, I live it / Ain't asking for forgiveness for my sins
 - "D'Evils", [*Reasonable Doubt*](#) (1996)

slide 28 – quote

- I never asked for nothin' I don't demand of myself / Honesty, loyalty, friends and then wealth / Death before dishonor and I tell you what else / I tighten my belt 'fore I beg for help / Foolish pride is what held me together through the years / I wasn't felt which is why I ain't never played myself / I just play the hand I'm dealt, I can't say I've never knelt / Before God and asked for better cards at times to no avail / But I never sat back feelin' sorry for myself / If you don't give me heaven I'll raise hell ("Til it's heaven)
 - "Justify My Thug", *The Black Album* (2003)

On the Roc-A-Fella Records Sight, You see Jay-Z Hova Da God

Friends, you don't just say stuff like that. You live it. Those are the words of a man that your money is supporting. If you want to know the mind of an artist, look at his art.

slide 29 – John 4

John 4:23-24 says, "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24 God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

I used to ponder exactly what that verse meant and think I have finally concluded that in order to worship the Spirit of God, our spirit must truthfully connect with His. The only way that our spirit connects with His is through our yielding to His Holy Spirit that indwells us.

If we flip on over to Galatians 5:22-25, we see:

slide 30 – Galatians 5

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

We were created to worship God and the only way we can truly worship Him is in Spirit and truth. If you are not worshipping God to the full extent, whatever you are not giving Him, you're giving to Satan. And I'm here to tell you, there's a whole lot of Satan worshipping going on by the world and by Christians.

slide 31 – The Truth

And Christians are largely to blame and I say this for two reasons:

First, We have been too focused on getting fat inside the four walls of our churches and done nothing to prevent many of the ills of society. Christians are grossly outnumbered in all areas of society that matter in terms of making cultural changes.

Secondly, we have been too focused on economically getting ours. The excuse we use is that we want to make life better for our kids. We want them to have the things we didn't have. Truth is they don't need most of those things you didn't have.

What your children need is somebody at home when they get there. What they need is someone who isn't so tired at the end of running this daily rat race that they don't have time to sit down and impart God's wisdom to them. But then again, you can't impart what you don't have and you can't get what you don't have if you're too busy trying to live like everybody else.

The truth about hip hop is that if we spent better time being parents and being home when our kids got home, taking them to the mall instead of sending them to the mall, yanking those headphones off their ears and making them play their music so you could hear it, going to open their doors and see what they are doing behind that closed door, making them spend time reading God's word, reading it with them, praying with them, having their friends come to your house, seeing what they look like and finding out who their parents were we could keep them away from some of the stuff they're hearing and seeing. (Don't be fooled by good kids ... I was a good kid that could have graduated with a much higher GPA than I did ... the told me to go study, but I'd go in my room and sometimes do whatever because I know what I needed to do to get by)

I have become convicted of late about why so many churching teenagers of the 70's and 80's have become backslidden carnal Christians with little evidence of salvation. I have come to the conclusion that churches and or parents were very interested in getting them saved but focused very little on discipleship ... they were unwilling to meet them where they were, regardless of how they got there ... and put them in a right relationship with God. The main culprits for this lack of discipleship were saved parents who were too busy chasing the American dream but also churches that were out of touch with reality.

We dedicate our kids to God today. We give them to God and then we take them back. When Hannah gave Samuel to God in I Samuel 1, she gave Him to God. He was in the service of the temple from the age that he was weaned on. Now consequently the barren Hannah was given seven other children. Today, we give our kids to God, we promise to raise them up in the nurture and admonition of God and then instead we turn them into CME Christians --- they make it to church on Christmas, Mothers Day and Easter. If you don't think the church is giving your children what they need, find a church that is, but if you have prayed and feel like the Lord has led you to a church then by all means be a part of the life blood of the church, have your kids here for events, have them here for service.

slide 32 -- Graph

I can't help but recall that stat again that Pastor gave us – 800 minutes in church by the time they are 17. And don't just bring them to church. Sit together, or at least set up some checks and balances and talk about what you all learned after church. We come to church as family all go our separate ways and then get in the car and go home and that's it. Some of you don't know what your kids have been doing while they are at church and then don't believe it when somebody tells you, you're raising the devil. And you're unwilling to get real and acknowledge that the only God your kids are getting is the "supposed" hour or two they are getting when they come. Consequently they are getting more knowledge from the world than they are getting at church or at home.

