

BlogBooker

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1. 1997

1.1 January

A Rare Interview with Stephen Nixon of Rhythmsaints (1997-01-01 00:00) - redsavior

A few years ago, the only source for true progressive house in the Christian scene was Stephen Nixon's Rhythmsaints. After three albums on N*Soul and a few remixes across a several N*Soul compilations, Stephen left the scene and now is a film maker in the UK. This is one of the few interviews with Mr. Nixon and was done after the last Rhythmsaints release. â~ Editor

Tastyfresh's Dj Andy Payne recently caught up with Steven Nixon of the Rhythmsaints. Via email, he had this to say to some questions we asked him...

Tastyfresh: Who are the permanent members of Rhythmsaints?

Steven Nixon: I always envisioned Rhythmsaints to be a collective of talent, headed by myself, that grows and changes with the needs of each individual project be that a song/track/album/video or live appearance. To this end I've worked with a variety of people who've added their talents to the Rhythmsaints vision.

The main people I work with are programmers/musicians as - although I'm musical I'm not a musician - my one major success is shadowing the keyboard riff in Felix's "Don't You Want Me!" Zarc came on board for the first album, I worked on "(Golden)" with Matt Wanstall at Perfect Music and then with Jason on the latest album "Continuum." I've been really lucky to work with people who are able to understand fully the inane blips, bleeps and grunts I make in an effort to communicate how I want this acid line to sound or that base line to undulate. Vocalists are enlisted as and when required and I've worked with some great people both in the UK and in L.A.

Lee-Jane is as permanent a member of Rhythmsaints as anyone can be and I really like the ways in which we can experiment with her voice on such tracks as "Man In The 5th Dimension," "L.A. Story," and "World." Although I looked at taking on board a full time vocalist for Rhythmsaints in 1996 I finally decided against it after completing "Continuum" in the UK in March 1996. I really believe that the power of dance music in it's instant relativity to what's happening in the clubs, the world and in technology.

It's an amazingly fast moving scene with very little sense of what has been before it, always clambering for the next new idea, riff, group, sound etc. and as such, it's a scene that I feel doesn't naturally lend itself to a 'live' performance, or for that matter album length projects. There are some people, (the Prodigy, the Orb) who can really pull off the translation of their music from massive club tunes to a live set up and PA but there are some extremely dodgy 40 somethings wandering around aimlessly, miming to a sampled saxophone riff! So I'm happy to stay off stage, except for DJing, and keep the ice cream cone costume and straight-jacket in the closet, where it belongs. Matron.

One final 'member' of Rhythmsaints is Leonard Zimmerman Jr. a close friend, (the brother I never knew I had!), from Georgia who I work with on the visual Engineering side of Rhythmsaints. Together we design the visual look of Rhythmsaints from album packaging, advertisements etc. to stage costume designs and underwear. Well, I'd love to design Rhythmsaints underwear.

Tastyfresh: Is Rhythmsaints a Christian band?

Steven Nixon: It all depends on your definition of a 'Christian' band. The term has been so manufactured and perverted it doesn't really mean anything. It's a label that makes people feel better in approaching your music. They know where you're at so there's no chance of being challenged. I am a Christian. I may doubt it sometimes but I do believe in many of the things attributed to the Christian faith. It is a faith that cannot be summed up and boxed into any one liner, sound bite, bumper sticker, song or album. It lives within and outside the context of who I am as a person. It shares and shadows the myriad of other things that make me a person - my love for my wife, my age, favourite films, music, books, life. It is me as a person who writes the material for Rhythmsaints, and each song/track reveals something about my perspective on life, the universe and fish. Is Rhythmsaints a Christian band? I believe in God. Does that make Rhythmsaints a Christian band? I have 3 albums released on a Christian record label. Does that make Rhythmsaints a Christian band? I know that God uses this music to touch peoples' lives in ways I cannot imagine. Does that make Rhythmsaints a Christian band? I write dance music. I live under no exaggerated ideas of it's ability to change the world. Although I have witnessed it's ability to entertain and make people dance. Does that make Rhythmsaints a non-Christian band?

Tastyfresh: Why are you a Christian?

Steven Nixon: Because of grace. That's grace as in GRACE not grace as in Brothers, or Jones. And it makes sense, in some non-sensical, amazing, beyond the realms of imagination sort of way!

Tastyfresh: What are your influences?

Steven Nixon: Club culture, Star Wars, Blackadder, emotional responses to audio stimuli, Star Trek, Michael Crichton, Shakespeare, Pet Shop Boys, Lee-Jane, my imagination.

Tastyfresh: Who is the lyricist in the band?

Steven Nixon: I guess that would be me. Guilty as charged your honour. Song writing is so strange. I wrote my first song whilst working at a radio station

twiddling my thumbs for half an hour. I actually had to ask someone what the structure was for a song (Verse, chorus, verse, chorus, etc.) It was the word elevation that started me off. Liked the word. Wrote the song. Bought the T shirt! I like words. All those individual letters formulating to make a string of letters, and then a word, (hopefully.) I couldn't write without them.

Tastyfresh: What are your songs all about?

Steven Nixon: The songs cover a myriad of different subjects.

But you have to be careful in explaining what they mean because people listen to and hear different things at different times. Hopefully they're all pretty entertaining. But they can mean whatever anyone wants them to mean. Lee-Jane actually got challenged about saying that on the phone to a fan who'd bought "(Golden)." He wanted to know what "World" meant and she said "It means whatever you think it means." Sometimes I let things slip and so the most persistent trainspotter will be able to piece together what I feel but my thoughts are of no consequence. The songs really do become something else. But at the end of the day, this is dance music and it only really has one aim...can you tell what it is yet?

Tastyfresh: Some of your music is instrumental. How can your faith come across in these?

Steven Nixon: I don't know as it does. Or doesn't. Music has certain inherent spiritual qualities to it and these qualities can be amplified through the use of words, sounds and rhythms. I know BT is experimenting with certain sound waves etc. that, he believes, can send the listener into a hypnotic state. I do believe in music's ability to manipulate emotions, that's why we have 32 bar snare rolls and piano breakdowns, but if the whole hypnotic state inducing qualities were true then we'd have some pretty dodgy hypno-therapists at number one. Mind you there has to be some explanation for the Spice Girls.

Tastyfresh: What is the current state of musical creativity in Christian dance music?

Steven Nixon: There are some extremely talented people knocking stuff but there's still too much crap. Complacency is a major problem, that and the business of economics. Some stuff, some of my stuff included, should not have seen the light of day but generally standards and expectations in the Christian scene are lower and most people are glad to get their hands on anything they believe is good to listen to and the people pulling the strings are only too glad to package it and put it out.

Tastyfresh: What has the secular reaction to your music been?

Steven Nixon: Secular, hmmm. It's been really encouraging. The breakthrough really came with Larry Flick at Billboard. He gave "(Golden)" a great write up and calling Rhythmsaints "A talent not to be ignored." I think most people did ignore that, but hey, the sentiment was there! He followed that with another piece on my DJing at a party in

L.A. It was reported as a resident slot at a Hollywood club called Rage, which is a gay club. So that was interesting. Then "Continuum" was written up as a great work as well. I spoke with Larry a few times and the way he received the CD's was a miracle and he seriously enjoyed the stuff. I know Danny Tenaglias got a white label of "Continuum" and a copy of "(Golden)" and I got chatting with BT online and sent him some of my stuff and he loved it. That was amazing to have an Email with this guy who I totally respect freaking out over the music! He recommended I send it to Music Now, his pre-Perfecto label based in Washington D.C., which is run by Deep Dishes manager. I did and we had dialogue for a few weeks but couldn't do anything at the time as I was relocating to England and all the music was owned by NSoul. I'd love to work something out with them. I met C.J. Mackintosh at the Dome in Hollywood before I came back to England and Cindy, our US rep, forced a few copies of "Continuum" into his hands and recently I sent the stuff to DMC (the DJ service) and they loved it as well. It's been pretty encouraging all round really.

Tastyfresh: Why was there the need for your "Continuum" album? Were you not happy with "(Golden)"?

Steven Nixon: I was very happy with the whole "(Golden)" experience actually. I thought it was a more mature, cohesive and entertaining album than "Deep Sustained Booming Sounds" and the critical response seemed to back that up. I recorded "(Golden)" in August 95 and it was released in the US in October 96. As I have stated previously the whole club scene moves so fast you need to be releasing singles and remixes all the time to stay in touch. That was not an option but by January 96 I felt I was ready to embark on another album project. I originally wanted to do an album that was completely separate from Rhythmsaints, as L.A. Continuum. I wanted to work with a few select people in L.A. and the UK to achieve a real hybrid sound clash of the two approaches to dance music. That idea wasn't right for NSoul at that time and with "(Golden)" only being released three months earlier there was a need to do a smaller project, hence my idea for "Continuum" as a Rhythmsaints album. Although originally pitched as a remix album, "Continuum" grew out of those confines pretty quickly once I started writing new material and began working with Jason in the studio. I love "Continuum" and am extremely proud of it. More so than the previous 2 album projects. It's a solid, big, noisy, danceable album. Sandra (Stephens) sounds great, the Korg Prophecy kicks some serious bottom and the remix of 'Living Joy' is a delight.

Tastyfresh: Who are the artists to look out for in the future?

Steven Nixon: Paradigm Shift are extremely talented and have established a sound that is instantly recognizable and accessible to a wide variety of dance music tastes. I'd be interested in hearing what they do with a dedicated vocalist. I was talking with Chris from P.Shift recently and he said that they'd been asked to remix a track from "Continuum." Now that will be massively interesting! Greg and Stefan from Virus are capable of some extreme, sound melding that's very similar to the stuff that Sasha and Digweed experiment with in their Northern Exposure nights. It would be great to see both these artists working in the UK where I am sure they'd be infinitely more appreciated. I'm hoping to work on a movie script with Greg soon. We've been talking about doing it via Email as neither of us could afford the postage or telephone costs!

Tastyfresh: What is wrong with Christian dance music?

Steven Nixon: It exists as 'Christian' dance music. It's segregated.

Tastyfresh: What is the future for Rhythmsaints?

Steven Nixon: Well were currently foot loose and fancy free and looking for a new label to work with. I've started working on new Rhythmsaints tracks and I've recorded one song with Sandra Stephens that could be really top drawer (Heard it on the radio the other day and quite liked it!) I'd like to concentrate on 12"s and remixes and work towards an album project after building up a good body of work - i.e. the way its meant to be done. We have a few options on the table at the moment but nothing definite. It's an exciting time.

Tastyfresh: Is there anybody you would like to work with?

Steven Nixon: I would dearly love to work with the Pet Shop Boys, Enya, Steve Martin, George Lucas, Yello and I really need to work with Calix (formerly of Resolution) on some new stuff and I'd love to work on some new material based around Celtic music.

Tastyfresh: Thanks for your time Steven, we are looking forward to anything you do in the future. God Bless!

2. 2004

2.1 May

History Is Everything, Or In Our Case, It's Currently The Only Thing (2004-05-15 00:00) - redsavior

It has been at least four years now since the last true article was written for and posted on Tastyfresh. Four years. Wow. In way, when Jamey Wright (the founder of Tastyfresh) stripped the site of everything but the message boards, part of Tastyfresh died. The interesting thing is that a new part of it grew out of that demise through the message boards. The boards brought the one thing that the old site lacked, community. I have often wondered how many people visited the site daily hoping that they were not the only person interested in the Christian side of dance music. Despite the fact that Tastyfresh has been without articles, news, and a music database for four years, we've come a long way.



Tastyfresh Circa 1996-2000: In the early years, Tastyfresh was the place for news, reviews, and more.

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If this is starting to sound a little bittersweet, I think you're right. The main reason why these sections were removed was specifically because at the time Christian dance music looked like a thing of the past. To many it still is. The facts are simple though. By as early as 1998, and perhaps earlier in some parts of the world, the only way to purchase Christian dance music was by special ordering it through your local shop or via N*Soul, which for all practical purposes was the only label out there. By the end of 2000, I believe only there were only four Christian dance releases. This was compared to an average of 8-12 that N*Soul alone released in previous years. The public's demand or rather the industry's desire to cater to it dried up. The labels had the desire to pump out the music, but there was no one willing to stock it.



Tastyfresh Circa 2000-2003: From 2000-2003, Tastyfresh was mainly existed only as an online community.

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After 1998 the market drastically changed. It went into a nose dive for the next couple of years, but the foundation that was set in the early 90's was still firm. We owe a lot not just to the artists of the early days, but the label execs, the distributor (Diamante/Butterfly), the stores, and even the radio stations who took a chance on this music and laid that foundation for us. But, all things change and change is actually a good thing. It was time for us to change. We needed to be shaken and for whatever reason, we got that change with the market slump. You can also look at it like this; any new industry has a big boom and then collapses for a time of restructuring. We just had out collapse and the restructuring in almost over.

The year 2000 and beyond is not just the start of a new millennium, but it is a new beginning for many things. So far, the US economy fell and started to rebuild itself, the US was introduced terrorism and is still struggling with how to respond to it, the RIAA is having to learn about new technology, and for the first time music lovers are faced with the ease of violating copyright laws without a second thought or concern. None of this is truly new, the US economy has always fluctuated, sometimes quite wildly, the US has also dealt with terrorist before as well as tragedy and the RIAA and music lovers dealt with this same issue a few years ago with the cassette tape.



Proposed Redesign 2004: This was one of the first prototype designs for the new version of Tastyfresh.

This was one of the first prototype designs for the new version of Tastyfresh.

By now, you should be asking "All of that is nice, but what does it have to do with Tastyfresh?" At least I hope that you are. Well, with the lack of availability of new music through the Christian market by 2000 combined with the new technologies in both music creation/production and digital distribution, we continued on. We have not totally severed our ties with the old market, but we have decided that we do not need it as much. Tastyfresh continued on without its articles, database and news just fine as a message board. For the first time, lovers of Christian dance music were able to hang out with the band on a daily basis. Those bands in turn could teach a new generation of musicians how to write music on a budget. Those who were new to it quickly caught on and combined the shared knowledge with their internet savvy and found ways to get that music out to people. Some of the new generation actually found ways to make money and control their own product independently. Others found a new home with not a Christian label, but rather a secular one. Still others took matters into their own hands and started their own labels. Times changed. We've come a long way.

1996 Tastyfresh Launch Announcement (2004-05-15 00:00) - redsavior

In late December 1996, Tastyfresh burst into the scene with this article. The founders of the site were Jamey Wright (Faith Massive, DJ Seven, Formant, Bandpass Feeling) and DJ Andy Payne. It was to be a news and information site to help those few Christians who loved dance music to connect. There were no message boards back then, just good solid news, music databases, and some articles (most of which can now be read again after almost seven years).

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For those of you who wonder where the name came from, "Tasty" and "fresh" were on the side of a popcorn maker at the movie theater near Jamey's house. It was from there that he got the name. — Editor

The dance scene moves fast and even two months can seem a millennium if you're a deejay searching for that elusive pre-release or a fan trying to trace that scorching track heard at Abundant or Club Messiah. A bi-monthly magazine cannot give ALL the coverage the zealous dance buff wants. So that's why a Sanctified Dance internet site, tastyfresh, has been set up by an American DJ Seven and UK deejay and Cross Rhythms Sanctified Dance coordinator Andy Payne. Says Andy, "Cross Rhythms magazine has really pioneered sanctified dance. But there's so much more needed. The net is the medium which allows for the rapid updating of information. The purpose of the site is as a one stop resource for artists, deejays, producers and fans to obtain music and build the scene on a global basis."

So what is on the site? "There is the latest news from the US and the UK - much of it supplied by Cross Rhythms. There are reviews of albums, which you are free to add your own to if you disagree. There is a list of elusive 12" vinyl releases and a global radio guide. There is an extended deejay playlist section, also printed in Cross Rhythms. There are club and concert listings and a producers and record label directory. There is information on current and new releases, occasional interviews with artists and a chat page where you may debate away for hours on the current state of sanctified music. You will also be able to link to other pages of interest, such as the Cross Rhythms and N-Soul home pages, as well as the artists home pages. The site is truly international in nature and will be updated on a regular basis. The site has something for everybody."

Scott Blackwell's famed N-Soul Records is a sponsor of the site and are holding a launch contest on tastyfresh. When you log on to the site you are invited to complete a short questionnaire as to your musical tastes and the site. During December, one respondent will be picked at random every week and will receive a package of the last five N-Soul release absolutely free. If you log on just once, you will be entered into all subsequent draws. Entries are accepted from anywhere in the world.

All artists, deejays and music fans are invited to join making the site a success and to visit the site on a regular basis. The address is <http://tastyfresh.digiweb.com>

dj404 (Chris Salisbury): Testimony of A Tastyfresh Moderator (2004-05-15 00:00) - redsavior

Although I could say that I have been a Christian all my life, growing up in church and my grandparents being ordained ministers, it would be a lie. My spiritual journey had not begun until the spring of 1990, a few months before my 16th birthday. I had heard about Jesus, was baptized as a baby, attended Sunday school every Sunday, and even said the "sinner's prayer" as a very young child. It was not a real-this-is-what-I-believe experience for me until I realized just how much of a sinner I was.

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At the age of 15, I became determined to lose my virginity and be promiscuous. I met this charmingly cute girl and asked her out. Not on a date, but to be my girlfriend. Just like that. I never met her before. Oddly enough, she said yes and within a few days I got my wish. For a few months, all we did was go clubbing and have sex.

Why do I mention that? It was during this time that God really got my attention. I was going to a Wednesday Night Youth Group at church and my youth pastor was talking to me about the Holy Spirit. He told me about how the Holy Spirit would guide me through life and help me make decisions that would honor God. He never ever doubted if I was a Christian, he just was really loving me and encouraging me to draw closer to God and be filled with the Holy Spirit. He never knew about my sin. He just loved me. I realized that there was no way that I could be destined for Heaven, when I was walking down the wrong street.

I remembered that as a child I prayed to accept "Jesus into my heart", so I made a decision that from that moment on, Christ was to be my solid foundation and His Word to be the path upon which I would walk. Call it a salvation, a rededication, a commitment, whatever. All I know is that I made that choice and have never turned back.

I broke up with my girlfriend and told her about Christ. She said she understood (whatever that meant) and we barely kept in touch for about a year before I never heard from her again.

By the time I was 18, I was involved with a local Christian Rap group as well as being a student leader in my church's youth group and had plans to attend a school to become a preacher. It was during the years I was in Bible School that I decided to take DJ'ing seriously. I was throwing small parties in the activity center of the apartments I lived in on a frequent basis.

After graduating I headed back home to California to be a "shepherd" in our youth group. That led to me becoming the worship leader for the youth and being on the drama team, which led to being involved with two missions trips to Costa Rica and Trinidad. God had been working on my heart to start a youth center with a weekly club as well as a weekly gathering of people who had a passion for God, electronic music and the Word of God. Basically a church for the underground culture or rave scene. I had no clue that anybody else in the world was already doing it and had no real words to describe it to my ultra conservative "no-to-dancing" Assembly Of God church. But God had given me a vision.

Today, I am still trying to figure out how to make that vision happen, while I watch other dj's and churches do exactly what I had on my heart more than 10 years ago. Sometimes I feel that I am standing still, but I feel that God is telling me to hold off a bit longer. It will happen in God's timing.

There is so much more to my story, but I felt for the sake of Tastyfresh server space, that I would only touch on the key point in my journey.

Related Links:

- [1]Groove Central
- [2]dj404.com

1. <http://www.groovecentral.net/>
 2. <http://www.dj404.com/>
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Cameron Dante seemingly came out of nowhere into the Christian scene when he joined the then World Wide Message Tribe in 1996. He was around for a few albums, released a solo album and then a book chronicling his life's struggles and search for God. Most recently he opened a club in the UK called Ascension ... which has unfortunately closed its doors. He however now has a regular show called Vision Classix every Saturday night on BBCi.

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The newest member of the World Wide Message Tribe is Cameron Dante. He spoke about his past and his Christian conversion.

Cameron Dante was born and grew up in Manchester. By age 16 he was already riding the fast lane. With two friends, Jason and Howard, who were eventually to become members of Take That, Cameron starred in a top break dancing group. They won awards and championships and Cameron found himself on TV and courted by "the beautiful people". Eventually leaving dancing he drifted out to Ibiza, the holiday island off the coast of Spain. In a nightclub on night, he was asked to deejay by the manager. "The deejay at that club was Boy George. We deejayed there together. I just became incredibly interested in deejaying - we were playing this incredible music that people were shaking their heads to, jumping up and down. I'd never heard it before. It was called 'baccalo' which was the original name for house music.

"So I started buying a lot of records. I spent four years over there. I was off my face and having a great time. I was doing everything. I was doing amphetamines, cocaine, I discovered this new drug called Ecstasy. Actually, things like cocaine were given to me by the management. They said, 'This will make you work good.' So it was pushed upon me by the management first of all. And then it just became a part of everyday life. At the time I thought this is fine, I can get this stuff for nothing. Then came the winter, the major nightclubs closed down and most of the English customers went home. Everyone had to fight to find work basically. You had to go and work in a small bar or something like that. And you had to go and buy your own drugs. That's when I got into trouble. "One day I thought this is pathetic. So I sold all my records and came home."

Resolving to get his life into some kind of shape, back in Manchester Cameron found old habits die hard. "I found I still had a problem with amphetamines. You can't get physical addiction, but you can get mental addiction. So I wandered around for six months. I had a friend I went to see at the club. There was a support band playing called Bizarre Inc that nobody had heard of. I got talking to a couple of them. They said, 'What do you do?' and I said, 'I deejay and rap,' and they said, 'Let's hear a bit of your rapping.' So there in the nightclub I started rapping. So they said, 'Look, come to the studio with us. Have you got any records?' Well I sold all my records - but I had a mate with some. They said, 'Bring some down and we'll sample them.' So we did."

Starting with the smash hit "Took My Love" on which Cameron rapped, Bizarre Inc became an international hit act. The hard core disco artists toured the world. It was a dream come true for Dante. But despite all the glitz and success Cameron made bad mistakes. "I was stupid to sell my royalties for 500 quid. I was writing tracks for them. Then the record company dangled 500 pounds in my face and asked me to wave royalties. And I was that naive enough to sign and take money! I really didn't care at the time, the money wasn't an issue. I was having a great time, I was touring the world, seeing all this limelight, doing Top Of The Pops, doing all these big TV shows, touring the States, traveling (sic) around in limousines. It was really good, I really enjoyed it."

Then Bizarre Inc went really quiet for two years. They were in dispute with their record company and their management. "I thought 'This is the end of Bizarre Inc really. It's time for me to strive on my own.' I made some records out on my own. I had one of the best backgrounds that impress any A & R man. But they'd take the tune and half heartedly put it out along with three or four other tunes that week. So I got really disillusioned with the record industry.

"Then I began to think about God for the first time. I don't know why. I'd been brought up in a Catholic home but wasn't in the least religious. But one day I said to myself, 'I've got to write a gospel tune!' And I wrote it in about two minutes! It was unbelievable, these things that were coming out! Really meaningful words. I'd arranged to go and see about eight record companies in London and the first person that I went to see went absolutely mad about it. For me that was a sign from God."

Feeling "a great hole" in his life, Cameron found himself talking about spiritual things to Zarc Porter. Cameron had used Zarc's Perfect Music on and off for four years, recording songs. "I always knew there was something different about Zarc but I didn't know what it was. I always knew he was the nice guy. I showed him a bit of respect. I didn't swear when he was there! It was amazing when I became a Christian and I prayed with Zarc for the first time, it was one of the most joyous occasions. I saw him in a totally different light. "It was Zarc who invited my down to a Planet Life service. I had absolutely no idea what to expect. I knew there was something in my that was screaming to be found out, I didn't know what it was, I couldn't explain it at the time. I knew I had, what I could only describe as a 'gift from God', songs that really MEANT something, whereas before I'd always written about love, like physical love. But now I was writing about a different kind of love. I couldn't explain it. There was something inside me, a hole that needed filling. I didn't know what it was. Zarc said, 'Why don't you come down to Planet Life and see if that hole could be filled.' Now I didn't really know what Zarc was talking about. But I decided to go."

Cameron didn't tell his girlfriend about his decision to take up Zarc's invitation. Cameron remembers the Planet Life service in 1994 vividly. "There was a Canadian evangelist there called Mike Hack, he was giving a talk. For some reason his talk really struck home. Now in typical American evangelism style - that we don't think much of in England - he said, 'Anyone out there who hasn't received the Holy Spirit in to you (sic) life...STAND UP!' It was frightening. I didn't stand up. I was PUSHED! Honestly, I didn't mentally say to myself, 'I've got to stand up.' I was just apprehended as it were and pulled out the seat. The next thing I could remember was that I was stood up. I looked round the church and there was no one else stood up! I was the only person standing. The thing was Mike Hack hardly acknowledged me. I started getting these burning feelings 'cause I was stood up for ages and ages and the whole church was looking at me. I was looking at Mike hack (sic) and saying to myself, 'Please say something to me.' Then finally he said, 'Yeah, sit down and come and speak to me at the end.' Zarc and his wife Miriam were sat beside me and they were just beaming, big smiles on their faces.

"I kept saying to them, 'I don't know what's happened, I can't explain it, I don't really know why I stood up but I think this is what I want...this is it, I need God in my life.' I went to see Mike Hack at the end of it and he said, 'Do you want to give up your life to Jesus Christ!' And I said, 'Yes, I totally commit my life to Jesus Christ.' And he said, 'Let's pray together,' and I thought, 'Wow, hang on a minute...I only know one prayer and that's Our Father.' He said, 'You just pray the way you need to pray, so go on.' So I said (voice getting higher), 'Uh...er...how do I pray?' I'd never heard anyone praying before. So he prayed first...then I got the idea."

Profoundly converted the born-again Cameron returned home. "My girlfriend was waiting for me. She said the first thing she noticed was that I was beaming, she said there was like a light shining from my. She said that she'd never, ever seen me that excited or happy in her life as when I first walked through the door. It was that beam I'd noticed in Zarc! That was when I truly knew I'd been accepted into the Kingdom of God."

New Zealand Christian Rave Scene (2004-05-15 00:00) - redsavior

This is a quick look back to the way things were around 1996 in New Zealand. Today, Paul Spain runs WorldDJ.com which is a global news site and community for DJs, producers and dance music fans from around the world covering both Christian and secular interests. Dr. Siminz continues on as a producer and DJ. Most recently he has appeared on Paul van Dyk's playlist and both Demulcent Sessions vol 1 and Osmotic Hype vol. 1. Siminz also moderates the Australia/New Zealand board on this site. — Editor

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For nearly two years I've worked with rave DJ and producer Dr Siminz. In November we started our own group, the working name for which is "Chosen Force". I MC whilst Dr Siminz plays mostly Happy Hardcore tunes. We did a secular gig together some two months ago and many people asked what my MC name was.

In the week following, God gave me the name 'Preacher Boy' (I am no longer referred to as DJ Spain as I rarely DJ now). Together we've done numerous raves over Nov/Dec, and I have MCed at all of Auckland's large-scale Happy Hardcore raves, including those featuring international artists such as Ultrasonic and DJ Daydream. We are also involved with the running of "Platinum 104" an inner city, smart-drinks club.

Here is some info about events promoted in New Zealand:

Jan 31, "Resolution" at YMCA stadium, Auckland, NZ

DJs include Dr Siminz (Chosen Force), Helix, Spectra-X, U-Gene, Hugo. MC will be Preacher Boy. Also lots of bands including Australia's Brotherhood Lush and some of NZ's best. \$15 at door, \$13 presale. Info phone 3027690.

Feb 5 - 8, "Parachute Music Festival Extreme", Matamata, NZ

Join 10,000 others for a huge weekend with a wicked lineup of bands and DJs. Bands include Jars of Clay, All Star United, MIC, Margeret Becker etc. MIC will play on Thursday 5 Feb before NZ techno/happy hardcore group "Chosen Force". Chosen Force features long time DJ - Dr Siminz and Preacher Boy (previously known as DJ Spain, now one of the top rave MCs in NZ). This will be a massive rave - expect 3,000-5,000, also expect wicked lighting and video and possibly a massive laser and fire dancers. Also playing over the weekend are DJs Drinian (Christchurch), Helix (Wellington), Hugo (Auckland).

Related Links:

- [1]Dr. Siminz on Besonic.com
- [2]Demulcent Sessions vol. 1
- [3]Osmotic Hype vol. 1
- [4]Parachute Music Festival
- [5]Paul van Dyk
- [6]Paul Spain's WorldDJ.com

1. <http://www.besonic.com/User/0,1391,g0r0l0t0o0i161373,FF.html>
 2. <http://www.demulcent.com/>
 3. <http://www.osmotichype.com/>
 4. <http://p04.parachutemusic.com/frameset.asp>
 5. <http://www.paulvandyk.de/>
 6. <http://www.worlddj.com/>
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Jonny, Johny, Johnny (2004-05-15 00:00) - redsavior

This is another OLD interview from the original Tastyfresh.com. Johnny Casswell is most definitely still around in the Manchester area. He has been evidently teamed up with Cameron Dante with the now defunct club Ascension. Hopefully we will catch up with him in the upcoming months for an over due check-up. — Editor

This is another OLD interview from the original Tastyfresh.com. Johnny Casswell is most definitely still around in the Manchester area. He has been evidently teamed up with Cameron Dante with the now defunct club Ascension. Hopefully we will catch up with him in the upcoming months for an over due check-up. — Editor

Here is some information about sanctified DJ Johnny Casswell. He provides some info on where he mixes and has some good advice on how to start spinning gospel in regular clubs...

Tastyfresh: What is your Dj name?

Casswell: Johnny Casswell (although it regularly gets misspelt e.g. no H, only one S, which is annoying particularly when thousands of flyers are produced!)

Tastyfresh: What are your current residencies?

Casswell: (I take it you mean club as apposed to where I live?!) I am currently Head DJ at my University, with responsibility for the nightly events in the S.U. building. I am also a fortnightly resident on a Friday at a club called the Sound Factory in Plymouth which is very underground and open till 6 am every week. Regular plays that I do are once a month at Club Loco in Bristol and Az-Oz at Kingstons in Taunton, the major rival to Screams dominance of the South Wests big club night, plus other dates around the place. All this has led to Djing with the likes of Jeremy Healy, John 'OO' Fleming (Trade Resident), Marc Vedo, Alan Stevens (Luvdup), Inspiration, and Mark Davis (Lakota Resident). Possible future dates include playing with Heaven (M.o.S. resident), Jon Pleased Wimmin and a date at Lakota.

Tastyfresh: What Dj work do you do in Christian circles?

Casswell: It has been a bit limited so far. I regularly play with a christian dance act called Psalmistry at their live gigs (watch out they are going to be big!) and have played at youth events such as the Edge in Bristol. I am going to be playing at Abundant over the summer and hopefully at some of the Christian festivals as well (Cross Rhythms, Soul Survivor). Its something I want to do a lot more of, and I feel its Gods wish for me as well.

Tastyfresh: What advice do you have for Christian Djs wanting to spin at secular clubs & events?

Casswell: First of all go round all the shops where you live and take a load of flyers for all the club nights you can. Phone up the info lines on the flyers and enquire where and who you can send your mix tapes to. Then send copies of your tape to the promoters. One good piece of advice is to be creative with your tape cover. Don't just leave the TDK AR 90 cover in the box with your name and number scribbled on with a bic biro (!) Promoters, particularly with the bigger clubs, get loads of tapes each week and can't spend all their time listening to the tapes, so put a picture or slogan on the cover, use colour, do a track listing for example. The promoter will notice this, see the effort put in and may then listen to your tape first ahead of a lot of others. Also try and do a couple of quick mixes at the start of the tape. Don't leave your first track in for 10 minutes as more often than not the promoter will only listen to the first 25 minutes or so if they have lots of tapes to listen to and you need to show them what you can do. After a couple of weeks phone the promoter up and ask if they got the tape, did they like it, what the chances are of a slot sometime. Don't be afraid to keep phoning them up and hassling them as you will show you are keen, stay in their mind and eventually they'll let you play even if its to get you off their back!! If you play well the first time then they may invite you back. Get to know the people in the business. Also don't go charging ?200 for your first 2 hour set. If you're doing a warm up set then you won't get that much as other DJs will require more. Start off happy to get what they give you, even do it for free if need be (we've all been there!!!), and then gradually as you play more clubs and build up more

of a name you can charge a bit more. Finally, don't expect instant success to happen over night. It took Dave Seaman 18 years of Djing to get to where he is today and he still isn't one of the 'Big' boys!!!!

Tastyfresh: Thanks for taking time to do this interview, Johnny...

Casswell: You're quite welcome!

An Interview with Raze (2004-05-15 00:00) - redsavior

Following the Tribe's departure from N*Soul Records to Warner Alliance and thebandwithnoname, Raze appeared on the scene. This was a very early interview between Tasty and Raze. — Editor

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Tastyfresh's Dj Andy Payne recently caught up with the new Movation band "Raze"

Following in the footsteps of the Worldwide Message Tribe are Tulsa, Oklahoma band Raze. Musically they do have some similarities with the Tribe, but their main priority like the Tribe is to reach School kids for God. Tastyfresh talked to Ja'Marc from the band in Zarc Porters Perfect Music studios in Manchester. Thanks go to Zarc and Miriam Porter for the hospitality, and to Belinda at Alliance Music for sorting out the interview.

Tastyfresh: Who is in the band Raze?

Raze: Mizze, Karina, Nathan, Donnella, LaTekia and me, Ja'Marc.

Tastyfresh:

Where are you all from?

Raze: We are all from Tulsa, Oklahoma, except Karina who is from England.

Tastyfresh: How did you all meet up?

Raze: I started out as a dancer for rap group ETW, and began dancing for Carman, I danced on his "Raising the Standard" Tour. I knew these artists from my Church, the Higher Dimensions Church under the pastorship of Carlton Pearson. During this time I met Mizze, LaTekia and Toomie, who were dance Students of mine. Donnie met Missy on a cruise ship in Japan. We all met through my Church, and we formed the "Joy to the World" Ministry, who are a schools outreach ministry. We needed music to fit in with the ministry, and that's how Raze came about.

Tastyfresh: How did you end up on Movation records?

Raze: Actually we were not looking for a record deal. We were part of a band, "Mixed" at the time. We met up with Zarc Porter and the Tribe at the Fishnet Festival in Virginia. It was just a meeting of hearts, from everything from Live Presentation, Music, and a calling to Schools work. We started to talk to Movation Records (The Tribes record label) and the deal simply came. We are not yet signed to an American label but Warner Alliance have first refusal of the Album in The USA.

Tastyfresh: Tell me about your album.

Raze: We have recorded twelve tracks of dance music, based quite simply of the subject " Why I am where I am" in our faith. Some of the tracks are entitled "The Way", "Shine", "Thank You" and " I need your love". There will be two club Orientated remixes on the album as well. We have been recording the tracks here at Perfect Music with Zarc Porter. As to what specific style of dance music we are, we simply describe ourselves as Dance Music.

Tastyfresh: Who writes the lyrics?

Raze: The album was written by Zarc Porter and Mark Pennells from the Tribe, and me.

Tastyfresh: Are you happy with the comparisons with the Tribe?

Raze: Certainly. They are an established ministry which we are happy to be compared to.

Tastyfresh: What is it like working with Zarc?

Raze: It was incredible. Zarc is a genius! He has a real good way of mapping out a record- he knows I have my ideas on music though and we collaborate well so musically its a mix of ours and Zarc's ideas.

Tastyfresh: What does your album address lyrically?

Raze: The focus of the lyrics at present are about God, about what we do and aspects of our relationships with God. We are going to touch deeper issues as time goes on.

Tastyfresh: Do you have a musical background?

Raze: Yes. My father in a minister of Music at Higher Dimensions. I was born in Detroit where my father had a rehearsal studio. I have musical memories of Fred Hammond on the Bass, Marvin Winans on the drums and Be Be Winans singing.

Tastyfresh: What are your musical influences, secular and christian?

Raze: The Tribe. Michael Jackson. Seal. Sting. Jazz and Blues and at present I am listening to No Doubt. As you see its pretty broad based.

Tastyfresh: Tell us about Raze live.

Raze: During our live work I am the focal point of the band, with female vocals as well. We are very High energy, 100 miles per hour style, with lots of singing, dancing and crowd interaction. We teach the audience to dance as well. To start with we will be working closely with the Tribe, mainly in the UK, but we are also doing some youth conferences in America. One big concert we did was the Essential Dance Music Festival in Holland with a bill of DBA, the Tribe, Hydro, Normal Generation and us. There was a crowd on 2,200 people, and we were well accepted for a band nobody had heard of before. we still need to spend some more time on our live work and to practice some more, but we aim to have a real exciting show ready for our visit to the UK in August 1997 when we will be doing some more live work.

Tastyfresh: As a multiracial band, have you experienced any problems?

Raze: Not really. Remember, we are not a manufactured band, we grew up together and it was natural we would work together. Most of us worship at the same church which is mainly White, but has a Black pastor.

Tastyfresh: What exactly do you see is the church's problem with Dance Music?

Raze: Its Tradition and Religion. Some people forget that Christianity is about a relationship with Christ first and foremost.

Tastyfresh: Is Dance Music of God?

Raze: Certainly. God can use any form of music, and dance music is based on gospel music. God created everything, including Dance Music. In any event dancing was originally simply a form of worship, and is biblically based.

Tastyfresh: Tell us about your schools work.

Raze: Our music is for 9 year olds and up. I have seen the positive effect that Christians like us can have on kids. They look at us and simply say "I can do it". The current climate in schools in America is that you cant pray durring school hours, can't even say the word God. Its not just about prayer in schools, I don't know how much real difference that alone would make. We overcome the problems by taking a platform of Self Inspiration and Self Esteem and by setting a positive image, our faith comes through.

Tastyfresh: What is in the future for Raze?

Raze: We are looking to do more live work, but our heart is in schools work.

Tastyfresh: Thank you, Ja'Marc.

2.2 June

A Tastyfresh Download Exclusive!!!! (2004-06-15 00:00) - redsavior

It is Tastyfresh.com's proud pleasure to make Jamey's Lightshine EP and final track available to you this month. Please download and enjoy and if you see Jamey on the boards here, thank him for the music. Also, please thank our own Tim Toll (Tolldog) for providing the bandwidth for these files.

The Lightshine EP

Back in 1996, Jamey Wright was just starting Tastyfresh.com. He has been DJing in and around Jacksonville, FL for sometime in and was quickly rising as a star of this small movement of "Christian ravers." His first real release was [1]Eternal on [2]N*Soul Records under the name DJ Seven. Shortly after that, he teamed up with J. Davis ([3]Devout Artist, [4]Cosmic Flux) to form Faith Massive, one of the very first Christian drum and bass groups.

Following the Faith Massive adventure in the late 1990's, Jamey Wright started producing under the name Formant. Under this name he released a total of six progressive house tracks. Two of which were on the [5]Devout Artists Vol. One compilation on [6]MYX Records and the other four were on The Lightshine EP which was supposed to be his demo for the major labels ([7]Bedrock, [8]Hooj Choons, [9]Sumsonic, ect...) Unfortunately, none of the labels decided to release his work. During this time he also became one of the founding members of the monthly event Fusion at the [10]Murray Hill Theater in Jacksonville, FL.

After the EP was released, Jamey did a breaks remix of [11]Anything[12] by Skywatchers under the name Bandpass Feeling for 3 Cell Records (now [13]System 3 Records). He wrote his last complete track, Panamorphic, in 2002. 2002 also marked Jamey's last years as a dance musician, a DJ and webmaster of this site. God had been calling him for sometime to pay more attention to his growing family. Jamey decided to sell his gear and follow God's leading as he knew that it would ultimately bring more peace, success, and pleasure into his life than if he had followed his own will and desires.

It is Tastyfresh.com's proud pleasure to make Jamey's Lightshine EP and final track available to you this month. Please download and enjoy and if you see Jamey on the boards here, thank him for the music. Also, please thank our own Tim Toll (Tolldog) for providing the bandwidth for these files.

Downloading Instructions:

To download this files, click the right mouse button (hold down the Option key and mouse click on a Mac) and click save as.

The Lightshine EP

- [14]Absolute
- [15]Ikon - Prophecy West (Formant Remix)
- [16]Lightshine
- [17]Lightshine Dub

Unreleased Material

- [18]Panamorphic

Legal Stuff:

All tracks © 2001-2002 by Jamey Wright. Downloads are provided here through the request of Jamey Wright and at no cost to the user. If you are interested in contacting Jamey Wright regarding commercial use of these tracks, please [19]contact the webmaster.

1. <http://nsoul.com/store/index.cfm?ItemNum=56>
 2. <http://nsoul.com/>
 3. <http://www.devout-artists.com/>
 4. http://www.cosmicflux.com/cfm_history.html
 5. http://www.myxrecords.com/myxstore/product_info.php?cPath=1_44&products_id=36
 6. <http://myxrecords.com/>
 7. <http://www.bedrock.org.uk/>
 8. <http://www.hoojchoons.co.uk/>
 9. <http://www.sumsonic.com/>
 10. <http://www.murrayhilltheatre.com/>
 11. <http://system3records.com/music.html>
 12. <http://system3records.com/music.html>
 13. <http://system3records.com/>
 14. <http://home.tolldog.com/%7Edaver/absolute.mp3>
 15. <http://home.tolldog.com/%7Edaver/prophecywest.mp3>
 16. <http://home.tolldog.com/%7Edaver/lightshine.mp3>
 17. <http://home.tolldog.com/%7Edaver/lightshinedub.mp3>
 18. <http://home.tolldog.com/%7Edaver/panamorphic.mp3>
 19. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/contact/default.html>
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An Interview with Stryke (2004-06-15 00:00) - redsavior

Greg "Stryke" Chin is one of several Christians who are actually making it in the secular dance world as both a producer and a DJ. His music has been released on such labels as Hooj Choons, Guidance, Isophlux, Platform, and Fluentia among others. He is also the founder, brainchild, and owner of Substance Recordings. With his classically trained music skills and sixteen years of DJing experience, it was truly an honor to interview him for Tastyfresh.com.

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Tastyfresh: What's new with Stryke? (latest releases, collaborations, & touring)

Stryke: Well, it was a slow start to 2004. I moved to a new house and moved the studio as well. For the first time, I have the studio in my house, which is strange, but good. It took a while to get the studio up and running, but thankfully, everything is up and working now. I'm currently in the middle of mixing and producing an album for an artist named Eric Barnhart. It's not electronic at all ... more contemporary rock stuff. On the Stryke end, there are a few things ...

- A remix I did for French techno group Trium will be out later this year. The track is entitled T10.
- A remix I did for Atlanta based Areotechnica Records will be out later this year. The track is entitled Stormkilla.
- I signed a digital distribution deal with [1]EDM Digital to make my Substance Recordings label available as digital downloads. I also inked a deal with them as an exclusive artist. You can find exclusive and unreleased Stryke material there that you won't be able to get anywhere else. In a few weeks, I start recording an album for EDM for download only ... entitled The War of Art.
- I'm in the process of signing a new song called Everything Is You to the Stereo Productions label in Spain
- My single with Murk entitled Time is out later this month on UK label [2]Subversive.