How can Christians affect the world of hip hop?

Let me go back to Jay Z. It's hard to change the direction of an 18-wheeler barreling 80 miles an hour in another direction.

See Jay Z is Jay Z and he may be at the point spoken of Romans 1, turned over to a reprobate mind.

slide 33-37

18For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;
19Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.
20For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:
21Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.
22Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,
23And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.
24Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves:
25Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.
26For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:
27And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.
28And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;
29Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,
30Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,
31Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:
32Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

slide 38

Jay Z is Jay Z, but we've got to get the Jay Zs while they are still the Shawn Corey Carters, born December 4, 1968. Originally from [Marcy Houses](#) housing project in the [Bedford-Stuyvesant](#) section of [Brooklyn](#). Jay-Z was abandoned by his father Adnes Reeves when he was twelve years old. Jay-Z attended [Eli Whitney](#) High School in Brooklyn, it was closed down. According to his mother Gloria Carter, a young Jay-Z used to wake his siblings up at night banging out drum patterns on the kitchen table. Eventually, she bought him a [boom box](#) for his birthday and thus sparked his interest in music. He began [freestyling](#), writing rhymes, and followed the music of many artists popular at the time.

Sounds a lot like teenagers around Cavalier Manor, Craddock. Are we investing time in seeking out our community? We can't talk about them if we're not trying to be about reaching them.

After Eli Whitney school closed, he attended [George Westinghouse](#) High School in [Downtown Brooklyn](#) with fellow rappers [Notorious B.I.G.](#) and [Busta Rhymes](#). Teens, people you befriend now may be with you for a long while. They will strongly affect who you will become. Choose wisely.

slide 39 - Now I want to come home to Calvary for a few minutes.

The bible says train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it. I want to make it clear that I'm not standing here today advocating that you raise your kids on Fanny Crosby and John Wesley hymns, not that there is anything wrong with those hymns.

But if you have guys like the Cross Movement, DaTruth, LeCrae and Sean Slaughter who got up on this stage in January and rapped the book of Job as well as any preacher could preach it ... and if you back a few years and say Transformation Crusade (a group that included Pastor Chris Williamson and Pastor Andre Sims) and these guys are putting God-honoring lyrics over driving beats and they are living lifestyles that are glorifying God. They're walking the walk they are talking, I ask you to ask yourself what's the problem. Don't deprive your children or teens of jamming songs because you don't like a beat. If you can find something in scripture that says otherwise, AMEN ... show it to me and I'll line up with the word. But I'm here to tell you, I've been cover to cover and I don't see it.

Let's not push our teens into the arms of the very thing that we are trying to say is wrong by condemning things because of our personal choice alone.

You see, God is the creator of everything. Genesis 1:1 says of course that God created heaven and earth.

God is the creator. He is the creator of every good and perfect gift.

slide 40 – James 1

James 1:16-18 says, 16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. 17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. 18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

Satan nor anyone else had a role in creation. Satan is not a creator, he is a manipulator. He cannot create a mess, he can only make a mess of something that has already been created.

Man also does not create. He manipulates. He manipulates only under the influence of the one he worships. The question is who do you worship? God or Satan.

Yes, one could say the world got the hip hop style of music first, but does that mean it has got to be eternally bad? Can it not be redeemed for God's glory?

Slide 41 -- Da Truth

Gospel Hip Hop artist Da T.R.U.T.H. (*To Reach U Through Him*) sums it up nicely when asked the question in an interview Gospel Flava.com –

GOSPELflava.com: Lately, there have been some who have been trying to denigrate holy hip-hop, putting out a smear campaign against those that use it to reach the lost. Do you have any comments?

Da' T.R.U.T.H.: I believe that the entire argument is based on a faulty premise. We can't "throw the baby out with the bath water." I do agree that there is a negative influence on the culture at large and life does imitate music. Indecency, immorality, homosexuality, self-glorification, and other vices that God 'has a problem with' saturate the music. On the other hand, hip-hop is not inherently evil, meaning that it can be redeemed and used for a positive purpose. Some that have cultural prejudices, biases, and personal problems with hip-hop and associate every aspect of it with the negatives are doing a generation a terrible disservice by imposing personal convictions on those that are constructively impacted by it.