Touring wise, I've been pretty quiet, mostly due to the fact that I signed as a resident to the new [3]Nocturnal club in Downtown Miami. I turned down all dates for spring and summer to build up the residency. However, the club still isn't finished, and we've decided to open in October as well. So my tour dates right now are still being rebuilt. I just came back from a great gig in Puerto Rico and there's currently a tour being worked on with myself, Noel Sanger, and Jesse Skeens (Medway). That should be fun. I was just elected to the board of governors for the Florida chapter of the Grammy's. I'm pretty excited about that

Tastyfresh: Who would you credit as your influences?

Stryke: Musically, my influences are pretty diverse ... Chopin, Vangelis, Depeche Mode, John Beltran, Jeff Mills, etc ... On a non-musical plane, I'd have to say that my father is my biggest influence. He's such a great man, with a big heart, and such a love for God. He inspires me every day. Also, Paulo Coelho (Brazilian author).

Tastyfresh: What has been your biggest temptation and/or struggle in your daily walk with the Lord while being a DJ?

Stryke: I'd have to say that my biggest struggle is keeping my personal relationship with the Lord at the forefront. My schedule and my life in general tends to be pretty hectic. I find myself often putting everything else on the back burner ... family, friends, and my walk with God. It's something I've noticed and have been trying to keep that relationship at the forefront. You'd think something as simple as going to church on Sunday wouldn't be a big production. But, after DJing for 4 or 5 hours and getting back to the hotel at 8 AM, the last thing you want to do is go to church. But, I am

making the effort. That's just one example.

Tastyfresh: What was the process in getting signed to Substance or other labels you have been involved with?

Stryke: Getting signed to Substance was easy, since I own the label. I made myself an offer I couldn't refuse (laughing out loud). As far as the other labels I've signed to, they all called. I've been truly blessed. When Josh Wink called about doing some stuff for Ovum, I thought it was a practical joke. To this day whenever Josh calls, he always reminds me that it's really him on the phone so I won't hang up on him. The Hooj signing with Oscar G. (Murk/Space resident) happened as a fluke. Oscar and I finished Hypnotized and kind of sent it to them as a joke. We were shocked when they called back right away and wanted to sign the track and us to an artist deal. It's been pretty much the same with the other labels as well (Guidance, Adrenalin, etc ...) Either they call me to do some stuff or I send some music up to them and wait for a call back.

Tastyfresh: What are some of your career accomplishments?

Stryke: Being asked to remix Madonna and INXS were both really honoring for me. Although the mixes were never commercially available, I am still honored to have been able to do them. Getting the opportunity to work with 2 of my musical idols, John Beltran (on 2 of his albums) and Miami House legends Murk. Just being able to do what I do on a daily basis (even through all the struggles) is what I consider my biggest career accomplishment.

Tastyfresh: Where is dance music going? What styles are hitting in the future in your opinion?

Stryke: I'd like to think that dance music as a whole is becoming more cohesive. Barriers are dropping. I hate the whole idea of pigeon holing music. It takes away the true purpose of what music is, which is communication. I love the fact that I'm hearing more techno textures in house tracks and more house textures in trancier and progressive tracks. I love the fact that people are having a harder time labeling stuff and just starting to call it really great dance music! that's where we should continue to head. As far as future styles? I'm in the so called techno corner. I'm seeing techno rear its head down here in South Florida, and it's something I've been championing for years. So, I'll say techno. However, as I said before, it's just all about good music.

Tastyfresh: Who is Christ to you?

Stryke: Besides my personal saviour and ultra cool guy? I've always envisioned him as a kind of older brother or father figure (to the infinite power). He's always been there to guide and comfort me. The important thing for me is to always remember that he's there for me not only in times of despair and struggle, but in times of total happiness and joy. Of course I always cry out to him when things are bad ... but I'm learning to thank him and praise him more in the good times as well. He's just the one who never fails.

Tastyfresh: What DJ, you have seen perform in the last year, is going to blow up and why?

Stryke: Hmmm ... I'd have to say Domingo Castillo. He was doing a really cool Sunday night with his manager, Ramon Crespo at Jazid in South Beach. Domingo is an excellent DJ. His musical style is really diverse. From IDM to deep, minimal techno, to house, he makes it all flow together so well. He has a very smooth, serene feeling to his sets; but it has a really great energy at the same time. Not many DJs can do that. Domingo does it like no other. I want to see him blow up big time.

Tastyfresh: What is the most disturbing aspect of the international dance scene today?

Stryke: Although I don't see as much drug use as I used to (maybe I just try to shield myself from being exposed to it on any level), I still think that it's the most disturbing aspect of the international dance scene. I think the drug use then creates a negative catalyst for bad decision making, life choices, etc ... It's a trickle down effect.

Tastyfresh: What do you feel you have left to accomplish in the electronic dance scene? Where do you want to be in 5 years?

Stryke: Just making more music. I never ever thought I'd come this far in this career, so I try not to put any specific goals to attain. That's not to say that I'm not driven. I just want to focus on always making the best music possible and giving the best possible performance. Always.

In 5 years, I think I'd like to finally have settled down with a wife and some children (and lots of dogs). I'll continue producing, performing, and doing the music business side of label ownership. I'd also like to really start scoring video games and film. I can then finally use my classical training to its full potential.

Tastyfresh: ... and 5 quick answers please

1. Best venue you have DJed at? Le4Sans in Bordeaux, France
2. City with the best scene? Bordeaux and Paris, France
3. Best DJ you have seen live and where? Jeff Mills at Bed WMC 2004.
4. Best or favorite all time record? That's a tough one. For home or car listening I'll say John Beltran's Morning at the Window (I was in Heaven) for the dance floor I'll say Jam & Spoon's Stella But of course that changes every minute of the day ;)
5. After DJing at a party ... What is your food choice? I've been trying to eat and be healthier ... so I'll say a good bottle of spring water. But, if I'm being bad ... good food from whatever city/country I'm in. In Jacksonville, that would mean some corn nuggets with Bill Sikes and the gang!

Related Links:

- [4]Nocturnal
- [5]Substance Recordings

1. <http://www.edmdigital.com/>
 2. <http://www.subversiverecords.co.uk/>
 3. <http://www.nocturnalmiami.com/>
 4. <http://www.nocturnalmiami.com/>
 5. <http://www.substancerecordings.com/>
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2.3 July

The History of Christian Dance Music: Issue #1 (2004-07-15 00:00) - redsavior

It's probably fair to say that new wave, synthpop, and industrial bands were actually the first to produce Christian electronic music. Deitophobia, who were then known as Donderfliegen, had already been making music for a few years in the late eighties/early nineties, and various members of that band had side projects under many different names. One of the most notable was Wigtop, a group comprised of Brent & Heather Stackhouse, who took the Deitophobia rhythms away from the industrial sound and more towards a much dancier, synthpop sound, mainly fronted by Heather's vocals.

✖ Joy Electric had also been around for awhile, although not by that name. Ronnie Martin collaborated with his brother Jason Martin in a group called Dance House Children. They musically separated later as Jason pursued rock music with Starflyer 59, and Ronnie created Joy Electric. A lot of these groups were part of a sub label called Slava Music which released through Blonde Vinyl Records. Even before all of this there were many of these types of groups who had been releasing obscure projects all through the eighties.

✖ For me it all started with Scott Blackwell in 1992 with his albums "Walk On The Wild Side" and "A Myx'd Trip To A Gospel House." While other groups may have been around first, this was the first thing I ever heard on the radio and was my first exposure to electronic dance music. Myx'd Trip featured the vocals of people like Sandra Stephens and Allegra Parks, and delivered gospel house versions of classic church hymns and songs. Wild Side featured a lot of the same people, but the album was made up of original material with more mainstream house sounds that had a clear evangelical message. The title track was actually techno flavored, and the opening stated, "Let the dead bury the dead, and let the dead play dead music! Let the dead mourn, we which are alive ought to be happy and merry. ✖ But it certainly wasn't some of this cold, dead funeral music, you hear in some of these cold, dead, modernistic so called organized churches." Not only was the musical declaration very controversial for it's time, so was the content of the track, although I never remember hearing any fuss about it. It mainly dealt with discussing pre-marital sex, a subject that was taboo in CCM at the time. Some of the best samples that were laid into the song were recordings of Scott Blackwell talking with teenagers about abstinence until marriage being the only true safe sex. "I don't need birth control, I need self control. Is sex safe if you have to wear a condom to protect yourself from a disease that will slowly, brutally, kill you?"

✖ Both of these albums released on Myx Records, which was fronted by Michael Sean Black at the time. In launching Myx he also released a third album called Jyradelix. This was a collaboration between Jyro & Jerome and The Psycho Lizards. The two bands knew each other because Jerome from Mortal, and Johann from the Lizards are brothers. Jyro and Jerome went on to become the Industrial legends Mortal which released some of the most timeless music ever made, and they eventually progressed into rock music as they became Fold Zandura. The Psycho Lizards went on to release albums under the names Mindbenders and Erinfall. ✖ Mindbenders had some techno tracks on it, but was pretty heavy with trance. It had a few standout tracks that were awesome, but a lot of it was filler material to me. Erinfall was much better and incorporated guitars in the music giving some of it a real alternative feel along the lines of The Chemical Brothers and FatBoy Slim. Jyradelix was a beautiful blend of hard techno and industrial, with a dash of rave thrown in at the end. It was very ahead of it's time for the Christian market and as a result received some brutal magazine reviews. A few years later the same magazines were praising albums made by the same people and most people who own the album still speak fondly of it today.

✖ These 3 albums from Myx Records in 1992 are the ones who made me aware of electronic dance music and infected me with a love for it. After that, I discovered some of the older Slava stuff I hadn't known about and fell in love with that as well. That same year Max Hsu and Ian Eskelin teamed up with some other folks to form the band called Zero, which released the album "Ravenous". This album was ahead of it's time as well, and featured a hybrid

of styles mixing techno, rave, hip hop, house, funk, and industrial all together. Each song focused on a different style from that spectrum for the main vibe, while the others were innovatively mixed in lightly to take it in a different direction. Another group called Syco released an album called "Kommand" at the same time that had a few good tracks and a lot of neat ideas, but was very under produced and unbelievably cheesy at times.

✠ In 1993 The Prodigal Sons burst onto the scene with their album "Tekno Theology" on the Metro One Music label. While a few albums in the past had featured techno songs, this was Christian dance music's first full length techno release. JR Barbee, Chris White, and Greg Hobgood hit us with techno that was so hard a few magazines called it industrial when they reviewed it. The album was a giant step forward in the quality of dance music, and while there were plenty of samples that delivered the message, they felt a lot less contrived, and a lot more like a natural part of the music. Chris White was responsible for a lot of that as he dropped samples in and gave it a lot of the DJ feel with his records. Greg Hobgood mainly took care of producing the music, and JR Barbee did a lot of the MCing at live events and helped with the music as well. One of their tracks "Satan is Dead" was a parody of another track that was out at the time called "James Brown is Dead" by LA Style. Neither were actually dead, but it was a humorous rip on them all the same. ✠ Another track called "Madolyn Vs The Sons" cleverly used samples of Madolyn Murray O'Hair which were recognizable, but unintelligible, followed by a loud male sample saying "We have to get God back into the public schools of America!" Some standout tracks from the album were "Believe" and "Power of God" which were both hardcore Techno tracks. I think this was the first Christian album that had a 150 BPM track on it. This was probably the best of all The Prodigal Sons albums, which is ironic because it is the lowest budget being recorded in Scott Blackwell's backyard! They released another album on Metro One called "Return" a few years later that was an impressive techno album, but in later years Chris White left the group and the DJ sample vibe went with him. They continued to release albums after that, but turned to more of a trance feel leaving their techno roots behind.

✠ Scott Blackwell also released his second album "Once Upon A Time" in 1993, which featured a Prodigal Sons track called "XYZ" and a wide variety of tracks ranging from dancehall to jackswing, to tribal and funk. Sandra Stephens and Allegra Parks were vocalists on the project again, and one of the most memorable tracks is "Love is not a Four Letter Word". A Myx'd Trip to a Gospel House 2 was also released the same year, and this time Max Hsu from Zero joined the team. This album remade classic hymns once again, but this time the vibe was much harder. A few original songs were included like "Free Indeed" and "Get On Up".

✠ A big change happened in 1993 when Michael Sean Black asked Scott Blackwell if he would like his own label. Scott founded N-Soul Records, and the very first album he released to launch the label was "Take A Long Hike" by The World Wide Message Tribe. This was one of the cornerstones of Christian dance music in my opinion, as the group infused high energy dance music with pop sensibilities and made it highly accessible to the radio and the mainstream. This was also the first Christian dance band distributed to the USA from the UK, and while dance music certainly has a great deal of its roots there, many of us had never heard a European dance band before. This is how we met Zarc Porter, Elaine Hanley, The Heavyfoot, and the band that quickly caught fire and swept the nation, dominating the radio with their sound. They went on to become one of the most famous Christian dance bands of all time, and even saw major charting and play in secular music with their single "The Real Thing" which released on vinyl, and received the remix treatment from Markus Schulz and C.L. McSpadden.

✠ Scott Blackwell also released his third album "The Real Thing" in 1993, and it was largely a collaboration with Zarc Porter who he had met through the World Wide Message Tribe project. This album delivered some great techno, acid jazz, ambient, and of course house music tracks. He also released a concept album called Raving Loonatics which featured comic book art on the CD cover and jacket of the project of superheroes patterned after the rave culture. The content was sermons by well known preachers laid over the top of techno and trance beats. Probably the most well known track from the project was "Man in the 5 th Dimension" which featured Billy Graham's very first sermon laid over a music bed created by Steve and Lee Jane Nixon, aka The Rhythm Saints. Other producers

who worked on the project were Zarc Porter, Max Hsu, Greg Hobgood of The Prodigal Sons, and Johann Fontamillas and Wilson Peralta of Mindbenders.

✕ NGM's renowned group Heartbeat had recently disbanded, and in 1993 some of the members of that group formed a new one called 65dba. With their album "The Great Awakening", they became the first electronic artists to ever appear on Integrity music, which was mainly known for releasing worship albums. The album had some enjoyable worship material with a light electronic influence in it, but was largely toned down for the target audience of the label. In 1994 the group hooked up with producers Zarc Porter and Scott Blackwell to release more of a high energy album called "Shout". Its focus was mainly dance pop, but it did contain several club-friendly remixes at the end.

✕ In 1996 the group's membership dropped to just Robbie Bronniman and Shaz Sparks, and the group shortened it's name to DBA. With their new name they released "Bubble", and delivered some sugary sweet europop that was received very well and quickly became one of the most influential dance pop albums of the era. They also released a remix from that album to vinyl that was called "3D". It was some of the finest trance that had been released at the time and quickly became a classic. It is now one of the most sought after rarities in Christian dance music. Robbie and Shaz continued to develop their talents and their fan base, and they became talented enough to make albums that had enough pop sensibilities to be accessible to the mainstream, and release vinyl remixes that were readily snapped up by the underground DJs. They currently have a home with "Hojo" aka Howard Jones' label Dtox Records and have enjoyed some major success in the secular scene.

✕ In 1994 Joey Belville appeared with an album called "Defend Your Joy". His brand of vocal heavy, uplifting synthpop garnered an immediate cult following, and The Echoing Green quickly became one of the top electronic groups in the scene. That same year, the former Newsboys member, Corey Pryor, and his wife Danielle emerged as Sozo. The group's name was a greek word which meant "saved and delivered", and their europop album "Purity" released on Scott Blackwell's N-Soul Records with influences from groups like Blackbox, Snap, and C & C Music Factory that was right on target with what was popular at the time. They released another album called "The Walk" a few years later, but it was more pop than dance and did not seem to be received as well.

✕ Virus was another innovator to appear in 1994, and their album "Analogue" introduced us to the much more underground sound of trance, and some harder, edgier rhythms. They released a double disc album in 1996 called "Odd" which was much more chilled, and ambient. All of their albums were released by Scott Blackwell, and they even tackled a few side projects such as "The Bubblebaby Experience" which introduced some of the experimental kinds of trance around the world at the time; and "Ambient Theology" which was designed as an ambient worship CD complete with a Bible study in the jacket.

✕ Steve Nixon, who had introduced Scott to The World Wide Message Tribe, had decided to come work for N-Soul in the USA. He and his wife Lee Jane created The Rhythm Saints. The debut album "Deep Sustained Booming Sounds" was actually more of a pop album featuring vocals from Sani of WWMT, and novelty items like the cover of the classic Tremaine Hawkins track "Fall Down". They quickly switched gears to a more underground sound with their next album "Golden", which featured a much more progressive house sound and received a very flattering review in Billboard magazine. Their third and last album "Continuum" featured remixes of earlier tracks and brand new material all rolled up into one of the finest progressive house albums ever released, and a definite inspiration to the whole new generation of artists to come. "Expansion (Time & Space Mix)" still has the ability to put me in the zone with every listen.

✕ Last but not least, 1994 brought us Prophecy of P.A.N.I.C. with their album "Manic Panic" which released through Scott Blackwell to introduce a very underground sound of dark and dirty techno from Brian Scroggins and Danyen. They also released a double disc set in 1995 called "Soul Reactivator" that had some super hard gabber on

it, some gorgeous techno, and some smoothed out ambient type songs that were very pretty.

✂ 1995 brought us one of the most talked about groups in Christian dance music, and in the opinion of many one of the greatest groups of all time, Paradigm Shift. Scott Blackwell had made one of the biggest discoveries in dance music history. Their brand of progressive house and trip hop was so far ahead of it's time UK DJs were scrambling to own it, and it was still being played years later while other albums were hitting the bargain bin. There is no doubt these guys probably made the biggest impact in the history of Christian dance, and they are still recognized for their amazing talent almost 10 years later. ✂ This was also the same year that the infamous Nitro Praise series was created, and while the name is spoken of distastefully by many these days, that first album was really something special and innovative. Many dance albums from many labels have followed suit over the years, but Scott Blackwell was the first one to marry praise songs and electronic dance music together. It wasn't until later when the label was run by someone else, and the idea had been copied by so many others; that the series became so contrived and monotonous.

✂ In 1995 the DBA crew began working with NGM again, and with a group of collective others began producing under the name Hydro. Their first album "Spiritualization" released through NGM in the UK and a year later was distributed to the USA through N-Soul. It featured a laid back remix of the Celtic group Iona's song "Beyond These Shores", and was mainly chilled trance and some various styles of house. Their real history maker was the second album "Aborigination" which was released through NGM in 1997 and distributed to the states through N-Soul in 1998. This was one of the most creative albums I've ever heard, and is one of my favorite albums of all time. ✂ The project was made up of songs that were in languages from all around the world: Celtic monks chanting, Aborigines yelling and pounding on drums, an ancient Russian prayer, Scottish bagpipes, African languages and singing, and sounds from every part of the world all praising God over electronic dance music. This project was largely Robbie Bronniman, Ray Goudie, and Shaz Sparks, but it also introduced us to Andy Hunter, Kenny Mitchell, and Jon Schorah aka Cedar. It was indeed an innovative album and an impressive piece of art that broadened our idea of worship, as "the rhythmic excursion spans the globe".

✂ AJ Mora and Scott Blackwell met each other in 1996 when AJ saw a guy wearing an N-Soul shirt and asked him if he knew Scott Blackwell, and it turned out he WAS Scott Blackwell! The two hit it off and AJ released his debut album "Transformed" through N-Soul Records the same year. The album featured the underground Los Angeles house sound as well as some smooth tracks like the classic "I Found Something Real" featuring Sandra Stephens. AJ was also a founding member of The Movement who wrote the infamous song "Jump" that has been heard worldwide. He also partnered with Richard Humpty Vission in the Aqua Boogie Records venture. He teamed up with Scott on a number of projects like "Holy Hard House" and "Gospel Housing Authority" over the years, and released a second AJ Mora album titled "Soul Of A DJ" that was packed with quality house and a strong Gospel message.

✂ Jeremy Dawson also happened to find N-Soul Records in 1997 and released his album "E-Majn" under the name Cloud2Ground. It featured some of the most emotional and beautiful trance anyone had heard, and was immediately a favorite with songs like "Melt Into Minor". A few years later Jeremy met Chad Petree and suddenly Cloud2Ground was a group of two. In 2000 they released their second album "The Gate <Beautiful>" which far surpassed the first on many levels. "Boomerang" was an instant trance classic and a radio hit, and the title track was beautiful, emotional Drum & Bass. Chad and Jeremy went on to become the Trance legends Slyder who released vinyl on labels like Moonshine and Generation, and received spins from big names like Dave Ralph and Paul Van Dyk.

✂ Andy Hunter and Martin King teamed up with Robbie Bronniman and Tanya Farthing in 1997 to bring us one of the finest Drum & Bass albums of all time through NGM with Trip "Cultural Shift". The album was distributed by N-Soul to the US in 1999 and was packed full of lush, emotional soundscapes that were beautiful and dreamy, and was contrasted by an equal number of hard edged drum & bass tracks that gave us a feel for what UK drum & bass

was really like. Andy Hunter has now began releasing his own music, and tracks from his worship album “Exodus” which have seen use in major motion pictures, network television shows, and of course the radio. He also had several singles from the project release to vinyl that saw major club play from people like Armin Van Buuren, Sasha, Digweed, Dave Ralph, Gabriel & Dresden, Sandra Collins, Pete Tong, Chris Fortier, and many more.

✖ Our drum & bass education continued in 1998 as Joey Davis and Jamey Wright teamed up to create Faith Massive and released an album on N-Soul called “Drum & Bass for the Masses”. The album was full of spirituality and was received very well in both the Christian scene and the secular scene. In 1999 the second Faith Massive album “Visions” was released, and although Jamey Wright did contribute one track to the album it was largely Joey Davis now. The album was intelligent drum & bass, and was some of the smoothest and most beautiful music you were ever likely to hear. Joey received nods from D & B artists worldwide, and many were impressed and surprised that he was from the USA and not the UK. Joey has now formed Devout Artists Records and is releasing all sorts of the best in drum & bass and breaks from artists around the world. Jamey Wright also founded Tastyfresh.com which was Christian dance music’s first real source of information on the internet. He then began producing more progressive house flavored tracks under the name of DJ Seven originally, and finally as Formant before he decided to lay down his music and focus on spending more time with his family.

✖ 1998 also brought us the band known as Sheltershed. Their unique blend of old school techno, electro, industrial, and synthpop quickly got them a lot of attention. They were quite successful as an independent band for sometime, before Scott Blackwell signed them to his new label Myx Records in 2003 and released “International Plastic”. The group collaborated with Ultrabeat, The Echoing Green, Joy Electric, Deitiphobia, and many more artists to bring us some of the best music the scene has ever laid ears on.

I am fully aware that there were most likely bands producing music in Europe at the same time people like Scott Blackwell and Deitiphobia were blazing the trails here in the states, but because I’m not aware of them I cannot write about them. I also barely touched just the beginning of the scene, and did not cover a great deal of territory; or this article would be even more obnoxiously long than it already is. There were many artists who I thought about but did not have the time to mention like Antidote, Dr Onionskin, Shiloh, SecretArchives of the Vatican, and Coretex just to name a few. I did not deliberately leave anyone out or ignore their accomplishments, and this is by no means a definitive or complete history of Christian dance music.

Hopefully it is a good look at some of the major players who started things and shaped the music we enjoy today; and my hope is that this is a decent stab at this unrecorded history. I’m hoping it can help or inspire others to pick up the torch and fill in the blanks. I also hope that as we look to our past we realize that this is not a manmade scene, but one that God created, and that we remember where we came from and that it inspires us in where we are going.

Artist Links:

- [1]Scott Blackwell
- [2]DBA
- [3]Deitiphobia
- [4]The Echoing Green
- [5]Joy Electric
- [6]Andy Hunter

- [7]Shaz Sparks
- [8]The World Wide Message Tribe
- [9]Wigtop[10]

Label Links:

- [11]Devout Artists
- [12]Flaming Fish
- [13]Metro One
- [14]MYX Records
- [15]NGM
- [16]N*Soul Records

1. <http://scottblackwell.com/>
 2. <http://www.dba-music.com/>
 3. http://www.christianmusic.org/cmp/artists/index.cgi?command=Display_Detail&artist_id=2958
 4. <http://echocentral.com/>
 5. <http://joyelectric.com/>
 6. <http://www.andyhunter.com/>
 7. <http://shazsparks.com/>
 8. <http://www.thetribek.com/>
 9. <http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Venue/1006/wigtop.html>
 10. <http://shazsparks.com/>
 11. <http://devout-artists.com/>
 12. <http://www.flamingfish.com/>
 13. <http://www.metro1music.com/>
 14. <http://www.myxrecords.com/>
 15. <http://ngm.org.uk/>
 16. <http://www.nsoul.com/>
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July 2004's Opinion of the Month (2004-07-15 00:00) - redsavior

Back in July, we asked basically two questions. The first was **"What should we as Christians do to have an even greater impact on the electronic dance community?"** The second question was **"Give an example of a person who is currently having a substantial impact and what that impact is."** We received a larger number of responses this time and I hope that this trend continues. Let's see what our readers said.

What should we as Christians do to have an even greater impact on the electronic dance community?

Live like a Christian. Do not hide it, but do not flaunt it. Just be a Christian and live your life like Jesus is your best friend so that people can see the tenants of Christianity in action rather than hypocrisy or hype.

- "Let the light of Christ shine through in every thing we do from making music to dancing and talking to people and being a disciple and a servant of Christ. When we are out in the world, sometimes we might be the only Jesus anyone ever sees."
- "I think the most important thing we can do as Christians is to **be** just that. It's easy to go out there and do what we do...and to be passionate about our music. But, what about Christ, is he being conveyed? We need to make sure that people **know** that we are Christians...regardless of whether or not our sets include any Christian material at all... the biggest impact we can have is by **acting like Christians** [and] not blending in with the culture or by playing Christian music or catering our music to Christians"
- "God has called many people to be ministers of the Gospel in the electronic dance community, but it doesn't have to be a complicated affair. Thinking that you have to be a successful promoter, great DJ, or record label exec before you can get the Word out seems to be getting in the way of the real work that has to be done."

We need to branch out into the secular scene unashamedly. We need to step out from our church only "raves" and be involved where people do not know Jesus. Most people who need Jesus will not be in a church on a Friday or Saturday night. Although I was at a party a few years back that was hosted by a church and some of the kids though the group had broken into the church and set up the rave. That was funny.

- "Understand the world; understand the way they think, and understand why they do the things they do. Then go out and tell them the ways that Jesus can give them the same things but in a better way."
- "Work hard, become a hot commodity and get closed to real people on real record labels, big ones if possible, and share God's love through realistic friendship and relationship so that it can trickle form the top down in the scene. Flip through a magazine, like The Wire, Grooves, or even XLR8R and URB... pick out a few artists and note their labels... poke around and look at what kinds of sales and crowds they have... then imagine what would happen if they became true worshippers..."
- "Get unified, everyone must work together towards a common goal."
- "Christians can have an impact on the electronic dance community by actually participating in that community, stepping outside the oft-mentioned "bubble" and making real, meaningful connections with people. This may mean stepping out from behind the decks for a change and not throwing parties in church basements that go from 9PM to midnight."
- "Too long have we decided to sit in our churches and gathering places and say 'Let's put on some events and we'll draw people into our church so we can tell them all about the meaning of it all!'"

Do everything that we to do the best of our ability. If it is not at least on par with the quality of secular music or events, do not release it or host it.

- “We cannot be an effective witness if we are not able to make an impact that is great enough to get some attention. God has given Christian DJs a unique opportunity, to go into these raves and spread the Word.”
- “The industry is a tough one to be involved in. It’s perfectly possible to represent all God’s glory in the work that we do, but understand that the music industry looks for something more than the church folk do... having some catchy Christian title or sample of some preacher saying something isn’t going to save anyone, nor will it get anyone signed.”
- “It’s been too long that many of us have made music that holds it’s only real relevance within the walls of the church. Mind you, if that’s your passion, so be it. But for the rest of us, it’s about time we put on our boots and get involved in the real deal.”
- “Sharpen skills God gave us, mix it with our passion and creativity, and then get the music out there... unashamed.”
- “Don’t be afraid to push the barriers...”
- “Release music as good as any secular label.”

Give an example of a person who is currently having a substantial impact and what that impact is.

I was mildly shocked that only three names came up regarding this. Either these people are the only ones having a substantial impact or we are not as educated about ourselves as we think. Still, the names suggested were good examples: Andy Hunter, Shiloh and Steve Jeffery of 2turntables and Rubik Records.

We interviewed Andy in our last issue. He started off as a roadie for rock bands and eventually got into DJing and wrote some of the most amazing Christian based EDM in the UK to date. Today, he is signed to both a Christian label and Nettwerk America and has been touring with the likes of Tiesto and others. Yet he still has time to work in directly with Christians. He is both a DJ and a worship leader who uses his turntables to lead people in worship. Having personally met him at Cornerstone 2002, I have to say that he is an outstanding gentleman and example of how we should live as witnesses.

- “I like what Andy Hunter said in the TF’s recent interview, “There were many great conversations had with clubbers and promoters about Jesus and that’s what rocks my world!” Evidently, he doesn’t believe in BLENDING IN with the culture. This is how we have an impact. Good model, Andy!”
- “Andy Hunter has had a substantial impact to the dance scene. He goes into raves and DJs for both Christians and non-Christians. He DJs along side secular DJs. As I understand, he has led quite a few to God DJing in the secular world.”

I personally like to refer to Shiloh as the only real EDM success story of MP3.com. Sure there’s Trance Control and a few others, but who have they really been remixing lately and is there exposure anywhere as high as Shiloh’s? Colin and Justin are Christians from Canada who have come from a Jewish background and still take pride in their Jewish heritage (as they should). These guys are now two of the most sought after remixers and producers in the secular scene and yet, they also have time to still come back to their Christian roots and directly support Christian labels like Devout Artists, Demulcent, and Low Roof. They have claimed their love for Christ on various secular boards and as far as I know, have never hid from it. Even the lyrics of their music are examples of God’s love in their lives.

- “Shiloh is by far the biggest Christian impact in the world today. They have been featured on numerous charts, Annie Nightingale (BBC Radio 1), proton radio... and much more that I don’t know about. They’re practically pioneering the modern breaks scene.”

- “ Shiloh would be a current example in my opinion. They have networked like crazy, their skills are sharpened and they continue to make a positive impact on the EDM community because of their love for God and humility in the scene.”

Steve Jeffery of 2 Turntables and Rubik Records is a great success story. Of all the new Christian run labels that have started up in the past few years, Rubik has done the most for releasing vinyl and getting it out in the hands of the secular scene. Lyrically, the releases express the label's faith and the quality of the music is right up there where it should be. 2 Turntables has been a great organization for aiding in the training of DJs and hosting DJ workshops through out the UK. He is focused on writing quality music, getting it out there and educating people. He's a prime example of what we all need to be doing in order to make an impact.

- “I vote for Steve from 2 turntables...”

It is a shame that he only got one vote though. =)

Terrance Parker: Testimony of a Gospel House DJ & Producer (2004-07-15 00:00) - redsavior

The LORD saved me on July 21st, 2002. Leading up to this date, I had become a successful, world renowned DJ, producer, and remixer. I had produced several hit records for myself and other artists; and I had DJed in more than 100 cities throughout the world (see complete biographical info at my website: [1]www.TPMusic.net).

Greetings from Detroit!

It is my honor, pleasure, and duty to share my testimony with you (Revelation 12:11).

✠ The LORD saved me on July 21st, 2002. Leading up to this date, I had become a successful, world renowned DJ, producer, and remixer. I had produced several hit records for myself and other artists; and I had DJed in more than 100 cities throughout the world (see complete biographical info at my website: [2]www.TPMusic.net).

At that time, I decided to retire from DJing because I thought it's what the LORD wanted, as well as what my church family wanted also. In short, I wanted to please everyone. However, on the day that I got saved, the LORD used one of the Elders from our church to give me a profound word of advice. He said, "Terrence, now that you're saved, you'll find that many people in the church will expect you to do and say certain things. But you have to be obedient to what GOD wants you to do and say. Understand that sometimes GOD will have you do or say things that totally go against the feelings of the people in the church." As time past, I began to understand this more clearly.

Soon after I announced my retirement, and as I began growing in the LORD, I learned HIS voice. It was at that time the LORD began dealing with me. He was speaking to my heart in so many incredible ways.

✠

1st - HE lead me to Luke 14:23, "And the Lord said unto the servant, go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." Then HE spoke to my heart and said, "See Terrence, my ministry is the world. That's why I need you out here among my people who are lost. Go back to DJing in the clubs and parties so the light I put in you can shine where there is darkness." I still didn't understand, so I asked, "LORD, how can I reach your people in the clubs?" The LORD answered and said, "Remember Terrence, that's where I reached you! I brought you from the highways and hedges to get the sin of Adam off of you. Now that I have sanctified you, I'm sending you back into the highways and hedges. I will use you to reach out to others the way that I used others to reach out to you." WOW - that blew me away!!!!

2nd - The LORD began leading me to powerful examples of how HE uses music to reach people and do HIS will. One of the scriptures HE lead me to that really touched my heart is 1 Samuel 16:23, "And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from GOD was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him." The LORD spoke to my heart and said, "See Terrence, I use music to bless my people. The enemy uses music to steal, kill, and destroy." This was very powerful, because now I viewed DJing through my spiritual eyes instead of my natural eyes. When I started DJing many years ago, it was because of the passion I had for it and the music. Later, it progressed into a lucrative business. But now, for the first time, I began to see it as a ministry!

I could go on and on because there is so much more. But in short, I'll just simply say that the LORD has blessed me and used me in so many ways as it relates to my DJing. I produce the Inspirational House Mix Show which now airs on FM, Internet, and Satellite radio in 6 countries. I continue to travel the world, DJing in the UK, Germany & Japan, with offers to DJ in other parts of Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and other parts of the world. Before JESUS CHRIST truly became the head of my life, the largest crowd I had DJed for at once was 10,000 people (Berlin, Germany). However, the LORD just blessed me to DJ in my home city of Detroit for a crowd of over 100,000 people as one of the headliners for the 2004 Movement/DEMF Festival (along with my brother in CHRIST, Maurice Turner - aka DJ Moreese on 4 turntables). The Gospel through House Music on the main stage in front of 100,000 people... GOD is awesome!

I've been asked to preach and minister to several church youth groups and related ministries all over the USA and other parts of the world. For example: I've been asked to DJ and preach this year during the JESUS DAY FESTIVAL in Berlin, Germany. JESUS DAY is an annual event and is the largest gathering of Christians in Germany.

I'm sharing these things with you not to brag on myself, but rather to illustrate just how good GOD is. Make no mistake; HE is the one who deserves all of the glory, honor, and praise. I am just the vessel. I don't know how the LORD might be dealing with you, but I do know that if you allow yourself to be a willing vessel and a living sacrifice (see Romans 12:1-20), the LORD will use you, and bless you for allowing yourself to be used by HIM. The LORD broke this concept down by reminding me of what JESUS did for Peter after he allowed JESUS to use his boat. Peter had been fishing all night (which was his profession) but caught no fish. JESUS told Peter, "Instead of dropping your net on the left side, turn and drop your net on the right side." When Peter did as JESUS instructed, he caught so many fish, the net broke. The LORD spoke to my heart and said, "See Terrence, when you sacrifice yourself for me, I will bless you and that which you have sacrificed for ME, and I will return it to you 100 fold." (also see Mark 10:29-30)

It's so deep, but yet so simple. What else can I say... GOD is awesome!

✠ In my walk with the LORD, I've learned there are many others who the LORD is using in much the same way. I know it sounds a bit silly or even crazy that GOD would use DJs to lead people to CHRIST. But the LORD explained this to me through 1 Corinthians 1:27, "But GOD hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and GOD hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty:"

You see, I sacrificed my DJing for the sake of the Kingdom of GOD. HE blessed that sacrifice and gave it back to me 100 fold. But it all began when I made GOD the priority and put HIM first in my life.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of GOD, and HIS righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." — Matthew 6:33

Although I'm ending writing this testimony, GOD is not finished blessing me yet. A new chapter is added to my testimony each day. I leave you with this thought... you cannot have a testimony without going through a test. Though what I have testified to is wonderful, it did not come without hardships. I've learned that sometimes GOD allows us to go through difficult situations and circumstances in order to show us and remind us that HE is GOD!

If you have any questions concerning your music and your walk with JESUS CHRIST, ask HIM for clarification and confirmation, and HE will answer you.

Grace & peace be unto you,
Terrence (TP) Parker

"Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." — Matthew 22:36-40

Related Links:


- [3]TPMusic.net
- [4]Mixing4U.com
- [5]Contact TP

1. <http://www.tpmusic.net%29/>
2. <http://www.tpmusic.net%29/>
3. <http://www.tpmusic.net%29/>
4. <http://www.mixing4u.com/>
5. <mailto:%20TParkerMusic@aol.com>

An Interview with Andy Hunter (2004-07-15 00:00) - redsavior

We had a chance to catch up with Nettwerk America & Sparrow Records recording artist Andy Hunter. Prior to his debut solo album in 2003, Andy worked with Robbie Bronnimann of DBA and Ray Goudie of NGM and others on the critically acclaimed Hydro project. Andy is also responsible for one of the first Christian drum and bass albums out there by the group Trip. He is also a critically acclaimed DJ who has toured with DJ Tiësto , Noel Sanger and others.

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 Tastyfresh: What is currently going on in your life (producing, DJing, ministry, family)?

Andy: I am currently in my studio working on the next project for Sparrow. Things are going well and its sounding good. Djing wise, things are quite hectic and I have just come back from Holland and the family is doing great, I just love being a Dad.

Tastyfresh: When did you know that Exodus was going to be a smash with remixed club hits and movie soundtrack deals?

Andy: I didn't know at a precise time, it was such along process writing and getting Exodus finished. Even through the writing and producing stage it was amazing to see how God was using it to open up doors and to break down barriers. I guess deep down inside I knew that God was going to use it. The film licensing was a complete shock though.

Tastyfresh: Does your relationship with Christ affect what records you spin out at parties and clubs?

Andy: Yes it does, I love to spin music that I love to worship Jesus too and I believe that it makes a difference through my sets.

Tastyfresh: I got a chance to see you open for Tiesto in Atlanta at the Riviera. Awesome experience! What was it like opening for world #1 at the time?

Andy: It was great! Although a little nerve racking. That whole tour was a dream that I have had for many years and I was excited to see how God had opened the door again. There were many great conversations had with clubbers and promoters about Jesus and that's what rocks my world!

 Tastyfresh: Musically who have been your biggest influences?

Andy: Lots and lots of artists, here are a few: Leftfield, Underworld, Chicane, Hybrid, Moby, David Gray, Coldplay, U2, Travis, BT, and Suzanne Vega.

Tastyfresh: What can you tell us about your next album? Will this once again be split-label marketed with sparrow and nettwerk?

Andy: I think the project will be a 6 track e.p. because hopefully we will be able to get them out quicker. The theme I am writing about is about God's heart for the wastelands of the nations and about the wastelands in our lives. For God to breathe his life into those dry areas.

Tastyfresh: What are some of your goals musically; and where do you want to go DJ/producing wise?


Andy: I guess some of my goals are to raise the standard of production and quality on this next record. To mix some in 5.1. Work with Tedd T and learn from the master.

Tastyfresh: You, Robbie Bronniman, and Ray Goudie produced the critically acclaimed Hydro CDs. Do you guys plan on doing any more work together or are you all just focusing on solo projects now? One last hydro CD for the fans?

Andy: Basically we are all busy in our own areas. Ray is writing a musical called 'Luv Esther' and robbie is remixing and producing. So I don't think there will be another Hydro album.

Tastyfresh: How involved are you with NGM? What other ministry roles are you currently involved in?

Andy: I am very involved in NGM, I have been apart of NGM for about 11 years now. I play a lot of gigs for other ministries such as Soul Survivor.

 Tastyfresh: Who has been your favorite DJ to listen to lately and why?

Andy: Paul Van Dyk, I love his music and sets.

Tastyfresh: Sparrow has used you on remix duties for Newsboys among others. Any more remix opportunities with Sparrow or perhaps another record label?

Andy: Not at the moment, too busy on my own project.

Tastyfresh: Four quick questions and answers:

1. What DJ or Artist is pushing the envelope musically in a positive way? Daniel Bedingfield
 2. Favorite lighting piece in a club? (Strobe, Fog, Laser, etc.) Laser
 3. Best piece of vinyl you bought in the last 12 months? We are all here together - Perpetual Motion - Wax
 4. Piece of gear you would rather not live without? (Must have gear) Logic Pro.
-

2.4 September

Christianity and the Dance Scene: Part 1 (2004-09-15 00:00) - redsavior

I'll be totally honest here. This is about the tenth time that I've started over on this article series. You would think that it would be a simple topic, but it really isn't. Part of the reason for the difficulty in writing an article series about Christianity and the dance scene is that there is so much to explain and so many different viewpoints and reasoning about it.

I'll be totally honest here. This is about the tenth time that I've started over on this article series. You would think that it would be a simple topic, but it really isn't. Part of the reason for the difficulty in writing an article series about Christianity and the dance scene is that there is so much to explain and so many different viewpoints and reasoning about it. To make matters more complex, I need to make sure that this article series reads well for three groups. The first group is of course Christians who like dance music and are looking for some validation that this really is ok. The second group is made up of those Christians who feel this is wrong to its very core. The last group and honestly maybe the one that will gain the most from the article series are those who are not Christians and this includes people who feel that Christians are, for whatever reason, the most evil people on the face of the Earth... second only to maybe the Jews in Israel<sarcasm>.

So, I'm really not kidding around. I am having a very hard time with this article series. It's been so bad that I found myself questioning the very tag line I wrote for Tastyfresh.com: Christ-Centered DJ Culture. I guess the first thing people have to realize is that this is actually the third tag line Tastyfresh.com has had. The first was Christ-Friendly Dance Music and the second was For Christians Who like Dance Music. When Jamey Wright coined the first tag line, he was really referring to a lifestyle within the existing dance culture that can co-exist within and not only encourage the use of Christian music, but also encourage the use of secular music that either reinforced Christian beliefs or lifestyle as well. Later as the Christian industry slumped, he simply changed the tag line to refer to the fact that Christians like dance music too. So when I coined Christ-Friendly DJ Culture, I was thinking about a combination of those two things yet, I never truly defined it and placed goals around that tag line and thus, why I question.

A little more back story to the current tag line is this. It fit under the logo. I would have preferred to have used Christ-Friendly Dance Culture or Christ-Friendly Club Culture as opposed to DJ Culture because those are a bit more all inclusive. On this site, we have DJs, producers, label heads, fans, and people who just hang out here for whatever reason. It's a pretty diverse crew actually. Before we celebrate our diversity in this regard, we really do not have anything to celebrate if we do not have goals to reach for or a clear objective to complete and that's where the debate enters.

The first question in my mind is should we as Christians be apart of this scene or rather... should we be allowed into the scene? A lot of my thoughts regarding this go back to two Biblical examples. The first and oldest is that of King David dancing in a parade as the Ark of the Covenant is being brought home to Israel after having been stolen by the enemies of the Hebrews for so many years. David was dancing in praise and worship to God before many people (including young women) solely wearing underwear. Not exactly a dignified thing for a King to be doing is it? His wife did not think so. She complained about him acting in such a way forgetting that David was actually worshiping God. The end of the story is that God was pleased by David's dancing, and displeased by his wife's criticism of it. So, at least in the act of worship, dancing is not against God. There are more examples, but that is probably the most memorable for me.