Slide 42 -- Luke 9

Luke 9:49 Now John answered and said, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us."

50 But Jesus said to him, "Do not forbid *him*, for he who is not against us is on our side."

Mark 9

38 Now John answered Him, saying, "Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us."

39 But Jesus said, "Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterward speak evil of Me. 40 For he who is not against us is on our^[c] side. 41 For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.

The world got a lot of forms of music first. Most of you know that the Thomas Dorsey, the writer of Precious Lord borrowed quite heavily from his blues life in writing his hymns. The world got many other things first -- Television, Radio, Movies

Slide 43-- Internet

Look at the internet. Christians didn't start the internet. Al Gore did. The point I want to make is that now, you can pull up every sort of filth imaginable on the internet with just a few keystrokes. Does that make it bad, yes. However, you can also pull up every sort of scholarly, biblical research with a few keystrokes. I think about when my dad would study and he'd have about four or five versions of the bible, a couple of commentaries, spread everywhere. I sit with my laptop on my desk and that's it. I looked at my taskbar on Friday morning and saw that I had 16 browsers open. I was able to access any version of the bible that I wanted, several commentaries and magazine articles in my preparation. Does that make the internet a great resource for Christians? Yes.

I know that I John 2:15 says, 15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. But I say to you again, God is the creator of music. Satan has used to people to manipulate it negatively, but I say let's make it positive.

Slide 44-- The Truth

The problems with us fundamental, evangelical Christians is that we take liberties and apply them as we see fit on case-by-case basis. But my question is what makes our decisions right? How many of our churches have big plasma screens or movie projectors and use them as part of your weekly messages? Why? How many of you use Sermon Spice in messages? How many of our churches across the country use drama before messages? How many of our churches are trying their best to get everything accomplished on a Sunday morning in 1 ½ hour. Why, Why, Why? Because people are visual. Because people like to be entertained. Because people (Christians mind you) are too busy to be in church for any period of time.

The beats behind Hip hop holy or other wise are not bad. It's the individuals creating the hip hop. The goal should not be to get rid of the hip hop. It should be to get the sinner saved so that he or she changes his message.

Its not the beat that's wrong. It's the life we're living, the words we're saying and the associations we're making.

Some of you all don't want hip hop music that glories God. The artists aren't cool enough. Is it more cool for you to join in listening to the lyrics of T Pain, T I, Young Joc, Chamillionaire and the list goes on. Those artists that do anything other than honoring God are ministering the truths of Satan to you and your friends. You are the only God that some of your associates will ever get. Are you interested enough to share Him with them. or is your mind being too cluttered and affected by the garbage that's going in.

Teenagers, adults whoever you are wrong and need to check yourself if you listen to these people and have no problem. Parents you're wrong, if you haven't taken the time lately to sit down and see what your children are watching and listening to ... Jay Z, Beyonce, Rihanna and all that goes with them.

We've got to stand up and be witnesses in what we look like, what we wear, what we say ... I won't begin to stand here and debate about long hair, cornrows, braids and fellas with earrings in both ears. Truth be told, you won't get a job in corporate America in the next twenty years at least, but that shouldn't be our litmus test.

If you say you're living for Christ, I just ask the question can your friends/associates those that you might witness to hear what you're saying over what you look like.

In 1 Corinthians 6, Paul said, I became all things to all people. He didn't say I became all people. He knew where they were and related to them without losing his identity in Christ.

One youth minister put it nicely saying, "The message seems clear to me: if we are new creations in Christ, why do we insist on looking like the creature we used to be. As for Christian hip hoppers, I keep it simple: looks like a duck, has feathers like a duck, pierced body like a 5%'er, tattoos like a heathen, speaks slang like a pagan, appears to be closer to the heat than they are to the clouds."

We've got some supposed Christian folks that have lost their identity. One of them will be in town Friday night ...Let me quote her

Slide 45 -- Beyonce

"Church is my sanctuary, the place I go to let go. Every time I go to church, I feel like I'm baptized, I can start over. I go to church and cry from happiness, sadness, and feel rejuvenated. Whatever's wrong in my life, I am relaxed and at peace when I can feel God. I know everything is okay when I am connected with God."

-**Beyonce Knowles** from Destiny's Child. (Source: TeenHollywood.com, [August 10, 2003](#))

Now more than likely, Hampton Coliseum will be packed out Friday night.

But my bible says the world hates a Christian.

Slide 46 – John 15

John 15:18-19

18 "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

Slide 47 -- Beyonce

I ain't seen a man yet that in conversation with another man hates Beyonce. And I can tell you its not her Christian testimony. The lust of the eyes, the flesh is a powerful thing. I don't have a hell or heaven to put anybody in ... but our fruits speak for themselves

Beyonce, **Slide 48 – I Corinthians 6**

Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God and you are not your own? For you were brought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's

– (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

Slide 49 – Beyonce quote "I need a thug that'll have my back, do-rag, Nike Airs to match... where my thugs at..." – Beyonce from her song, That's How You Like It..

You do know she's dating the aforementioned Jay Z

And where are we as the body of Christ?

Slide 50 – St. Johns

You go to the website of St. John's Downtown Church – Houston, <http://www.stjohnsdowntown.org/> and featured prominently on the site is Beoynce. Why, cause she stopped by the church, cried a little, dropped a little change in the plate and went back to doing whatever she pleased. The Knowles Family has a youth center

named for them because of a \$500,000 contribution they made. I'll say the only place her Knowles name needs to be is on a list that says Pray for me.

Every gospel awards show has got to have some secular artist stop by to validate them, present an award, have them sitting in a camera friendly spot.

Finally, I don't think you can openly share a stage with the world. I think such choices have a great potential to blur our testimony.

Slide 51 – II Corinthians

II Corinthians 6:14 says, “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? 15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?”

There was a video a few years back called Welcome to Atlanta – featuring Ludacris and Jermaine Dupre ... in that video filled with various expletives and dancing girls was a short clip of Creflo Dollar – he had to give his permission.

Slide 52 - Yolanda

Parents this is not just a critique of secular hip hop artists. We've got to be consistent ... you want to belittle gospel hip hop, again I'll point to lifestyles of some of the guys I mentioned earlier and put their walk up against many of our contemporary Christian singers and popular artists whose testimonies leave something to be desired ... I'll start at my house with one of our favorite singers, but one who is increasingly becoming an annoyance to me personally and I believe a confusing entity for the body of Christ -- Yolanda Adams, is now the product of two failed marriages and an increasingly blurred line of where she stands.

I've heard her morning show a few times and pretty much just turned it off both after about 15 minutes. The other day they were doing birthday shout outs and felt it necessary to point out that we lost a giant on this particular day in history – Billy Holliday. They then proceeded to do a birthday shout out for one of the Members of Mint Condition. What place do those two people really have on drive time, Christian radio.

Don't be confused that her most successful venture up to that point was Mountain High Valley Low. Two of the producers on that album, Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis (of Janet Jackson fame among others)

And this is how the BET awards opened in 2006.

Slide 53 – Jesus Walks Video

(keep video playing, lower music) One day Kanye West is doing Jesus Walks, the next day he's Stronger (lyrics say)

When we get opportunities to disciple, we need to disciple. Beyonce's Pastor needs to tell her to put some clothes on and get rid of her thug.

Slide 54 KRS One

KRS One – One of the golden age rappers is now involved with a ministry he calls Temple of Hip Hop. Now reading interviews that he has done, it sounds like he may be a Christian, but he needs some discipling. In an interview with Gospel Flava magazine several years ago, he was asked:

C.H.: Let me address the impact holy hip-hop can have on young, lost souls. On your latest project – Spiritual Minded - you've had the opportunity to work with a couple of righteous hip-hop messengers in **BB Jay** and **T-Bone**. I'm sure you've also heard the lyrical acrobatics of today's vanguards like **CrossMovement** and

G.R.I.T.S., and Obadiah-1. Do these artists have the flow and free style to catch the ear and hearts of a new generation. Is the production behind their tight lyricism strong and sharp enough to go toe-to-toe with the **Jay-Z's, Nelly's & Nas'** of the world?