The second example is Jesus' life in general. I know that it is old and campy, but Jesus is really the only one who ever truly lived up to the phrase P.L.U.R. (the old rave motto of Peace, Love, Unity and Respect). Jesus taught and showed that whenever possible, we should live in peace with one another. He taught and showed that the two greatest commandments were to love God and then to love others as you love yourself. He taught and showed that we should be united together in one spirit and one accord. Lastly, he taught and showed us to respect everyone from the rich to the dregs of society. The thing that so many people miss is that you don't need PLUR, you just need love. If not for love, Jesus would not have been able to live in peace, show unity, or even have respect. His entire life was dedicated to that and for that; he was falsely accused of crimes he didn't commit, brutally beaten, and then murdered in a way

that we could not even imagine the suffering. Ironically, this was also his greatest act of love in this world as his death and later resurrection brought us all salvation and forgiveness for our sins.

Peace, unity and respect are all dependent upon love and Jesus knew that. If you do not love that person dancing next to you like you love yourself, then you will never be at peace with him. If you do not love that person next to you, you cannot be united with them even if you sometimes disagree with them. If you do not have love that person a row behind you, you will never be able to respect them. To follow in Jesus' footsteps requires that we as Christians love. Sometimes we do a good job and sometimes we fall short. That's the great thing about Jesus though; he loves us even when we screw up.

The only thing is, before you get the idea that Jesus accepted everyone regardless of whatever they had done, you should know that while he did do that, he also told those involved in things they should not be involved in to "go and sin no more." Jesus was not in favor of a free pass to do whatever you want. He was all about loving and caring for you even when you did something wrong though. Whenever someone recognized Jesus for who he really was (God's son, the Messiah), Jesus would offer them forgiveness for their wrong doings and then encourage them not to participate in those types of actions again. In doing so, he actually taught these people how to truly be free and live a more fulfilling life than they had been.

So, here's the next phase of confusion, if the whole concept of the dance scene is to not only connect with others in a respectful manner, but to accept people no matter what they do, who they think they are or even who they actually are is not this contrary to the modern teachings of Christianity? We all have heard Christians adamantly bash and attack people for drinking, doing drugs, and of course bashing homosexuality. And yet, this does not even take in account the miss-education about Christianity that the media and public schools give people everyday. From the non-Christian's view point, Christians come off as a bunch of hate filled party poopers who just want to ruin everybody's fun.

This really does not jive with the example of King David dancing or Jesus showing love and kindness to everyone he met. So who is wrong? Are the accounts as I have presented regarding Jesus and King David wrong? What about the non-Christian view point? What about the attitudes of Christians? I think the truth is that Christians have done a lot of damage to the ideals that Jesus put forth, but not nearly as much as non-Christians have accredited to them. A lot of it boils down to hate. There are the Hell-fire Christians who have been only taught about Jesus' habit of calling a sin a sin and never have really considered the love he has shown them and extends to the very sinners they attack. There are also the non-Christians who blindly attack Christians either because they personally ran into one of the Hell-fire Christians or hate because they know that if the Christians were right, they would have to admit they were wrong and had to change. So, it becomes a quest with some to distort or dismiss anything that has to do with Christianity quickly, efficiently, and sometime quite loudly. If the core beliefs of the dance scene include peace, love, unity and respect, then Christians should be welcomed with open arms. And if we as Christians are going to have anything to do with the dance scene, or Jesus for that matter, we need to find a way to live in the scene that includes peace, love, unity, and respect. That does not mean that either group (Christians and non-Christians) have to agree on everything, but it does mean that we should respect the other's opinion and listen to what is said. Both sides could learn something about the other. It is my hope that we all can find a way to do

Realizing the Importance of Our Talents (2004-09-15 00:00) - redsavior

Four years ago this Christmas, I was quickly and anxiously tearing open a perfectly wrapped present and excitedly pulling out my very first Playstation along with a game called MTV Music Generator. It wasn't much of a surprise to me because I had been nagging my parents all year for it, but it was an awesome gift; something that would help pass the time away as I eagerly waited to finish high school and move on to my life-long dream of becoming a meteorologist.

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As I began using MTV Music Generator more and more, I realized, through the comments of my friends and family that I had somewhat of a talent for writing music. It was at that time that I started to intensely analyze the few dance music albums that I owned and break down and study song structure in my head. By doing this I quickly picked up on the basics and was able to apply them to my own music. However, I continued to view music as just a pastime, and my music reflected that feeling. It's only been in the past few months that I have come to realize what an amazing gift God has blessed me with and what an enormous responsibility I have.

God has graced us all with a different ability; anything from caring for the elderly to being an amazing artist or from being good at math to being good at taking care of and entertaining children. And as every day goes by, I come to realize more and more just how important it is that we use our gifts and perfect what God has started in us.

I remember once when I was little, I wanted a train set so bad! I begged my parents to buy me a train set for Christmas and on December 25th I eagerly awaited the time when we would open our presents. The time finally came and the first thing my parents let me open was a brand new wooden train set!!! I quickly dropped everything I had been doing so I could play with my train set and ran out of the room screaming with excitement. I was pumped! My parents had smiles on their faces knowing that I was definitely pleased with the gift they had given me. When it came time for me to put my train set together, however, I faced difficulty. As a kid, I expected everything to work straight out of the box, but I soon discovered that that wasn't the case.

My extreme happiness soon turned to extreme frustration as I sat on the floor in my room trying to put the train set together by myself. When someone tried to come in and help me I screamed and cried grabbing all of the pieces and trying to do it on my own. When I finally saw that this new gift of mine was going to take some time to put together, I gave up on it altogether. My parents were understandably discouraged and somewhat frustrated.

I believe God reacts the same way as my parents did when He sees us realize and receive our gifts. I am sure He is thrilled to see us accept His plans for us with open arms and excitement. But far too often, we begin to realize how much responsibility and work our gifts need and we become discouraged and either give up completely or only put in half as much work as we should.

Our gifts are not just something we are good at or a way for us to feel good about ourselves; they are jobs that God has given us in order for us to effectively reach out to others. At this point in my life, I feel that is it my job that I perfect my musical skills and prepare myself for whatever is in store for the future. However, if somewhere down

the road of life I uncover a hidden gift that is greater than my musical abilities, I will strive to perfect it. It is my duty to work hard, get torn down by critics - only to rebuild stronger, and perfect what God has entrusted in me. And it is only through maturing in faith that we can effectively combine our gifts and our faith to be powerful instruments in this world.

Craig's Story (2004-09-15 00:00) - redsavior

My name is Craig Willers and I currently spin under the moniker DJ Himmel. I've been into electronic music since '97 and started out as a primarily Gothic/Industrial DJ but have since discovered many other forms of electronics that excite me. This is my testimony:

Aloha !

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I was born in Oregon and raised here in Hawaii. My father was born and raised here (Hawaii) and met my mother in college in Oregon. We moved back to Hawaii when I was a year-and-a-half and enjoyed an idyllic youth surfing, fishing, diving and making and listening to music. This all changed when my parents divorced when I was thirteen.

I began to use drugs and alcohol and slowly lost interest in school culminating in my dropping out after my junior year in High School. They don't call it "High" School for nothing and I fell deeply in love with marijuana, or as we call it here "Pakalolo". "Paka" is "cigarette" and "lolo" can sometimes mean "crazy", so there you have it "Crazy Cigarettes". I also used LSD, Cocaine, PCP, Speed and lots of easily obtained beer and hard liquor.

I fell deeper into drug use and began hearing voices and feeling very depressed at the age of seventeen. I lost a love relationship with the girl I was ready to marry for life and that was just the beginning. I went to church for help and ended up meeting a man who said he had the answer to my problem. As it turned out, he was bisexual and wanted me as his lover. He told me a lot of lies, touched me and expected me to reciprocate. He probably still doesn't understand why I hate that sin, but I do.

This was the ultimate betrayal and I broke hard under the weight of it, becoming a full-blown Paranoid Schizophrenic. I tried to work and continue with my life but I am still in recovery today, 24 years later.

I did end up quitting drugs and have never gone back. My parents blamed my drug use and sent me to Teen Challenge anyway, telling me they "couldn't afford a Psychiatric Hospital." It wasn't until my present employer sent me to get help six years later that I really began to heal.

After quitting drugs, I was living with my mother and stepfather. I went to the pool one day and shared my tale of woe to some young people there. A young man shared Christ with me that day and that was THE major turning point in my life. I've struggled, but Jesus gave me hope and strength to get through. He gave me purpose and brought me through horrific times in my life when I wanted to just give up and die. Go to my website and listen to my music and you will get a feel for what I've gone through. It's: [1]www.soundclick.com/Omnos . You can download all you want, it's free. I want to share my story with others and encourage them to cling to Jesus during the storms of life, don't give up!

I'm 41 now and have worked at the same job for almost 19 years. It's a miracle I can work at all. I've been married to my wonderful wife Mindy for just 12 years last month. I want to tell you that Jesus revolutionized my life and can do the same for anyone. The world is headed downhill but we must climb higher. There is hope!!!

DJ Himmel
(Craig)

1. <http://www.soundclick.com/Omnos>

An Interview with Prophetica (2004-09-15 00:00) - redsavior

Eric Dunne has preformed both live and in studio as Prophetica for about ten years. Last month he put down his keyboard and monk outfit and walked away from writing music and touring. This after two full length albums, a piece of vinyl, appearances on several compilation CDs, a tribute/remix album and a still much anticipated unreleased ambient/down-tempo album. He could be considered one of the most best known Christian trance producers in our small scene. He has graciously given us one last interview.

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Tastyfresh: How did you get started in music? Did you start out writing trance or was there something else?

Eric: I wrote my first song in 8 th grade (1991, I think). Since then I have written many different styles, from classical to pop to the trance I became known for. I also write ambient, down temp and have played with other styles too.

Tastyfresh: What type of equipment did you start out with?

Eric: I've always used the same equipment, a Roland JX-305 Groovesynth. Later on I added Acid Pro and Cool Edit Pro to my software and lastly add Reason, but my hardware has always been that faithful 305.

Tastyfresh: What was your motivation for writing music?

Eric: Selfishly, I've always just loved to write music and love the creation process. Specifically though, I was trying to be a light in the rave scene and actually never intended to get involved in Christian music at all. I kind of just wound up doing it. My first and foremost priority has always been to show those who don't know Jesus that there is hope.

Tastyfresh: Who were some of your biggest influence musically?

Eric: Deepsky, Jeremy Dawson, but mainly good ol' Rock n Roll.

Tastyfresh: Did you even try to incorporate some of their production methods into your music?

Eric: Heh. I tried.

Tastyfresh: Prophetica existed as both a studio artist and a live act. How did you make that transition from studio to stage?

Eric: I actually started playing live and then had to transition to studio musician. ICONS was a terrible feat to produce since everything was written for live performance. (Plus the fact that I only had 3 weeks to do it.) I had to reprogram every song and give it rigid constraints as opposed to the live sets where I could do whatever struck me at the moment.

✕ Tastyfresh: Given that there are several ways to do an electronic act live, how did you do yours?

Eric: I used to do it all live. Moved to playing over preprogrammed loops but I still had to trigger everything by hand. It was the most stressful hour every time I played out. Eventually my music progressed to the point there was no way I could do it all live with my limited set-up so I began playing over MD. I actually started to have a lot more fun at that point and learned to develop a stage presence and interact with the crowd.

Tastyfresh: You performed live for several years, who were some of the artists that you performed with that really impressed you?


Eric: It was almost always the locals that impressed me. So sincere, and doing it for the love of the music. The larger acts were mostly just arrogant.

Tastyfresh: You've had an ambient/down-tempo album called The Redemption on the table for release for sometime now, when can we expect to see it?

Eric: Honestly, I'm not sure. I have assurances from the label that it will be released at some point and that they are very happy with the CD as a whole.

Tastyfresh: Demulcent Records just released your new album and a tribute/remix album of your work. The centerpiece story behind Walkaway is your retirement from dance music. Why are you retiring?

Eric: I have been doing Prophetica intensely for five years, and many things have suffered for my passion for it, including friendships, my relationship with my wife, and even my walk with God at times. I guess my priorities just changed. I want to be a better husband, a better friend and to learn to love those who don't know Christ better.

 Tastyfresh: With Walkaway, you dedicated a lot of time to writing lyrics for the tracks. Which lyrics from the album are the most meaningful to you and why?

Eric: I think the title track without a doubt. It is a love song that I wrote to the rave scene and the Christian rave "scene". It's a very heartfelt goodbye to something I loved to do and people I loved as well.

Tastyfresh: How was your final show at the Underground in OH?

Eric: It was great. Some of my favorite people made it out and I went out surrounded by people I love. I really couldn't have asked for more.

Tastyfresh: Have we heard the last musically from Eric Dunne or will there be other projects?

Eric: Wouldn't you like to know?! Ha ha. Seriously though, I don't know. I'm still writing but I don't know if I could do it professionally again. I don't have the drive and focus anymore. I know that I am doing what I need to be doing.

Tastyfresh: Four quick questions and answers:

1. If you could do it all over again, would you? Hell yeah.
2. What was your best show? Cornerstone 2002
3. What happened to that Monk outfit you wore on stage during Cornerstone 2002? I still have it and wear it at Halloween sometimes to pass out candy to kids. I almost wore it at my last show.
4. You've just retired from music, what are you going to do next? Take a nap. Seriously.

Related Links:

- [1]Demulcent Records
- [2]Demulcent on Beatport.com

1. <http://www.demulcent.com/>

2. http://www.beatport.com/site/index.php?label_id=389

What should the number one goal of Christians in the EDM scene be? (2004-09-16 00:00) - redsavior

In the last issue we asked you to tell us what our number one goal should be as Christians in the EDM scene. We've talked a lot about this in the forums over the years and we have had many different answers. This proved to provide just as many as in past discussions. All of them fit into three categories. So, here are the summaries with some of the best quotes.

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Professional Excellence

The first category is what I would call professional excellence. We have a mandate to do everything that we do to the best of our abilities and to do things for/to the glory of God. This means that we should strive to be not only trend setters, but leaders in everything we do. We should write the best music, behave as responsible business people, and act with integrity in everything we do.

- "The number one goal of someone in the EDM scene should be to be the best."
- "If you take evangelism as something that you would do anyway, I think the number one goal of Christians should be to write top quality tunes. Nobody will take us seriously if our music is really bad."
- "Integrity"

Worship and Fellowship

The second category is worship and fellowship. The act of worship and fellowship is two fold. First, we are pausing to recognize God: how much we owe him, pay our respects, and to thank Him for everything He has done for us. The second part also is fellowship and entertainment. The act of worship often times is an act that allows us as Christians to be renewed through fellowship with other Christians in the presence of the Holy Spirit. Entertainment is usually a healthy bi-product or result of this. This helps us to grow spiritually and to strengthen us to go back into the scene and mission field. We also often show concern for one another during this time and that concern manifests itself in love.

- "to enjoy god and the music..."
- "Let the Holy Spirit rule the dance scene as the worship director of souls who need to face Jesus and be cleansed by His blood."
- "To glorify Christ in Life and death (phil. 1) and to portray him in everything we do. In the music we play: that it is not sexually provoking, or putting God to shame, or celebrating sin, etc... And that glorifies God for that is why he made us!!!!"

Evangelism

The third category of responses is evangelism. If you are not a Christian, I can understand any apprehensions that you might have at hearing this. It is creepy and annoying to have someone come up to you and preach about how you are living a life in a way that is wrong according to 2000 year old teachings. Please keep in mind; many of the Christians in the scene who do approach you have been exactly where you have. Some have been strung out on drugs. Some have

even sold the drugs in the past. Some pursued just as much sex as you might have. Some have even been gay at some point in their lives. They found these things to be destructive to their lives and have found freedom from it through Jesus. If you do not believe me, just read some of the testimonies posted in this Zine and talk to the members of this site for yourself.

All of that said, overwhelmingly the responses to this question pointed to evangelism as our number one goal. While it can be said that we do not have to make this the priority of Christians in the EDM scene, it has to be said that as Christians period, our first goal should always be to reach out to those who are hurting and looking for a solution to their pain. That was the "Great Commission" that Jesus gave his disciples and that is what we have in turn been "commissioned" to do.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. – Matthew 28:19-20

I know it is not always fun to do or easy for that matter and it is scary for whatever reason, but it is our job. Money and power does not matter to God. He can get all of that and more. He will not force people to come to Him. Now, here is what you said:

- "Our number one goal should be the one of the things that Jesus Christ called us all to do."
- "Go after these people for Christ. They need Him more then we do. We already have Jesus living in our hearts, they do not. We need to focus on bring these clubbers and ravers to Christ. The only way we can do that is by being the Christians that God wants us to be, because that is when He can use to cause change in the lives of others."
- "I'm a baby Christian that loves dance music. I believe that the main goal should be a heart felt love of Christ expressed though the music to bring more people to Christ."
- "I think the number one thing that Christians should be doing in the dance scene, as in any other scene, is living by the example of love. As the word says, 'they will know you by your love for one another'"
- "To be servants and ambassadors for Christ first and Dj's, Promoters, Reviewers last."
- "If you combine the two I feel that the number one goal of a Christian in the EDM scene should be to be the best in the scene and be the most Christ like person that anyone else in the scene will ever meet. That will change lives. I have seen it."
- "Be Jesus to those who don't know Jesus. That's the number one goal of Christians, period."
- "The number one goal of Christians should be bringing others to Christ. This should be the number one goal for Christians in any 'scene'. Bringing souls into the Kingdom of God was Christ's number one goal while here on Earth, and He is to be our example. God cares about souls in heaven more than anything else. As His people, so should we. Christ attended many parties in His life, but He always found opportunity to share His faith with others – to sow seed. He didn't attend parties just to party. Neither should we. It's the Great Commission. It applies to Christians in every walk of life, including DJ's, music producers, and music fans."

Well, those are the results. I hope you found them to be interesting and worth the read. Please take the time to respond to our new question for this issue and to check back with us in the next issue for those results as well.

2.5 October

Examining Our Attitudes (2004-10-15 00:00) - redsavior

Last month, I attended a funeral for the mother of an old friend. It was sad, people cried, but the chapel was packed. I honestly did not know my friend's mother very well, but I wish that I had. She was a stand up person. Basically the exact type of woman Solomon talks about in Proverbs 31. Part of the eulogy for the funeral was from something this mother had written in her youngest daughter's diary. The short version of what she said to her daughter was this: You know that you are truly following God's will when you are able to give up all of yourself to God. It is when you are always thinking of others before yourself. It is when you take joy and pride in the successes of your friends and others around you even when you yourself may be suffering. It is also when you joyfully are willing to work in the background without a chance or the expectation of recognition. Lastly, she wrote that you know that you are in the center of God's will when you do good deeds and all of those around you call them evil.

A Reflection from a Funeral

Last month, I attended a funeral for the mother of an old friend. It was sad, people cried, but the chapel was packed. I honestly did not know my friend's mother very well, but I wish that I had. She was a stand up person. Basically the exact type of woman Solomon talks about in Proverbs 31. Part of the eulogy for the funeral was from something this mother had written in her youngest daughter's diary. The short version of what she said to her daughter was this: You know that you are truly following God's will when you are able to give up all of yourself to God. It is when you are always thinking of others before yourself. It is when you take joy and pride in the successes of your friends and others around you even when you yourself may be suffering. It is also when you joyfully are willing to work in the background without a chance or the expectation of recognition. Lastly, she wrote that you know that you are in the center of God's will when you do good deeds and all of those around you call them evil.

What amazed me most about this story was that it was focused on our attitudes rather than what we did or our abilities. This is what made her a successful Christian who was able to impact not only the lives of her husband and four children, but the lives of all of the people attending her funeral. The picture of this funeral was one of a chapel packed to the point of not only standing room only, but of people standing in the lobby because they could not get any closer to the event inside. What a life and how sad that I did not know my friend's mother in a closer sense.

There is a profound issue in this that we desperately need to pay attention to as members of this scene. Are our attitudes really in line with the ones God would want us to have? Are we really in this scene to serve for God's glory or our own glory? Are our attitudes the ones that will help perpetuate growth or hinder it? If we are going to make this Christian dance scene last another ten years and if we are doing this for some greater purpose, we need to start following the advice my friend's mother passed on in that diary.

I think if we really break down the possible answers to those questions we will really have three main groups of people. In fact, we may have a little of each group in us. The first group is made of people who know without a doubt that they do have the right attitude. These are the people who are usually the ones who arrive at the event set-up first and are the last to leave during the clean-up. These are the ones who will be just as happy headlining an event as taking money at the door or taking out the trash. These are also the people who will talk to the kid that just hangs out in the corner alone. The second group is made from people who doubt if they are in God's will. These are the ones who do everything right and more often than not have the right attitude, but simply doubt their motives and deeds for whatever reason. The last group is made from the people who think they are doing God's will and think that they have the right attitude and yet refuse to do anything but headline an event or other jobs in which they think they are the only ones who can get it right.

If you truly are in the first group, then I hope that this article simply reassures you regarding your attitude. For the second group, I pray that this article will help you to find peace regarding your attitude and God's will. I understand how hard it can seem to both not know what God's will is for your life and how difficult it is to become confident in it once you do find it. For the third group, I hope that you read this article and reevaluate your reasons for contributing to the Christian dance scene. This is important because your attitude could mean the difference between someone accepting Jesus or rejecting him forever. Even if you feel that you do not need to preach to the dance scene, your attitude is a direct reflection of who Jesus is and that will affect that person's life.

We have all heard it from time to time. It is not what we do; it is how we do it that makes a difference. An example of this is a Mag-Lite Flashlight. You know Mag-Lites are the best. Everyone does. When you think of flashlights, a Mag-Lite will sell itself. Our attitudes about serving in the Christian dance scene are no different. The ultimate goal of our involvement in this scene should not simply be to have fun, but to make some sort of an impact. Sure, you do not need a reason to party, but partying should not be your reason to live. The best way to live is in a manner that will impact lives. That impact can be anything from developing a friendship in which someone learns to trust you with some of their most private thoughts to helping someone to find and develop a lasting relationship with Jesus Christ. This is not going to happen if our attitudes are wrong.

Biblical Attitudes

The Bible is filled with people who learned to put aside their attitude and doubts and handed their lives over fully to God so they could impact the lives of others. Ruth, David, Ester, Noah, Hannah, Daniel, Samuel and many others come to mind. Their situations and sacrifices were all different and none of them were perfect, yet they allowed God to work through them so that He could affect the lives of others. They were not perfect, but their willingness to serve God in whatever role he had for them outweighed the times when they did not exhibit this willing attitude.

The Bible also has several good examples of bad attitudes as well. The best example has got to be Jonah. Here is a man who was given a clear purpose and job to do by God. He did not like what it was because he would have to convince a group of people that he hated to change the way they were living or face God's wrath. Jonah ran from this task. His presence brought trouble upon those around him until finally he was cast over the side of a ship he had been traveling on and eventually ended up right where he did not want to be: the city of Nineveh. Grudgingly, Jonah confronted the people there who he hated and pleaded with them to change their ways. After he had done his job, he left the city, found a nice view of the city and sat down waiting for God to destroy it. Jonah's attitude was all wrong. He wanted to see these people die. He did not want to do this job that God had given him and he was determined to make sure it failed. As he waited there, God allowed a plant to grow and give him some shade. In the city however, despite Jonah's attitude, the people changed their ways and God spared them.

The moral of this is that while it is true that Jonah did eventually do what God wanted him to do and God's will and purpose for his life was fulfilled, Jonah missed out on a huge blessing in his life. He had the opportunity to serve willingly. He could have spared himself the suffering that is often brought on when we decide to do things our way rather than God's. He also missed out on the joy of seeing God's work fulfilled in the lives of those who truly needed it. He also probably was not very effective on his own either as he grudgingly performed his work. It probably was a lot harder than it would have been otherwise if he had simply had the right attitude in the first place.

For us, this is an example of how we can be trying to do God's work and be focused on the wrong benefits of it. Jonah eventually did the work for two reasons. First, God would not let him out of it. Second, he thought there was no way that these people would change their ways and God would destroy them rather than redeem them. Sometimes, that is exactly how we are in this scene. We try to get that record contract so we can make money and buy new gear while God wants us to have it so we can reach others better. We might try to be the best DJ so that we can get gigs with the cool DJs in the big clubs while God wants to get us in the big clubs so that we can minister to the needs of the DJs and patrons of those clubs. Our focus can often times be on ourselves and what we want to happen rather than God and what He wants to happen. Sometimes we are so unwilling to do the mundane tasks but we always jump at the chance to do anything that gets us in the spotlight. That is not the attitude of Jesus, who despite being the King of the Universe still has the time to wash the feet of his followers.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other." Those were Paul's words in his letter to the Galatians. We should not be focused on building up ourselves, but others. That goes for our fellow Christians in this scene and those who not. There is no room for jealousy or petty competition among us. Rivalries will not help us to win the race when we are in reality dependant upon each other.

It's all About Humility

All of this is about humility. We need to humble ourselves and be willing to listen to each other's problems and to realize that not everyone is on the same level spiritually and learn to handle each other gently. Our attitudes will cause this scene to fall apart if we do not keep them in check. We should be just as willing to clean toilets as we are to take the prime DJ slot at our events. I know that I am not always the best example of this, but it is something I am working on to correct.

This attitude of humility really is a total emptying of oneself; the removal of our own thoughts and desires and the replacement of them by God's own thoughts and desires. If we do not have this, then we will never truly find His will in our lives. Our humility will effect the planning of our events, how we raise up new talent, and even how we conduct the business end of our scene. Humility is the thing that allows us to take out the trash at a party and be joyful about it. It is humility that says you do not care who someone is, they are just as important to you as your best friend. Humility is a difficult attitude to develop, but it is one that we need to strive for because it may be the biggest difference between our Christian dance scene and the secular one.

Let me leave you with the words of Paul from Colossians 3:12-14 as a final parting thought.

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Josiah-Fingaz (2012-05-24 17:01:36)
Amen!

A Foundation for the Industry (2004-10-15 00:00) - redsavior

The music industry has become a pretty major passion of mine, thanks to my career and ministry in radio. Anything I do is a result of what the industry is doing, whether it's good or bad. For the last six years that I've been developing my career in radio and mass media, I've had no choice but to keep my fingers on the pulse of the music industry.

Back in March of this year, I started a thread called "Foundations for our Industry." The idea was to talk about ideas and principles we can execute that will give us a stronger push into the music industry. This article's goal is to go into some more detail and spell out what I think our foundations should be. It applies to people in the following genres of life:

- ARTISTS
- CLUB AND MOBILE DJ'S
- LABEL REPRESENTATIVES
- RADIO PROGRAMMERS AND DJ'S
- EVENT PROMOTERS

Before we really get into anything, I'd like to outline what I think these five categories include. Artists would include any person who writes music, song lyrics, or is somehow involved in the production of a song, whether that is an engineer, performer, or remixer. Club and Mobile DJ's include those who spin primarily in the clubs, on stage, or for other commercial outlets. Label Representatives involve anyone working or volunteering in any department of a record label of any size. Radio Programmers and DJ's include program directors, music directors, promotions directors, and those who either produce and/or host programs on radio that directly or remotely involve dance music. Event Promoters include those who throw parties, raves, club events, or church events; also those who run clubs, churches, concert tours, outreach or worship oriented ministries, etc.

Let me shoot out one more set of definitions, before we really get into it. I've narrowed down every aspect of dance music into what I believe are these three sections:

- MAINSTREAM INDUSTRY
- UNDERGROUND INDUSTRY
- CHRISTIAN INDUSTRY

When I refer to the Mainstream Industry, I'm specifically talking about music that is marketed to places including: top 40 radio stations, television, top 40 dance clubs, MTV, major media events like the Olympics and the Super Bowl.

The Underground Industry is the area where most of us are probably the most familiar. I would define the underground industry as the music that you can't purchase at Best Buy and Target, but the kind of stuff you can only get on vinyl from your local record store, if you're lucky enough to catch it in stock. I would also include all of you who aren't signed to any labels and your music is mostly available on CD-R and .mp3 format.

Lastly, the ever-argued-over Christian Industry. I would define this as any music that is signed to a record label run by Christians, aimed at specifically targeting Christian media outlets. I would also include here DJ's who

consider themselves worship leaders and do events mostly in church settings, or artists who feel that they are writing worship music, even when there are no lyrics.

So, the point of defining our roles in the industry (the first list) was so that we all can get a sense of where we belong. To use myself for example, I fall into the categories Artists, Club and Mobile DJ's, Radio, and Event Promoters. Yes, I am a busy man. As an artist, I have both written lyrics, performed as a vocalist, and created remixes and original tracks. As a club/mobile DJ, I have performed at various events including some that were hosted by my church, and at places like the Cornerstone Festival, and the Underground. I also program and co-host a radio program called "Electric Circus", of which I am also the resident DJ. Lastly, though I don't do this very often, I have worked as an event promoter before, in making a dance venue happen twice at a young adult festival hosted by my church called "Breathe".

Take a minute to think about and define where you fall into the industry.

More than likely, you already do or could fit in with at least one of those areas. Now, tastyfresh is a place dedicated to people who say that they are followers of Christ, and first I want to talk about what I believe is the single most important aspect of our industry, that being Jesus.

Jesus sacrificed everything that He was in order that we could finally breach the gap that sin has created between us, and God. For each and every one of us who has discovered who Jesus really is, we've all experienced some sort of miraculous change in our lives. Now, it doesn't end there. It's been said before in a million cheesy ways, but I'll go ahead and say it again. Jesus gave us one task, and that is to bring his truth into the world. Let me say that again in a not-so-Christianese way.

The word "Jesus" has become a joke to our culture, but there's no denying for me how real he is, and how real he's changed me. There's only one thing he wants me to do, and that is to help other people understand who he really is, because most people on this planet have really screwed up his reputation and made him look like an idiot.

Now here's the thing with dance music culture. It's dangerous, just like any other culture is. Tractor truck rallies are dangerous. I may look at them and think, "Wow a bunch of rednecks, drinking cheap beer and watching something really stupid!" But you know what? There are a lot of "stupid rednecks" that are wasting their lives away in something that is destined to die and fail. Guess what? The dance music industry and techno culture is mostly a stupid waste of time, something that's destined to die and fail. Why? Because on the big picture, God is not a part of it. No, really! You've probably heard it said before, but if not, God is the only source of life in the universe. If any person, or any thing, or any idea or feeling doesn't have God right there with it, then it's going to die. And when it dies, it's going to hurt people... a lot.

Think about the traditional ideas surrounding dance culture. People taking ecstasy on the weekends and ending up with addictions, STD's, the list goes on. These people obviously don't see God in the culture. Conversely, there are people deeply involved in dance culture and have Jesus right there with them. They're alive, excited, living a life that they wouldn't trade in for anything. This our mission, people. We've got to show people who Jesus really is, so that they can inject some God into their lives and stop living a life of excruciating pain.

Now, finally, I feel like I'm getting to the point of this article. And here it is. Our industry needs a foundation, and I believe that those of us involved with tastyfresh are the only ones who are going to build it. When you build a strong building, you first have to dig out and place a good foundation. Pads, footers, concrete, the list goes on. Otherwise, some obese dude could lean on it the wrong way, and the whole thing will fall over. That's a lot of money to waste because you didn't know how to build a building. Or, to use a direct metaphor, that's a lot of time, energy, sweat and tears spent on a ministry or project which is destined to fail because you don't have a strong foundation for it.

When I look at the mainstream dance music industry, I'm not sure if I see anything good. I'll shoot off some names like Stryke (who performed at the VMA's) and Andy Hunter (who has gotten a lot of publicity over the internet, video games and movies). However, I don't see any good Christian people landing singles in top 40 radio, or really being recognized by name on a major, global way.

When I look at the Christian industry, I honestly just want to scream and punch a hole through the wall, or sob. I'm not going to make this a bashing session. All I will say is that, across the board, I have seen nothing but failure from the Christian industry when it comes to dance music. I attribute it to this: The people in the industry who have the money and positioning either don't want to invest anything in dance music, or they have no idea how to do it right what so ever. The people in the industry who do understand dance music (and I'd venture to say they understand it very well) have, basically, no funding, no promotion, and no support.

Then, I take a look at the underground side of things, and I see tons of progress. There are tons of great producers, making tons of great tracks. And I won't deny that it's making a difference. I'm very impressed with what so many of you are doing.

But I have to say this, because it's one of my deepest felt convictions. I really feel that God needs some of you to get into the mainstream or Christian industries in a serious way. Maybe even both. And yes, I said need. I didn't say that God would really think it might be a neat idea but necessary. Believe this, it is necessary.

God needs someone to make Jesus look good on top-40 radio with a dope four-to-the-floor beat behind it. God needs for people to actually want to hear dance music on Christian radio. I can't even begin to give you a reason to prove this either, because God's plan is so much larger than anything I could conjure up, and even if I could, it would be impossible to explain it all before I'm 90 years old and unable to type thanks to my arthritis. I just know it, deep inside my heart.

What we all need to do, is first, we need to pray. We need to pray that we wouldn't be stubborn anymore. We need to pray that our trivial little arguments would end. We need to pray that somehow God will use us for something bigger, and that we might actually show people that Jesus isn't a retard and that this isn't just one big cult. We need to pray for people who are leaders, because let me tell you, they can have pretty sucky lives. We need to pray that even if they do have sucky lives, God would give them joy. We need to pray for their families, their finances, and their physical health. We just need to pray, a lot.

But back to my house metaphor - the whole thing is going to get knocked over if we don't have a firm foundation.

Let me take this moment to try and be a leader. Here's what we need to do. Each and every one of us needs to make sure that we have a foundation in Christ, and if not, we need to get our butts out of the scene and ministry for a while until we do. If you don't have a foundation in Christ, you are going to be poisonous to our mission, if not now then later. Once your foundation is secure (and I would hazard to say you should get the guidance of a pastor just to make sure it's really secure), you need to really look to Christ for direction. I think we all go through a phase of being "on fire" where we just want to do everything and anything. But you'd better believe that's not how it works. ESPN didn't become the world's most popular sports network because they were wasting their time doing cooking shows, covering weather, and being the first network to air the latest blockbuster film. Rather, they knew what they had to do, and they did it with excellence and based upon a good, firm, and organized foundation. This reflects the "Body of Christ" metaphor you can see in 1 st Corinthians 12, especially versus 14 - 26.

In the next issue of the Tastyfresh E-Zine, I will be writing a similar article based off the "what the industry needs to sell music" thread. Until then, I urge you to take the time and make sure you have a strong foundation, but

in your own heart, but also in whatever it is you plan on doing for ministry.

DJ Rish / apoq.79 can be reached by e-mail at [1]apoq@apoq79.com

1. <mailto:%20apoq@apoq79.com%20>

Dave Richards (2012-03-19 13:10:57)

Yes. Opps. That obviously got overlooked during the most recent migration. I'll change that.

Josiah-Fingaz (2012-03-19 11:10:46)

This is a good article. Was it written by Matthew Risher?

From Oddities to Wormsign: Greg Young Tells Us Everything (2004-10-15 00:00) - redsavior

The fact of the matter is that no techno group was as diverse and prolific during the early years of Christian dance music as Virus. In just a few years they released a mix of techno, gabber, ambient, synth-pop tracks and maybe a few other styles of EDM as well. Virus' core was Greg Young and Stefan Nelson. With the release of the double album Odd, they added vocalist Stephanie Dosen. Their contract with N*Soul Records was over in 1996 with the release of The Bubblebaby Experience.

Introduction

✂ If you want to get specific about it, back in the early 1990's there were only four real Christian techno groups: Prodigal Sons, Prophecy of P.A.N.I.C., Jyradelix (which was more of a side project), and Virus. Sure you could argue about Zero being in there, but even Luke of Zero would debate you on that one. The fact of the matter is that no techno group was as diverse and prolific during the early years of Christian dance music as Virus. In just a few years they released a mix of techno, gabber, ambient, synth-pop tracks and maybe a few other styles of EDM as well. Virus' core was Greg Young and Stefan Nelson. With the release of the double album Odd, they added vocalist Stephanie Dosen. Their contract with N*Soul Records was over in 1996 with the release of The Bubblebaby Experience.

✂ They then disappeared only to reappear with the newly revived MYX Records. Since that time they have released a two CD compilation of previously unreleased work from 1990-2001. They also worked with Scott Blackwell on some of the early MYX Records material such as Raving Loonatics Hypnocrite among other titles. This issue we are proud to have Greg Young telling us what he has been up to since 2001 and those early MYX Records days. When you get done here, check out [1]www.virusworldindustries.com where ALL of the Virus material is now available FREE for download as well as the new Wormsign projects ([2]Wormsign and [3]Notes from the Collapsing Wall). And now, Greg Young:

From the Horse's Mouth

Oddities was at the end of the MYX records days. Stefan and I were looking back at the recordings we had from the years of the virus project and decided to release them for anyone who might care. I always loved when bands released things of this nature.

After Oddities the Christian music scene had changed. MYX was in bad shape financially, I was working for Micah records for a time there. The whole industry was taking a big dive and no one could move any units. There was a failed attempt at creating our own label through Micah called Unrealaudiowerks. Oddities was suppose to launch that showing we still had fans out there to buy the music. But the bottom was falling out.

✂ So we closed the book on the virus project. Oddities was titled from the band formerly known as virus. Stefan began his solo projects, something more mainstream with vocals and all. I worked as a video editor and freelance designer.

With the Virus thing I had set out to create music for Christians like me, who were stuck just having that well to draw from. My goal was to be signed and release music that made no compromise and was true to itself regardless of the pressure to make it more "Christ-friendly" lyrically. And after four albums and years of great memories, I had achieved that. So I made the shift to making movies. As much as I have loved music.. I have loved films. I think it shows in a lot of our music. Every song I wrote had a strong visual image to it for me. So it seemed the logical step.

During this period I lost the desire to make money with music. I wanted to reclaim the joy and passion for it I had before all the industry crap tainted it. So I stripped it down and just made music for my own amusement. I recorded a few albums. My solo project was self released to friends and family under the name Speed Queen. All of this was just for fun. No selling, no money concerns... Just music the way God intended it. Pure. Free.

✂ This led me to Wormsign, my latest inception. After passing around demos and early mixes to my friends, I was inspired by an old high school buddy of mine that I ran into in LA, after a ten year absence. He was recording music under the name Howard Amb and giving it away. No strings. Just putting it out there, how he wanted, when he wanted.

This really got me interested in music again. The idea of a community of musicians making music for themselves and giving it freely to anyone who would listen re-sparked that old feeling.

So Wormsign is my outlet for music I love. It's a sign of the coming change that technology is giving us: The ability for the artist to connect with the audience without the trappings of money or bottom lines. It's a chance for all of us to share and experiment and try new things without worrying over how many units we can move. It's the best thing that has ever happened to my creative life and I look forward to making more in the future.

So I set the site up. Put the songs out there and let people discover and take what they will from the experience. I think it's a truly revolutionary time to be an artist. I look forward to the coming changes and hope to inspire more artists to let go and be free.

I hope that's helpful.

God bless.

Greg

Related Information:

- [4]Virus World Industries
- [5]MYX Records

Virus Albums:

- [6]Virus Analogue (Orange)
- [7]Virus Analogue (Black)
- [8]Ambient Theology
- [9]Odd
- [10]The Bubblebaby Experience
- [11]Oddities

Side Projects:

- [12]Wormsign: Wormsign
- [13]Wormsign: Notes from the Collapsing Wall

1. <http://www.virusworldindustries.com/>
2. <http://virusworldindustries.com/wormsign.html>
3. <http://virusworldindustries.com/tcw.html>
4. <http://virusworldindustries.com/>
5. <http://www.myxrecords.com/>
6. <http://virusworldindustries.com/orange.html>
7. <http://virusworldindustries.com/black.html>
8. <http://virusworldindustries.com/ambient.html>
9. <http://virusworldindustries.com/odd.html>
10. <http://virusworldindustries.com/bubble.html>

11. <http://virusworldindustries.com/oddities.html>
 12. <http://virusworldindustries.com/wormsign.html>
 13. <http://virusworldindustries.com/tcw.html>
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Steve Jeffery and Rubik Records (2004-10-15 00:00) - redsavior

Steve Jeffery is a busy guy. With one hand he runs Rubik Records with his buddy Douglas Ross and with the other he helps out with 2Turntables.co.uk, an organization dedicated to teaching the finer arts of DJing to new DJs and to help all DJs network. As a label exec for Rubik Records, Steve has a drum and bass label that has already gotten the industry's attention and is quickly becoming successful. Today, Steve takes some time out to talk to us about the challenges of running Rubik.

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TF: How did Rubik Records get started?

Steve: I met Doug about 6 years ago when we both became residents of the same club night and we hit it off straight away and became really good friends. A couple of years later Doug was launching the Rubik Cube club night which was primarily a drum 'n' bass night. I had wanted to start a label for sometime and it seemed to make sense to associate the two things and work together on them. That way the label could raise the profile of the night and the night in turn would raise the profile of the label.

TF: Who are the main guys running this label?

Steve: Myself and Douglas Ross. We use [1]www.sample3.co.uk for all our design and [2]www.nu-urbanmusic.co.uk for our distribution.

TF: Who are the main artists associated with it?

Steve: Obviously Kubiks & BCee (Doug = Kubiks, Steve = BCee). We are working very closely with a new artist called Lomax at the moment. You can expect to see a lot from him in 2005.

TF: What is the main focus of the label?

Steve: We are really focused on building a family. What I mean by that is that we want to keep the label more about the people than the music. We have found that by doing that we seem to keep getting access to the best music but that is almost a secondary thing. With all our artists, distributors, designers, producers etc. we just want to hang out with them, get to know them better, help them out when they need it, pray with them and the one I like the best eat with them.

People may comment on the fact that I haven't put God at the centre of the label. The reason for that is that my main focus as a person is for God to be the centre of my life. Therefore if I am running a label or working in a super market that will never change. It's just a different environment that you take God into. I would be doing the same things as I do with the label whatever job I was doing.

✖ TF: You just released Rubik Records Presents: Kubiks & BCEE. What is the story behind its release and is this going to be the start of a new series of drum and bass mix CDs?

Steve: This is the first Rubik Records CD release. We did work with Joey on Devout Artists 2 but that was just a side project. The reason that we decided to release the CD is quite simply because so many people that want our music don't use vinyl. I am sure that some people will complain that it is mixed but we have done that so that people still need to buy the vinyl or the MP3's if they want to DJ with it.

We will have to keep you guessing for now as to whether or not we will be bringing you more CD's. There is a reason that it doesn't say volume 1, we thought we would leave it open ended.

TF: Where can we get this CD and the other Rubik releases?

Steve: The Kubiks & BCee CD isn't out until the 15 th November but if you e-mail [3]info@rubikrecords.com you can get an advance copy now. We are keeping it as affordable as possible so it's only £7 including delivery to the U.S. and £5 in the U.K.

TF: How many releases have you had to date?

Steve: The promos for our 7th release (our first double pack) are being pressed right now and will be around next month.

TF: What has been the biggest success of the label to date?

Steve: It depends on how you look at it, Salvation by Hold Tight & Kubiks and remixed by Blame by far sold the most copies but it was the Carlito remix of Don't Stop Me that really made people sit up and take notice of the label.

TF: What can we expect to see next from Rubik?

Steve: You can expect to see a lot of releases from Kubiks & BCee outside the label in the next 12 months. We will still be doing stuff for Rubik but Kubiks has a string of releases due with Davide Carbone on several different labels and BCee has been working with Lomax on some exciting new tracks that we are aiming to get picked up.

As I already mentioned, next up is our first double pack with tracks from Suv, Kubiks, Davide Carbone, Hold Tight & Blue Sonix. Then early next year we have two amazing tracks from Polish artists CLS & Wax. We are also working on some new Kubiks & BCee material that we intend to be the best thing that will have come out on the label yet and get in someone BIG to remix it.

TF: What is the biggest struggle you have in running this label?

Steve: Making money. Feeling like your out on a limb.

TF: Why is it such a problem?

Steve: We are in a scene where people don't like to pay on time for anything. Also there are about 5 times more d & b labels around now than there were 3 years ago. A new label starts each week. Plus there is a lot of rubbish getting released as it's so easy for anyone to knock a track together these days.

It's pretty hard sometimes when you realize that you are pretty much the only people doing what you do. My church is great and really supportive but they don't have a clue about the scene and even the d & b scene in the U.K. is quite a bit different from the rest of club culture. My advice to anyone else feeling a bit like that is to remember that it's just a job and that it's all about the people and not the music. Most people at my church have jobs and want to see God impact their workplace. We have to remember that at the end of the day they deal with the same things as we do. Just in a different environment. We may get a bit scared of offering to pray for someone in the back room of a club or whatever. Do you think it would be any less scary to do the same thing on a factory line. It would probably be even scarier. You don't need to understand someone's job to understand the needs of a human. So I just get people as church to pray for people's needs and stuff and the fact that they don't understand the scene is irrelevant.

TF: What is the one thing that seems the easiest in running the label?

Steve: The thing that I have found easier than I ever imagined is getting to know people. In the last year I have got to know a large number of producers whose records I have been buying for years. It's pretty mad.

TF: How has your faith effected how you run the label?

Steve: Unlike most labels run by Christians we operate totally in the drum 'n' bass scene and have only a small amount of crossover into the Christian scene rather than the other way around. Everyone we work with knows we are Christians, we are proud of it and that gets interesting reactions as it is. Financially we always pay people (which for drum 'n' bass is very unusual unfortunately). It's got to the point with people (who are not Christians) that if I am a bit down or ill or something they are offering to pray for me as that is what I have done for them.

TF: If you could travel back in time to change one thing you have done regarding the label what would that be and why?

Steve: I have always been a strong believer in living and learning. If you changed one thing would have learnt the same lessons? What would things have turned out like? Sure I think we have made a few mistakes, but in a way I am glad we made them. We have learnt a lot in a short space of time.

TF: Where do you see the label a year from now?

Steve: My aim is for us to be nominated for best label at the drum 'n' bass awards. We have a way to go, but we are already getting some serious respect in the scene and it's going to be a big year in 2005. I have heard a lot of people say similar things over the years and then nothing ever happen, but trust me, we have got some heavy heavy tunes lined up and ready to roll. Plus with the big G on our side, who can stop us.

TF: If you could change one thing about the dance scene in general, what would that be?

Steve: If anything was possible I would invent some glasses that as soon as someone put them on they could see the effect of all the drugs and alcohol abuse that takes place every night.

Hope you enjoy the read. I am off to crossrhythms magazine for an interview tomorrow so look out for that soon, maybe they will even take some pretty pictures!

Take it ez,
Steve

1. <http://www.sample3.co.uk/>
 2. <http://www.nu-urbanmusic.co.uk/>
 3. <mailto:info@rubikrecords.com>
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DJ Mike Sunlider and System 3 Records (2004-10-15 00:00) - redsavior

Back in 2001, a new label was formed by Mike and Nino to put out Christian dance music that could compete with the secular scene. They originally banded together with Tastyfresh.com to release a CD pool each month that featured some of the best in Christian dance music. That lasted about two issues for various reasons. After that, they released their one and only vinyl by Skywatchers called Anything. Despite the success of the vinyl, the label simple disappeared. Here's the story behind that and the label's rebirth straight DJ Mike Sunlider of System 3 records.

☒ Back in 2001, a new label was formed by Mike and Nino to put out Christian dance music that could compete with the secular scene. They originally banded together with Tastyfresh.com to release a CD pool each month that featured some of the best in Christian dance music. That lasted about two issues for various reasons. After that, they released their one and only vinyl by Skywatchers called Anything. Despite the success of the vinyl, the label simple disappeared. Here's the story behind that and the label's rebirth straight DJ Mike Sunlider of System 3 records.

TF: Prior to becoming System 3 Records, you label went by 3 Cell Records. You had a few issues of a CD pool released through Tastyfresh.com and you had one successful vinyl. What happened to cause the change from 3 Cell to System 3?

Mike: The change from 3cell to System3 was a change in ownership and direction. The other part of 3cell is Nino, and he is into more acoustic based music, while my focus was on Electronic music. Also, I got married and so did Nino. Now my wife Cara and I run System3, and Nino and his wife are doing the acoustic thing. His site is [1]www.ninorecordings.com, and he is planning on revamping the 3Cell site for acoustic based stuff.

TF: Who is working with System 3 today?

Mike: Mike and Cara Mia aka Mike and Mia.

TF: What is the focus of System 3 Records now? Do you see it as more of a secular, a Christian label, or some hybrid of the two?

Mike: We never really wanted to be a Christian label, even with 3cell. We have always seen ourselves as Christians who DJ and make music, not really as Christian DJs. That said, we made the CD Pools and such to help the Christian Scene as best possible, because we love the Lord and want to see him glorified. The Christian Dance scene is far too small to sustain itself, plus we have never wanted to limit ourselves.

TF: Early on in System 3 history, the label was involved in sponsoring various events. How successful were those events? Who were some of the bigger names to perform at them?

Mike: Some of the events we produced we really successful, some not so. That's the way promoting goes. Sometimes it's packed, sometimes its not. We had Slyder play a couple of times, General Midi, Jeffee, FM, Tim Hyber (audity), and Jason Dunne. We usually tried to focus on local DJs and crews.

TF: After the success of the Skywatchers Anything vinyl, there were high hopes that we would see the Inspired Shekinah single released on vinyl rather than CD and MP3. Will we ever see another vinyl from System 3 or is the focus of the label going to be limited to CD and MP3 for a while?

Mike: It's always possible that there will be another vinyl release. Vinyl is so expensive to make, that it is not really cost effective in short runs. If you have the market to move 10,000 or more, maybe you can make a little money back. We sold out of the Anything vinyls, but just barely broke even. At the time that we were ready for Shekinah (late 2002), a couple of companies we would have distributed with went out of business, and there was a really heavy downturn in global vinyl sales so we didn't press the vinyl. CD and MP3 are way better for distribution, and for getting out quickly. I would rather play CDs myself, but Cara loves her vinyl, so you never know.

TF: What can we expect to see released next on System 3?

Mike: The next System3 release will be "Energy" by Mike and Mia. The original is a dark, heavy-bassed breakbeat affair, and there is a STELLAR remix by Chance's End as well ([2]www.chancesend.com). It looks like the release will have 4 tracks, and release in November 04.

TF: Where can people buy your music today?

Mike: [3]www.system3records.com and [4]www.nufonix.com

TF: Why did you select NuFonix for your MP3 distribution rather than Beatport, EDM Digital or any of the other MP3 distributors out there today?

Mike: Nufonix was the first to respond, but we are currently talking with others as well.

TF: What is the most frustrating thing for you as a label executive to deal with?

Mike: Lack of funds and time. It's hard to focus on music when you have to work a "real job" too. =)

TF: What is the easiest?

Mike: Easy? Nothing. LOL.

TF: If you could go back in time and do one thing differently with either 3 Cell or System 3, what would that be?

Mike: Nothing. We put out a record that we really believed in with the Skywatchers, and I would do it exactly the same. I wish there were still raves and parties, but that's out of our control. =)

TF: How has your faith effected how you run the label?

Mike: I have always felt that ministry can be in everything you do with your life, including djing, making music and selling music. I think that Christ shows through best when you don't try too hard, and you live the life God has set before you. I have always tried not to compartmentalize my life into secular and Christian, but rather see it all as one.

TF: We all have been hearing stories about how the scene has been in a slump since about 2002. From your experience, how much truth is there in this?

Mike: Total truth. Sales are still kind of slow. There are less ravers and events. The underground is really far underground right now.

TF: Do you think that the slump is almost over?

Mike: Doesn't really seem like it, but I hope so. =)

TF: Recently you mentioned to me that you were moving the label to New York City because the Orlando scene has dried up. How bad is it down there and what are your expectations for New York?

Mike: We just visited NY and went out a couple of nights. The big club we went to was really lame, but the smaller ones were rockin'. There were quite a few people that were really into the music, and that was refreshing. Orlando is really slow, and the big clubs are all playing radio hip hop. Not our scene at all. We love electronic music in many forms, and hope that a move to NYC will put us in the center of something better.

TF: Where do you think the label will be in another year?

Mike: God willing, NYC with a few more releases!

Related Links:

- [5][System 3 Records](http://www.system3records.com)
- [6][Mike and Mia](http://www.chancesend.com/)
- [7][Nino Recordings](http://www.ninorecordings.com/)

1. <http://www.ninorecordings.com/>

2. <http://www.chancesend.com/>

3. <http://www.system3records.com/>

4. <http://www.nufonix.com/>

5. <http://www.system3records.com/>
 6. <http://www.mikeandmia.com/>
 7. <http://www.ninorecordings.com/>
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Sho' ya Love: apoq.79!! (2004-10-15 00:00) - redsavior

For my first lil' chat, I asked a man that has been around the DJ and EDM arena for quite a while. Some might call him a radical in that no matter what happens or who says what, he keeps on coming with fresh musical ideas, and he keeps on tearin' up those ones and twos every Saturday night on RadioU! Right now he's got a hit going with Prophetica, and some other things in the works too (I won't say anything here, though ... I'll leave that up to him!).

Welcome to Sho' ya Love...my first article ever, y'all! I'm excited to bring you some musical newness hot off the presses and straight outta the minds of some of the hottest DJ's, vocalists and producers around. Some you'll know, and some you might not know...but it's all good; and it's all to remind us how we have come to love this thing, this entity called Electronic Dance Music.

This article will do more than just introduce you to the artist, and the artist to you. It is meant to inform us and open our eyes to the intimacy of music ... the thing that makes us love it... that drives us to buy it, to play it over and over until we wear it out ... that makes DJs spend their last dollar so they can be the first to spin it ... that brings us all joy.

For my first lil' chat, I asked a man that has been around the DJ and EDM arena for quite a while. Some might call him a radical in that no matter what happens or who says what, he keeps on coming with fresh musical ideas, and he keeps on tearin' up those ones and twos every Saturday night on RadioU! Right now he's got a hit going with Prophetica, and some other things in the works too (I won't say anything here, though ... I'll leave that up to him!).

Heh ... aaand without further ado ...

Coco: So apoq.79, when did YOU fall in love with EDM?

apoq.79: I think the full on reality of what EDM was all about happened when this guy came to work for me as an intern at RadioU, he was from Miami and brought up a pair of 1200's. He set them up in my office to do some cuts for promos I wanted to do, and he let me take a spin on the turntables. That got me hooked, and once I had finally saved up enough money to buy my own decks, it was over. I was in love.

Coco: Why EDM and not another kind of music?

apoq.79: I've actually been in a couple of bands that didn't really go anywhere for various reasons. When I started to see that from my perspective there was a big "hole" in the Christian EDM world, I came to God frustrated with it. He told me to stop complaining, and do something about it.

Coco: Just flow and tell us your story. Wherever you want to go.

apoq.79: Well, it's a long one. I think the most important parts though revolve around my fall and rise, if you will. When I got into college, this huge change in my life happened when I got into clubbing. Weekends... weeknights... whatever. I mostly went to the top 40 clubs, and it was '97, so you know I heard that Chumbawamba song about 2,500 times. But, a lot of these clubs would switch up and play trance after midnight .

Well, my club experience got pretty dirty. Without going into the inappropriate details, I had to just get away from it for a couple years. Completely away. I mean, I tried going to this latin club one night with a bunch of friends from church, but all I did was gawk at girls, and ended up leaving before midnight !

After my trip to europe in 2001, and my first real taste of mixing, I started to realize that there really was a whole other side to this techno thing .

Coco: Name your artists, your influences, the date, time and place...your earliest memories of it. What about them made you want to get into this kind of music?

apoq.79: Well, I'm a big fan of Uberzone and Deepsky. When it all first began, I was big on ATB. I remember listening to Club Mix Ibiza 2000 and freaking out about "Blow Ya' Mind" by Lock N' Load. I think it was Lock N' Load. Anyway, I've gone through a tone of style phases but it's always been less about the artists and more about the mix.

Coco: What's the first track that drove you wild? How did it make you feel, and what did you do when you felt it?

apoq.79: That's probably "Sandstorm" by Darude. I got it the same time I got Ibiza 2000, and it was on this Lisa Pin-Up Hard House CD. Man. I freaked when I heard it, and wanted to write hard trance.

Coco: Who are your heroes, in so much that just hearing the name of one of their tracks sends you into a nearly unconscious state.

apoq.79: Uberzone. He's really the one artist who has never disappointed. Although Tresice is up there on that list too.

Coco: Now...Let yourself go into the poetry of the thing. It's alright. It's just your family here. And most importantly, where did you find the Lord in it?

apoq.79: You know, for a while I actually couldn't even listen to dance music. It made me think of clubs and then naturally, women. It was a rough time, because honestly there was just so much sin that was in my life it was sort of like going through a Brita water filter... over and over again. But when I came back from Europe, it was like this veil was lifted and I was able to look at the club and EDM thing in a new light; and as the years went on, my heart just completely broke for it. When I came to God complaining about the deadness of Christian EDM, he sort of reacted harshly and told me to stop complaining. But then, he told me that he'd give me the knowledge and ability to make a difference, if I wanted it. I had to ask... and I did. I wanted to fill that hole, because I couldn't see anyone else doing it, and at that point, my heart just broke in two for the culture. And, it continues to break more every day.

Coco: Wow. I was really feeling this interview. Thanks so much for taking us back so we can understand your future.

3. 2005

3.1 January

Dance Music Ministry in the Great White North (2005-01-15 00:00) - Brandon

Nathan Phillips Square . This was the downtown meeting point for many of the raves held in Toronto 's industrial fringe. Every Saturday night the square would fill up with phat pant wearing, backpack toting ravers waiting for the rented shuttle buses to arrive and ferry them off to a night's excitement. It took on a carnival atmosphere, and was transformed into a pharmaceutical marketplace, for a few hours on the weekend. One such night nearly a decade ago, I happened to be in Toronto with a bunch of my Christian friends on our way home from a concert, and we crossed the square on our way to our parked cars. Here and there, little clusters of ravers were gathered, viewing flyers by the light cast from their lighters and generally preparing for a long night out. We were asked if we wanted to buy E at least twice before leaving the square. One of my best friends turned to me as he looked at the growing crowds and said quite seriously, " Brandon , this is your mission field."

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He was right.

My name is Brandon Sweet. I live in southern Ontario , Canada in a city called Waterloo , about an hour west of Toronto by dogsled. Whenever I am asked to give my testimony, I get a little nervous because at first glance, there's not a whole lot there. I've been saved since childhood and was raised in a Christian home. I'm a survivor of the evangelical youth group scene. I look back on my youth and teen years and see a montage of church plays, Sunday school activities, Christian summer camps, youth rallies, retreats and all-nighters, short-term mission trips and everything else you'd expect from a life spent in the church. I've never taken drugs or abused alcohol, so there's no life-affirming story of a spectacular fall and redemption for me to tell.

However, I'm not only a veteran of Christian culture; I'm a veteran of a little subculture known as the rave scene. That's where my testimony takes a bit of an interesting turn. For the past decade I've been actively involved in outreach to the electronic music scene, in whatever form it has taken over the years.

I began my discovery of rave culture in the summer of 1992 when I was hooked by my first techno mix tape. From grade 10 onwards my interest in techno and rave culture grew and grew. Many of my school friends attended raves regularly, and I was caught a few times trying to sneak out to parties by my parents. Ultimately I chose to honor their wishes about not attending these all-night events until I was 18, and in the absence of partying I got hooked on the musical side of the scene. I found out that by fiddling with keyboards and computer programs I could reproduce some of the fantastic music I heard on mix tapes and vinyl. By high school's end, I had performed live techno in school concerts, at my youth group, and for class projects. This earned me the dubious title "Mr. Techno" at my high school, which my raver friends thought was quite humorous given my lack of real partying experience.

I started partying in 1996 just before my 19 th birthday. I didn't really see a contradiction between partying and my religion. After all, I felt no temptation, or even curiosity towards ecstasy, LSD, marijuana or whatever else was popular at the time. I was there to dance.

⌘ That year, I began to feel a serious call of God on my life to reach out to the lost generation of ravers that surrounded me. I would get convicted while in the middle of the dance floor as I watched people literally party their lives away. It was a tall order I could not do this on my own; my girlfriend Katherine was blessed by the same vision, and together we started an outreach ministry known as Jesus Style Productions. It was a very humble beginning, to say the least. Our tactics included handing out rave-style evangelical tracts (text photocopied on colored paper) at the parties we

attended, and praying for an ever-growing list of ravers we met in our travels. Confirmation after confirmation of our vision seemed to follow us, with friends and our youth pastor being supportive of our activities. At this point though, we felt very alone in our efforts – it seemed like Christians who were interested in dance music, to say nothing of reaching out to the dance scene, were few and far between.

It is often said that the rave scene was the first subculture to make great use of the Internet as a communication and information tool. Katherine and I began to search the Web for other like-minded people, and we soon found ourselves making new friends all over the continent as well as right in our own backyard. Tastyfresh was one of the first web sites we stumbled across in our search for Christian dance culture. N*Soul Records' online portal provided a database for people to network with one another, and we found that there were several other Christians in our own geographical area who were into the rave scene, whether as DJs or partiers. We started to send out feelers to see if those people shared our vision of outreach to the rave scene. N*Soul also brought us into contact with certain individuals spearheading a movement that seemed poised to cause a revolution in the rave scene: Found. Found was formed by electronic dance music lovers as a network for those in the scene, to produce and promote spiritually healthy dance experiences and events, to bring a message of true hope and unity to those who were lost and searching. Sharing their resources and building community within the urban underground rave culture; its members were to send out a positive vibe for Christ, to be lights in the darkness. As this movement shifted from idea to reality, I finally knew for sure that this calling I had on my heart was from God. All over North America, young people sharing the same unique vision for reaching lost ravers through creative and inventive means were making connections and sharing ideas.

Regional Found chapters began springing up across the USA, and Katherine and I co-founded a Canadian chapter, Found Ontario, in the summer of 1998. Though we started out as merely observers from afar as the movement coalesced at the annual Cornerstone Festival and elsewhere, we contributed what information and experience we could on the Foundkids listserv. Our backyard networking bore fruit as we began to build relationships with other Canadian Christians who felt the same way we did – that the rave scene was a mission field.

Katherine and I were riding high that summer and autumn, living out our dream of reaching out to ravers with the support of many others, so it was with some shock that we hit a substantial roadblock in the form of fervent opposition to our activities by Katherine's parents. They did not believe that the rave scene was the proper place for Christians to be engaging in ministry. Even though this was still a few years before the moral panic that swept North America regarding the rave scene, Katherine's parents had heard a bit about it and did not like what they heard. Our justifications for what we were doing did not sway them. They gave me a hard choice. Stop involvement in the rave scene until Katherine and I were married and on our own, or stop involvement with Katherine altogether.

I knew that Katherine was as much my future wife as she was my ministry partner and so out of respect for the 5th Commandment, we took a leave of absence from the rave scene in the late fall of 1998, handing over operations to the other two members of Found Ontario at the time. Again, we became observers rather than participators. It was a hard decision to make, but we felt that God's plan was probably long range rather than short, and that we would trust His timing rather than our own.

✕ Trying to balance the wishes of Katherine's parents with my own drive to see my vision for rave outreach facilitated, I quietly worked in a background support role, staying home from the parties and channeling my energies elsewhere. I began to contact Christian DJs and artists, asking if they were interesting in putting together promotional DJ mixes with inspirational music that would be added to a j-card featuring outreach-oriented text. These mix tapes would then be distributed to ravers at the parties the Found Ontario crew attended: a free gift of both music and a message. The response I received from the DJ community was favorable, and in particular a mix put together by Antidote's Jorge Goyco was very popular with the ravers. These sonic seeds were sown far and wide.

The Found Ontario group began to expand in 1999 as we came into contact with other crews in Toronto and elsewhere who were interested in cooperating and sharing information. Out of these fruitful discussions, usually taking place in a downtown Toronto area we called "Sketch Corner," projects like the streetbeatz e-zine and the danceontario email list, which would evolve into the DM4C online community were born, and Found Ontario benefited from the cross-pollination of ideas between our group and other individuals as well.

With the influx of new members came a shift in Found Ontario's mission, as the idea of throwing our own events as outreach projects came into being. The Found Ontario crew assisted its newest member Jordan Teschke in throwing an alcohol-free party in the spring of 2000, and its success brought other group members into the fold.

Central to our mission was the recognition that relational evangelism and keeping it real to others was a crucial evangelistic tactic. We agreed that we were not going to try and be anything other than what we were – dance music loving Christians with a heart for the scene. Our peers were our mission field, but it was more about making friends and being an example than *witnessing* or talking in some dialect of Christian-ese to strangers when trying to make our point.

Katherine and I were married in the summer of 2000 and looked forward to integrating ourselves fully into the operations of Found Ontario once again. But in our absence, others had grown into positions of leadership and our roles became uncertain. It was excruciating not being selected to lead the group that we had founded, but again I had to trust that God's plan for Found Ontario was superior to my own. Interestingly, my experience had been duplicated in other Found chapters as a similar changing of the guard took place.

From 2000 to 2003 the Found Ontario crew threw four outreach events, and the parties incorporated the various visions of the group members to varying degrees – free mix tapes with outreach oriented materials, flyer tracts, mixed DJ lineups with Christian headliners, all-night prayer rooms, even hundreds of Gospels of John given out at the door.

I continued to attend other events, sowing what seeds I could and continuing to build relationships with other party kids. Found Ontario gained a positive reputation in our local scene, even though we were often known as “those crazy Christians who throw good parties.”

As time went on, the Found Ontario crew went their separate ways, getting married, starting families, pursuing education and getting further involved in ministry.

It's not been an easy ride, to be sure: we faced opposition from church authorities, concerned parents and even at times our closest friends both inside and outside of the scene. But we held firm in our belief that no group, no subculture was truly untouchable. Internal problems within our own group, whether based on personality conflicts, competing and often divergent individual visions, and pride took their toll as well. Most painful is witnessing others living out your vision while you seem stuck in a rut, unable to bring it to fruition. God has taught me a lot about humility and obedience. It would have been much easier on me if God had sat me down and told me, “Brandon, if you back off now, you'll be rewarded in a certain way in the future.” But now I realize that the true measurement of obedience comes when you are not guaranteed a timely payoff. You have to trust God, both His plan and His timing. It's that trust that brings reward, not an exchange of present hardship for future pleasure.

✠ The Found movement did not carry the revolution in the dance scene all the way through either, as Found Ontario was the only active chapter still operating as 'Found' by 2001. It was disheartening to see the larger community based on outreach to the dance culture die out. However, I am reminded of John 12:24: “I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.” In its death, Found sowed many seeds, the fruits of which have been felt in the current Christian scene. Many Found alumni went on to promote successful outreach and worship events, laying the groundwork for future scenes, and individuals associated with Found also found success as DJs and artists. It was the Foundkids who first pushed to have DJs incorporated in a meaningful way into the Dance Tent at the Cornerstone Music Festival. And there were many lives touched by the Foundkids all over North America.

With Found Ontario on hiatus, I still wanted to remain plugged into the scene somewhat, and I assumed a moderator position on Tastyfresh, first for the local Canada board, and then generally after the board restructured. I hope that I can continue to share the experiences I've had with others who are interested in ministering to the electronic music scene, both at home in Canada and abroad.

It has been a rewarding experience being on the front lines of outreach ministry for these last few years. I look forward to continuing the work that God has charged me with, and helping others realize their visions.

The Current State of Things (2005-01-15 00:00) - redsavior

A while ago, Carey Jarvis gave us a brief history of Christian dance music. This month I want to share with you how I feel about where we are today. Some of this is great and other parts of this will probably draw some criticism from our forum members. The short answer is we are doing better, but we have a long way to go as a whole, but let's take a detailed and hopefully non-bias look at things.

The Labels

At the end of the 1990s there was effectively only one real major player in the Christian EDM scene and that was [1]N*Soul Records. Scott Blackwell had just left the label and as many people have vocalized in the past, so did the soul of that company. I do not want to get into the details (facts or rumors) surrounding Scott's decision to leave. Regardless of the reason, it is pretty clear that Scott's decision to leave was also a catalyst for change. It was around that time that it became evident that Christian dance was entering into a slump. You had to special order just about everything N*Soul released and what once was a monthly release schedule trickled down eventually in 2000 to half that and then halved again the following year. Today, N*Soul's presence is almost non-existent, but N*Soul's current owners keep telling me that will change.

Scott's leave resulted in the re-birth of [2]MYX Records which left all of us with high hopes. The Devout Artist Vol. 1 CD, their first release and was the best release since Rhythm Saints and Paradigm Shift. It seemed for a while that we would have two Christian labels that could battle it out. The scene desperately needed more labels to challenge each other to raise the quality bar in our music. Sadly, after less than 10 dance releases and three years, MYX has not produced the new fluid source of music we have been hoping for. To their credit, they too are lacking a good distribution system and are working to correct this by becoming an online record shop for all Christian dance music labels.

3 Cell Records was the first big hope we had as a scene for a label that was totally free from ties to N*Soul. Their first release was actually the Tastyfresh CD pool. There were a total of two issues made before it folded. Later a sampler was released. The last official release by 3 Cell was the Skywatchers' *Anything* vinyl. There were only about 1,000 pressed, it sold out completely with rave reviews from the secular world and because of poor planning, the label folded. Today, 3 Cell has been reborn as [3]System 3 Records and they have just released their first new single: Mike and Mia's *Energy*. Due to various reasons expressed by owner Mike Sunlider in our last issue, this is just a CDR and MP3 release.

The next attempt at a successful indie label was started by Joey Davis of Faith Massive. [4]Devout Artists was created and to date has released two CDs with a few more releases in the works. Devout however seems to have the same problems that MYX, N*Soul and 3 Cell have had; both in distribution and finances. The quality here however is consistently good which will lend itself to Devout's future success.

Dave Copeland is the next big contender. His label, [5]Demulcent Records, has been on the map since October 2003. Since that time, he has released one compilation, two albums, one CDR single, and a co-released CD single with Low Roof Records in the Netherlands. The quality still lacks in some areas, but consistently has been improving. It is also arguable that his label's first release, *Demulcent Sessions Vol. 1*, was better than the *Devout Artist Vol 2* compilation, jointly released by Devout Artists and Rubik Records. That's pretty impressive.

Demulcent has bet the farm on its survival. This label has just made it past the one year mark. During that year Davo has pushed his product in to some of the hottest mp3 DJ services such as Beatport.com and PlayItTonight.com. His product can also be purchased now through TowerRecords.com, Amazon.com and other sources. There is something happening here that does not seem to be happening with the other labels. Demulcent's latest release is Noah DeSmit's *I See Grace* and it is arguably the best single a Christian artist has released to date on a label run by Christians.

Now, I did leave out several other labels. There were a few reasons for this. Some of them are not marketing to or heavily associated with the Christian scene. Other labels simply have not been releasing music as frequently or for as long as the ones I discussed above have. I would like to mention that both [6]Deep Sink/Low Roof and [7]Rubik Records have been pushing things along nicely. Rubik has released the most music on vinyl out of any label associated

with the Christian EDM scene while Low Roof has just released its second compilation album and jointly released the *I See Grace* single with Demulcent. Low Roof is based in the Netherlands while Rubik Records is based in the UK.

Today, our scene has maybe eleven to fifteen EDM labels. All of these labels are hurting for two things: cash and distribution. The catch here is that they need money to make records/CDs so they can get distribution so they can sell music so they can make money so they can make more music. Each release a label makes is pretty much relying on artists being willing to work for free and sometimes on sub-par equipment. This feeds into a quality problem, which is then of course reflected in what little sales they do get. The only consolation that can really be offered is that while they are struggling to correct all of these problems, the secular labels too are struggling and some of the more prominent ones like Hooj Choons have simply not made it. They are not going at this alone even if it might feel like it. The industry in general is simply in a state of flux.

The Artists

The year 2001 marked the start of a mass exodus of Christian artists from the realm of music making. Quite frankly, this is a good thing. After almost ten years of Christian dance music, we desperately needed some new talent to come along. Of course the struggles of labels did help this along a good bit. Today, the first generation of Christian artists appears more as a combination of ground breakers and grandfathers of this arena. Some of these artists are still producing, but many have moved on to family life. Over all, we are now experiencing a changing of the guard. What is interesting about this change is the number of artists that are actually starting to gain popularity in both a Christian and secular market. Maybe, just maybe, this is actually the direction we should be heading in.

For years now the reality has been that some of the artists we have known in the Christian world have also been involved in the secular world. Alexander East comes to mind instantly. He released two albums through N*Soul under the moniker Sonic Boom of Love and has been producing and remixing secular tracks during that same time period and continues to do so today. Joey Davis, the owner of Devout, has also been releasing music off and on through secular labels like Cosmic Flux and has had two albums on N*Soul as well. Cloud2Ground has experienced the biggest success to date under various monikers including Slyder and R.R.D.S. and now a secular rock/pop/new wave/electro-clash band called Shiny Toy Guns. Shiloh is without a doubt the poster band of Christian artists who have crossed the secular/Christian scene divide and made it. The band first spread its name through the debacle that was once MP3.com. All that said, and I still have not talked about the Christians who have ALWAYS been involved in the secular scene. The new generation of Christian artists is really in good company, all they need to do is strive for that level of quality and dedication to their music.

So who is apart of this new generation of artists? The quick way to tell is simply to look at the MYX, Devout, Low Roof and Demulcent artist rosters. Some have been around for a while, but most are brand-spanking new. Of the more prominent artists I would have to say that MYX's LPT/Michael Farrington, Demulcent's Joel Armstrong, Devout's Yesha Cohen/the Weather Inside and Low Roof's Trecise are close to the top of the list. Keep in mind that Demulcent, Devout, and Low Roof has still mostly put out either singles or compilations to date so the artists actually operate in a more independent manner; much like that of the secular labels.

This brings us back to why the artists seem to be getting better. The new generation is not out there seeking a multi-album record deal which was the standard for the 90's. This generation is taking a tip from the secular scene in signing individual tracks to labels. This allows them to have more freedom and control than ever before. This also means that labels can choose from a variety of tracks and select only the ones they think will sell. This is the new model for the Christian market and it seems to be working.

The Radio

There is always a big issue over radio and the dance scene. If it is supposed to be underground, why in the world would you broadcast it out to tens or hundreds of thousands of people? The simple answer is not everyone either goes to a club or can go to a club every weekend. Radio also gives people the opportunity to discover new music, just like a club DJ does. The only difference is the commercial breaks and the radio DJ actually tells you what you are hearing.

Over all, the Christian radio jocks seem to be doing a decent job in getting new music out to the people. New stations and shows pop-up with regularity, but unfortunately we also see many shut down within a year of starting. Many of the shows combine dance and R & B/hip-hop to reach more than one group of listeners at once. There is definitely a lot of room for improvement, but things are improving.

The biggest issue within the Christian radio scene however seems to be not a lack of new music, but more in their chart reporting. Even if the listeners still like a two year-old track, there is no reason for it to actually be listed on those stations charts. There is nothing wrong with playing that old track, or listing it on the play list for the night, but when it comes to chart reporting to groups like Beyond or others, unless there is a new remix out, a two year old track should not be listed in published charts. The reason for this is simple. It does not reflect well on the taste or skills of the radio DJs and does not put our best foot forward when compared to their secular counterparts. I am not saying anyone should lie. I am saying that we constantly need to push new music into our charts. As a radio DJ, like a club DJ, part of your job is to educate listeners as well as helping them to have a good time. It is going to be hard to help educate people about new music if your show consistently plays two year old tracks. Oldies should be used sparingly, maybe only as by request and never as a currently popular track.

Then again, after reading DJ Rish's article on *Advancing the Industry*, everything I have just stated about our progress regarding radio should maybe be disregarded. Maybe we simply need to discuss both aspects and find some truth that can be applied. How much stronger would the Christian dance scene be if we could get regular airplay? How many new fans could we reach? How many local event groups would start up because Christian dance music could be heard during regular rotation?

Local Clubs and Events

This is probably the area that needs the most work. It seems that just about every on-going event or club closed their doors at some point last year; not that we had a ton of them in the first place. The good news is that some have re-opened or are about to. Fusion at the Murray Hill Theater, Frequency at the Underground and Club Worship are probably the three largest or at least longest running events. All three events are of decent to excellent quality. Fusion alone pulls in between 200-300 with each monthly show with promotion and pulled in 93 in November without any promotion at all. The problem is that out of the entire United States, there are fewer than five ongoing events really stand out with the exception of the annual three to four night Dance Barn at Cornerstone.

The reality is that despite the existence of a Christian dance scene for over twelve years now, locally, there are still very few Christian events occurring. I think there are various reasons for this that range from money, talent, equipment, music, venues and support from a local body of believers. It is also hard to find other Christians in any local area that share the same passion for dance music and are willing to help put an event together. What almost needs to happen is a grass roots movement. There were at least two such movements growing on earlier this year.

The oldest is the Groove Central Fellowship that both DJ Pat D and DJ 404 have been working on for the past several years in California. The goal is to provide a place for a monthly meeting of the minds. DJs, producers and fans meet at a house once a month, pray, study the Bible, socialize, and spin records. The group is also somewhat involved in their community as well. They will head out to store openings and spin records there to draw in a crowd for example. As far as putting together shows, that really is not a priority, at least not yet. The primary goal is to provide a place for Christians to network and fellowship. To that goal, they are doing a good job. Sadly, with DJ 404's move to Kansas and Pat D's life as busy as it is, Groove Central is no more for now.

The other group is the Tastyfresh Atlanta Fellowship. That is not the official name, but that is only because the group is so loosely formed that no name has yet been selected. Once a month for the first 7 months of 2004, between five and fifteen DJs, producers, and fans from up to three states meet in a home in Atlanta to fellowship, talk about various issues from music, parties, books, movies, and so on. At the last fellowship the group added a DJ booth for people to show off their skills. The group is open to anyone and is advertised through this site. What makes this group different from Groove Central is the fact that many of the members were also tied to the event promotion group Amplified Life which broke up a few years ago for various reasons. There is hope that eventually the Fellowship will start participating in the community or hosting events, but at this point the group is not ready to move beyond the fellowship aspect.

Hopefully, this group will start up again in 2005, but speaking as a member, our lives have been too busy since this summer. I can honestly say that I miss it and I need it back in my life.

The way forward right now is for more of these groups to start up in local areas. This will help everyone to get to know each other and help to build a local Christian scene. Eventually, these groups should try to host an event; maybe in a church, maybe not. I would not recommend doing this until the group has solidified and you know for sure how many regular members you have and how many you can count on to help put things together. Given the cost of throwing a quality event, this is not something that should be taken lightly. In fact, these local groups are the very foundation of building a large national movement or event. We will never truly have the experienced workers to pull off a nation event if we cannot train them first in our local scenes.

Where Are We Going?

I think the most important question for us to ask right now is: where are we going? The reason for this is because the question really is asking to things. First, are we as Christians really going anywhere with this scene and second, where is it that we are going. It is not enough to simply ask where if we really are not going anywhere. Likewise, if we are not going anywhere, the next question is not where we are going but either why we are not or should we even be going. Sound confusing? If so, welcome to my world.

From my personal observation, I am not one-hundred percent sure that we are actually going anywhere just yet. I think we might have been prior to 2000, but that could have been our imagination. Today however, we have some people who are breaking new ground and others who are either not doing anything or are still re-treading the same ground they have been for the past ten to twelve years. We have an older generation of leaders who are slowly leaving the scene behind for various reasons and a new crop of leaders who are struggling to pick up where the old ones left things. In some cases, leaders that should step down are not doing so and some people who should be leaders are not stepping up to the plate. Collectively as a whole, if we can even say that we have a scene, we are not yet ready to move together. I think that time is coming. I remember stating that back at Cornerstone 2002 and I still believe that today. Until we get our leadership straight and can herd everyone together, we will be able to grow. Unfortunately, before we can start growing, we need to determine how we want to grow.

By the way, I am not implying that are not growing now, just that we are not growing as a unified force. This unified force is what is going to be required if we really do want to see things like massive ongoing Christian parties or Christian dance music in the stores again and so on. It is also debatable if we should be aiming for such things, but unless we are to be a social club of just a few hundred or thousand people on the internet, we need to change our method of doing things today. Most of this simply involves us collectively deciding to cast off our old ways and to decide that no matter what, we will reach out, support, and work with each other on all levels within the scene. It sounds easy, but it will take commitment.

When I say support no matter what, I do not mean that we should give money blindly or simply tell someone to "go for it" when we have reservations. I mean that we should talk to that person or group about what they are doing or saying so you understand why and what they are doing. You have to be educated in these matters. Even if you disagree after this, you should still find a way to work with them and support them (within reason), but you will be educated and understand the issue better and should be able to better tailor your support to their needs.

Once we finally do get to the point where we can start to grow and work together, then we need to make some serious decisions regarding our goals for growth. Are our goals going to be to throw great parties and write great music or are they going to be geared more toward evangelism and worship. It maybe a combination of everything, but we need to have a true discussion of goals and create a vision for our scene. Sure the scene can have multiple focal points, but it also has to have a unified stance and commitment to certain core values. It is those core values that we need to define. What is funny about this is that we all seem to assume that we all have the same core values, goals, vision and belief for this scene. This may be true, but more than likely these are assumptions. The way that these goals and values are worded plays a huge effect on how we interact with each other and grow. We need to develop a common frame of reference. That is what I propose that we do over the next month or so in the forums.

Predictions

This is where I really step out on thin ice. Regarding the labels, I think within the next year or two at least two of the larger US labels will fold or drastically change their business model. The evidence of this is already starting to show if you examine them hard enough. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but it will have an effect on this community.

I believe that we will see more and more Christian artists make the switch from Christian only marketed acts to secular ones. They will keep their faith and probably stay in contact with the Christian scene, but their focus as far as releases go will be in the secular scene. The quality of artist that is rising up now is such that they cannot simply be ignored by the secular scene. Shiloh and Cloud2Ground are recent examples of this; as are Michael Farrington and Siminz whose vinyl have both been spotted in the record bags of Paul van Dyk among others. What really has got to happen though is more honest feedback regarding new tracks posted on Tastyfresh.com. If we are not truly honest about the music posted there, then the quality will not improve to the point where making the crossover is normal.

Christian dance radio broadcasts can go either way. I can see it increase in availability and at the same time stagnate just like Christian CHR stations have for the most part. I can also see more and more legitimate shows popping up. In order to stay competitive and grow though, these radio shows will have to include more recent material. The DJs have full control over that. They also need to determine what the focus of their show is (if they have not already). If it is simply to play music, then play charts do not matter. If the purpose is to play the best music available, then charts do matter and the material on those charts should be representative of what has recently been released on the market as opposed to older material.

I can see a large increase of local scene activity if people would simply start fellowship groups. It does not take a lot of time to set one up, but it does take a little bit of planning and promoting. These fellowships could be in someone's home or apartment, at a church, or even a group outing to a show. Whatever works in your region should be the norm.

None of this will happen however if we do not consciously make an effort to start working more closely with each other. It is also a must that we create a list of goals and a vision for us as a whole. We cannot afford to wander aimlessly if we truly do want to see this scene grow rather than stagnate and disappear. Tastyfresh.com may not be here in 5 years and you might have *retired* by then as well. If we do not lay a firm foundation now, the third generation of Christian *ravers* will be left with the same problems that we have now. If that is our goal, then why does Tastyfresh.com exist?

1. <http://www.nsoul.com/>
2. <http://www.myxrecords.com/>
3. <http://www.system3records.com/>
4. <http://www.devout-artists.com/>
5. <http://www.demulcent.com/>
6. <http://www.lowroof.nl/>
7. <http://www.rubikrecords.com/>

Advancing the Industry (2005-01-15 00:00) - redsavior

In the previous issue, I wrote a somewhat emotional article about the foundation we ought to have as Christians involved in the music industry. This article is going to be a bit less emotional. It's going to deal with the ins and outs of our industry and how we might improve what we're doing. I'm going to point out a few bad things and a few good things, and we'll get to hear some thoughts from people in the industry itself. Hopefully, these things can be useful for everyone in working toward a new position in the music industry.

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First, it would be very important to read the "Foundations for our Industry" article. Though it covered spiritual topics, it also outlines a few areas of the industry and also defined the differences between the Christian, mainstream, and underground industries. Since I'll be referring to these things a lot, it would be good to read over it to better understand where I'm coming from.

This article will focus mostly on the "Christian" and "mainstream" sides of the industry. I'm mostly experienced with how the Christian industry works, and it often tries to model the mainstream industry. I don't have a lot of experience with how the "underground" industry works, so I won't talk about it much. As I said before, I think many of our heavier hitters are doing great things in the underground, and there are plenty of forum topics dealing with that side of the industry. It seems, however, that our efforts to reach into the Christian and mainstream industries have been slim and rare, often times a nonexistent failure.

Reasons for the lack of advancement

I think we're up against some tough, but not unbeatable, competition. You don't hear a lot of dance music on mainstream radio and you don't see a lot of music videos from dance artists. On the mainstream side, this is a direct result of the labels and artists catering so closely to the clubs that they have forgotten about radio, which is the foundation for all media outlets. Because of this, most media outlets have forgotten about dance music. We still hear it in clothing stores, and often as background music for commercial advertisements, television shows, and talked over by radio announcers. This, however, does not equal radio airplay or pop-culture relativity. In other words, it isn't really selling CD's. For example, when someone is shopping at Abercrombie & Fitch and he hears a great dance track, he still has no idea what it is because there's no plug for the artist. No DJ giving out track info, no text on the music video, no references on AIM Today.

Those of us working the underground side have a profitable future. There will always be DJ's who want to buy club mixes on vinyl, or download them from beatport. But those of us who are trying to sell music elsewhere are in a world of hurt, because we're approaching it all wrong.

Small Christian dance labels seem to be struggling with selling music and keeping out of the red. In my opinion, it's because they're marketing to the wrong people with the wrong methods. They're focusing on making music for DJ's, but trying to sell it the wrong way. Plus, there's a massive audience of non-DJ people willing to spend money on a Christian dance CD, but the CD's aren't created in a way that makes it enjoyable to them. So, we need to change our focus in order to make things work.

An example of failure

Here is an example of how we've failed. I'll use a pretend-situation because I don't want anyone to say I am secretly talking about a specific label.

Blasted-Eardrum Records is a small label run by a Christian named Mark, who wants to market his music to the Christian industry. He's released one full-length album, one compilation CD, one CD single, and one 12" vinyl, all

by Christian dance artists. He had some pretty decent exposure, with a limited amount of airplay on the few Christian mix-shows and dance programs. However, none of his projects have sold well enough to put him in the black, and now Blasted-Eardrum Records is thinking about folding.