KRS-ONE: Excellent question because it goes into different directions. First of all, I would say they have the beats, they've got the flow, it's all good. But there is a sense of hesitation in their voice, they're restricted; they can't use certain hip-hop terminologies. You see, the key to get into the hip-hop culture isn't a physical key; it's a compilation of words that open the mind to that specific. And if you can't use those certain words then you can't open the minds of the community. Words like [excuse me] b----, nig---, h-, but not just words like that but fly, dope, fresh, nah'aimean; it's all good, and so on. If you can't use those keys to unlock the culture then it does make it a little difficult and it seems like your flow is not up to par. In fact in this CD, I tried to inject a lot of different words and flows not commonly used in gospel rap, at least from what I'm hearing.

To make this clearer I'm going to tell you about a rhyme I was writing last night, this is top secret (chuckles). I started to write about words and things I can't say because I'm saved, but I would say them. I can't call you a b--- as- rapper because I'm saved, I can't pull off the cap and bust off because of what Christ gave, and so on. Whereas I'm using the language, I'm using the terminology but I'm flippin' the script because I can't really go there with you because of the commitment I've made to God and Christ in my life. When it comes to Christianity and Christian thoughts, there is a community buying music with Christian thought in it but the kids who are doing it are living a hip hop lifestyle. Now either we preach to the choir, which [is fine too], which is what I think we're doing where the gospel rap community is right now, preaching to the choir, they're rhyming to each other, they are the gospel CNN for the church right now.

But there is a need for gospel rappers to step out and use some of the language that opens up the minds of some of these rappers and to the audience that needs to hear the message. It's one thing to come on the Word Network or NBC or have an article in Gospel Flava Mag, that's all well and fine but that's still preaching to the choir."

Some preacher needs to get on the phone and call KRS One and say let's do lunch. Catch him.

Slide 55 – 2 Timothy 3

Give him the word found in 2 Timothy 3

13 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest *your* hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as* in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, 16 because it is written, "*Be holy, for I am holy.*"^[c]

17 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear; 18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. 20 He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you 21 who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. 22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit^[d] in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, 23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever.

Tell him that Proverbs 26:4 says Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Lest you also be like him.

Slide 56 – The Truth

The opportunity presented itself to the Christian community with Mase and now he's worse off than when he was on the secular hip hop scene the first time.

We can't let the world dictate what a Christian is. We need to stand firm, strong and apart. Be holy, for God is holy.

For the cause of Christ, I will live my life. The cause of Christ is not for us to stay in the four insulated walls of the church and talk to ourselves. We are the salt of the world. This is not the world. If a tree falls in the forest and there's no one there to hear it does it make it sound? It doesn't matter ... nobody's there. Pastor Mac can get up here week after week, month after month. If we don't go and spread what were being taught it won't make a sound.

When I was a boy growing up and I wanted to know the meaning of the word. I would ask my dictionary ... her name was moma. Moma would always say, look it up. Inevitably as I looked up that word, I would run across four or five others on the way and I was able to increase my vocabulary to the point that I now have a way of annoying my wife during simple conversations.

My kids mispronounce a lot of words .. Caleb says nitening for lightning
TJ says Lellow for yellow. Ninjan for Ninja. Five years from now if TJ is pronouncing yellow, lellow, I might want to have him checked out. As my kids hear the pronunciation of words from me, from mama, the words will become more clear to them. Most of what my kids hear prior to going to school should be my words, my wife's words. My words will be their words, the word pronunciation and the word choices. Where are my words coming from?

I don't know you, truly know you. Only you and God know you and your spirit. But I would say there are some things in our spirits that we need to drive out. There are some things that our spirits have bought into our houses and lives that need to be dealt with. There are some associations that we can't make. The bible says, what fellowship has darkness with light. There are some things in all our lives that need to be bought into submission and reconciliation with God's Word. But some of us are having a hard time hearing from God because the voices of the God's of this world are drowning out the voice of the true and living God.

Calvary, we are in the world, but not of the world and the way we make sure of that is to get in the Word and stay in the Word. Look up one verse and on the way look up another and another. Fall in love with Jesus. Taste Him again for the first time.

Slide 57-58 – I Corinthians 2

I Corinthians 2:11-16 says.

11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy^[d] Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is *rightly* judged by no one. 16 For "*who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?*"^[e] But we have the mind of Christ.