The 12" vinyl was simply a mistake. There wasn't a big enough buying pool in the Christian world to make it worth its while.

The CD single didn't do well because most of the songs were catered for DJ's, and DJ's like to either get serviced for free, or buy individual tracks from download sites like beatport or iTunes. Fans don't want to sit through a 2-minute drum intro like DJ's do.

The compilation CD and the full-length were probably the most accessible releases, but there were two problems. Neither album got much exposure, because radio stations didn't want to play the eight-minute length tracks, and none of the artists were the touring type. Not to mention a serious lack of catchy vocals. The result: No fans knew about the songs. It wasn't something non-DJ's cared about, and so it didn't sell.

I think this reflects a lot of what our Christian labels have been doing. We're making tracks for DJ's, and expecting them to purchase those tracks when they could spend the same or less money purchasing a 12" record or making a \$0.99-cent download which might even be of equal or better value. We're also making music that the average listener, who happened to dig Days Go By by Dirty Vegas, can't get into because there are no words to sing along to, and the songs are just too darn long.

Where is the audience, and what does it want?

The audience is everywhere, but none of them are listening. They aren't buying Christian dance music (defined as music written by Christians). For one thing, the big-time Christian labels aren't interested in investing time or money in dance music. I know this for a fact, because I e-mailed several label representatives with some questions for the interview section below, and the only larger label that responded was Rocketown Records.

This whittles our audience down by more than half. Now, we're looking at the people who are smart enough and willing to search the internet sites for smaller labels, many of which have people who hang out here at Tastyfresh. The problem is, a lot of the smaller labels are still under these radars. I think it all boils down to a perception that dance music is "boring" – it's all ten-minute music that's too repetitive. There's no hype, there's no attainable coolness factor for people who aren't DJ's.

The audience wants something they can listen to on the radio, or something they can listen to in the car that their friends won't say is getting obnoxious. They don't want a song longer than three and a half minutes, and they want words and lyrics they can sing along to without sounding like a broken record. Unfortunately, that's not what we're giving them. We're giving them six minutes, at the shortest, and we're giving them one or two lines of vocals repeated over and over again. It works in a club... it works on the mix shows which air once a week... it rarely works for the average fan.

We need to start making a serious effort on writing what I always refer to as "radio-friendly music." If you scoff at the idea, but you are seriously trying to get music into the mainstream or Christian industries, then pardon me for this but you are the problem. I would hazard to say that, if you aren't trying to reach the underground, but you aren't writing radio friendly music, then please do us all a favor and throw in the towel until you're ready to get serious about this.

What is "radio friendly"?

For those of you who are willing to listen to a radical idea, thanks for your willingness to stick around and keep reading. Here's what a "radio-friendly song" is all about.

A radio friendly song is all about simplicity without always sacrificing art. It's about mass appeal, which may or may not translate into "cheese" depending on the situation. It's not just about radio, however. I simply use that term since radio is my career. In short, a radio friendly song is around three to four minutes in length, and it has vocals with a memorable melody, verses and a chorus, something for fans to sing along to in their cars, at home, at work, wherever.

Most other genres of popular music hold dearly to this concept... rock music, hip-hop, country, pop, everything that's well known. Even Polka. Even vocal jazz.

Dance music used to stick with this concept, but in recent years it's gotten selective, even snobby if you will. Many people think that if a song is played outside a club or party, then it's lame, or lacks legitimacy to the genre. I think this is only hurting the industry and stifling the availability of a great artistic form of music from the masses.

Taking it a step further, if you're going to write music specifically for the Christian world, you really need to grab on to this concept hard. The underground, call it secular if you want, can hold its own, but there's no such thing in general when it comes to Christianity. The only way you'll get your music to impact a lot of people in the Christian world is by writing radio-friendly music, of which is lacking right now.

Unfortunately, the current status quo of Christian dance music seems to be long, instrumental tracks, or tracks with very limited vocal work. Getting mass appeal in the Christian world just isn't going to happen with this structure, and you can dream on if you want to go beyond the underground club culture and get your music into the mainstream.

How do I write radio-friendly music?

As an artist, you're more than likely used to writing long club-style tracks for DJ's to mix with. Here is a step-by-step process on how to take your current style and make it radio friendly. There are other ways to do it, but this is how I, having produced before, would do it.

- Go ahead and write a nice DJ-style intro. Most often, this consists of 16 to 32 bars of gradually expanding drumbeats, into 16 to 32 bars of looped beats with synths adding in during the transitions.
- Next, cut out the 16 to 32 bars of gradually expanding drumbeats.
- The song must move into a Verse to Chorus style. This means there must be 16 to 32 bars of music with actual vocals over it, leading into 8 to 16 bars worth of catchy, memorable chorus. This can be all vocals, or a mixture of vocals and synth leads.
- To get there, you don't want to have more than 32 bars of non-vocal intro. This means you need to compress your "building synths" segment into something shorter, preferably 8 or 16 bars that either models the sound of the verses or the chorus.
- There should be two verses and a chorus. Often times you can add a bridge, which could be just instrumentation, a whole new vocal line, or a mixture of the two. Ideally, you want to have a verse into a chorus, then a second verse into the chorus, then either repeat the chorus or add a bridge before repeating the chorus again.
- Finally, you don't want to use 4 minutes to end the song. You want the chorus to go into a natural ending, something that lasts anywhere from 2 to 16 bars at the most. Don't be afraid to use a fade-out, DJ's aren't going to be mixing this track.

What do we do with radio friendly music?

I have my own ideas on this, but the two people who replied to my interview questions not only answer that question best, but they also back up much of what I've written. Big thanks to Josh at Illect Recordings / Sphere Of Hip Hop, and Derek from Rocketown Records for their brilliant responses and willingness to spend some time answering these questions! These guys say it best, and they're right there in the thick of it all, so listen to their advice.

QUESTION 1

It seems that dance music is an art form that doesn't receive a lot of respect on radio airplay. Why do you think this is? In the past, many dance releases have incorporated the traditional 6-9 minute song lengths, often times with lyrics that are repetitive, or simply non-existent. Is it simply a lack of the artists' ability or willingness to create appropriate song lengths with lyrics, or is it something else?

JOSH: Song length and appeal has much to do with it. In the Christian market (which often mirrors the general market, but on smaller scale) the avenues to promote an electronic record/single is very limited. Because of that, there aren't a lot of opportunities. Sounds a bit redundant but it is the old "you can't get credit until you have it and you won't have it until you get it".

I must say that strides have been made (ala a release from someone like Andy Hunter) but maybe just not enough visibility. Moreover, the trailblazers have been few and far between. It'll be a tough road (as I've shared on the TF forum before) but it can be done.

Lyrics definitely would be helpful to get radio programmers to feel that the genre is "safe" and any songs that aren't too aggressive or extreme in their style (more 'pop' leaning material) does help to get started.

There are few specialty shows out there. Having a few folks get some started can help to prove that the genre/music as a whole is viable to a radio audience.

DEREK: I think it is radio's inability to play songs that don't fit in the traditional 3-4 minute box. Listeners have A.D.D. and tend to flip around a lot or become bored easily. Also, longer songs could cut into precious time for ads.

QUESTION 2

In regards to that, what would you suggest an artist do in order to create music that is better suited for mass appeal?

JOSH: Short and catchy songs. Make it 'easy' for radio and fans to get into it.

QUESTION 3

There has been some talk amongst the dance/electronic community of "Christian Mix-CD's" similar in concept to the DJ Maj albums for example. Another comparison would be any number of "Club Mix 2005" type CD's traditionally found in the mainstream dance music sections of retail stores. Many believe there is enough Christian dance music to begin creating these CD's. Do you think this would be a good selling tactic? If so, specifically, what advice would you give to make sure that a project like this would sell?

JOSH: It's maybe the best way to start. Illect for example is working on our first one. We are primarily a hip-hop/rap label but the three of us who run the company love various parts of electronic music. The progression towards something like that would be a natural one for us as a label. We're working on something more along the lines of down tempo and instrumental hip-hop. It has a lot of appeal and we can grab the electronic fans and also the hip-hop fans at the same time.

Price point is important. It'll have to be well promoted and priced at say \$9.99 SRP to draw in the fringe consumers who will take a chance on something new because it's a low cost option. It's helpful to offer CD samplers at large events (tours and music festivals) to spread general awareness.

Having modest goals is important. Knowing what the market can bear will help everyone involved keep an even keel approach in seeing the vision through. It'll take a lot of time/dedication/follow through.

DEREK: Include some songs that are already familiar and do dance remixes to sell the product to consumers who already love a particular song or artist. Also, keep budgets low and make the product look attractive. Quality sounding dance and mix CD's don't have to be too expensive to produce. Be realistic with sales/marketing/promotion expectations. Incidentally, I feel that the demand for Christian dance/mix CD's is still relatively small...very few outlets for exposure and promotion.

QUESTION 4

Simply put, to get music on the radio, music needs to fit the accepted format of radio, including lyrics and a small song length (3:30 average). There is an added element with dance music, and that is the "club style remix" which is usually 6 to 10 minutes in length, designed to be mixed together by a DJ. There are certain radio programs that have these kinds of "mix shows" and, though the station may want to play a "radio edit" they also may be interested in getting "remixes" for their mix shows. What do you suggest would be the most cost-effective way of making this happen, in an ideal situation? Would it be broadband servicing of tracks to specific people? CD-R servicing?

DEREK: ALWAYS do a radio edit and remix and put them on the same CDR for servicing. Target your VIP mailing list for the CDR's and make the rest available on a website for download (password protected of course).

JOSH: Do it all. Offer everyone a choice. In my experience, some stations like getting access to the single in advance in MP3 format (several options: 192kbps, 256kbps, 320kbps) to either use or preview the single. Then we also mail them a CD in addition to pitching our singles for inclusion on other radio samplers.

QUESTION 5

Many dance artists want to release their remixes on 12" vinyl records. This is almost always not cost effective. I do know some labels have gotten around this issue by allowing the remixes to be released on a vinyl-specific label, usually not Christian-run. What's your opinion on this? Could this work, and if so, how?

JOSH: Christian radio doesn't play vinyl. Most DJs unfortunately don't support it even when it is available. It's not feasible for artists or labels to press it when it: won't sell and won't get played.

Digital is now. iTunes. Offering remixes to people on your email list. CD-R on request. It's all about flexibility and being able to get people what they need. Then they see you're serious about what you do and more apt to provide more opportunities.

DEREK: Vinyl is only feasible if you have the budget for it. It is almost always a novelty piece and not feasible for small labels to do. There is not enough demand in the Christian market for vinyl, so I feel this would be a wasteful use of money (unless it was for a specific promo piece, P.O.P. materials or chotski item for gives).

QUESTION 6

Lastly, I'd just like to ask you to give any broad-based suggestions that you think these artists need to hear about the Christian recording industry; something that may help them to pursue it with better stewardship and focus.

DEREK: Be accountable in your music and life – your writing, the mixes, and your life in general. Use a group of peers as a "test focus group" and get opinions before committing anything to tape. Pray and commit your way and your music to the Lord and seek Him every day!

JOSH: Learn the business. Really learn it and for oneself. Everyone talks about the industry stories but usually don't know the intricacies of what is *really* going on. Labels aren't evil. Artists aren't stupid. Be educated and learn everything you can.

Start small and grow one step at a time. While it would be great to burst on the scene and sell 50k units, it's not likely to happen. Try to sell a few thousand and then grow.

Now What?

I think that, from looking at these interview answers, we can look at a pretty good summary of what to do. My suggestion would be this. Continue writing the music you love to write, but begin to think about ways to add vocals to your art. Find vocalists who can sing and even write lyrics, and work on getting those vocals recorded by professional-standard equipment. Then, begin to work on writing music that leans toward radio-friendly, with the ultimate goal of being able to make two versions of each song: a radio edit, and an extended mix for the club and mix DJ's.

Also, it's crucially important for us to discuss these things, and begin to think about finding ways to approach promotion and publicity better. One serious avenue for labels to consider is teaming up with some larger Christian labels to get the work done. We, the producers, smaller labels, and artists ought to learn how to make mix-CD's and radio-friendly songs. Then we can put together album packages that actually have some appeal to non-DJ's, and ask larger labels to put their stamp on it and handle the distribution. It cuts out their production costs and... it just sounds like a great idea to me.

Finally, let's just drop the attitudes we have about "Christian music" and "Christian artists vs. artists who are Christian" and start approaching this situation intelligently. We can get great music spread throughout the Christian and mainstream industries by spring of 2005 if we work hard at it. Let's make this happen.

Sho' ya Love: Sheltershed! (2005-01-15 00:00) - redsavior

This month's installment of Sho' Ya Love is from a couple of guys that have been influential in Christian EDM for quite some time. They are on fire for God, and their work brings many to the Lord. And their music ain't bad either.

Coco: So SHELTERSHED: When did YOU GUYS fall in love with EDM?

Craig: The history is so long and rich that it is very difficult to pin point the moment that I fell in love. It's more like a journey. I met a bloke from the UK during a summer job at a YMCA Camp back in 1992. He came with his whole music arsenal from London . He called it "Rave" back then. During the first song that he played for me (wish I knew what it was) I realized that I was drowning in musically glory. This is one of my beginnings of the love affair with EDM.

Rob: Honestly I was a metal head when I was younger and started to move toward dance music around 1990. Then I met Craig and some other friends at college that had been more into the EDM scene. They pushed the right buttons and I was hooked.

Coco: Why EDM and not another kind of music? What's your favorite genre(s)?

Craig: EDM feels like partners with my musical soul. Sounds funny – but it's true. I believe that each of us is wired up to gravitate towards a specific genre/style/sound. Once we find the path, it's like coming home after wandering around lost in the forest. However, there are other genres I do enjoy. Many of my roots are Industrial starting back in the late 80's. In addition, I have always appreciated Classical (I'm corny like that). I also like Reggie & Island.

Rob: There is nothing that moves the emotions more than EDM. My emotions are moved depending on the song and even change during the course of the song.

As a youth pastor I listen to all sorts of music. You have to stay current. It doesn't matter what genre it is; it just has to move my soul.

Coco: Name your artists, your influences, the date, time and place...your earliest memories of it. Why did these things make you want to do this kind of music?

Craig: Back when I was an Industrial head (late 80's and early 90's); KMFDM, Front 242, & Die Warzau were some of my favorites. At the time, these guys were some of the pioneers of the mental-electronic hybrids. I remember seeing KMFDM live in a place called Medusa's in Chicago . It felt like honey on toast. A little bit later; a friend turned me onto Dietiphobia. I loved the fact that these were a couple of Christian dudes producing the kind of music that floated my boat. This was probably another stepping-stone of my interest in EDM.

Rob: Moby was probably the first EDM musician that I felt connected to me. We saw him in Chicago in 1992, and that night was the birth of my passion for EDM. From there we listen to a lot of Rave and held house-raves on campus, etc.

Coco: What's the first track that drove you wild? How did it make you feel, and what did you do when you felt it?

Craig: Information Society's What's on Your Mind (Pure Energy). It was like waking up after a long nap that I didn't even know I was taking.

Knowing that I was born in the late 60's may help folks understand some of my musical influences. For instance, my first cassette tape that I ever bought was "Pac-Man Fever". I'm curious to know what else that says about me other than I'm old.

Rob: The Hypnotist; Hardcore You Know the Score. It brings back more memories than even I care to remember.

Coco: Who are your heroes, in so much that just hearing the name of one of their tracks sends you into a nearly unconscious state.

Craig: Unfortunately (I think), this doesn't happen to me.

Coco: And most importantly, where did you find the Lord in it? Just flow and tell me your story, wherever you want to go. Let yourself go into the poetry of the thing. It's alright. It's just your family here.

Craig: Let me start by giving our mission statement:

Sheltershed is an underground ministry experience that seeks to provide a means of worship and Christian celebration. To accomplish this, Sheltershed provides an avenue for praise through music, dance and community. Through its unconventional style, Sheltershed is dedicated to servant hood and upholding traditional Christian values.

It's all about Passion & Servant hood. It makes sense to me that God wants me to focus my ministry efforts in an area that I'm passionate about. I love the scene & music and am energized by people & relationships.

Trust in the LORD, and do good; so you will dwell in the land, and enjoy security. Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act.
Psalm 37:3-5

Worship of our Lord and Savior has taken many forms in these "current" times. DJ Led Worship is yet another unique and creative way to assist its "participant's" in a community of coming together in order to focus hearts, minds, and body's in one mission: To honor with extravagant love and extreme submission, as a lover and adorer of Jesus Christ.

Sheltershed's DJ Led worship deliberately creates an environment of music, sights, and community to lead the participants in and encounter with God.

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. John 4: 23-24

In addition to the DJ Led worship thing we do what we call the "Black Box". It is an energetic way to come together and have fun in the name God. It is also a DJ lead experience, however focuses more on having a good time of fellowship and celebration.

Rob: For me it comes down to two things I read from Jesus. "Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence." Secondly, "Love others as well as you love yourself." Loving God and loving people is our goal. Connecting with God and people, this is what EDM and Sheltershed is all about. For some reason it seems like everyone can connect with music. It is the one thing that God created in us. Whether a band leading worship, singing from a hymnal, or a DJ spinning tracks, music leads people to the throne room. I know God loves it when we can lead people in connecting with their creator. My goal is to lead people in that same connection I am feeling on stage. I imagine if we can experience Him on that level we are one step closer to knowing what it will be like in eternity.

Coco: Ministry, Dedication, Passion, Servant hood, Worship, Connection, Experience. The freshest ingredients for leading people to the throne room of God through, music. These men are role models for us all!

3.2 March

My Walk with Trance (2005-03-15 00:00) - redsavior

My name is Darren, but you probably know me better on the TF boards as Trance Lover. Trance music has been a huge part of my life and had a big influence on me over the past 11 or 12 years, it has been a journey, and a journey that I have really wanted to share. This is my walk with trance.

My name is Darren, but you probably know me better on the TF boards as Trance Lover. Trance music has been a huge part of my life and had a big influence on me over the past 11 or 12 years, it has been a journey, and a journey that I have really wanted to share. This is my walk with trance.

My EDM journey started in around 1994, when I was only around 10 or 11 yrs old, and at that time I was listening what I would only describe as Old Skool Italo House and Rave, and was hooked on artists such as Cappella, Corona, and Reel 2 Reel etc.

I guess that I did not really discover trance the trance that I know of today until around 1996. The first proper trance tune I remember hearing was the Nalin & Kane mix of Meet Her At The Love Parade by Da Hool, I loved it at the time, and still do to this very day, mainly because of it's steady, thumping beat and acidic melody.

As far as my listening pleasure is concerned, the trance scene has developed in many ways and separated into quite a few different directions over the last 8 years or so. At first, I was into tracks like Josh Wink's Higher State of Consciousness, that beat addled track with an almost pointlessly repetitive high-pitched riff that play games with your brain, but for me, that was what made it so good. Then, not long after that, I discovered Faithless, and two of their tracks that I particularly loved at the time, Salva Mea, and Insomnia. A couple years later, I guess it must have been around 1998, I got more and more into the atmospheric trance sound. Many of the tracks that I was into back in those days are tracks that I still love now such as 1998 by Binary Finary and Flaming June by BT. I know that many of the tracks that I am mentioning here may have actually been around before I remember them, but I am just trying to give you an idea of the path that I have taken musically.

In 2000, I became a Christian, but even then, I still was not at all sure what path my life was taking, or what influence god was going to have. All I knew at that time was that I wanted it to have something to do with music. During the same time, hard house was getting big again here in the UK , and I guess in a way, I got into that sound, but not nearly as I had with trance.

The main thing that I discovered about trance is that there are elements in trance that make it much more spiritual than any other sub-genre of dance music. I am yet to discover what those elements are, but I know that they are there. Now I know that for many of the people that will read this article, that may be a very debatable statement, but that is just how I feel about trance as an individual fan of it.

In 2001, I left my Hard House phase, and concentrated all or most of my listening efforts on trance. I think that this was because at that time. I had some sort of idea that the path that I wanted to go down, musically and potentially career wise and it was the same path that God wanted me to take. For me, that was the best thing that could have happened.

Then, for about the next 18 months to 2 years, things stayed the same. I still listened to all the current trance tunes released here in the UK at that time and nothing really changed.

2003 was when the next big musical change in my life happened. So far, it has lasted to this very day. MOST of the commercial European artists/producers that were releasing material here no longer inspired me (DJ Tiesto

and Armin van Buuren are the exceptions) and I wanted something more... underground and less commercial.

I decided to turn to the sound of Goa and Psy trance. Throughout the last 18 months or so, I have been excited and inspired both spiritually and musically by artists/producers such as Man with No Name, Astral Projection, Digitalis and Infected Mushroom. This music has everything that I look for, solid beats, infectious melodies, and best of all, breathtaking breakdowns.

Now I just pray that God will continue to steer me on the right road in life and I will be able live, not just how I want to live, but how GOD wants me to live as well.

Love, Pain, Redemption & Salvation (2005-03-15 00:00) - redsavior

In Junior High, I craved attention, but never got the right kind. I chased after boys who were rebellious and different from the norm. My best friend (I had known since the third grade) and I grew apart. I began running with a 'rough crowd'. I smoked my first cigarette at the age of 12. The summer I was 12 I had my first kiss with a boy at summer camp. I remember breaking into a church at the age of 13 and running around in it. I had my first drink at the end of my 8th grade year.

✂ My name is Suzi. I was born in Cleveland , Ohio , in October 1973. At 3 months old, my mom and dad moved to Rochester , Michigan (due to my dad's job transfer). My mom, a beautician, gave up everything to support my dad's career, and as a result, lost her client base.

As a child, I grew up in an extremely dysfunctional family. My mom, grew up in an abusive home, and carried on the sins of her mother in that from my earliest memories, she always abused me physically and mentally. I have always been extraverted, and was naturally outspoken. She would slap me in the face constantly for being 'disrespectful' and 'sassy' if I attempted to express an opinion. She would grab my arm so hard that she left bruises from her fingers, and nail digs in my arm. She told me more times than I can remember how she 'hated me' and 'wished I was never born'. I remember an episode of her getting angry with me as a small child and in a rage she kept slapping me until I curled up like a ball onto the floor. She kept hitting me until my dad finally pulled her off of me. Don't get me wrong; my dad was no angel either.

From my earliest memories, my father was addicted to pornography. At an early age, my brother and I discovered that my dad's 'workshop' contained hundreds of magazines. My dad was also the absent father – always on the road for work. He also was extremely lazy with hygiene; he almost never took a bath. He never brushed his teeth (they were literally green at times). He became grossly overweight. He repulsed my mom. They both had wicked tempers and were constantly fighting. I suspect that these things perpetuated my mother taking her anger out on me.

I would say, however, in light of all of it, that I had a closer relationship with my dad while I was a child. I remember at the tender age of four years old, I was crying in my room. My dad asked me why I was crying. I told him, "Daddy, I can't read." From that point on, my dad began teaching me how, and soon reading became my escape from the world I lived in.

All of the chaos at home left me unbalanced in the world with other kids. Try as I might, I never really had any friends growing up. Sure there would be a girl here or there, but eventually they would move away, and I would be left alone. There weren't many kids in the neighborhood my age, but there were some boys my brother's age. I found that I really enjoyed playing with the boys, and became a tomboy. An odd mix bookworm and tomboy, but somehow it helped me to cope with the cards that life had dealt me. Finally around the third grade I made a few friends at school, and even had a best friend. Even so, we most likely bonded because we were the misfits. My mom's unpredictable fits at home did not make it easy for me to be self confident enough not to care what people thought. That year, in third grade, my mom decided I wasn't taking good enough care of my hair and chopped it severely short. I clearly remember boys calling me ugly from that point on. The popular kids were tough on me as we went to a 'rich' public school system, but we were barely making it economically.

There were a few times that my mom showed tenderness to me, however the majority of her affection was lavished upon my younger brother. He was the 'golden child' who could do no wrong. He always got into trouble at school, and so was rewarded just for not being bad. I was an angel at school, and was ignored and or abused at

home. I truly loved my brother, but from the stories I've heard, even as a young child I dealt with jealousy about the way she treated him. My mom never abused my brother, but constantly doted on him. Apparently I pushed him off a porch as a toddler, and punched him around until he got big enough to punch me back. Maybe it was my way of taking out my frustrations from my mom. In spite of it all, my brother was my best friend growing up. He always made me laugh, he was so creative and always made up new games for us to play. When we would get grounded for anything, he would talk to me across the hallway. He looked up to me, and even (to my irritation then) imitated me.

I had a favorite aunt, on my dad's side. She took a strong liking to me, as she had two sons but never had the daughter she desired. She began calling me 'her little star'. (This is where the name Suzi Star originated.) I can't tell you how much that meant to me. Starting around 12, once a year, on my birthday, I got to spend the day with my aunt. She treated me like I was somebody. To this day I feel like it was God's reprieve for a little girl's wounded heart. She would take me shopping and allow me to pick out my own outfit. That was a huge deal for me as my mom never allowed me to have any say. One year, I came home with a trendy outfit and my mom didn't like it. She refused to let me wear it. Me being a kid who desperately wanted to fit in at school, I decided to risk trying to sneak past her. I somehow got out of the house and to the bus stop a block down the street without her seeing my outfit. My mom figured it out, however, and before the bus arrived, she drug me back into the house. She ripped into me with her words. She made me get out of the outfit. She washed out all of the hair spray I had craftily used to try to style my hair (in an 80's fashion) scrubbing my head, hard. She then told me I wasn't allowed to go to school as my punishment. Then she changed her mind and told me that I could go, but only if I kneeled on rice for half an hour and prayed for forgiveness. This struck me as odd, since our family wasn't really religious. I cried for hours in despair, not knowing what to make of my mom. She finally made me up to look like a china doll with big fat doll curls and put me in an outfit that I was most likely allergic to – wool that made me itch. She promptly deposited me at school and we never spoke of it again.

In my opinion, none of my family truly knew God. My dad's side of the family was Catholic by family tradition. They rarely attended any services, much less pursued any kind of personal relationship with Jesus. My mom took us to a congregational church for a short period of time when we were kids, but it was more like duty, or something you were 'supposed' to do. The turmoil in the family and the cares of life eventually choked even that small amount out of our lives.

In Junior High, I craved attention, but never got the right kind. I chased after boys who were rebellious and different from the norm. My best friend (I had known since the third grade) and I grew apart. I began running with a 'rough crowd'. I smoked my first cigarette at the age of 12. The summer I was 12 I had my first kiss with a boy at summer camp. I remember breaking into a church at the age of 13 and running around in it. I had my first drink at the end of my 8th grade year.

The summer after 8th grade I had a boyfriend who wanted to do more than kissing. I remember feeling how it was wrong somehow, and couldn't bring myself to allow him his desires. But I was torn – the affection that boys gave me was becoming a substitute for the attention I was seriously starving for at home. That summer I contracted mono. I was so sick that I didn't do much for the latter ½ of the summer. (In my opinion it was God's way of trying to protect my innocence by keeping me away from my boyfriend; he broke it off with me after a while.) The biggest trouble for me was that my mom did not believe the fact that I was sick. I laid on the floor doing nothing for about a month. My tonsils became so swollen that they filled my entire throat. My mom kept telling me to stop being so lazy, and to get outside and do something. Finally, I pleaded with my brother to get a flashlight and have a look. Maybe, I thought, if he believed me, then she would too. It was so bad that it freaked my brother out. My mom finally believed me, but by then I had to go to a hospital for care, and the doctors scheduled surgery to remove my tonsils and adenoids as soon as the swelling went down enough.

In high school, things really went down hill. My parent's fighting had gotten so bad that they filed for divorce. I started going to parties, getting drunk, and messing around with boys to keep their attention. I really just wanted

someone to love me, but didn't know that this was clearly not the best way to go about achieving that. Somehow through my partying, and the continued abuse and rejection at home, I maintained a good GPA at school. At 16, my mom's abuse became unbearable, and she threw me out of the house, afraid she might kill me if she didn't. I moved in with my dad, whose limited presence merely added to my rebellious behavior. My brother stayed with my mom, and began hanging with a rough crowd at school who were heavily into drinking and doing drugs.

My dad's fore mentioned bad habits continued, and now in addition, he began to look at me like I was a woman and make comments that a man should not make to his daughter (like how sexy she looks). I felt like I was in a lose-lose situation, and tried to avoid him as much as possible. I tried to lose myself in my world at school and parties. I was talked into losing my virginity at the age of 16 to my boyfriend. I really wasn't ready for that, but I didn't want to lose him. This was a pattern with all of my boyfriends and friendships – I would cave in to their demands/peer pressure if I thought it would stay their rejection of me.

I graduated from high school as a complete heathen, living life carnally. I attended college right after high school, continuing to party and try to get approval from boys and friends. At 18, my dad began acting really weird towards me, at times it seemed he was ogling me, and the comments got worse. By 20, I jumped at the chance to move out, scared that my dad might do something. At very least, it creeped me out enough to want to get away from him, and fast.

When I was almost 21 years old, I began dating a bartender and I began moonlighting as a cocktail waitress in the blues bar where he worked. We moved in together after dating for a while. A short time later, I received the news that my brother had overdosed on a drug called Jimson Weed. Thankfully, they found him in time to save his life. My brother is 2 years younger than me. He was always very creative, artsy, and intelligent. After that, he slowly lost himself, and became a paranoid schizophrenic. I still grieve this loss today. Sometimes he acts like himself, but usually it's almost like talking to a stranger or a child.

My bartender boyfriend ended up cheating on me with our boss, the bar manager. I literally caught him with her right after the act had taken place. I was mortified. Horrified at my dad's indecent attitude towards me, I ended up moving back home with my mom for several months until I found some friends from school to move in with.

The partying continued as I joined a sorority. I lived with 5 girls in a huge 3-½-bedroom apartment. I kept working in bars as a part time job to pay bills during school - and the life consumed me. School was beginning to be a struggle. I went through several boyfriends who cheated on/used me. I began to feel jaded and started closing myself off to other people. My priorities were where I felt accepted, and this was in the nightclubs. I interned with Polygram records and then I dropped out of school due to lack of funding and interest. I worked for 2 years in a techno club in Detroit called Motor. I was beginning to be surrounded by a lot of famous people. I was deceived by the world, and burnt out by all of the abuse and rejection in my life. Due to my connections in the bar industry, I literally almost never had to pay for a drink or a cigarette, much less access to a club. I entered a competition for bartending, and took 6th place out of all the Michigan entrants. I felt pretty proud of myself, but my life was going nowhere fast.

At 23, I became hard of heart. I had always been fascinated with electronic music, and fell in love with the Goth scene. It seemed a perfect portrayal of my life. I took it on as a second job in addition to my job at Motor. With exception of working in the bar or going out, I became a recluse. I had little to no contact with my family. I only had superficial friends who I partied with.

At 25, a carnal Christian started talking to me about Jesus. By carnal, I mean someone who believed that living a nominal life for Christ including indulging lusts of the flesh was ok. No matter, the Holy Spirit will get a hold of those whom He desires. I didn't even believe in God anymore; however, about 2 weeks before Christmas, the Spirit got hold of my heart, and I started to believe. I dug out my bible and began reading as much as I could. I started

to pray. I began a relationship with this guy, and going to raves with him. I suspect the devil knew that God was getting a hold of me, and was throwing some large obstacles my way - I began to experiment with drugs like e, k, coke, and Ritalin. Being with this guy confused me, I remember going out all night and doing drugs and then showing up to church in the morning as we came down from the high. Even though we each had our own places to live, we practically lived together for the first year of my salvation.

The next summer, God began the process of cleaning me up. I was baptized in water, and felt the Holy Spirit come upon me so hard that my knees were buckling and I felt drunk spiritually. Shortly following, by His conviction, I stopped smoking, doing drugs, and getting drunk. God convicted me of my job in the bar, and at my resistance, He got me fired! I knew at that point that I had to make an honest living, and got a day job working as an administrative assistant. About this time, I also was convicted of the pre-marital relationship I was having with the aforementioned guy. I told him I had to live in purity - it was hurting my heart when I thought of how much it must have hurt my Lord's heart. I began to pray about things, whether God wanted us to marry, without saying much to him. He broke it off a month later. Needless to say, God has shown me in hindsight that marrying him would've been detrimental to both my emotions and my walk with Jesus. I prayed that God would keep me invisible to all men until He brought me a husband; deciding to forsake pursuing any relationships.

✕ Almost immediately, my spiritual life began to take off. I was baptized in the Holy Spirit two months later. I went through deliverance for all of the evil that had been in control of my life. I was discipled by some very loving people in my church. Reading as much of the bible as I could, I became a sponge for the Holy Spirit to fill up with God's love and instruction.

God revealed to me that the drug ecstasy was the devil's counterfeit for the Holy Spirit. If you've never done e, it makes you feel completely at peace. The high seems almost spiritual and there is a physical sensation on your skin. Unlike drinking or other drugs, you remember every detail while you're on it. You feel an overwhelming sense of love and compassion for people - even your negative feelings towards people kind of melt away. But here are the side effects - you constantly feel like throwing up, you gnash your teeth, and when you come down you feel uncomfortable in your own skin and even find it difficult to go to sleep (though you've been up all night). I believe that the enemy has introduced this drug to give people a false sense imitating the true peace that only the Holy Spirit can give us. The side affects here seem demonic. I also noticed that while on e, I could literally communicate with people via thoughts alone. It's definitely a spiritual doorway that I felt compelled to encourage ravers to shut permanently. From that time, I began on a path of service for Jesus. For about a year and a half, I went to raves clean, and witnessed to kids at the parties. I saw God's love minister to so many lost souls. I was a really good dancer, and the Spirit would literally draw them to me out of my gifts. I watched God's love enable some of them to get off drugs and out of the scene. Since I didn't have any Christian friends who would go, I went everywhere solo to witness to raver kids. A lot of people in the church chastised me for doing this, but God sent me, and He protected me. Every summer, I took a road trip to go camping on my own to the west coast of Michigan as a sort of retreat - where I would spend time alone with God. It was amazing how much He used me as a witness during those times when I thought it was all about me being alone with Him. By God's leading, I became involved with ministering to high school youth as a youth leader at my church. (This lasted for 3 ½ years.)

In normal fashion, I went to Cornerstone in 2001 solo. It was there that I met a lot of you TF'ers in person for the first time. I attended Scott Blackwell's DJ/worship seminars, and spoke out boldly about how I felt as a former raver who wanted to see God move in the scene. After the seminar, I met Kevin & Shyla Coffman. We had a similar passion to reach out to the secular world with God's love. We promised to keep in touch. Later that fall, I attended a Prophetica show in Michigan at John Rhaesa's (DJ Race) church. I met Eric, John and Davo that day, and found out that they knew Kev & Shy. That winter, we got a plan together to form Shine. God gave me the idea for the name from Matthew 5:16 - "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." I have always felt like I was called to minister to the secular world. It was really neat to

meet some like-minded Christians. Out of God's leading we started a ministry to ravers - our goal was to throw clean parties where we would have the chance to get to know some of the kids and open our hearts to them as the Spirit would lead. We put on a few clean raves together; and I was able to introduce my kids from my youth group to the rave culture in a safe environment.

It was one of the best things in my life that I've been allowed to be a part of. It was also one of the hardest. Promoting for a Christian party is 10 times harder than for a secular event. But it was worth all the blood, sweat, and tears, if one of them came to know Christ from it.

I've since been led by God to move out of state. I'm living in Indianapolis . Although I'm not here for reasons I thought He wanted me here, God has given me a gift of healing. For the first time in my life, I am getting counseling for a lifetime of hurt over broken relationships. The Holy Spirit has lifted my countenance and I'm feeling strong in Him once again. I have been working with helping women in crisis situations. I still feel strongly drawn to electronic music and ministering to teenage/college-aged students. At this point I'm becoming a sponge once again, eager to soak up all that God will pour out into me. I'm taking several bible classes. I am hoping that God will lead me to minister to the youth again.

This life has taught me that all things really are possible in God. No one is past the point of reconciliation. I consider myself to have been the chief of sinners in this life. I have not divulged every point of wickedness, and nor do I care to. I just want to thank Jesus for saving me from my sure destruction. I am also grateful for the community of Tastyfresh. I've been here for many years, and have found steadfast friends here. Many of you have prayed for me when I've been out of work, disappointed, out of sorts, or broken-hearted. Everything I have gone through has helped me to take a step closer to the holiness that Christ desires for my life. Every hurt has caused me to cling to Him more closely; to become more sensitive to the hurts of others and His Spirit Who wants to touch them. Trials make your faith grow stronger, and God uses them to test your heart. He also uses them to teach us that His wisdom is far, far greater than ours could ever hope to be. I have learned that even if God wills something for your life, it doesn't necessarily mean that other Christians will go along with it or even agree with it. I've learned to trust in God alone and pursue His path, even if it can be lonesome at times. And lately, God has taught me patient love, steadfast prayer, and gentleness. Lastly, His Spirit - this is what truly wins people to Him. I pray that God will help you to view every hurt, every struggle, and every frustration as a learning experience from our Wonderful Counselor.

In Christ,
Suzi

Sho' Ya Love: DJ NIKOS (2005-03-15 00:00) - redsavior

From the depths of his soul, NIKOS, DJ Extrordinaire and one of the founding members of the Deep, Spirit-filled and Soulful Under My Skin Records ([1]<http://undermyskinrecords.com>) mos definitely sho's his Love for the music, for his fellow man, and for his Lord. Alright NIKOS...It's your turn.

Coco: When did YOU fall in love with EDM?

Nikos: Back in 95 I was playing jazz and soul as a bass player in the UK when I bought by accident a double Roger Sanchez mixed CD. I was totally blown away by it. From then on It took me three years transitioning into a DJ and in the summer of '98 I got my first gig at the Yazz Club on the beach in the island of Santorini playing deep house every afternoon for 4 months. Its still the best gig I ever had !!

Coco: So Why'd you choose EDM and not another kind of music?

NIKOS: I got into dance music because I felt it was the freshest thing I've heard at the time (1995) I love jazz and I found a lot of jazz in it (dance music).

Coco: What's your favorite genre(s)?

NIKOS: Deep, soulful house is definitely where I am at. Its all styles of black music wrapped up in one package. I also love drum & bass of the LTJ Bukem persuasion and minimal, smooth techno

Coco: WORD!!! Right up my alley! Now, please name your artists, your influences, the date, time and place...your earliest memories of it. Why did they make you want to do this kind of music?

NIKOS: My influences don't have to do with dance music necessarily. I love Miles Davis, Charlie Mingus ,Quincy Jones and Prince. They are my biggest influences musically.

I was excited about the way I can I translate those influences into dance music.

Coco: What's the first track that drove you wild? How did it make you feel, and what did you do when you felt it?

NIKOS: I was gigging in Germany with a punk band playing bass back in 94. We were having breakfast at the hotel and MTV was on. I saw this band called the "Nightcrawlers" and the track was called Push The Feeling On. I turned around to the drummer and our jaw dropped it was amazing. I was totally hooked. I was like, I wanna do a track like that.

Coco: When I first heard that track, I stopped dancing in the middle of the floor, and just listened. Folks were looking at me like I was crazy...but I couldn't help it. I was absolutely captivated by Push The Feeling On!

Who are your heroes, in so much that just hearing the name of one of their tracks sends you into a nearly unconscious state?

NIKOS: As I said before I love jazz, that's my big love. That's what I am trying to achieve with my music, that level of freedom. Now from dance music artists, I love 95 north, Terry Francis and LTJ Bukem

Coco: Indeed...all of them are artists par excellence! Now as usual, the last (and most important) question... Where did you find the Lord in your music? Just flow and tell me your story. Wherever you want to go. Let yourself go into the poetry of the thing. It's alright. Remember...It's just your family here.

NIKOS: I would say the Lord came and found me. When I got my first gig on that Greek island back in '95 I wasn't saved. In fact I was just recovering from a long period of tribulations in my life and had absolutely no direction.I was very valnurable. That's when I met my wife, Elesha who was working in the same beach bar as a waitress. She was an American from Virginia who was just travelling the world with her backpack. I immediately fell in love with her. She introduced me to Jesus. In the beginning I didn't know how to believe, I was like a baby taking his first steps. But I believed that such a beautiful person like her must be right.

So, I tried to keep it up, although I didn't really understand. I kept the doors of my heart open and my soul eager to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The rest is history. I am sitting here right now, in Los Angeles , with my one year old son Noah walking around the house with Under My Skin Records, the ministry God gave to me, I am thinking of all of these folks out there that need to fill the void in their lives. The same void that I felt before my life was turned upside down.

And I know that if there is one reason that I wake up in the morning wanting to do this music thing its because of all these people out there who are struggling with drugs, with broken relationships, with lies with hatred and bitterness, those who have lost hope in life and they are just going through the motions. This is who I want to talk to because Jesus was always amongst those who need Him the most. It's about time we take a new stand towards our fellow man.

It's about time to unite rather than being divided. It's time to listen rather than judge.

Coco: I think it is so worthwhile to get to know the person's love side. We already see the music side when we hear an artist's music or vocal interpretations, but we never get to know about the heart! So come on, y'all...Sho' Ya Love! Next time...Frankie Vibe!!!!

1. <http://undermyskinrecords.com/>

3.3 May

Andy Hunter: Life, The Universe and Christian Dance (2005-05-15 00:00) - redsavior

It's been almost a year since we last heard from Andy Hunter. On May 24th, his new album/EP Life will be released. Today, we caught up with him to discuss the new project, his thoughts about the Christian dance scene in general and a few other things.

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TF: It's been almost a year since the last time we talked with you. What have been some of the highlights of the past year?

AH: I can't believe that it has really been a year since we spoke! Finally getting "Life" finished, playing gigs with Louie Vega@midem, Kaskade@WMC. Leading worship at the Radical Festival in France (it's the 1st time France has seen DJ led worship.) Playing at a launch event in LA for Microsoft.

TF: Let's talk a bit about the new album, Life. Exodus was as much a thematic project as an album. You billed it as a journey into the presence of God. What is Life about?

AH: Well, a few years ago I was spending time with God, and He gave me a picture. The picture was of a wasteland, everything was grey and dead. On the Horizon of this wasteland there was a figure, that figure being Jesus. Every step that He took towards me life grew under his feet to the side and behind. My prayer/call as I saw this was "run faster bring your life and color to this wasteland!" For me this wasteland represents the different nations in which we live and also our own personal lives. All the tracks on the record are inspired by this picture.

TF: How was the writing and production of Life been different from that of Exodus?

AH: I feel that the sound of life has stronger hooks and melody and a lot more of an organic feel about it. There are a lot more live instruments involved. Such as guitar, bass guitar, cello, drums. I guess this sound came about because I started writing a lot of the tracks on guitar.

TF: What has been the biggest challenge during Life's creation process? What had to be done to overcome it?

AH: Part of the challenge on this record was trying to forget about the success of the Exodus, in terms of all the films. I needed to hear from God for each track so I could write from that, rather than trying to recreate exodus.

Also God talking to me about the wasteland that I have in my own life, and dealing with that, through the process.

TF: What about vinyl? Can we expect the Nettwerk America to release it as they did with Exodus?

AH: We are certainly looking to get some remixes done of the 1st single from life and we are in the process of doing that now.

TF: Moving on to other subjects, how do you classify your own music? Is it Christian, secular or something other than that?

AH: For me I don't think there is a divide, and I believe there shouldn't be. I am trying to create music to the best quality that I can. For me my music always comes from a place of worship and hearing God.

TF: Given the recent successes that Shiloh, DBA and yourself (among others) as Christians active in the secular dance scene, where do you see God leading Christian DJ's, and artists/producers?

AH: I would like to see us all involved in the electronic/club industry and not making a separate Christian Club scene. We are all called as Christians to be salt and light.

TF: Without getting too detailed, what is the future of Christian dance music? What are we getting right? What are we doing wrong?

AH: We certainly need to be improving the quality and raising the bar on dance music.

TF: If you could give one piece of advice to a Christian producer striving to break into the secular scene what would that be?

AH: Be yourself, and be inspired by God for your art.

TF: You have been touring with some of the biggest named DJ's in the world for well over a year now. You have probably had many opportunities to share your faith. How has this been going?

AH: For me I love talking about my faith with other people, it makes me feel alive. I just love putting myself into a place where God can use me. I have had some great conversations and I am amazed at the respect that I get. Its early days though!

TF: Cornerstone 2005. You are coming back this year and this time you get to perform at the main stage. I believe that this is a first for any Christian DJ. I personally am still in awe from everything that happened in 2002, especially that night when the power went out in the dance barn. Do you have any thoughts about Cornerstone this year?

AH: For me it is a real answer to prayer being back at Cornerstone, especially on main stage. I prayed that prayer last time I was there. Being there for me isn't just about saying to all those people "isn't dance music great." It's about breaking down the barriers of what worship is, and going for God in an energetic way.

TF: Andy, thank you for once again taking time out to speak with us. As always, it has been a pleasure.

AH: Thank you, and thanks to all involved in tastyfresh who have supported me over the years!!!

Related Links:

- [1]DanceChapel's Review of Life
- [2]Sparrow Records
- [3]NGM
- [4]Andyhunter.com
- [5]Preview Life
- [6]The Midi Signal (Street Team)
- [7]Andy on Pure Volume

Buy Andy's Music:

- [8]Life (CD)
- [9]Exodus (CD)
- [10]Cathedral of Sound (CD)
- [11]Trip - Cultural Shift (CD)

1. <http://www.conquestministries.com/dancechapel/reviews/AndyHunterLife.htm>
2. <http://www.sparrowrecords.com/>
3. <http://www.ngm.org.uk/>
4. <http://www.andyhunter.com/>
5. http://www.sparrowrecords.com/artists/discography.aspx?id=80546&proj_iid=340074
6. <http://www.themidisignal.com/>

7. <http://www.purevolume.com/andyhunter>
 8. <http://www.musicchristian.com/sys/product.php?PRODUCT=163890>
 9. http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/B00006LI47/qid=1088474280/sr=1-1/ref=sr_1_1/102-5211969-3824145?v=glance&s=music
 10. http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/B0002CZPKG/qid=1088474280/sr=1-2/ref=sr_1_2/102-5211969-3824145?v=glance&s=music
 11. <http://nsoul.com/store/index.cfm?ItemNum=64>
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Sho' Ya Love: Frankie Vibe! (2005-05-15 00:00) - redsavior

This man is everywhere. He's got a Legendary after-hours mix show called HOUSE OF INSPIRATIONCORNERSTONE (W00t!!) Friday, July 1st at the One Life Radio/Gospel For Asia Stage along with other excellent turntablists. Who knows ... you might even see ME there! Aaight ... Here Goes

Hey Now! Just like I said last month, I have one of the most influential DJ's in the GospelHouse/Inspirational House arena...Mr. Frankie Vibe (applause, applause)!

This man is everywhere. He's got a Legendary after-hours mix show called HOUSE OF INSPIRATION on 89.1 WFDU-FM (New Jersey) that runs into the wee hours, Saturday morning from 1:15-6:00AM Eastern time. He will also be spinning at CORNERSTONE (W00t!!) Friday, July 1st at the One Life Radio/Gospel For Asia Stage along with other excellent turntablists. Who knows ... you might even see ME there! Aaight ... Here Goes

Coco: So FRANKIE VIBE: When did YOU fall in love with EDM? Why spin EDM and not another kind of music like Hip Hop or RnP?

Frankie Vibe: As far I can remember I have always enjoyed music that is uptempo, from The Beatles to Earth Wind and Fire to Parliament/Funkadelic to Kraftwerk to Electronic Hip Hop (1981-1985) to House anything up-tempo that got me to dance I've always enjoyed.

C: Wow. I think you just named every major cut I have in my own collection! I know you have many of them, but name your Artists, your influences, the date, time and place...your earliest memories of it. Why did these things make you want to do this kind of music?

FV: [As far as artists] The first time I went to Club Zanibar in Newark, NJ to hear Tony Humphries spin. He is the most influential DJ/Producer in my life, back then that was what we grew up with Club Music (it was not called House Music to those at that time) and I'm talking late 70s early 80s when music was so creative that is what struck me, the creativity behind the decks and how the people responded to the records that he played from Freestyle to Club Music, he played it all.

As far as artists there are just too many to name but here are a few that have a big influence on what I spin. Colonel Abrams, D-Train Williams, Fonda Rae, Kim English, Earth Wind and Fire, Brothers Johnson, Gap Band, Kraftwerk, Heatwave, Kenny Bobien, Dawn Tallman, Stevie Wonder, Natalie Cole and others.

C: Earth, Wind & Fire have influenced many artists, including yours truly. And I have resolved that I will meet Ms. Natalie Cole someday (laughs). Frankie, what's the first track that drove you wild? How did it make you feel, and what did you do when you felt it?

FV: There are a few tracks that drove me wild in the 90s when I was in the club scene, Bucketheads – These Sound Fall Unto My Mind, Spin Spin Sugar – Sneaker Pimps, KenLou3 – Sensational Beats, Deep Inside – Barbara Tucker, Brighter Days – Dajae, God Made Me Funky – MD Express, Kim English – NiteLife. Tight production, use of instruments in the tracks, a uplifting vocalist. I like songs that have a message in the music. These that I listed here would just let me dance all night long and not want to stop, I really felt like I was in heaven (So I thought)

C: I remember this one saying some folks used to say when we would be in between glistening profusely on the dance floor, that "House is God," meaning that most good (and I stress good) house music is inspired by God...but we know that heaven and the music of the heavenly host is far better than what we have here!! Now then...who are your heroes, in so much that just hearing the name of one of their tracks sends you into orbit?

FV: Todd Terry, Masters at Work, Erick Morillo, Armand Van Helden, DJ Sneak, Roger Sanchez, Tommy Musto, Louis Bendetti, Victor Simonelli, Eddie Amador, Kerri Chandler, Roy Davis, Jr. Jamie Lewis, Basement Boys, Urban Blues Project, CopyRight.

C: Now we know why you spin like that. Look at all those legends...and y'all know that legends beget legends! The last, but certainly not least thing I'd like to ask you is where did you find the Lord in your spin? As usual, just flow and

tell us your story. Wherever you want to go! Let yourself go into the poetry of the thing. Remember ... it's just your family here.

FV: I knew the Lord had a hand in the type of music that I always liked because it is creative, soulful and there is a message to be found in the type of House/Dance music that I have always enjoyed. Most of it talks about love for one another or love for the Father and that is what God is. LOVE ... Blessings.

C: Blessings to you, too, Frankie ... maybe (just maybe) I'll see ya at Cornerstone. And thank you for this excellent look into why you do what you do!

Hey ... Wanna Sho' ya love for what you spin too? Hit me at [1]ShoYaLove4edm@yahoo.com
Next Month ... Shiloh!!


1. <mailto:ShoYaLove4edm@yahoo.com>

3.4 July

Christianity and the Dance Scene II: Welcome to the Real Underground (2005-07-15 00:00) - redsavior

Part of the reason why I have waited so long to continue this series is that I still have my own questions as to what we are doing, why we are doing it and what the end result should be. There is also division among our “leaders” in regards to what we are doing, why we are doing it and what the end result should be. All of them, in some way passionately feel that their way is God’s way. I’m fully including myself in that statement by the way. One thing that I feel we need to do is get a reality check on our position in the larger scene. Hopefully, this article will do just that.

Introduction

 A few months ago, I wrote the first part to this series. It almost too brazenly simply declared that Christians were interested and involved in dance music. It also attempted to establish that such an interest and involvement do not conflict with the “pillars” of our faith. It also declared that we would not go away. What it did not do was discuss whether or not we were having an impact or if we were even really know to exist.

Part of the reason why I have waited so long to continue this series is that I still have my own questions as to what we are doing, why we are doing it and what the end result should be. There is also division among our “leaders” in regards to what we are doing, why we are doing it and what the end result should be. All of them, in some way passionately feel that their way is God’s way. I’m fully including myself in that statement by the way. One thing that I feel we need to do is get a reality check on our position in the larger scene. Hopefully, this article will do just that.

Scene Or Market Part I: The Basics

Very recently, it occurred to me that there is a slight difference between a market and a scene. For example, there can be a market for brown socks, yet you probably will not see people willing to stand in line for hours just to buy brown socks or to be the first person to get the latest style of brown socks. If there were a scene for brown socks, we should see this happening. It may even be truer with white tube socks. Likewise, there is a big difference between someone who will go out a buy a CD and someone going out and buying a concert ticket for that CD’s artists and an even greater difference between both of those and someone who is willing to become a member of that artist’s street team. It all comes down to commitment levels that in turn are at least somewhat based on the value one places on the shoulders of that artist in question.

Whatever the true distinction between a market and a scene is, it is not finite. The line is blurred, but where a scene exists, you cannot deny it. The only question is, how large does a market have to become before it becomes a scene or visa versa.

Scene Or Market Part II: A Look At The Numbers

In regards to Christianity’s involvement in the dance scene... or rather the existence OF a scene can also be based on this commitment level. For example, we know that people will buy Christian dance music. Well... we know they will buy it if:

1. It gets played on the radio.
2. It is on a label that supports it.
3. Its own artist takes time to really support it via touring and appearances. With almost every release, this never happens.

The two exceptions are:

1. Andy Hunter
2. Most of the Christian artists who release music strictly to the secular scene on secular labels.

The highest numbers of CDs sold for a Christian dance release on a Christian label (excluding Andy Hunter) is probably not much higher than 5,000 copies*. When you break that down financially, that means that most Christian dance CDs either were losses or just barely broke even. In the US, that is roughly 100 CDs sold in each state for the best selling release, compared to 1,000-2,000 for a popular CCM release.

If you expand this view to look at the active local dance community, the picture is a bit different. For simplicity's sake, let's define a local scene as a major metropolitan area and the people who are willing to do more than just buy a CD. Across the US, there are basically five major groups that have recently tried to build a local scene that meets regularly. Those groups are The Underground, Club Worship, Fusion, Groove Central and the Atlanta Fellowship. Of those, only Club Worship, Fusion, and the Underground are still meeting regularly. The Atlanta group has simply been too busy (although we are planning a new gathering now) and Groove Central lost one of their leaders in a move to Kansas. If look at the numbers of people willing to attend these events, you will see all of them draw less than 200 people on average. Atlanta only could pull in a maximum of 15 people and the core really consisted of about 5 people. In it's hey day, Amplified Life, the Atlanta Fellowship's predecessor, could pull in between 100-200 people.

If we look at radio support, it is fairly similar to the local scene. There are certain radio shows that stand out such as Carey Jarvis' Dance Chapel, Rish's Electric Circus on Radio U and Frankie Vibe's House of Inspiration. They all have their endearing qualities, but as a whole they are just as few and far between as the local scene is. The one difference is that each show is able to broadcast their music to tens of thousands of people each week. However, as the local scene in these areas is not growing with people committed to leave their homes and take an active role in forming a local scene, radio has not been the most effective tool for building a scene or creating market interest for dance music by Christians. Of course, some, if not all, of the blame for this can be placed on the labels and artists for not given the radio stations material that will do well on the air and not supporting their releases.

Aspiring To Be Underground And Failing

Dance music is supposed to be underground. We all have heard that. We all pledge at least lip service to the thought that it is underground. At one point, electronic dance music as a whole was largely underground. That is not the case at all today. Today, everywhere you go, almost every TV show or movie you watch, and almost every pop song you hear on the radio has some element of electronic dance music buried in it somewhere. Prime examples of this include such radio hits as Madonna's Ray of Light, Cher's Believe, Moby's Southside, Dirty Vegas' Days Go By and Britney Spear's Toxic. You cannot avoid it, the sound is everywhere and it really is not underground anymore when even BT, John Digweed, Moby, Tiësto and Paul Oakenfold have become near household names.

When people go to clubs, unless it is a club dedicated strictly to country, hip-hop, jazz or some other specific form of music, you will hear club remixes of pop songs mixed with some underground tracks. The concept of breaking into a warehouse and throwing an illegal rave/party is almost non-existent in the US today for various reasons. One being that enough people like dance music enough to dedicated legally established nightclubs to it. At this point, is dance music truly underground? Maybe the days of disco never really died, but rather evolved into today's club culture. Regardless, those in the know of the secular scene fight to maintain the idea that they are underground.

Christians Are The Underground

Compare that view with the view of a Christian scene with the numbers I mentioned earlier. The Christian dance scene is a subset of the whole dance scene. It is not a very attractive subset of the whole, outside of the clean behavior we infuse because of our faith because:

1. You cannot find dance music in most Christian bookstores or secular music stores.
2. Very few Christian events of any size occur.
3. Because of a lack of support from the labels, radio stations and the artists themselves.

People largely do not know that we even exist. If by underground, the larger scene means hard to find and little appreciated, you cannot get any more underground and under appreciated than the Christian scene currently is. In a way, we have succeeded where the secular dance scene has now failed. We are truly underground.

To take that a step further still, we can look at some web stats. We can start with the stats of this very website. Tastyfresh.com has been around since December 1996. It has been the communication “hub” of the Christian dance scene through most of that time. As of July, the site drew 7,292 unique visitors. That number is based on unique IP addresses, so a few could be the same people, so it may be more accurate to say the readership is between 6,000 – 7,000 people. The message boards currently have 450 members. That’s about one third the number it had prior to installing the new system, but many of the accounts on the old boards were duplicates. What this tells us is that between 7.5 - 6.4 % of the visitors are willing to take their involvement one step beyond simply reading the site. The average number of posts per member is 35. 82 % of all the viewers of the site are American.

That may seem like a bunch of useless facts, but they are important and tie right back into my earlier statements. If Tastyfresh.com is the largest website dedicated to Christian dance music, then these numbers support just how underground we are. Numerically, we are just about 50 % larger than the sales number I mentioned for the highest selling Christian dance CDs. 80 % of the Tastyfresh.com readers are from the US, which means that roughly 4,800 – 5,600 people are American. This puts between 96 – 112 people in each state on average. Compared to the event attendance numbers I mention earlier, this accounts for almost all the attendees of every event. If you take a look at Cornerstone’s dance club in particular, you have about 300 to 600 people willing to travel each year to one-week festival. 300 to 600 people in a sea of more than 25,000 people is not a high percentage by any stretch of the imagination. Numerically, we are underground both in terms the larger dance scene and the Christian music scene in general. This is a fact that cannot be denied.

The Best Things Come in Small Packages

So we are truly underground in the most literal sense of the word. So what? Why should that even bother us? Why should we even care? I think these are valid questions, but all that truly matters is that each of us follows God’s will for our involvement in building this scene. Not everybody is the best lighting expert. Not everybody is the superstar DJ. Most of us can’t even write a half-decent tune, although the progress made in this area in the past year or two has been nothing short of mind-blowing. What we have here is nothing but opportunity. Despite the fact that after just over 13 years of existence, the Christian dance scene is truly to the point now where we can start growing and impacting the lives of others in some very meaningful ways. We just need to determine where God wants us to be and what he wants us to do. That means we all individually need to sit down and listen to God for his direction. I think we have seen part of that develop over the past few weeks.

Small Packages make for Small Groups and Firm Foundations

On May 31 st, DJ Rish, Carey Jarvis, DJ Saryn, a few others and myself started a debate on the message boards here. The subject was the existence of this Christian scene and how it is or is not growing. That eventually led to a mutual consensus that the best way to effect people for God, to grow the scene, and to fellowship is not to hold huge parties, but to start local small groups. The idea is that in each major town, a Tastyfresh.com member will start a small group. These groups will meet once a month and have some type of activity, even if only a few people show up. They would also be independent from Tastyfresh.com so they can operate effectively in their local scene. These local Groove Fellowships can form the basis for a new, stronger and hopefully larger Christian dance scene, although their goal should not be to duplicate a separate but equal scene. If you would like more information about these Groove Fellowships check out the new forum on the message boards.

We are clearly at a point in time where we need to grow. We have a good base to start with that was founded by the first generation of Christian dance artists, label execs, promoters, and DJs, so of whom are still active in the scene today. We have also been blessed in that we have seen first hand mistakes that have been made and how they were resolved. We have all the knowledge we need to build the first floor of this house of God wants to see built. Now is the time for that to start happening. It’s time for more than just talk. It’s time for the past to be a lesson applied rather than an anchor holding us back. Regardless of whether you think there should or should not be a Christian dance scene, God wants and is moving to move in the lives of the club goers. Your job is to do what God leads you to do. That could mean throwing parties in your church’s gym or that could mean hanging out in the back of some secular club building a relationship with a DJ. The thing is, God is ready to move. Are you ready to let Him? Good things come in small packages. That small package is you. You are God’s tool.

* Unfortunately at the time of publication, I was unable to find a wholly accurate number via my sources. This was a very rough estimate given to me regarding sales of an earlier Faith Massive album some time ago.

What God is Doing in My Life (2005-07-15 00:00) - redsavior

What God is doing in my life... sounds a lot like some serious church cliché doesn't it? If you knew me personally you'd know that cliché church lingo is something that you won't find coming out of my mouth. I almost cringe when I hear people say the same things that we've been trained to say in church every Sunday morning. In fact I believe it's come to the point where people say, "I'll be praying for you" when they have no intention of doing it at all. In fact I know it happens because I've done it.

✖ What God is doing in my life... sounds a lot like some serious church cliché doesn't it? If you knew me personally you'd know that cliché church lingo is something that you won't find coming out of my mouth. I almost cringe when I hear people say the same things that we've been trained to say in church every Sunday morning. In fact I believe it's come to the point where people say, "I'll be praying for you" when they have no intention of doing it at all. In fact I know it happens because I've done it.

I've believed in Jesus for 11 years now. I have been in the same non-denominational Christian church ever since then. It's a fairly typical church with extraordinary Pastors whose preaching method I love and whose knowledge of God's Word I really admire. I've gone to this church nearly every Sunday, I met my wife in this church, I was counseled and married in this church, I served as a deacon in this church, and I stopped going to it about 1.5 years ago. Wait, what? Yeah – unfortunately. I've never really fit in, but I loved my church. I could wear shorts every Sunday and no one ever cared... except when we as deacons served communion... no shorts on those Sundays. But I still had spiked bleached blond hair and people didn't pay much mind. But recently I really lost desire to go to my church. Nothing was drawing me there. The pastor was repeating some sermons I'd heard and the worship was just dreadful for me.

I have never really been a fan of modern contemporary worship. A few times when the band has dropped out and the church has been filled with voices, I have teared up, closed my eyes and felt very close to God. But the last couple of years instead of worshiping God the only thing I think about when I'm standing there is the 500 people in the church singing like drones who just don't care. This has made me very jaded. I have become ill of being exposed to people who claim to know God and Jesus and then they just act like automated dispensers of catch church phrases and fake smiles. Maybe that sounds a bit negative but unfortunately most of you reading this have probably experienced this to some extent. I took my mom to my church after she lost a dear friend and she found no consolation there even though she was looking. When I take friends there and try to introduce them to people I know it often goes something like this:

Dan: "Hey there Jim, I'd like you to meet my friend Cornelius"

Jim: "Hey Cornelius it's nice to... Oh hey, be right back I have to go catch Renaldo before he leaves!! He has my copy of Grand Theft Auto in his car..."

exit Jim

Cornelius: "Wow... that was... a nice dude..."

You get my point. All in all the church has kind of left me empty and a fairly useless vessel. (There is another word I learned in church: vessel. I used to think a vessel was like a submarine. Is that word even in the Bible?) I'm sorry for the droning on but I need you to understand something. I've desired to be closer to God and the church hasn't helped me do that for about 5 years. It's helped me learn about God, but it didn't get me any closer. When is the last time you had a real worship experience? One where you knew the grandeur of God and you felt it - you could have died on the spot, opened your eyes and been standing next to God and it would have been all good. One year ago? Two years ago? Five? Ten? Maybe you have never had a real worship experience like that. Well recently I had one and here is

where it went down: Cornerstone 2005. For the first time in a long time I really feel like God has actually shown me something. I sound like a hypocrite speaking some crazy church rubbish again but that's what is so wonderful! I had an honest to goodness worship experience at Cornerstone and it involved electronic music. God is so good.

✕ On Friday night of Cornerstone 2005 there was an event in the dance barn called RE:Fresh. It was ambient electronica night with communion and fellowship. It started at 1am, but we showed up way late at about 2:20am because we had just seen Andy Hunter on main stage and we hung out with him for a long time afterwards. It was so awesome to see Andy on main stage because he is a brilliant worship leader. I didn't dance but I let myself get immersed in the music he was playing. Yet I was still not in a worshipful mindset. I hadn't been in that mindset for many years and I think a part of me believed that I could never go back there. I wasn't even looking for it or thinking about it. Worship for me was dead.

When we walked into the dance barn it was an abrupt shock. We were laughing, talking, and when we walked into the dance barn it was pure silence. There was a slow ambient bass drone and people were sitting on the cold dusty floor of the barn all over the place. On the projection screen it simply said: "SILENCE". It then proceeded to talk about when the last time you had been silent was. The last time you shut out the world, stopped everything, and just listened. Pure silence. Then the bass cut out. All you could hear was a silence at a festival with 30,000 + people. I sat down on the floor of the barn with my wife and near all of my Tastyfresh friends. I was calmed.

Earlier in the day DJ Race had asked me if I would help carry a loaf of bread out to the communion table at about this point. They had multiple different shapes of bread that were being laid out in the shape of a body. At this point an ambient track kicked in and I was motioned to go get a loaf of bread and stand in line to go carry it out. Then I realized a great significance. Everyone holding a loaf of bread was a DJ or producer in the scene we all love and spend lots of time in. Brian Scroggins, DJ Glow, Cindy Tucker, Hypostatic was leading the communion service, DJ Ellipse, DJ Race... and about 15 others give or take. We all carried the bread out, the body was formed, and then one by one people began to go to the table, tear off pieces of bread, and kneel.

✕ The table was intentionally placed close to the ground so you would have to kneel to take communion. I went up, took bread and dipped it in the grape juice. As I kneeled there praying and thanking God, listening to a great ambient electronic track, and being surrounded by like 10 of my best friends, it HIT ME like a ton of bricks. DJ Glow, or DJ Ellipse... someone put their hand on my shoulder while I had my eyes closed and holding a piece of communion bread and I knew it right then and there: THIS is the church I want to be a part of. I began to get teary eyed. I can't express how close to God I felt at that point. There was a great electronica track chilling in the background, and EVERYONE was worshiping God. You were not sitting in the barn that night and not worshiping God. Believe me. The following night I danced for an hour and a half to Andy Hunters set and I worshipped God the entire time. This worship was more real than I have ever experienced.

Can you believe that such a church exists? Well this is my new goal in life - to be in this church. Every aspect of my relationship with God has been ignited and I can't wait to get back there again. I will tell you exactly how I plan on getting back there too: Tastyfresh Groove Fellowships. We are planning one in Ohio and there are numerous other ones being planned. All I want now is to get back together with my friends most of whom I know because of electronica and take communion together while we listen to someone spin a nice long set of breaks, trance... it doesn't even matter what they spin. I want to hear about what God is doing in people's lives. I have a genuine desire to pray for my friends again. I have a genuine desire to be in a church again; a church of people who worship God through electronica. The coming months will be some of the most amazing in my life and I can feel it. It's on. I feel like I've been given a totally amazing blessing. God really pulled me back to church and I couldn't have dreamed up a better church on my own.

If you think about it I believe this is how churches really were 2000 years ago. They didn't get together every Sunday

and take communion, go through a routine, then leave and forget about Jesus for 6 more days until the following Sunday. They genuinely, truly wanted to know God more and when they took communion it was a true celebration. That's the real church! I'm looking to celebrate – and I'm looking to do it in front of some hard-hitting bass. The best part is, I know it makes God happy.

It's time to get out of our chairs, get off of our behinds and do whatever it is that makes us come alive. If you come alive when you are rock climbing, running, or bicycling then do that and surround yourself with people who do it. If you come alive when you see young children who haven't eaten in months receive food then dedicate yourself to this cause. And for goodness sakes if you come alive when you hear loud electronic music and you cant resist the urge to move - then get out there, dance the night away and remember that God loves us.

SHO' YA LOVE, SHILOH!! (2005-07-15 00:00) - redsavior

Ms. Cocolove catches up with one of the hottest production teams of today: Electrofly artist Shiloh. She chats with them about how their passion for dance music came about and how their faith has influenced their lives.

If you've ever done a Googism search for "Shiloh", you might get some very odd definitions, like " Shiloh is a beautiful dog who is great with kids " or "Shiloh is about a boy named Marty who falls in love with a dog..." *Whattup with the dogs, yo?* But folks that have been around, know that Shiloh are one of the most talented and committed music and multimedia artists (who just happen to be blood-brothers) of our time! I felt so honored to have an interview with the duo, who came up for air in the midst of their busy schedule just so I can holla'...

✕

Coco: Wow. I can't believe I'm actually interviewing you guys! So SHILOH: When did y'all fall in love with EDM?

Colin: I fell in love with it in '91 with industrial groups like Nitzerebb etc. Then I discovered house in '92 and progressive house in '94.

Justin: I started getting into it right around the time Colin started DJing, which was probably around '93. I remember listening to all his old records and sneaking them out when he was gone, trying to beat match. Thank goodness I never destroyed anything. He would have killed me, and I would have deserved it! I really started falling in love with the music around '96 though; back in the days of progressive trance.

Coco: I love stories about beginnings...and it's good for you, Justin, that you didn't tear up Colin's wax (laughs). So then why did you choose to create EDM and not another kind of music?

Colin: For us, it's purely for what the music does for us. It's not about trying to be a commercial success or impressing anyone. It's just about what moves our insides, and the nature of the music just meshes with what God put inside of us.

Justin: I guess it's just what I can relate to most musically. It's what really gets me moving. I used to play in bands as a bassist and I enjoy other types of music, but there's just something that appeals to me in knowing I'm not limited when creating music. I know that whatever sound Colin and I have a vision for we can make. And I think proof of that is the fact that a couple of progressive house heads are releasing an album full of downtempo breaks tunes.

✕

Coco: That's so interesting to find that you have not placed limitations on yourselves when it comes to creating music. You know that whatever seed God puts into you, He will see it through to completion! So, now, what set it off for you? Name your artists, your influences, the date, time and place...your earliest memories of music. Why did these artists make you want to create EDM?

Colin: For me it's really one person that started it all off. In the summer of '94 I heard my first Sasha mix tape. It was him playing at Renaissance. That just absolutely changed everything. Changed the course of my life forever. I was blown away like I had never been blown away before. I just knew that I had to be close to that sound. Also at that time there was a little tiny dream birthed inside me--wondering if I could one of the people influencing that scene. Never could I ever imagine that I'd be here, 11 years later, with Sasha as one of our biggest supporters.

Coco: Absolutely incredible. Dreams do come true!

Justin: It was definitely influenced by all of the mix tapes that got filtered down to me through Colin and Tyler (our other brother). But as much as any DJ or Producer back then, the intense influence of the TB-303 is what got me hooked. Acid house and early acid trance absolutely blew my mind. I remember hanging out in my friend's infamous shed when we were 15 playing acid tunes from this old Carl Cox compilation we had on vinyl. And hearing Kill City by Hybrid on Nick Warren's GU 008 is what got me into breaks. But above all, Sasha's mixes and tunes are what have influenced me to be musically where I am today. And that isn't something that will change.

Coco: And this, dear reader, is why it is so important to keep track of your musical roots...always remember where you came from! OK fellas, what's the first track that drove you wild? How did it make you feel, and what did you do when you felt it?

Colin: Probably "Spooky - Little Bullet", and other progressive classics like that. Made me feel like there was something larger behind the music—not just something man-made but something divine. I guess it made my insides knot up in a profound way. Still does.

Justin: I don't know if I can remember the first, because at that time I had no idea what the names were. It was all "that track that goes [insert sound here]." But a couple of the ones that are up there for me are "Jark Prongo - Movin' Thru Your System" and "Three Drives - Greece 2000." Greece 2000 to me is one of the most beautiful pieces of music. Would still bring a tear to my eye today.

Coco: It's no doubt that some of your tracks are causing quite a stir in the hearts of some up and coming artists as well! Speaking of which, who are your heroes, in so much that just hearing the name of one of their tracks sends you into a nearly unconscious state.

Colin: Hahahaha. Well, I've been around the scene for 15 years now, so my track induced frenzies are far more controlled these days... but Sasha's DJing and production still does it for me as much as ever, as does Charlie May, David West, Martin H—some of the notables.

Justin: I thought this would be an easy question to answer, but there's so many new names out there, and some of the biggies that once were, aren't around anymore. Used to be guys like Breeder and Slacker. But now it's guys like Martin H, Blake Potter, and Tim Fretwell. Also, I'm always excited to hear new tunes by Beaumont. He's a newer name but writes very beautiful music.

☒ Coco: This has been such an enlightening interview, guys! It puts your admirers into the soul of why you do what you do. As usual, I like to end the interviews with a most important question. Where did you find the Lord in this music? Let it go, and let it flow!

Colin: I knew the Lord from ever since I can remember. I always knew that God had a big plan for me. I guess from an early age I set out to make that plan happen for myself. It seemed that the more I tried the farther the goal got away from me—in anything that I did. Just didn't find any peace at all, but just a deeper desire to strive more and push through more. The first time around in the scene, I had a good measure of success as a DJ and did travel around the world. To my friends, I was successful and had every reason to be the happiest guy. I was miserable though... and getting more miserable by the day. I also made a right mess out of my life in the process. Then, when I was just at my lowest point of misery, I just felt like God visited me and asked me if I was ready to do it His way. I was! Right then and there I gave the whole thing to God and have never looked back since. Every now and then I start to feel a desire force things through, but God just reminds me to relax, have fun, and make music. It's like, He wants to do it all, so there's no doubt who did it and that He loves me. My ego can't say that I have no need for Him. So, you know? I can honestly say that if God said today, "okay Colin, that's it... it's time to move on to something else now", that I would do it and wouldn't look back. I guess I might feel like there was some unfinished business, but I already feel like God has given us many, many times over what I ever dreamed could happen with Shiloh. Besides, better is one day on God's path than an eternity as a rock star. At the end of the day, only He has the words to eternal life, so it's really a no brainer and I accept no commendation whatsoever for my commitment to Him. It's like, where else am I gonna realistically go?

Justin: I don't know where to begin man. I grew up knowing God, and had a great loving family. But I needed to find things out for myself I guess. That led to really bad decisions that had some not so great consequences. But through everything, God gave me the opportunity to get close with my brothers. The three of us became best friends really. God led us all back His way, one at a time, oldest to youngest. During the darker times, Colin and I had started producing some music independently from each other, which then turned in to us working together. We never really stopped doing music, but after we started getting more serious about our spiritual lives it just sort of didn't matter as much anymore. We had more important things going on. Then, one day, it was just time to do it. Colin looked at me and said "Ok, it's time man." And I felt it too. It's like God was saying "Guys, it's time to use your talents, and I'm behind you this time." And so we did it. Started going strong, keeping focused on God through it all, and we haven't looked back. And why would we? God has blessed us so much in our lives, and that's apart from the music thing. Everything we're doing is just temporary anyway. And you know what, if it stops, it's not the end of the world. What matters is

that we each love and serve the Lord, have an amazing wife, Colin's got a baby on the way, we have loving families and friends, and a vision for the future.

There it is, readers! Thank you, Shiloh for Sho'ing your (very well balanced) love for the music, the "scene" the players and our glorious God! Much, much respect!

Hey ... Wanna Sho' ya love for what you spin too? Hit me at [1]ShoYaLove4edm@yahoo.com

Next Issue ...People in a Box !

1. <mailto:ShoYaLove4edm@yahoo.com>

An Interview with 4o1K Productions (2005-07-15 00:00) - redsavior

Ryan Gibson a.k.a. 4o1K has been a mainstay in the Christian dance scene here in Atlanta, GA for years now. He has done it all from heading up the Atlanta based production group Amplified Life which threw parties throughout the southeast to writing and recording his own music and running his own music studio out of his home. Recently Ryan has gotten into creating a hybrid DJ/VJ show using self-produced audio and video controlled via a custom built rig.

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TF: How did you get started as a DJ?

4o1K: I got started at the age of 12. I couldn't afford turntables, so I used two tape decks and a mixer. My first gig was at a local house party. I think I was the only white dude there. I got my first real residency quite early. I think I was 16. It was a local place named Charades. I started out playing drum n' bass even though track selections was slim. I stuck with it for awhile, but then I ended up getting into house music, and after that the rest was history.

TF: When did you start writing and producing music?

4o1K: I started playing drums at a young age, so reading, writing, and creating music was a part of me for years. I started out composing drum scores for local high schools, so it just came natural when I started producing electronic music in 1996. What's really interesting is how I was experimenting with video production in high school. Some classmates and I, worked on dance music videos I produced for the youth group I was working with at the time. I find it funny to see how God was working in that department before I had any clue of what I was doing.

TF: You also own and operate a recording out of your home. How has that been going? Any hits recorded there?

4o1K: Its been going good, and I haven't releases the hits to the public yet. Ha ha ha. But, really I have been working hard with some very talented artists for the last year, and I hope I can really make some great products with the tools and the talent God has given me.

TF: If there were one tip you could give any producer about working in a studio, what would it be?

4o1K: When you're working on any piece of art, I feel it's important to reflect on the elements of your inspiration that makes them great. It may be the rhythm, progression, lyrics, colors, shape, or whatever, but some aspect makes it special. Expand on that.

TF: You were one of the main guys behind Amplified Life. How did that get started?

4o1K: Amplified Life was a Christ-centered production group that I started back in the mid 90's. It was geared towards teenagers and young adults, christian and non-christian, to give them a common ground environment to socialize, and just have fun. It was also a great platform for mentorship. I had the pleasure of training and helping many great christian DJ's and promoters during that time. It all started at a local event that's held in the Atlanta area every year, know as AtlantaFest. Robby Nelson (our sound tech), DJ Wiz, DJ Backdraft, and I set up shop in the middle of the campground, uninvited, for two different nights. We didn't have much gear then, but we definitely made ourselves known. After that we started playing at churches, youth retreats, clubs, warehouses, and went on tours all over the southeast.

TF: What did Amplified Life accomplish? What did the group get right?

4o1K: I think the number one objective was met. We created the 50/50 ministry environment, consisting of something for the church as well as the world. We discipled each other and reached out to people that might not get reached. It took a lot of work and some very special people to make it as successful as it was. Having people like Robby Nelson,

for sound and lighting, and Adam Plouff, for our web and flyer needs, was the key in throwing a sold event. Having great DJ's like Bill Sikes, Jamie Wright, DJ Backdraft, Fitzpatrick, DJ Deikon, and many other great guys, made it easy to believe in the events as a selling point. You have to believe in vision, and the people God has given you.

TF: What were some of the failures that the group had? How would you do things differently today?

4o1K: Some of the failures of our group, I would have to say a lack of prayer at times. We were a very event savvy group, unlike many churches, and at times relied on our wit and experience to push us through instead of prayer. You have to keep a tight reign on balancing both.

✖ TF: You are working on a new live DJ/VJ experience now. What is this about?

4o1K: It's about time is what its about! I've been working with many new artists like Rage, of Temple Yard-formally Christafari, and other guys trying to create a multimedia experience that allows me to perform original songs linked with video imagery, that can be altered on the fly. Although I think VJing and DJing is cool, and I still spin records from time to time, I like to think of myself as a live producer/performer. Although similar, I think what separates me from these titles, is the amount of spontaneity and live production that takes place with all the elements involved. Adding the element of video, allows me the opportunity to package up and take all the artists i work with, to my shows. Whether it be vocalists, drummers, keyboardists, or whatever, the can be right beside me on stage.

TF: What type of equipment are you using to create this experience?

4o1K: I've been working closely with a robotics engineer named Damon Pageant, of Tactical Robotic Solutions, to develop a custom multimedia production unit. It runs video and audio software such as Ableton Live and VJam Pro, and can record in real time for immediate distribution at my performances. it doesn't use a mouse or traditional keyboard, but has built in knobs and buttons as an audio/video manipulation interface. All the heads can check out my site for more info. Other than that, I use a projector, 17-inch Powerbook, RS7000, Turntables, and headphones. And on occasion, I use my Shure SM58 mic.

✖ TF: Another aspect of your new venture, is that you are selling your music on your website. The first single is Lights Out...featuring Rage of Temple Yard. Can you talk a bit about this track and how it came about?

4o1K: Rage and I have been working together on and off for about a year now. He's now in a group named Temple Yard. I've followed him for years, even back in his days of Christafari. I asked him to really stretch his boundaries for an electronic project such as this, and I really felt like stepping out and trying to come up with something unusual myself. Like every single I plan to release, there will be multiple versions of the track. The Lights Out single has four. I try to make each one unique and original, using lyrics as the only reoccurring concept.

TF: Your next single is a track called Serious...featuring DJ Deikon of Sweetbeatz / Beat-lab Productions and another former member of Amplified Life. What can you tell us about this single?

4o1K: Many people don't know this, but DJ Deikon is quite the vocalist. He'll be appearing on a couple of my releases in the near future. With that said, the Serious single, will contain some "dancier" vibe tracks, and still have radio appeal.

TF: where do you see the Christian dance scene going these days?

4o1K: I don't quite know, but what I do know is that dance music, in whatever form, has always been and always will be a part of society.

TF: What do you hope to see happen?

4o1K: I think I want what any Christian would like to see, Christians on the forefront of the industry leading the way. I think the key will be Christians trying things they may never have done before. When we put ourselves in positions where we're trying something new, it gives God the opportunity to make SOMETHING out of a nothing situation. You've got to exercise your faith.

Related Links:

- [2]4o1K Productions

1. <http://www.4o1kproductions.com/>

2. <http://www.4o1kproductions.com/>

3.5 September

Christianity and the Dance Scene III: (2005-09-15 00:00) - Brandon

[1]Any history of a Christian dance scene must include not only the producers of the music and the DJs that spin it, but also the variety of venues, the myriad of events, and the differing motivations that exist for throwing parties – outreach, worship, the desire to kick out the jams, whatever. Dance music events are a key element of the subculture and should not be treated lightly.

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✂ In the past, the Tastyfresh e-zine has featured articles examining the history of North American Christians and their involvement with dance music culture, but has treated the issue largely from the standpoint of the music industry, dealing with it as a market rather than a subculture. Any history of a Christian dance scene must include not only the producers of the music and the DJs that spin it, but also the variety of venues, the myriad of events, and the differing motivations that exist for throwing parties – outreach, worship, the desire to kick out the jams, whatever. Dance music events are a key element of the subculture and should not be treated lightly. Recent discussions on the topic have taken the tone of resigned pessimism tempered with hope for the future, demonstrated by the Tastyfresh Groove Fellowship initiative.

A common criticism whenever Christian involvement in a musical or cultural scene comes to light is that they are behind the times, bandwagon-jumping latecomers looking to appropriate a dying scene for their own purposes. The truth is a little more complicated than that. cursory research reveals at least 150 events of all kinds – 7PM-midnight microraves, illegal all-nighters, church-sanctioned dance parties, and club nights, among others, going back a decade, which proves that in conception if not always in execution, Christians haven't lagged far behind the larger scene at all, breathing the same air while occasionally nipping at its heels. At worst, the scene-within-a-scene can be accused of being 'middle school.' At best, it was a much-needed breath of fresh air. Given the transitory nature of dance music culture, it is no surprise that the events are largely forgotten.

Internally, other factors obscure the history of Christian dance events. Whether through a constant turnover of participants, a lack of unity, or willful ignorance, each generation of Christians involved in the EDM scene seems to feel that they are trailblazers charting new territory. Certainly, the scene does have its pioneers, its first generation, but the 1990s are starting to feel very far away, and the efforts of those that followed after the scene's humble beginnings need, sometimes desperately, to be put into context. Fresh perspectives are key, but it's all too easy to reinvent the wheel if you've never seen the blueprints. The early 2000s are littered with the remains of unprepared events and fledgling ministries that could have benefited from the all-too-ignored voice of experience.

The following is a snapshot overview of the sorts of events put on by Christians in North America in the past decade or so. Whether or not the event organizers consciously felt they were participating in the "Christian scene" or not, their events are linked by common values, often times a common pool of DJ-ing talent, and most importantly, the fact that I've dug through flyer collections, dozens of news articles, and internet archives to connect these dots. And this is just the tip of the iceberg.

Please note that the events listed below do not constitute an exhaustive list, as one article could not hope to fully describe the infamous "Christian dance scene." All credit where credit is due; the scene's not *that* small.

Repetitive Beats

✂ Around the time that the historic Firestone club was opening in Orlando, Florida, Tastyfresh founder Jamey Wright was persuading the owner of Jacksonville's Murray Hill Theatre to host recurring dance events with a Christian theme. Wright's efforts paved the way for Fusion, which has the distinction of being Jacksonville's longest running electronic music event on both sides of the Christian/secular divide. Fusion's near-unbroken string of events dating back to 1999 has made it an anchor of sorts in a sea of changing tastes and changing vibes.

One of the other longest-running recurring events, Illumination, is put on by Phantasmos productions and has been in operation since April 14, 2000 in the Connecticut area.

Christian clubbing has been aided by the opening of several purpose-built venues, like the aforementioned Murray Hill Theatre, as well as The Underground in Cincinnati, Ohio. "Most seasoned clubgoers are amazed with the venue and what it has to offer," says Cindy Tucker, one of The Underground's organizers. Metro Rags & Java, a Christian coffeehouse in Santa Monica, was the location for Found's seminal weekly, Tonic, in 1998.

Unfortunately, most club nights find it difficult to sustain a party week-in and week-out, and tend to be short-lived, like Toronto's "Revolution" that debuted at Club 160, a nightclub in the heart of the city's entertainment and record-shopping district but only lasted for two weeks.

Church Raves

This is probably the most flogged stereotype when it comes to Christian events, aided by classic send-ups on websites like landoverbaptist.org and ishkur.com.

Parties thrown in church venues have their own benefits and drawbacks. Organizations like Different Sect (Ohio) and Unified Soul (Toronto, Canada) were fortunate enough to be linked to churches that all but screamed for events to be thrown there, featuring large, warehouse-like open spaces (and in the case of Unified Soul, multiple spaces) that once cleared of furniture could house hundreds of partygoers without them bumping into pews and stumbling over hymnals. Tribes 02: The New Model, a youth all-nighter with a dance music twist, was thrown in a church that occupied an old YMCA space in Sarnia, Ontario, which allowed the promoters to decorate several rooms featuring different genres for a multisensory experience.

For some partygoers, the idea of throwing down and losing it in a 'sacred space' is too weird to contemplate; I lost track of the number of times I'd see a crowd of confused ravers smoking nervously outside a church, unsure of whether to go in or go home, while inside the DJ played to an empty dancefloor. Unless the promoters could foster the notion that this was a renegade break-in party in a church, they were not usually seen as credible venues by skeptical partykids. In other cases, no amount of decoration could conceal the fact that the venue was a traditional church sanctuary, and as any dancer will tell you, slightly sloping carpeted floor is not the best surface for physical activity, even if altars or communion tables are great flat spaces to set up decks. "I think Christians will go to an all-night party before ravers will go to a church rave," says Bryan Ketler, who has thrown events with the Electro Spirit Crew in Ohio.

Getting one's foot in the door at a church often means compromising one's vision at the behest of the authorities, and the event can sometimes wind up being held under the auspices of the church's youth or young adult programs. "All ages" events I've attended at churches ended up having children running around with glowsticks, which sent street cred flying out the window faster than a punted Teletubby. The intended audience for the event can also be muddled depending on how the promotion is handled - Tribes 02 was marketed as an electronic music worship conference but filled up with youth group participants armed with sleeping bags like any other church lock-in.



Is it a Christian party, or a party thrown by Christians?

Whether as vehicles for outreach or pure entertainment, events thrown by Christians that have no obvious ties to a church or ministry organization have a long history in North America. Religious references at the Innerglo event held in Hagerstown, Maryland in October 1997 were limited to cross-shaped glow sticks, for example.

One advantage to these sorts of events is credibility with the more serious students of the subculture. Mostly all-nighters, these parties sometimes feature mixed lineups of Christian and non-Christian performers, actually participating and integrating into the local culture of a given scene. "If I was having an outreach or party just to party, I would try to have it in a central location, like a VFW, banquet hall, teen club, etc. You'd be amazed though at how many non-believers end up at outreaches," says Ketler.

These events are undertaken with a considerable amount of risk, given the war on raves in North America in the past few years. The preemptive shutdown of Illumination's one-year anniversary party after a fire marshal's inspection caused a minor media circus in East Hartford, CT back in May 2001. The event's spiritual underpinnings, as well as

Phantasmos' thorough preparations to ensure a lack of drugs at the party did nothing to impress the city's authorities. Promoters who choose to run events in unlicensed venues face the same risks as those in the larger scene.

The issue of drugs can be the Achilles' heel for such events, as promoters are effectively on their own to come up with ways of screening attendees who might not abide by straight-edge values. Found Ontario promoters bought out the bar to ensure that alcohol would not be sold at their 2001 all-ages event "Guidance" only to see bottles in the hands of its attendees minutes after the party started and a smirk on the face of the nightclub owner.

Local politics affect party promoters of all stripes. Toronto police effectively priced promoters out of the rave market by demanding that a large number of paid duty officers be hired at exorbitant hourly rates to provide extra security.

When done right, these events can occupy positions of renown in the history of a local scene. Found Ontario's "Together Again," held in December 2000, is still considered by many partygoers to be one of the best events ever held in Ontario's tri-city region, while "Redemption," a 2001 event put on by Focused Underground Spirituality Environment (FUSE), was voted "Party of the Year" by admiring Minneapolis ravers. Redemption is also remembered as one of the last true raves ever held in Minnesota.

Naysayers take note: all-night one-off dance events still regularly happen in North America, whether they are called raves or Teknivals or nothing at all.

Festival Sideshows

Electronic music has also had a home on the periphery of many Christian music festivals. The longest-running and most well known of these is of course the Dance Tent at the annual Cornerstone Music Festival in Illinois. Over the past decade it has transformed from an all-night rave to a dance music label showcase back to a DJ-based party (albeit an abbreviated one), moving from a tent to the permanent "Dance Barn," with many ups and downs in between. Other festivals have also incorporated dance music in recent years. Phantasmos carved out a niche for itself at New Hampshire's Soulfest from 2002-2004. Further west, Washington's Tomfest regularly features dance music artists, and Xfest in Oregon as well as this year's installment of Joshuafest in California included after-hours events.

Worship Events

☞ One of the oldest types of Christian dance event, the DJ-led worship party can trace its roots to the UK's alt.worship scene and controversial experiments like LA's Techno Cosmic Mass in the early 90s. Reading, PA's Club Worship, for example, has been in operation since April 2000, its longevity rivaling Illumination and Fusion. "The worship is a led by a worship leader with a team approach – the DJ and the worship leader, and the visual people work together to create an atmosphere where peoples' hearts are moved toward connecting with God on the dance floor," says Club Worship founder Jeff Stoltzfus. "Of course the sound system and the lights make the place really move, but when it comes down to it, everything is secondary to the worship. Dancing before the Lord – worshipping on the dancefloor."

Dance music worship events can also be considered the latest development in a long history of introducing new sounds and musical instruments into a church setting. The 2000s have seen an increasing number of DJs included as performers at youth conferences and as part of worship teams across North America.

Putting the 'Art' in Party

Fusing art and music with faith, the avant-garde art party is a newer feature in the scene. Skycalled's western Canadian events such as Sky Pilot in June 2005 and the Easter 2001 collaboration between the Ichthus and Found LA collectives are key examples where sound, light, and visuals combined to get a spiritual point across to attendees without a focus on the dancefloor.

Conclusion

The first step that usually happens after something has been categorized is a total breakdown of the barriers between categories, and many of the events mentioned above can easily straddle the line between two or more variants. Not all worship events take place in a church setting, and some churches have been friendly to the concept of all-night dance events. "I would say that the 'purpose' of our events is really a blend of outreach, encouragement, worship,

fellowship, and entertainment among other things,” says The Underground’s Cindy Tucker. “The beauty of an event is it can be different things to different people.” Other groups have seen their events change from one form to another over the years as they feel out the right niche for themselves. Fusion’s events were club-focused at the outset and have shifted gears to cater to a younger market in recent years. “We really try to make it clear that we aren’t on a mission to make clubbers out of local teens,” says Fusion leader Bill Sikes in reference to Fusion’s current incarnation that features music from 8:15 to 11:15PM with a pizza party for its attendees afterwards.

Christian events came on the scene in increasing force during the decidedly ‘middle-school’ era of the rave scene as its first and second waves began to subside. Events of all kinds have regularly occurred in California, Arizona, Colorado, Texas, Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Florida, Georgia, Connecticut and Maryland, as well as southern Ontario, Canada, going back to the mid-90s, and that’s no slouch as far as the grand scale of the EDM scene is concerned.

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/ezine/9-2005-sept-oct/christianity3.htm>

How To Build A Local Scene - Part One (2005-09-15 00:00) - gsynth

The building blocks of any scene are the people in it. The talent, events organizers, and anyone and everyone who gets involved to help out, show support, or show up at events. You can't have a scene without all the crucial elements - mainly people, talent, skills, equipment, and support - so building excitement and getting people involved is a major priority. What it comes down to is building community.

I'm Shana Gray from Toronto, Canada. Professionally I'm a producer engineer, keyboardist and DJ, and social worker. Many people here at Tastyfresh know me for my nonprofit youth outreach work, specifically involving the DM4C Network, StreetBeatz Zine and InfoLine, and promoting outreach events. I'm going to talk about how we built and promoted the Christian dance music events scene that seemed to explode from Toronto in 1998, but more importantly, how you can use what we did and learned, to build your own scene. Anything I can pass on, that might inspire or help you in some way with your own efforts to reach out and make a difference in your own community, using whatever skills, gifts or abilities you may have in your hand.

The building blocks of any scene are the people in it. The talent, events organizers, and anyone and everyone who gets involved to help out, show support, or show up at events. You can't have a scene without all the crucial elements - mainly people, talent, skills, equipment, and support - so building excitement and getting people involved is a major priority. What it comes down to is building community. We didn't set out to start a scene, we started with one monthly event, but people were really into it, and excitement built and exploded. What we had on our hands was nothing less than the impact of revival! I believe God blessed us because we put Him first and gave Him the glory, were willing to work together in unity for a greater purpose, and were unselfish in our willingness to serve and work hard to make things happen.

Getting Started

In order to accomplish anything, you must first believe it is possible. If you have a vision, idea or interest, you can then do some research. Talk to people, your pastor, music industry professionals, anyone who may know what you need to learn. You might read 'How To' books and websites (try business books from [1]www.musicbooksplus.com), consider attending industry conferences or taking courses, and mostly, learn from others' work who are doing what you want to do. Above all, pray and commit your plans to the Lord, if you want to succeed. Learn what you can from what we've done, and apply it to your own situation. Get out, get learning, get experience, and as you go, you will learn as I did, and things will begin to fall into place over time. There are many ways to do things, and you're limited only by your imagination, ideas and research. This is what we did... and it worked...

StreetBeatz and DM4C

For those who weren't here to experience the StreetBeatz scene, basically we had many events going on in Toronto, and different cities and towns, and raves out in the bush. The scene started in Toronto, spread across southern Ontario, and grew to include central Canada and northeastern USA. We had many different DJs and artists and even breakdancers performing, and people sharing their testimonies on the mic, through drama, and talking to people individually who came out to events. We also went out to secular events to build friendships and talk to kids. We had a lot of volunteers and people supporting and praying for us, and the main attitude was "get involved", "let's make a difference", and "let's work together and support each other, to accomplish something we could never do on our own, in unity for the glory of God". StreetBeatz was our online zine and events mailing list. The original zine with pictures of artists and events is now posted at [2]<http://www.gsynth.com/sbz/SBZp1.html> . Part of the events list is archived at [3][http://groups.yahoo.com/group/streetbeat z](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/streetbeat%20z) . DM4C was the network mailinglist where we stayed in touch to make things happen. The mailinglist is still active at [4]<http://www.DM4C.com> .

The difference between a scene and a few scattered struggling events is found in connecting with others and supporting each other, and making opportunities for people to get involved. You could have one event with a moderate attendance and the same two DJs every month - or, you could connect with other promoters, sharing DJs so that the events have more variety, and the DJs have more places to play. Then, if you promote each others' projects and events, and encourage new events and talent to join in, you will have a connected growing scene. You will all benefit from the fellowship of others doing the same things you are doing, and you will all get more results from your collective hard work. And people will support you - your audience reach will stretch farther and wider, and the media and the general public will take you more seriously. Instead of a handful of people putting on one event you might find that your resources soon stretch to 300+ people who support what you are doing. The foundation to build any scene is based on networking and building audience.

Networking

Networking is connecting with others in your field and in related fields, beyond your own project. A 'network' is an invisible web of relationships. Without networking, it is unlikely your project or event will grow beyond a basic level, because you are not part of a larger support system. When you make a point to stay in touch with others in your field, your support system becomes much larger and things become possible that you can't do on your own. 'Official' networks often exist in the form of meetings, online messageboards, email lists, conferences and printed directories. A successful network involves all the components that make up a scene (promoters, DJs, artists, labels, media, supporters, etc.), and always has room for fresh up and coming talent, projects and ventures. You can start on a local level building your own personal network of relationships by staying in contact with local youth ministries, newspapers, radio, any and all talent, events, venues, sound system companies, etc.. And by getting in touch with people from other cities who are DJs, artists, events promoters and media. Messageboards such as [5]Tastyfresh.com and mailinglists such as [6]DM4C.com are designed to support and encourage networking among people in our scene. You can only get out of a network what you give!! Your involvement, getting in touch with others, and being the first to show initiative and support can make a huge difference. Ideally a successful scene is built on the teamwork of all people involved in the scene, particularly leaders. Never underestimate what your energy, ideas or influence might accomplish, even if you are new! Make a point to get involved, build relationships, show your support, and work together with others. If you create your own network, you should focus on building teamwork and support among the different components within the scene. Creating opportunity for people to get involved will enable the scene to grow faster. The purpose of networking is to build support and relationships, and become part of a larger system that will enable you to do things that you can't do on your own. This often makes the difference between a struggling event or project... and a Scene.

Building Audience

There are two aspects to building audience: (1) promoting, to draw new people in, and (2) keeping the people who come, coming back, and bringing their friends. There are three types of audience: (1) your supporters in media, (2) your supporters in the industry, and (3) your fanbase. Supporters in media can be defined as all radio shows, TV shows, magazines, newspapers, websites, etc., who support what you are doing and are on your mailinglist. When you promote to these people, often your promotional efforts are magnified as they pass on your events info through listings, radio spots, interviews, feature stories and announcements. Supporters in the industry (for the sake of non-profit projects) can be defined as any and all businesses, nonprofit organizations, or people who have something to give (even their prayers!), who are supportive of your outreach projects and are on your mailinglist. In your immediate team, you may also have volunteers and a street team. Your fanbase is the reason you put on the events - the kids you hope to reach out to, with your music, lifestyle and message.

Your original promotional mix to attract your audience will often involve a mixture of flyers, posters, websites, email, media support, advertisements, and word of mouth. You should always use the most quality promotion you can real-

istically afford, and put on the most quality events you can. What will keep people coming back? Sometimes it's the friendships they make. Or they feel they are a relevant part of the community, or they believe in what you are doing. Sometimes it's the leadership, your Christlike example, authenticity and connection to the people you are reaching out to, and the love you show to them. Sometimes they sense the very real presence of God or have been impacted by the truth of your message. Remember, nothing happens without prayer. Also you should strive to offer a variety of the best talent you can, a comfortable atmosphere, fun things to do, fun people to hang out with, food and drinks, whatever you can do to accomodate people, remembering that they come because they want to have fun and meet people. If you can give them free stuff, like stickers, flyers, or CDs, often it will keep you in their minds and hearts, help them feel more connected, and keep them coming back. It also helps if you have an online aspect of the community, with pictures from events, stories from people who attend, email (keep it fresh, fun, lighthearted, relevant and real!), and sometimes a messageboard or forum. The online aspect of community can help build audience and excitement within the scene. That was the purpose behind StreetBeatz.

Once you have a community, keep building it by having fun, staying real, entertaining the kids, always showing love to people, and always feeding them new spiritual food. Keep it fresh, always bringing in new ideas, people, and music. Create opportunities for people to get involved, and be prepared for growth. Keep promoting and building excitement. Remember, it's not about you, its about the people that come to your events, and what you give to them. The people are the reason you do the events, and without them, there would be no scene. If you don't reach out and touch them where they are at, why should they come? Give them something they want and need. A fun time, clean atmosphere, cool music, free stuff, real people, and Jesus Christ's Love that can change their lives. Give and live a believable message, and love them in action and in truth. Keep them wanting to come back, and bring their friends with them.

Your Following

Once you have a following you have to lead them somewhere. You can often see your influence in the attitude of your audience, if your message is coming across. If your message isn't coming across the way you want it to, you may need to rethink the way you do things. Is your influence positive? Are you making a difference? Did you tell a drug dealer about how Christ changed your life? Have you given kids enough reason to quit doing drugs? Are they cleaning up their lives? Are you inspiring young people to go out and change their world in a positive direction, or draw closer to God? Sometimes it takes time, and you won't see all the direct results or the impact your words may have on their lives. But you should be able to tell if your message is successfully coming across and if you are reaching people's hearts. If you don't know where to lead your followers, pray for them and let your light shine. Always love them. The influence of God working in your life, from your own prayer life, when you are open and willing to share, is often exactly what they need. Let God lead you as you lead them. And be prepared to plug them into a local church, youth or young adults group, or drop-in centre that has more resources than you do to help them in their spiritual walk. Remember, we are called not just to preach the gospel, but to make disciples. Do what you can.

A Positive Force In Your Community

Ultimately what you want is to positively affect a subculture or community in some way. If you know what your goals and message are, it should be easy to make them known. Sometimes creatively getting the attention and support of your community can help your cause. Volunteering in your neighbourhood, performing in the park for a free charity event, or getting involved somehow in the larger community can bring attention to what you are doing, encourage support from your community, and show them that you are a positive force. When you are ready to be noticed by the general public, don't forget to call the media. They can raise awareness, promote your cause, and deepen your respect and support in your community. By this time you should know who you are, be prepared to answer questions, deal with misunderstandings, uphold your mission and image, and take responsibility for your project and the people with you. Always remember why you do what you do, and stay on track. In Parts Two and Three, I will discuss in more detail how to start out.

Related Links:

- [7]StreetBeatz
- [8]DM4C
- [9]Shana Gray

1. <http://www.musicbooksplus.com/>
 2. <http://www.gsynth.com/sbz/SBZp1.html>
 3. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/streetbeatz>
 4. <http://www.dm4c.com/>
 5. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/forum/>
 6. <http://www.dm4c.com/>
 7. <http://www.gsynth.com/sbz/SBZp1.html>
 8. <http://www.dm4c.com/>
 9. <http://www.gsynth.com/portfolio>
-

People In A Box...SHO YA LOVE!!! (2005-09-15 00:00) - redsavior

[1]Having followed dance music from its birth in the early 90's after having grown up on disco and the synth-driven music of the 80's, I came to love dance/club music. The energy and melody of the music pushed my buttons, and the style has its own built in industry and community, so that is compelling as well.

Who are these people anyway? The name sounds like a macabre twist on a popular fast food restaurant, but the tracks that come from this music maker are hardly macabre...no, these sounds are innovative and definitely dance worthy. So, ok, how'd they get where they are now? The answers came from Kurt, the group's founder and lead vocalist

Coco: Hey Kurt! Thanks for taking the time to answer a few questions about how everything got going for you. So what made you choose to make EDM rather than, let's say Pop music?

Kurt: Having followed dance music from its birth in the early 90's after having grown up on disco and the synth-driven music of the 80's, I came to love dance/club music. The energy and melody of the music pushed my buttons, and the style has its own built in industry and community, so that is compelling as well.

Coco: Disco is the bedrock of many an artist's beginnings, but I think it is really refreshing to hear how synth played a part in shaping your sound! <Side Note> I ADORE Synth!! </Side Note> What artists did you listen to that influenced you the most, and when did these things begin to ignite your music making?

K: Technotronic-"Pump Up The Jam", C & C Music Factory-"Gonna Make You Sweat", and Snap-"Rhythm is a Dancer" are the songs that were first on the horizon to me. I remember hearing PUTJ in the student center, GMYS through the wall in the dorm over and over, and RIAD used on MTV's The Grind. Some of my influences also include Capella, Armin Van Buuren, Worldwide Message Tribe, Tina Cousins, Aqua, Madonna, and a lot of Top 40 dance remixes. After being such a fan of the music and studying it, it became the style I was most adept at writing, singing, and producing. Thus, the majority of People In A Box songs are one shade or another of dance music.

Coco: What's the first track you can remember that you thought was amazing? How did it make you feel, and what did you do when you felt it?

K: Wow, that's been a long time! I guess Code of Ethics-"Taking You Down." Made me feel like dancing! It's such a meaty dark track with unusual sounds and electric guitar woven so effectively together into a rich dance song. To my knowledge, it was never a single for the band. But ah, aren't most of the best tracks on the album never pushed as a single!?

Coco: Yes...many, many successful tracks are never released and pushed as a single. Off the top of my head, I think of Crystal Waters' "Gypsy Woman" from her first release back in the 1991. Kurt, you dropped a bombshell! Good dance tracks make you feel like dancing. And that, Dear Reader is the simple, yet profound nugget of truth! Ok, back to the questions. Who are your heroes, in so much that just hearing the name of one of their tracks sends you into a nearly unconscious state?

K: Well, Armin Van Buuren/Perpetuous Dreamer blows me away. He has such knowledge of mood, programming, arrangement, and mixing. There are a very limited number of Perpetuous Dreamer singles, and I'm kinda on a mission to get them all. DJ Light is also an amazing programmer/remixer/artist and such a great friend and vendor. Da Buzz (from Sweden) are a genius eurodance/pop group; their melodies are super-hooky. Iris, a phenomenal synthpop band from Texas, is another—what a rich mature sound and deep lyrics to boot! (irismusic.com) I'm a huge fan of 80s pop music, and after having learned how involved producers are in the achieving an artist's final product, I am blown away by several. Brian Tankersley (Bash 'n the Code, Kim Boyce), Dez Dickerson (Keith Brown), and Carl Marsh (Farrell & Farrell) were such an influence on me. I still am in awe of those albums today and after 10 years in Nashville have had the privilege to meet and talk with all three.

Coco: That's a good definition of a classic...being in awe of someone's art for years after it has been made, and aspiring to do that yourself for your own music. That's really great. So Kurt, lastly, and most importantly, where did you find the Lord in your craft? Just flow, flow, flow!

K: Granted a lot of the artists listed heretofore are “secular,” but the more I mature as a Christian, I think God is “in” more than just Christian Contemporary Music. If you can appreciate the beauty and delicacy of a flower and praise God for it, why not the lush melody, tight production, and body-moving groove of a club music song (that is not crass or lewd) so pounding that you want to get up and dance?

I praise God for power vocalists like Melanie Thornton (La Bouche) and the female singers of Capella as well as the gritty soul-baring emotion of Margaret Becker (also an influence on me). Kathleen and Jennifer of People In A Box have been an enormous blessing in their contributions to our music, their attitudes, and their heart for people.

Also, as far as myself or anyone finding the Lord in music, music is such a powerful tool. Anyone, with a well-done enjoyable song, could use it as a vehicle for their point of views, attitudes, expression, encouragement, venting, emotion, or anything. You can convey and drive home so many things with music. This question brings to mind First Call’s “Without You” (1989). What a dark, poetic, and make-you-think song! Music can definitely be a means for God to reach a person—encouraging Christians or breaking through to a non-believer with a thick wall of pain, anger, and questioning between himself and God.

I also think it’s good for everyone not to shun (and I was guilty of this myself as a teen) all music that is not CCM. After all, we don’t ignore all works of art that aren’t painted/sculpted by a *Christian* artist...poetry written by a *Christian* poet, etc. There’s so much more out beyond the CCM bubble—but as with anything, you need to find what is not a stumbling block for you and avoid what is lewd/crass/obvious “garbage-in.”

In closing, I just wanted to encourage fans — be they of dance or any other style of music — to support the artists. If you hear a song you like, go check out the full album. And if you like it, buy it! So many people today I don’t think understand the time, money, effort, and sacrifice that goes into an album — indie or big-label. And with radio, digital music download services, and rampant ADD, the full-album a band has worked so long and hard to craft is going largely ignored. Our newest full release, Find You Again (trance/dance-pop/eurodance), is available for preview and purchase at our web site: www.peopleinabox.com

Coco: Thanks Kurt!

Once mo’ again, we get to have a wonderful look into how one of the most creative artists around cut their musical teeth, and allowed our Glorious Lord to shape them into who they are today!

Next Time: REDSAVIOR

Hey You...Come on and SHO YA LOVE for what you do! Hit me at shoyalove4edm@yahoo.com

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/ezine/9-2005-sept-oct/sho-people.html>

3.6 November

The History of Christian Dance Music: Issue #0 (2005-11-15 00:00) - redsavior

DJ Dual Core takes a look back on how the CCM scene evolved and eventually made room for a Christian dance scene in this "prequel" to Carey Jarvis' original History of the Christian Dance Music.

To go along with Carey Jarvis's July 2004 article, "The History of Christian Dance Music (Part 1?)" I would like to offer a sort of pre-history. In the comic book world, I would be writing "issue # 0."

As Jarvis writes, things really took off with Christian electronic, dance and synthpop music in the early 1990's. Most of us know little about what happened in Christian electronic music prior to 1992...and that's too bad. It isn't too bad just because some of the pre-1990 music is good and underappreciated. It is also too bad because it is our history and we owe it to everybody to learn from it. What happened before Scott Blackwell's "Walk On The Wild Side" and the SLAVA "Voice Of The People" compilation? What can we learn from the history that gave us those artists and those that have come since?

The short answer is that there was some Christian electronic music before 1992 but much of it had an authenticity problem. Eventually, the record labels, producers and festivals got it right. The story has an important moral that works on multiple levels. Here is how it happened.

The 1980's and the growth of CCM.

✖ Let me take you back to the mid 1980's. For all practical purposes, Christian techno, electronica or synthpop did not exist in any form. Christian rock, although it had existed for over twenty years, was still a novelty. Larry Norman, Randy Stonehill, Rez, Daniel Amos and other members of the first wave of Christian rock (grown from the upheaval that was The Jesus Movement of the 1960's and 70's) were well established in the corner of The Church that accepted them and the corner of the Christian music industry that put out their records. The rest of The Church didn't "get it." The rest of the music world didn't care.

Then, in 1985 Amy Grant released her 9th full-length album, "Unguarded" and in '86 Stryper released their 3rd, "To Hell With The Devil." Through a combination of talent, clever marketing and broad distribution Grant and Stryper broke out of the CBA (Christian Bookseller's Association) bookstore market in a way other Christian artists had not. They didn't just deliver a novelty single that got popular attention. They moved into the mainstream of American popular culture in a way that sold T-shirts, concert tickets and back-catalog CDs. They even did well on MTV. Enigma, A & M, Word and Myrrh Records; the artists themselves and thousands of retailers made a lot of money. CCM-friendly churches and youth ministries everywhere were overjoyed and thousands of Christian rock fans had artists to talk about that their un-churched friends had heard of and maybe even liked.

Christian Synthpop Surfs Stryper's Wake

✖ What the success of a pop-metal band and a pure pop vocalist moving from the CBA market to the mainstream did for Christian electronic music was critical, if indirect. It grew the Christian music market as a whole and opened doors. By the mid 90's I'd be buying Mortal at Disk Jockey Records instead of Olive Branch Books. In the mid 80's the immediate effect was that listeners realized "religious" music didn't have to sound sappy or churchy and the music industry realized it didn't have to sell in small quantities. Overnight, the style options on the big Christian record labels went from about four (southern gospel, black gospel, inspirational and worship) to almost limitless. In theory at least, any style that sold in the mainstream market could be viable in the CBA market.

CCM (Contemporary Christian Music) busted out. In the 1980's climate of intense fear within The Church about all things "Satanic" the race was on to find the Christian equivalent to every secular music act that hit a youth pastor's radar. In the '70s Resurrection Band had been the Christian Led Zepplin and Daniel Amos the Christian Eagles. Now we had a Christian Motley Crue (Stryper) and a Christian Olivia Newton John (Grant). Alternatives to Loverboy, Heart, Dan Fogelberg, Billy Joel, Iron Maiden, Hewey Lewis and Pat Benatar showed up in pretty short order. However, we had no Christian Depeche Mode, Information Society, Frankie Goes to Hollywood, Erasure, Dead Or Alive, OMD, Howard Jones, Ministry or Skinny Puppy...yet.

In the early and mid 1980s there were a few Christian synthpop records, most of which are very hard to find now. Flock 14, Crumbacher, 441 and The Technos all put out full-length albums prior to 1987 that almost nobody heard. For both records and live performances the right audience was hard to find.

In the summer of '86 Crumbacher ruined equipment playing in the rain for a disinterested audience at Sonshine festival in Minnesota. Shortly after that the band played a set for an equally indifferent crowd at Greenfest in Kitchner, Ontario. According to Dr. Tony Shore (now a writer, blogger and musicologist, then a DJ for KJIA radio), bandleader Stephen Crumbacher was extremely frustrated that summer by the Christian community's failure to embrace synthpop the way they were embracing hard rock. Both its entertainment and ministry value seemed lost on them. The people showing up at festivals were not looking for a Christian Duran Duran.

The mid 80's also saw artists known for other things bringing some electronic sounds to the CCM audience. Most notable were Petra, Bash-n-the-Code and Steve Taylor.

Petra's contribution was simple. Their keyboard player, John Lawry, was one of the stars of the band and would show off basic sampling technology in concert. He had the sentence "Jesus Loves You" sampled. When he got his solo spot in the concert he would play it back at different pitches, stuttering "Jesus" and then playing the full sample at a low pitch so it was really slow. It was goofy. It was a gimmick. It was the 80's. The crowds loved it.

At the same time, pop group Bash-n-the-Code was having some success with a light electronic dance sound. Being a quintessential "play-preach-alter call-play some more" teen/pre-teen music ministry more than a band, Bash had zero artistic credibility. This is too bad. After stripping away the contrived images, silly stage show and childish lyrics, the sound was actually not bad.

Steve Taylor's mid 80's sound was semi-electronic, too. He even released remixes...after a fashion. Being the first of it's kind (for me, at least), the maxi-single of "Meltdown" remixes was exciting to see, if not to listen to. In one interview he named The Transatlantic Remixes (a split release with Sheila Walsh) as his worst release ever. Taylor's wit and topicality probably undermined these records as serious dance music or techno as much as the second-rate production. Taylor's strengths were, and are, a snide wit and an eye for social criticism. Those things aren't at the top of the resume for a dance or electronic artist.

1987 was an important year for Christian electronic music. This was because of both good and bad things. In 1987 Frontline Records (who would eventually bring Scott Blackwell to the attention of the CCM community) released Mad At The World's self-titled debut album. This was the best-produced Christian synthpop release to date. The sound quality, serious mood, keyboard patches and conspicuous use of technology were all up to the minute and ready for anybody and everybody to hear.

As good as this record and some later MATW records were, there were also problems, general ones and specific ones for electronic music fans. On the debut record the life-long Californian singing lead did so with a fake English accent, referencing Depeche Mode and New Order. This was a big problem for anybody who cares about authenticity. In short order we saw the copped accent go away but so did the techno beats. Over the next five years, each successive MATW record was less electronic than the last. Clearly, Roger and Randy Rose, the brothers at the core of MATW, were not committed technophiles. No problem for the bass, guitar and drum crowd. Big problem for the sampler, drum machine, flanged vocals set. Our new best friend, and best hope for developing a real scene, bailed on us.

Mad At The World put out one great sounding electronic dance record but the follow through and credibility just was not there. By the early 90's MATW were a steamroller of a live hard rock band—something that came much more naturally for them. Our loss, rock 'n roll's gain.

In my opinion, the single worst thing to happen to Christian dance and electronic music fans in 1987 was also the release of an individual CD. I think this one album, more than any other, captures what we were up against in the 80's and early 90's, and still are, to a lesser extent. It was a various artists compilation released by the otherwise respectable Myrrh Records. It was called "Adventures In The Land Of Big Beats And Happy Feet."

To say that the album was bad is both an understatement and unfair to the artists who contributed tracks to it. The album contains good songs by everybody from Amy Grant to Phillip Bailey and Mark Heard (under the name, Ideola).

What made this record embarrassing, aside from the saccharine cute name, was that it was presented as a continuous mix. Unfortunately, Myrrh did not hire a skilled DJ/Producer to properly remix and/or beat-match the songs. In stead, the songs are linked together by bad additional music by Lee Cahuenga. These short tracks have names as cute as the album title and are likewise attributed to made-up artists, also with cute names, in the track list. Cahuenga is credited in the notes for the additional music and "remixing."

Where was Scott Blackwell when we needed him back then? That's not a rhetorical question. He was spinning real dance records in real clubs and producing tracks with artists like Book of Love and Debbie (Deborah) Gibson. I'll wager nobody at Myrrh even knew his name.

What Adventures... (along with similarly misguided dance, synthpop and rap releases from Star Song, Benson, Reunion, Arcade and even Frontline) revealed was that most Christian record labels of the day, ones that had the resources to put out good electronic or dance records, weren't doing it. They put out products that they wanted to be able to call dance, hip-hop, techno or synthpop but it too often arrived in a form that crushed any possibility of it being taken seriously. Like the executives and producers at the labels, Christian electronic and dance music fans wanted Adventures... to be a driving dance mix that made you want to move. For those of us who had heard the real thing the distance from that wish to the truth was not just disappointing, it was embarrassing.

The brightest star in the Christian techno sky in '87 was the Mad At The World debut (fake accents and all) and we focused on that. What most of us didn't know was that there were other things brewing. Soon, Mortal's precursor band, Mortal Wish, would form. '87 saw Mark Planquet begin work on what would become the Gadget album, Joyful Noize. Gadget was as underground as could be, most people wouldn't hear it until 1990 and you couldn't dance to it. It was, however, proof beyond all doubt that it was possible to make electronic and in this case quite experimental and avant-garde Christian music and get it heard, at least by a few people. There was even a Gadget live set at Cornerstone, 1990.

Speaking of 1990, that is when things started to really look up. Synthpop band Painted Orange opened Cornerstone Festival 1990 to an enthusiastic crowd and had a well-produced independent cassette on sale. The shadowy industrial act, Blackhouse released the spooky, deliciously noisy album, Material World. Like Gadget, you couldn't dance to it but it was electronic, provocative and good. Christian rap was starting to blossom, which brought attention to big beats, DJing, dancing and house music.

Then, finally, came 1992, when it all came together and we started to get full servings of the dance and other electronic music we were oh, so hungry for. By the end of the year Deitiphobia, Mortal, Jyradelix, Technokraci, and Scott Blackwell would all have full-length albums out on well-distributed CBA market labels. Blonde Vinyl's SLAVA compilation, "Voice Of The People," also came out that year. Releases by Dancehouse Children, Prodigal Sons, Echoing Green, Code Of Ethics, globalwavesystem, Dead Artist Syndrome, Under Midnight, Circle of Dust, Eric Champion and Native Son And The Foundation were either in the works or in the can. Not only that, most of them were good.

True Tunes News declared Cornerstone 1992 "The Year Of The Synthesizer."

✕ Aside from quantity, what changed? There was a lot more going on than Scott Blackwell needing a breath of fresh air and Blonde Vinyl taking risks with Deitiphobia and Dancehouse Children. And it wasn't just Frontline Records' desperation to be the label that broke the Christian alternative to Nine Inch Nails—Mortal. All those things were true (it is said that Mortal was signed without anybody at Frontline even listening to their demo tapes) but something else had changed, too.

The music was no longer being made by people who knew nothing about it or the scenes it came from. Almost every attempt at Christian electronic and dance music prior to 1990 lacked authenticity and the artistic credibility that comes with it. It took a combination of Christians who had been listening secular electronic music all along (on the sly, if their church was like the one where I got saved in '86) and people who were part of secular electronic and dance scenes coming in from outside. They got The Church, the labels and the festival organizers to listen to them, rather than the pre-existing industry professionals. When that change took place, the audiences and the music had a chance to size each other up properly for the first time.

The established CCM industry people had backgrounds in gospel, worship or, if you were lucky, rock. That's where records like "Adventures..." come from. It took somebody who had been spinning house for years in smoky clubs and needed a change of scene to give us Scott Blackwell's "Walk On The Wild Side." It's far from my favorite CD, but it was oh, so important in 1992. It was real and it made so much that was to come possible.

At the risk of stating the obvious, the lesson here is that you have to be real. Electronic music is all about synthetic sounds, appropriation and the creation of things that are inherently unnatural. We then use those things, those most "fake" of all sounds, to communicate the most real of emotions and to tell the truth about ourselves. As Christians, that means putting our faith, as lived out in our lives, into the music, not somebody else's.

What changed in the early 90's was that several Christian producers for whom electronic music was their natural language had the chance to release Christ centered records to the CBA market and in some cases, beyond. Before that the labels were trying to fake it with rock and gospel producers. We were all very glad for the change. Let's not spoil it. Let's keep it real.

How To Build A Local Scene - Part Two (2005-11-15 00:00) - gsynth

[1]Everyone has to start somewhere. There seems to be many doorways into the music industry. The key is to find an entrance that works for you. To walk through it and get involved where you can learn and grow and become what you want to be, and enjoy the journey. Whether you have a goal in mind or not, you can often stumble upon opportunities. You can often find or put yourself in situations where you can create doorways to get involved and start something new.

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Retracing My Steps

I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life, and had been strongly discouraged from pursuing music, despite my creative personality and talents. So when I left home I did a year in Masters Commission in [2]Rockford, IL, which soon became a second year in [3]Phoenix, AZ. What I did with my second year set the course for what I've done since. I learned how to start up every ministry they ran there, and spent the rest of my time playing in bands. Day in and day out, when anyone needed a musician, I was there, playing keyboards, violin, vocals or fretless bass guitar.

My first week back in Toronto, where I decided to attend school for keyboard performance, instead of going to orientation activities, I went to a Christian band festival at a local theme park. After a concert there, I helped the headlining independent band carry gear off the stage (the most difficult job for musicians, who can almost always use some quality roadie help). I told them I was new in the city and wanted to start a band, and asked how could I get involved with what was happening locally. They invited me out to a networking meeting. The door price was expensive, but I soon found myself talking to producers from Nashville, people from the media, and tons of other bands and artists.

So I started a live electronic band, and soon began touring in southern Ontario, as I continued to show up at other networking meetings and was offered gigs. But after a month of touring I realized I had missed a month of school... so I decided to put the band on hold, and see what else I could do closer to home, to fill my need for adventure and excitement. I showed up to volunteer for a community radio station located on my school campus, and offered to write for and help out at a newspaper, to try my hand working in media. And one night, hanging out with some local media types, we showed up to a Christian club night and coffeehouse.

It was a monthly event called Life Zone, located at Queensway Cathedral in Toronto. In the main room, they had DJs mixing in Christian and worship vocals over house, techno and breakbeats, with a light show and video projections, a dancefloor, pool tables and video games. They also had a fantastic coffeehouse with gourmet desserts where people could sit and talk. I was so inspired by the electronic music and atmosphere and instantly became friends with the DJs. I liked the club night so much I was the last to leave, and I met all the people putting on the event.

The following month I began volunteering with them, helping to move chairs around and designing flyers. Whatever I could do to help out and get involved. They had a moderate but faithful monthly attendance, and I felt with more promotion, more people would come. I had never designed club flyers before, but since I understood the basics behind promotion from playing in bands, I put my creativity to work. I figured people can't come to events they don't know about, and believed I could come up with some creative ways to get the word out, so more people could find out about this cool event in our city.

Prayer was a cornerstone in my lifestyle, and soon I found myself talking to many different people about Christian dance music and club nights. People seemed to come out of the woodwork who were interested in being involved, and willing to bring in their talents, abilities and resources. So many people expressed interest, that I decided to have a meeting at my house to bring everyone together. It was a networking and vision casting meeting, to become acquainted with each other, talk about what we were actively doing, and what we wanted to see happen. I never intended to become a leader in any way, until one of the Life Zone guys turned to me and said, "I think you need to

lead this". At the time I had no idea what any of this could become or what might happen. But I did feel something would happen, and I wanted to be a part of whatever it might be.

I was new at email, but soon had an email list for anyone who wanted to hear about what we were all doing. Soon some of us were starting up more events, and brought in more DJs and artists we had come into contact with. Things began to grow faster. We made a point that whenever anyone started up a new event we would all stay in touch, so the DJs could play at the different venues, and more events could happen with better lineups and more variety, as we pooled our resources.

I started [4]StreetBeatz Zine to promote the artists, DJs and events. It was originally going to be in print, but that didn't work out, so I put it on the internet instead. Word had spread so quickly I needed two email lists. I set up one events list for supporters and fans, and another networking list for DJs and promoters to stay in touch and make things happen. The network list evolved under different names until we stuck with [5]DM4C.

A visit to Cornerstone festival with a single print copy of StreetBeatz Zine in hand literally doubled the number of people involved on the networking list at that time. Because I was also networking in the music industry, some people on our events list were from radio stations and newspapers, and we received more promotion from their support. Word continued to spread, and our fanbase grew.

There was always room for new talent, events, people, ideas. Love for God and people, electronic music, club and rave culture, and hanging out with each other, were our continual sources of inspiration. We shared a true passion for all types of electronic music, reaching out to people in the scene, and the experiences of each unique event. There were always new faces and often familiar faces at the events. City to city, we supported each other and felt a real sense of community. PLUR not only in the sense of Peace Love Unity Respect but also Prayer Love Unity Revival. Collectively doing whatever we could to make this outreach scene happen.

Together we built the scene. Artists, DJs, dancers, labels, media, supporters, volunteers. Anyone who could put on an event, spread the word, bring in resources, or help out in any way. For about five years we had between one and five events every month in cities, towns and out in the country. Anyone who had a Christian electronic music event could be listed in StreetBeatz OnLine InfoLine and had access to the DM4C networking list. Our collective hard work resulted in lots of music, events and ministry happening in many different cities...

Memories... I remember dragging my cousin out to take event photographs for the website. Driving a car load of people two hours to a rave in the middle of nowhere. Staying up all night talking outside, after one club night, because no one wanted to go home when it closed. God meeting us right where we were, time and time again. One hundred fifty kids listening intently as one girl shared her testimony through a beautiful, heartbreaking live theatre presentation. A crew of breakdancers called the Bondage Breakaz. A concert where an artist painted live as musicians played. An art room where you could create your own. A drum circle. MCs sharing from their personal lives on the mic. A heart to heart talk from one performer to a crowded chillout room. Different creative atmospheres, rooms and visuals, and many different types of music. Conversations with people who came to the events. Sometimes people accepted Christ, other times we were planting seeds. People loved us because we were real and we loved them first. Sometimes we had free music from the artists or labels, or candy, gifts or tracts to give out. Everyone has stories to tell... The artists, DJs, breakdancers, promoters, people working so hard and putting their hearts fully into it. So many people supporting and encouraging us and praying for us.

When I finished my two years in keyboard performance classes, I studied producing engineering and began working full time in the music industry. I had also responded to ads when I was in school, working for labels, studios, clubs and companies, soon picking up contracts from people I met through other jobs and people I knew. Before I finished school I was working for many of Canada's top companies. And soon my work began to take over my life, and I had less time for promoting events, and needed to spend more time on my own projects.

All things come to a close... most of us running the events were professionals and artists in other disciplines who had done this in our spare time. By the time we finally gained mainstream acceptance, when TV stations were interested in covering our events, and Toronto area churches were showing a real interest in supporting our ministry... most of us no longer had time to promote events. Most of the Toronto promoters and DJs were working full time in technology

jobs or were freelance performers in other fields. One was working on his first short film. I continued to book DJs for a few more events, but couldn't commit to the time required to keep running events, since the demand and workload was too great, and I needed more time in the studio. Because like anything else, promoting events can become a full time job.

Some of the DJs are still around, and plenty of new performers. New events have come up. Like anywhere else, Christians are working in jobs throughout the entertainment industry. Most of the young adults churches have expressed an interest in supporting this form of music, outreach and events. There is no shortage of opportunity. Currently the artists and events do not seem to be well networked and supporting each other to build a unified scene. There are some artists who are getting out there with their own message.

For anyone with an interest to start out, I would encourage you to look for what you feel is needed, and try to fill that need with what you may have to offer, because often that will be a growth area. I started promoting events, simply because I thought an event I liked needed some fancier flyers and more people, and soon found myself with an events list that "those in the know" considered "the source" for underground Christian dance music events in our area, and respected by professionals and media in Toronto's industry. I started a networking email list for DJs and promoters because no one, excepting one label at that time, was supporting all the talent out there. So I created a way for people to connect and make their own opportunities.

It has never been easier to make your own music at home and reach a worldwide audience. To network on an international level, and get involved in any scene you want to. To get the knowledge you need, to pursue what you want. You have to choose what you want to do and then find a way to do it. If you feel something is needed that you think you can do, why not step out and do it? If you can find the doorways I used to get into jobs and start new things, you can create your own out there and figure out ways to do things that will work in your own city, with your own ideas and projects.

And theres a world out there crying out for answers that you have found just by knowing God and living a real Christian walk each day. There has never been a more important time for new leaders to emerge, and for people to communicate real love and truth that can only be found in a real relationship with God. Sometimes it only takes one person to step out and start making a difference. If we don't reach out to people, who will? Whether it's through the safe environment and friendships you can provide through events, the real life Christian or Christlike example you portray as an artist through your music, the influence you may exert as a DJ with your positive track selections, attitude and example. The excitement you build as a promoter, when the kids know your name, who you are and what you are about. How much more can we all accomplish if we encourage each other and spur one another on...

I once thought my ultimate dream was to play in a band. But almost as soon as I left home I played in my first real alt rock band and several other bands as well. So what was I to do now, since all my dreams had come true so quickly? "Look at the nations and watch - and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told." (Hab. 1:5) God is not limited by our imaginations. Once you take the first step, there is no limit how far your journey may take you, if you will trust Him. So take that first step and the rest will follow. Get started! In Part Three, I will talk more about how to start up your own unique project.

Related Links:

- [6]Street Beatz
- [7]DM4C
- [8]Shana Gray

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/ezine/10-2005-nov-dec/localscene-part2.html>
2. <http://www.rmconline.net/>
3. <http://www.mcin.org/>
4. <http://www.gsynth.com/sbz/SBZp1.html>

5. <http://www.dm4c.com/>
 6. <http://www.gsynth.com/sbz/SBZp1.html>
 7. <http://www.dm4c.com/>
 8. <http://www.gsynth.com/portfolio>
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The God of My Journey (2005-11-15 00:00) - Cindy

[1]I first shared the desire to go on this trip with the Tastyfresh community on July 23rd. In order to go I would need to get the time off approved by work, raise \$2000 for the trip, and get all the necessary paperwork completed. On August 17th I took a leap of faith and purchased a plane ticket, with no place to stay and no confirmed spot at the conference. It was one of the biggest leaps of faith I think I have ever taken.

Sometimes in life an opportunity comes our way that blows our mind, such an opportunity came my way recently.

This past summer I was involved in helping put together the Re:Fresh event at Cornerstone. Re:fresh's purpose was to draw people into a time of reconnecting and refreshing their relationship with God through multi-sensory outlets. We had 2 DJs (DJ Race and DJ Jamin) spinning chill out music as well as mixing visuals. While the music and visuals were essential to leading people in worship, various interactive stations opened up for participation throughout the night. The stations were modeled after concepts and other stations used in prayer rooms in the 24-7 Prayer movement. And it was in the journey of Re:Fresh that God placed me on a path that included leading me to a foreign country.

While we were preparing for Re:Fresh God crossed my path with [2]David Blackwell, the director of 24-7 Prayer in the United States. Through several phone calls he listened, encouraged, and helped birth the stations that would appear at Re:Fresh. And through talking to David my path crossed with [3]Dan King, director of 24-7 Prayer in Canada and Clint Dunning, owner of [4]Haylo Clothing.

At the time I thought these contacts were made just for Cornerstone. I had no idea that soon after returning from Cornerstone I would be sitting in my office at home holding a personal invitation to attend the International Leaders Gathering for 24-7 Prayer in Dresden, Germany. You see, God crossed my path with various others to show me that He is the God of my journey.

I first shared the desire to go on this trip with the Tastyfresh community on July 23rd. In order to go I would need to get the time off approved by work, raise \$2000 for the trip, and get all the necessary paperwork completed. On August 17th I took a leap of faith and purchased a plane ticket, with no place to stay and no confirmed spot at the conference. It was one of the biggest leaps of faith I think I have ever taken. On August 23rd I registered for the conference and started to wonder if I could make the suggested deadline of having everything taken care of by the end of the month, a mere 6 weeks after the invitation was extended to me.

In the 8 days after I jumped out in faith and purchased a plane ticket, \$836 had been donated. I was shy \$434 from having the total amount raised. At 8:41pm on August 25th after sending out an email update sharing how much God had showed me the difference 8 days can make, God showed me the difference 11 minutes can make.

11 minutes after I posted the update a member of this community donated the remaining \$434. Honestly, when the email came I did a double take and once my eyes believed what they saw I busted out into tears. In one month and 2 days everything that I needed to go was taken care of. I don't know how many of you have ever experienced something coming true that you really thought was a pipe dream, but that is what I felt.

Me... a little ole' nobody from Cincinnati... invited to attend a leadership conference for a ministry I deeply respect half way around the world... funded by friends, family, and a ton of people I have never even met... it all seemed a little unreal.

And so on September 22nd I boarded a plane in Chicago to head off to the conference and I doubt my life will ever be the same.

In an attempt to keep this article from being super long I won't be updating you on the happenings of each day. If that is something you are truly interested in you can read those kinds of updates here ([5]9/22 & 9/23, [6]9/24, [7]9/25, [8]9/26). But my intent is to share with you how God is God in my journey and to share a few of the many lessons He taught me.

If God wants you somewhere, you will make it there.

There were many times in the process of raising the money that I doubted if I heard God correctly or perhaps I was just going because it was something I really wanted to do. I learned though that God has a way of leading this child to right where He wants me to be, whether I know it or not.

The joy and the lessons are often found in the journey and not the end destination.

Dresden, Germany was amazing and I learned a ton, don't get me wrong, but it wouldn't have been as amazing if I hadn't enjoyed the process and learned along the way. I found out that no matter how stressful or how close a deadline was, God was still there ready to provide comfort or show me a lesson in it all. God is an amazing teacher because He can use even the smallest simplest things to teach us. The key is to stay moldable and teachable.

I learned that I have no guts when it comes to prayer. I pray for God's will but I won't just flat out come out and say what I want.

I don't know about many of you but I truly stink at praying. (Sounds funny from someone who attended a leadership gathering for a prayer ministry.) When I pray I often find myself praying the standard 'whatever your will is Lord' kinda prayers. Now there is nothing wrong for praying for God to have his will, in fact it is how I got into this predicament. The error is when we forget that we can go boldly before God's throne with our burdens and it's there we find grace and mercy and the strength to leave our burdens with Him ([9]Hebrews 4:16).

I learned this lesson when I watched people crying out to God begging him to spare America of Hurricane Rita and I sat back praying that God would do what He needs to do. I didn't realize I had no guts until we read the news from CNN and found out it had turned away from Houston and had weakened. In fact, CNN said that Hurricane Rita had gone 'gentle' on the states and Pete Grieg prayed that it would be gentle on us. It was in that moment that God spoke directly to my heart, "Thanks for praying for my will, but it's ok just to flat out ask. Remember sometimes you don't have because you didn't ask, so ask." I almost busted into tears but I held my composure and just muttered back, "Thanks for taking care of it even if I am stupid and don't ask."

I learned that I really have no idea what it means to live as the body of Christ or to live in community with other believers.

There were many lessons that I encountered during the whole process of this journey and I believe that many more will surface as time passes, but out of all of them, thus far, this is the lesson that I have wrestled with the most. What does being the body of Christ look like? What does living as a community mean?

I would venture to say that a majority of us are familiar with the community model in Acts 2, a group of believers who sold all they had, lived together, and took care of others' needs (see [10]Acts 2:42-47), but that seems to be as far as our knowledge goes.

While meeting different people and learning about their ministries I was amazed at how many people lived in community with those they ministered with, I'm not talking about being roommates with people, but truly living out what is modeled in Acts 2. Hearing stories about their life and hearing what God was doing started in the motion the wrestling match of what does it mean to live in community.

For me, living in community or the body of Christ meant helping people out if they were in need and I had extra. I never thought about giving or serving that might require a sacrifice. My perception of living as the body or a community was really based on what I could do or give that didn't interrupt my current lifestyle. To be blunt, I would help if it didn't inconvenience me.

Over the course of the few days in Germany, I couldn't shake the thoughts about community. Was it hard for me to grasp because as an only child, having to share my stuff and life was too much? Was it hard for me to understand because, as an American I have been taught to be independent and community goes against that notion? Honestly I didn't know the answer then and I still don't know the answer now.

But let me share with you what I have figured out, I am tired of living a selfish life and I am changing that. I may not get all there is to this community thing, but I know I am being challenged to give more of myself and what I have to

others. And I know there is more to all of this than I understand right now, so I will continue to meditate on the lesson and seek what God is trying to teach me.


There are so many more lessons I could share with you and in the interest of space I'll stop at 4. Me... a little ole' nobody from Cincinnati... invited by a ministry I deeply respect to attend a leadership conference half way around the world which was funded by friends, family, and a ton of people I have never even met. It all seemed a little unreal. But what seems even more unreal is the fact that the God of the universe went on a journey with me and He never once saw me as a little ole' nobody from Cincinnati. He saw me as His precious daughter and fellow traveler. He chose to teach me many lessons and be the God of my journey.

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/ezine/10-2005-nov-dec/journey.html>
 2. <http://www.24-7prayer.com/cm/news/2476>
 3. <http://www.24-7prayer.com/cm/ldown/407>
 4. <http://www.hayloclothing.com/>
 5. <http://www.captivethoughts.net/?p=95>
 6. <http://www.captivethoughts.net/?p=96>
 7. <http://www.captivethoughts.net/?p=99>
 8. <http://www.captivethoughts.net/?p=106>
 9. <http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews%204:16;&version=31;>
 10. <http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%202:42-47;&version=31;>
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An Interview with Uberzone (2005-11-15 00:00) - redsavior

Following their live PA at a Halloween massive, American breaks producer Q (known as his "brainchild" Uberzone), his companion DJ Davey Dave, Rick and I sit amidst the party's smoky backroom. In case Uberzone is a new name to you, Q has been revolutionizing breaks (along with the entire electronic scene) as we know it since he surfaced. With recognizable tracks coming all the way from 1995, Q prides himself on tying his love for technology to his music.


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 BRIAN: First off, that was an INCREDIBLE set you just cranked out. Thank you very much for joining me tonight to hang out and be interviewed. So, the last release you put out was the "Science" 12" with Simply Jeff if I'm not mistaken. What new music can we expect from you in the near future?

!Q!: Well, I've got some new stuff coming out soon on TCR (Thursday Club Recordings, founded by Rennie Pilgrem). Rennie will be coming back from vacation soon to hear some of it. At this point, I'm simply loving all music. Lately I've been getting bored with just one style of music. A lot of the time I'll get into the studio and just start producing random styles, based on what I'm feeling at the time. In retrospect the "Faith In The Future" record consisted of so many different styles. I simply got so excited writing, I feel like that record didn't have enough continuity! I've been working on producing my new album since fall of last year and should be finished by year's end.

BRIAN: Do you know what the name of the forthcoming album is going to be? What else can you tell us about it?

!Q!:The album's going to be called "Ideology". I made an attempt to remove myself from the technology this time. I got way more into experimentation, and the tracks have come out with a much more cerebral sound than in the past. I mean, to me music is about soul, idea, and spark, rather than the pure technical aspects. I feel like I had a stronger focus working on this album. I pulled out some old synths, even my venerable Jupiter-6. I put a conscious effort into bringing the thoughts on this album out of the box. In a couple parts I even used an acoustic guitar, as a bit of a rhythmic element. Essentially I think I'm staying on the path really well with this one, and like I said before... I'm really excited about music in general and tend to be all over the place when it comes to producing. The album itself will be very eclectic. However my goal at the same time is for all the songs to work well and come out sounding good with each other, despite how different each one is.

 Also I've been working on and off on this project called "Plastic Astronaut". It's basically something new that I've really been trying to get started. I'm looking for some backers as the budget could be hefty. So far it hasn't been completed yet, though I hope put it out in the near future. It's been a rough ride lately, what with record sales being down, and there aren't as many shows these days either. For me, it's consolation to always be doing what I'm doing for the passion, rather than the money.

BRIAN: Definitely, and the projects you have coming sound very intriguing. I'll be excited to hear them when they're ready for release.

What are your thoughts on the Christian dance music scene lately?

!Q!:Well, to be honest with you I'm a bit of a space cadet when it comes to secular and Christian music. I hear music I like and even after I buy it sometimes can't remember who it is! I'd say before I could sufficiently answer that I'd need to be a bit more exposed. I know I liked some N'Soul stuff I heard a while back, but I was never sure where to find more.

However, as a Christian artist in a secular industry, I can honestly tell you it's rough. I would give up anything in my life for my faith. However, very often in the music industry you're confronted with the egos and ambition of other people who have no moral compass or rules to play by. I trust God and figure it's his will be done, not mine. That's what gets me through the rough patches. I grew up in a Christian home, strongly based in ethics. Early on in my career, I was bothered even by playing in clubs. As I progressed I made the decision that I could be a positive influence on

the scene, by appearing at secular clubs or parties. In producing and performing, everything is based on faith for me. I use my music as a mechanism to reach people. I like to think that by putting such references to my faith in my music I'm unlocking doors for people. For example, because of the liner notes in "Faith In The Future", someone can come up to me after a show and be able to tell me about their faith, when they otherwise wouldn't. It's a learning path for me as well; I know that God meant for me to be in this position. In addition to being an example, I always want my faith to be a celebration, not a routine. In the end I've got to give all glory to God, as far as my music goes, I take no credit.

✕ Anyway, I still feel very conscientious at parties and clubs. Sometimes I feel like I want to just get up and walk out the door from places like this (artist/staff VIP room). It can be a din of iniquity. Though I'm not a judgmental person and believe, there but for the grace of God go I, I sometimes feel like, "I shouldn't be here". Ultimately though you need to look into your heart and ask God for answers to problems like these.

Before I started performing and making music I was incredibly shy. It's really brought me out of my shell. While I'd like to share my faith openly and show my allegiance to God, it's been important for me to realize is that there's a line between loving someone, and being judgmental. What's sometimes hard to accept is that as people, we have to be careful with judgment. The only one who's got that right is God. I try to separate the man from the act.

BRIAN: Do you have any opinion on where the Christian dance music scene is going?

!Q!: Normally I tend to dodge answering where I think a scene is going. In this case though, I really think that it will be good to see more and more collaborative efforts as time goes on. I think people would be ready, and excited for that. In the Christian dance scene as well. Are there any good Christian IDM artists?

BRIAN: What secular artists influenced you the most before becoming big as an artist/DJ? Do they still influence you now?

!Q!: Well I was a youngest child growing up, so I ended up with a lot of hand me down music. The first group that REALLY inspired me was Kraftwerk. They were this incredible new sound for me at the time, which I simply couldn't get anywhere else. I was also a huge fan of Vince Clarke and Depeche Mode. Orbital had me really impressed when they came out as well. They managed to give this new electronic sound to the world without sounding cheesy like so many others. Around the same time as Orbital was getting big, Leftfield had me really intrigued. That "Leftism" record was simply amazing. I'd have to say though, that it all comes back to Kraftwerk for me. They were the first ones to be completely "dance", and have such a refined sound to them.

✕ BRIAN: Finally, what are your favorite records at the moment?

!Q!: Well, again, I get so much new music on promo CD's I don't even always know what it is that I'm playing. Sometimes someone will come up to me after a show, "Oh hey glad to hear that new _ _ _ _ track" and I'll be thinking "Oh..... right". However I can definitely tell you I'm into the new Brazilian Girls track. I'm still a big fan of Air, the "Talkie Walkie" record never fails to impress me. I'm also listening to a lot of Radiohead. Outside of dance music, I'm into Keane. I mean, the way I am about music I'll listen to 10 different styles in one day. One minute I'll be listening to Air, next I'll be listening to something like Zeppelin or Beatles.

BRIAN: Well thank you very much for joining me. It was definitely a pleasure.

!Q!: Thank you, great talking with you.

Related Links:

- [1]Uberzone.net
- [2]Uberzone on Amazon.com

1. <http://www.uberzone.net/>

2. http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/stores/artist/glance/-/65686/ref=m_art_dp/102-2071535-0468961

Lost in the Remix (2005-11-15 00:00) - redsavior

[1]Proton has been hosting remix contests every few months. The most recent contest was for the new Deepsky and Marc Mitchell track Lost in the Moment. The winners for this contest were announced just a few weeks ago now. We sat down with one of the winners and two of the runners up for a little chat about the remixes and their faith.

[2]Proton Radio has been around for some time now and most of you are probably familiar with it. For those of you who do not know however, Proton Radio has become one of the premiere sites to find quality dance music of mostly the progressive nature. They broadcast live and pre-recorded shows featuring not only some of the hottest DJs, but also actively take time out to feature new artists and to showcase labels. Within the last year Proton also launched its own music label. Because of Proton's established reputation, the label has already garnered a lot of attention, but in an effort to continue exposing new artists and promoting the label itself, Proton has been hosting remix contests every few months. The most recent contest was for the new Deepsky and Marc Mitchell track Lost in the Moment.

"Peg City Allstars have created a superb reinterpretation that adds a gritty dancefloor edge to the original, with the on par production quality making them worthy winners of the remix contest"
— Simon Jones (Progressive-Sounds)

The winners for this contest were announced just a few weeks ago now. The news is still spreading around, but to be honest, our community here at Tastyfresh.com could not be happier. Three Christians, two who are active members here and one who seemingly disappeared years ago, made the announced list of winners and notable mentions. Our very own Joel Armstrong and his partner in crime Peter McCowan won the contest under the name Peg City All Stars. Gerwin Koudijs, probably best known around here for his remix work for Demulcent Records and the Osmotic CD series, received an honorable mention. Last but not least, His Boy Elroy aka Tim Holt got another honorable mention. You may remember Tim's work from N*Soul Record's Eclectica 2 and 3 Cell Records' Tuned Samplers.

There is nothing really significant about this except for the fact that to my knowledge, never have three Christians been picked out of the crowd for their interpretations of the same song. That said I am not at all surprised that these three artists accomplished what they did with this remix. Recently, I had the both the opportunity to sit down with these three and chat about their remixes and how they got started with music.

TF: What excited you the most about Lost in the Moment?

Joel: It's a great tune. When I listened to all the remix samples I couldn't believe how intricate they were.

Gerwin: I was amazed by the variations in melody, sound and themes, which were in the original track. The sounds (and remix parts) are beautiful, sometimes cinematic. It was quite a challenge to pick up a theme (apart from the strings part) to base the remix on.

Tim: This contest from Proton has had the highest profile original artists (Deepsky & Marc Mitchell), so that initially got me excited about this contest and Lost in the Moment.

TF: Did you ever think your remix got this far?

Joel: When Peter and I came up with our original ideas for the tune, we knew right away that we had something exciting. Our goal was to create something club friendly, current, and also something that showed respect to our dance roots. When we had finished the tune, we knew it was a great track, even if we didn't win. But we did write to win and we are happy with the success.

Gerwin: I really hoped I would be in the top 10 or so. But still was surprised when I was!

Tim: Honestly I was hoping for a win. I wasn't that surprised that my remix got notable mention, I felt it was better than my last one for Proton, which also received a notable mention. Fortunately I've done pretty well in remix contests so far (Wired Magazine, Magnatune, and now 2 Proton contests) so I tend to get high expectations for these things - even though I try not to.

TF: What do you attribute to the success of your remix?

Joel: I guess I sort of answered that in the last question. Music just seems like such a hit or miss situation half the time. After listening to many of the other entries and the extreme quality they show, I was excited there was that much competition to go up against.

Gerwin: Not overusing the remix material, which was made available. Apart from the strings I hardly used the material I think. I also tried to locate the different themes in the track and use/interpret them in my remix.

Tim: Well I hope it's because of the production quality, and the time and energy I put into it, but you should probably ask the Proton guys. Besides, I really do think that God had his hand in it too, as I keep feeling like this is what I'm supposed to be doing. I kind of stop short at saying it's my destiny or "calling", but try as I might, I can't get electronic music out of my head and heart, and I suspect God has a lot to do with it.

TF: Did you run into any problems during the production of the remix?

Joel: Peter and I had to be careful not to stray too far with our original ideas, it was a remix after all and we wanted to pay as much tribute to the original as we could without compromising our own creativity.

Gerwin: The structure. It's always my biggest problem. I think it still lacks a good climax (but don't tell anyone!).

Tim: Not really - I had some odd issues converting the files into Apple Loops (I use Logic to write and remix stuff), so I ended up settling on keeping the tempo the same as the original track. I think I've figured out now (after the thing was over) how to fix the loops, but it sounds good at the original tempo, so it's not a huge deal.

TF: How long have you been producing?

Joel: I guess I started messing around with demo software for production around 4 years ago. It's only been inside the last 2 years that I've buckled down and truly attempted to get a good foothold on my hobby of choice.

Gerwin: I think I was 13 years old or something when I made really awful music with trackers (Fasttracker 2 anyone?). Some years later I discovered Buzz and Psycle which got me into (virtual) synthesizers. These two programs (especially Psycle) have thought me a lot about sound design. When Reason came out I tried the demo and actually liked horizontal music programming. Since then I've been using it. When I'm limited by its functionality I rewire it into Ableton Live 5 (like I did for the remix).

Tim: I've been doing some sort of electronic music for close to 9 years now. I wrote a lot in college, then kind of got away from it for a few years, and now I'm pursuing it full time.

TF: Why did you start producing dance music?

Joel: Honestly? Well, this might sound dumb but I started writing dance music because I was lonely. I was living in a new city and I didn't have too many friends. I had my computer, music that I loved, and some free time.

Gerwin: Because dance music was the kind of music I liked (I guess it was mainly eurodance back then, Dutch and cheese!). Besides that, making music always fascinated me, along with computers.

Tim: Just because I love electronic music. I really can't put my finger on it, as I'm not a huge clubber or anything, but there's just something about it that I'm drawn to. From house or progressive breaks to IDM or just plain weirdness, I love it. I think the fact that as a baby my parents used to put me to sleep next to a running dishwasher may have something to do with it too.

TF: How has your faith influenced your music?

Joel: I don't know how to answer that honestly. Well I guess God's given me a gift to be creative and I'm trying not to let that go to waste.

Gerwin: At the least my faith has given me doors and ways to expose my music. The other way around it has given me friends and opportunities that influenced my faith.

Tim: Well, I think the biggest way it's influenced me is in how hard I work on it. I feel like the highest calling of any Christian who is an artist is to do stuff with excellence. I tend to really try to pour my emotions into my music, and that's probably a lot like what David did with the Psalms. They have a tremendous depth of emotion that I love, and I try to put that sort of depth into my music.

TF: Thanks for your time guys.

So, that's it. You can grab Joel Armstrong's and Peter McCowan's Peg City All Stars remix from [3]www.Beatport.com/proton. Both Gerwin's and His Boy Elroy's remixes are free downloads from [4]Proton Radio's website. Also, be sure to grab Joel's latest release on Proton called Serenity. It received an amazing 10 out of 10 from Progressive Sounds and is only available on [5]Beatport.com.

Related Links:


- [6]Proton Radio
- [7]Proton Music
- [8]Lost in the Moment Remix Contest Results
- [9]Progressive Sound Review of Lost in the Moment
- [10]Joel Armstrong
- [11]His Boy Elroy

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/ezine/10-2005-nov-dec/lost.html>
 2. <http://www.protonradio.com/>
 3. <http://www.beatport.com/proton>
 4. http://www.protonradio.com/Proton0006_LostintheMoment-Remixes.php
 5. http://www.beatport.com/artist/joel_armstrong
 6. <http://www.protonradio.com/>
 7. <http://www.beatport.com/proton>
 8. http://www.protonradio.com/Proton0006_LostintheMoment-Remixes.php
 9. <http://www.progressive-sounds.com/reviews/Deepsky-&-Marc-Mitchell-Lost-In-The-Moment.asp>
 10. <http://www.joel-armstrong.com/>
 11. <http://www.his-boy-elroy.com/>
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Taking Our Medicine with Demulcent (2005-11-15 00:00) - redsavior

It's been two years now since Dave Copland opened the doors at Demulcent Records. We've ment to sit down with Dave earlier, but we just have not been able to work the schedule out until now. Without any further delay, here's Dave Copland to tell us all about Demulcent.

It's been two years now since Dave Copland opened the doors at Demulcent Records. In that time, we have seen the release of one of the best Christian dance compilation CDs so far in the 00's, the final album and remix album of a gifted producer and friend to our community, a CDR single and two jointly released singles with some really breath taking remixes. We've ment to sit down with Dave earlier, but we just have not been able to work the schedule out until now. Without any further delay, here's Dave Copland to tell us all about Demulcent.

 TF: Why did you start Demulcent?

DC: The short answer is to raise the bar for labels that release christian dance music and for the artists themselves.

TF: What does the name mean?

DC: Soothing like a medicine or a melody.

TF: Why did you choose it?

DC: Because music is an incredibly powerful thing. It can change your whole outlook on any given day. I want to release tracks that soothe the body, soul, and spirit.

TF: What is the main focus of the label?

DC: To release music made by christians that competes with the 'major label' stuff.

You have recently released your second co-release with Deep Sink/Low Roof. What brought about this relationship and has it been what you expected? Wim (who runs the label) and I met online through tastyfresh and our friendship grew from there. It started as a simple matter of economics.

The relationship has been fantastic so far. I think it's mutually beneficial in that we can both get a proper release out for about half the cost. I know I've dropped the ball on a few things, like sending 400 CDs to the wrong address! (Thank God they got returned to me!) Wim is one of the coolest guys in this scene. Always encouraging, always patient, and always inspiring.


TF: Running a label is a pretty stressful job, what has been some of the hardest things to cope with?

DC: Probably the overall state of music industry. The industry is in shambles right now. Downloads (both illegal and legal) and the digital marketplace have completely changed how things work. Distributors aren't taking any new product. The product they do take is bought at little to no profit to the seller.

TF: What has been easy?

DC: Putting the artists together. It's a lot of work putting together any release, but the artists have been phenomenal. Without them giving of their time and talents for very little reward there wouldn't be a record label.

Special mentions also go out to my art guy, Eric (<http://cleansedesign.com>) and my mastering guy, Victor (hypostatic.com). I wouldn't have any releases if it wasn't for them.

 TF: Do you feel that the label is turning out to be a success or is it too early to really tell?

DC: The label has definitely made progress with every release. Most recently getting a tentative P & D deal for all of South Africa. It's hard to say it's a success at this point, though, as the next release will be all digital (yep, you heard it here first, folks!) Welcome to the 21st century.

TF: What has been the biggest success that Demulcent has experienced to date?

DC: There's been a series of 'little' successes that all mean a lot. Charting #1 on radiou and dancechapel, Shiloh & Terrence Parker playing Demulcent tracks. Andy Hunter sending me an encouraging email about I See Grace. The

most recent success was having Faith of a Child by Siminz appear on TVU as one of their featured artists. (If anyone taped it, I'd like to see that footage!) Having people say things like 'this is the best dance track made by a christian i've ever heard in my life' is a HUGE thing to me, because that's a big goal for the label.

TF: How has your faith effected how you run the label?

DC: It affects what tracks I choose and in how I do business with people. I try to pick tracks that are somehow uplifting or encouraging. I'm open to listening to anything, but I have to go with my gut about what's right for the label. I try to be fair and upfront with the artists, because they've all been burned...a lot.

✖ TF: Recently, you put a call out for the second Demulcent Sessions CD. How is the track selection process going?

DC: The tracks are pretty much picked. Just waiting for the contracts and final copies of the tracks so they can be mastered.

TF: Is there still time for more demos to be submitted? If so, how do we do that?

DC: Not for this release, but i'm always open to hearing good tracks. you can email me demulcentATcomcastDOTnet or snail mail:

Demulcent
PO Box 3
Belleville, Mi 48111

TF: If you could start the label over again with all of the knowledge and experience that you have today, what would you do differently?

DC: Not start a label? heheheh...Seriously, I don't know if could have done anything differently. I would have set the bar too high for the first release and it never would have gotten done. I probably would have pursued licensing and digital releasing more aggressively. I still need to do that, but this is still a part time hobby for me.

TF: Where do you hope to see Demulcent a year from now?

DC: On record store shelves everywhere! haha. Hopefully still raising the bar with every release. I'd like to get some good exposure in the worldwide scene. I'd like to see big DJs playing my tracks. I'd like to see the "average fan" on the big message boards giving my artists the respect they deserve. I'd like to see a track get licensed for a car commercial or MTV. That would be a pretty good year :-)

TF: Where can we get our hands on Demulcent's releases?

DC: The best place is [1]www.demulcent.com it supports the label and artists more by buying direct. Individual downloads are available at [2]www.beatport.com

Related Links

- [3][Demulcent Records](http://www.demulcent.com/)
- [4][Demulcent at Beatport.com](http://www.beatport.com/demulcent)

1. <http://www.demulcent.com/>

2. <http://www.beatport.com/demulcent>

3. <http://www.demulcent.com/>

4. <http://www.beatport.com/demulcent>

Journey to the Next Dimension (2005-11-15 00:00) - redsavior

Since June, NDM has had nine massive releases in 2005 with more heading out the door in 2006. Sonically, the label is a combination of tribal, tech, Latin and just about any other type of house music you can think of. Diverse in its music and diverse in its beliefs,

✎ Earlier this year, a new label stepped out into the market. Next Dimension Music is the brainchild of Harlem native Joseph, formerly known as DJ Dimension, of the MegaMen. Since June, NDM has had nine massive releases in 2005 with more heading out the door in 2006. Sonically, the label is a combination of tribal, tech, Latin and just about any other type of house music you can think of. Diverse in its music and diverse in its beliefs, Joseph is making sure NDM makes a nice and lasting impression in today's club scene.

TF: How did the label come about?

Joseph: I've had the opportunity to take part in many labels through the years. The experience allowed me to see what works and what didn't for both the artist and the label. After mulling it over for a while I decide to give birth to the "solution".

TF: At what point did you realize that you needed to start the label and not doing so was no longer an option?

Joseph: Amidst the stirring thoughts and sitting on a vast amount of incredible product came Andy Turner (Deep Life Records) and PJ (Infamous Light recordings) with loads of start-up info. I collected the info and my wife and I drew up the distribution proposal.

TF: Where did the name come from? There is an obvious connection to your former DJ name, but why this name beyond that?

Joseph: Yes, DJ Dimension was my official moniker, stage name etc. While I did experience a successful run of it, it eventually led to an acute case of "celebrity". So, I shed and grew and became more focused on the sound-Next Dimension Music.

✎ TF: Your site says that Next Dimension Music is art, music, culture, faith life and love. What exactly do you mean by this?

Joseph: Art, music, culture, faith life and love are the most common threads of diversity.

If NDM were pop art, house music etc...we'd be limiting our capacity to bring people together which is a very important cause.

TF: Is the label a Christian label?

Joseph: NDM is the brown bag of indie labels. We distribute music for artists who still live in fear of religious persecution. We are artistic sanctuary, a "label-free" label.

TF: If you had to describe the label's sound to someone, how would you do that?

Joseph: Exactly that, we are sound, limitless sound. There are what, 150+ genres of music? But sound is infinite.

TF: What has running this label taught you?

Joseph: Running the label has taught me openness. Everyone here produces such unique expression of sound. I've learned how not to pigeonhole creativity. This is big.

TF: How has your faith influenced how the label is run?

Joseph: Faith, through grace is the center of it all.

TF: What has been your biggest success and what has been the biggest failure to date?

Joseph: My biggest success has been my failures.

✎ TF: Who are some of the artists currently on the NDM roster?

Joseph: In no particular order: Moelicious, Rick Felix, Kayasswhy, Los Colombechez, Jus Ed , Flexuous, Henry Maldonado, Jeremias Santiago, William Rosario, Lem Springsteen, Black Jazz Consortium, Matt Balzan, Spiritual Blessings, Redsavior [a.k.a. Dave Richards] and myself.

TF: Since June of this year, NDM has had nine releases. How have you been able to keep on task to get everything out to the masses while keeping the quality up?

Joseph: Well, without my wife Tameka keeping up to task would be near impossible. She writes the newsletter and handles the books-this leaves me room to pick quality product and make sure it gets released and promoted timely and diligently.

TF: Which release do you consider to be the most successful?

Joseph: Each artist submission was released to us with the artists "nod of approval" and received by the ear and tapping foot of a listener. This is success at ndm.

TF: Why did you decide to be a digital only label?

Joseph: Digital allows for minimal overhead amongst us starving artists less is always more.

TF: Do you ever plan to have a physical release, either CD or vinyl?

Joseph: We do, at present we are slotted for release early 2006.

TF: Is being a digital only label allowing you the freedom to operate more freely than if you had to release a physical product?

Joseph: Yes. It widens the margin of creativity. It allows us to take chances on projects that might not be well received by an audience without threatening the label. Being digital allows us the freedom to experiment as well as expand on sound that wouldn't be touched otherwise with physical product.

TF: Where can we check out and purchase NDM releases?

Joseph: Beatport is currently our sole distributor snippets can be heard on our website [1]www.nextdimensionmusic.com/!

Related Links:

- [2]Next Dimension Music
- [3]NDM @ Beatport.com

1. <http://www.nextdimensionmusic.com/>

2. <http://www.nextdimensionmusic.com/>

3. <http://www.beatport.com/nextdimension>

SHO YA LOVE... Redsavior!!! (2005-11-15 00:00) - redsavior

[1]This episode of Sho' Ya Love is about The Reluctant Legend himself. I think he's got the best stage name around. Multi talented, intelligent, versatile, loves our humble craft, and masterfully runs our tight little ship of a home we lovingly call TastyFresh. But how did he get his music thang going?

⌘ This episode of Sho' Ya Love is about The Reluctant Legend himself. I think he's got the best stage name around. Multi talented, intelligent, versatile, loves our humble craft, and masterfully runs our tight little ship of a home we lovingly call TastyFresh. But how did he get his music thang going? Where did he begin, and BESIDES ALL OF THAT, what does his earliest music sound like? Enquiring minds wanna know, man! Will he let us check it out? Read on...

Coco: When did you fall in love with EDM?

Redsavior: I probably fell in love with it differently than most. My family, my father specifically, listened to almost nothing but classical music. So from practically day one, I was listening to music that progressed across ten minutes or more. It was pretty cool. The concept of actually listening to shorter pieces of music is actually rather new to me. In a way, this is where my foundation really is musically; not that I can hold a candle to Bach or Mozart.

About the time Chariots of Fire hit the theaters I noticed synthesizers. The theme for this movie just really inspired me and captured my heart. My father bought his first CD player about that time as well. One of the first CDs he purchased outside of the Chariots of Fire soundtrack was a compilation of Sci-Fi movie themes. There were several on that CD that relied heavily on synths at that time. Those were my favorite pieces. What intrigued me about them was how alien they sounded compared to the strings and horns I normally listened to. Nothing I had heard prior to this had the same qualities.

Later, I think I was on a field trip, I saw a group called Future Bach. It was a quartet of keyboardists who were performing selected classical pieces (mainly by Bach) using only synths. The sound was so amazing I convinced my mom to buy a tape to give to my father. I think I listened to that tape only a few times though. The sad thing is that despite being exposed to classical music all my life, it just did not truly excite me. Classical music was my dad's choice, not mine. As a result, until high school, I really had no interest in music outside of playing my alt sax in band class.

That's the background information. Here's the EDM tie in.

The first time I recognized any use of synths outside of classical music and soundtracks was when a neighborhood friend (one that i wasn't too fond of, but that's another story) played Depeche Mode's Personal Jesus when I was over at his house. I didn't pay any attention to the lyrics, but I was amazed that synths could be used to do THAT. So... like my experience with classical music, that got filed in the back of my head.

⌘ It really was not until I was a senior in high school that I truly fell in love with and pursued electronica. The year was 1992. I was on a ski trip with my church and on the way home, one of my friends slipped a copy of Jyradelix into the bus' tape player. WOW... that struck a nerve with me. I loved it. The next techno I heard was the Prodigal Sons and after that Scott Blackwell and then I was hooked. Of course prior to this I had heard other dance songs that are still guilty pleasures for me, but they NEVER hooked me like this music did. Gonna Make You Sweat by C & C Music Factory will always be number one on my top 10 guilty pleasures list and James Brown is Dead by LA Style is another... but it is LOW on that list.

Coco: Believe it or not, we follow similar paths. I started out listening to classical music as well...I adore Mozart, and the movie Chariots of Fire moved me beyond words. The theme stuck in my mind for a long time afterward. So, now, 1. When did you start to create your own music? 2. For all the gear heads out there, what did you first use? Mine was an old Casio that had those preprogrammed songs on it like "Loreli" and stuff. 3. What was your first creation, and do you still have a copy of it (heh heh)?

Redsavior: I think I was making my own music the day I got my sax. I wouldn't exactly call it music though. I was pretty bad like everyone else is when they first get an instrument they don't know how to play. Eventually though, I would just noodle around with it. I would never write a real tune or anything, but it would be more like impromptu solos... in the privacy of my bedroom. I'm sure my parents loved that. I did learn to play music that I liked by ear though. In some ways, I'm like a drummer... I hate sheet music.

What's funnier is that at one point, two of my best friends and I decided to form a rock band in high school. We were all Christians and well... we wanted to have a really cool band that would knock the socks of Petra. Side note: Petra is now over 30 years old and is FINALLY retiring. I'll be seeing them in concert later this year to say goodbye. I'm shocked though that despite Bob Hartman's age, he's not performing in a wheelchair or cryogenically frozen.

Anyway, we basically had a huge problem with the rock band idea... I knew how to play sax and my friends knew how to play squat. I think one of them did have some guitar lessons and sometime after the other got married he learned how to play bass by ear. Well, all that meant one thing; the band lasted about a weekend.

Outside of pulling out my sax every few months or so, my music performing days actually ended my sophomore year in high school. I had to choose between my two passions: art and music. I choose art because I felt I could be more creative there than with music and might be able to make a living of it as a graphic designer. Turns out, I made the right choice at the time. Still, I hated to give up music. The funny thing about that was I had just then really started to listen to pop and rock music. My knowledge of music was just starting to expand when I had to give it up.

✕ All of this led up to about my first year of marriage when after studying art on a college level for a few years I realized that I had never truly explored how music was made. Something clicked and I realized that each second of a track or frame of music on a CD was like a photograph or painting. I saw music much in the way you would view a crudely animated flipbook. What really grabbed me was the realization that I had no clue how to develop things artistically over time. I understood composition on a 2-dimensional or even 3-dimensional plane, but I did not understand it when the 4th dimension was added. This is what really got me interested in writing music. It was a desire to learn and answer a question.

Never was it to become famous or even write something halfway decent that someone might play on the radio or even want to spend money on. At that point, music became an artist exploration of the 4th dimension for me.

So here I was, married, in college, working full-time as a part-time employee with a \$12 an hour salary, and a Pentium 133 PC with a SoundBlaster Live! card. I had no clue where to start with gear. I just knew two things: I didn't have much money and I didn't want to invest much in something I might not be good at or enjoy. This is where Jamey Wright entered my life, but I doubt he remembers this too well.

I was asking questions about how to start on the old N*Soul Records boards. Tastyfresh didn't have forums yet and the Tastyfresh community really was the N*Soul community at the time. Things have changed haven't they? Anyway, Jamey responded that FruityLoops was a great low cost program to start out with. He and Joey had used it to lay out some of the drums for the first Faith Massive album. It wasn't a tool that he was still using, but he thought it would be a good one to start out with. I trusted his advice and bought it. It was a pretty minimal program back then, but today it's robust enough to take on Reason as a studio while still being versatile to be a plug-in within any of the major audio suites. What I loved about it was how simple it made the percussion and how easy it was to sculpt sounds to be used as fx. The big selling point though are their free upgrades.

So, that was my studio back then. Just a SoundBlaster Live! and FruityLoops. Today, my studio is still pretty barebones. I still use FruityLoops. It's name has changed to FL Studio for various reasons though. In addition to that, I'm sequencing all of my midi, arranging audio clips, mixing and so on now in Cakewalk's Sonar 5.0 Producer edition and using Native Instruments Reaktor 4.0 as my main group of synths. FL Studio is the cornerstone of my drums and "sound sculpting" as I sometimes call it. By working this way, I can focus solely on the rhythm of the percussion and then later focus solely on the synths.

It's been a good system now for five years. Ironically, the one part that has yet to be upgraded in my studio is my soundcard. It's still a SoundBlaster Live! I really should upgrade that at some point, but since I do very little work with actual hardware or vocals, it's fine.

Coco: You said that your performing days ended when you had to choose between art and music (wow, what a beastly choice to have to make!!) so you're saying you have never performed ever since? I don't know about everybody else, but I'd LOVE to see a redsavior Live PA!!

Redsavior: Well, yeah... from 1991 until today, I have not done a live performance. The sad thing is that I don't even have the right setup to do a live PA right now. For the record though, I was never a great sax player... even if I did have six years of experience.

I actually do get requests for live PA's from time to time. I have to turn them down. Of course, I could always do what

many in the industry do and fake a live PA. All I'd need to do is grab my Yammie CS-2X and a CD deck with my music on it. It wouldn't fool any producer, but the crowd would never know. The number of artists who have done this before would shock people.

Coco: Going back to the 4th dimension of music exploration, have you answered that question? And I still wanna know what your first EDM creation was, and if you still have a copy of it! If you have it, let's hear it!

Redsavior: Yeah, I think I've answered that. I'm not sure how to put it into words though. It's more of just something you do. Music or film for that matter is similar to the ACT of painting. While a painting tells a story, if you were to film the painting of a painting you would see a story about the painting's creation. In a way, the creation of music is a hybrid. It tells a story, but within that story is the story of how the music was produced.

As far as my first work goes, yeah... I'd like to hear some of that now too. Unfortunately, despite the fact I have most of the FL Studio files, FL Studio has changed so much and I'm missing some plug-ins that the files I have sound nothing like what they did when I originally did them. I did find [2] a 20 second loop that I wrote about three months before I started Redsavior for a flash intro at work. It's not too shabby for 1999. It's pretty different from [3] what I can do now though.

Coco: It is obvious that you love this craft, but what's in it for you? I mean, what does this music add to your life?

Redsavior: Heh... what's in it for me? Hopefully at least enough cash to pay for an music software upgrade each year. Seriously, it's not really money or fame. For me it really comes down to being creative. Do I like getting recognition? Heck yeah... who doesn't. It's not the focus though.

I look at it like this, my ability to write music is a gift from God and gifts from Him need to be put to use. I don't believe everything you do with that gift has to be buried in the church, but I do believe it should bring glory to God in some fashion either directly or indirectly. For example, I would not call my music Christian. I am a Christian musician and my music is a reflection of my beliefs. There are times when I set out to do an overtly spiritual track, but then there are times when I write music that simply reflects how I feel at the time or just as an exploration of tools and ideas. In the end, if I write something halfway decent, it's because of the talent God has given me. Regardless, I want my music as a whole to help support Christians who want to use dance music to aid their ministry.

Coco: I really want to thank you for taking the time to let me get all up in your musical business. I do have one last question, tho'...where/how did you get the name Redsavior??

Redsavior: Heh... my name actually dates back to my senior year in high school almost 8 years before I posted my first track on mp3.com. The short version is that I was curious about how the hype about bands got started. I wanted to see if I could create a name for a band that did not exist and then plaster the world with marketing material about the band. I was thinking that it would be possible to create a huge market demand for a band that does not exist just like some companies will do that with products. After the need is there, they develop the product.

At the time, I was looking at some secular bands to model the name after. The Red Hot Chili Peppers were making a pretty huge splash back then so that was part of the inspiration. The second was that this would have to be a Christian band since I'm a Christian. The original name of the band was "The Blood Red Savior" and was going to be a weird mix of metal and alt rock in the vein of King's X and maybe Undercover. Well... that effort lasted about a week before I lost interest.

Fast forward to December 31, 1999. I was about to upload my first track to mp3.com called "TheTruth." I needed an artist name. I didn't have one at that point in time. I needed one RIGHT then or I couldn't post the song. I just simply remembered that fake band name and quickly choose to clean the name up. I dropped "the blood" and pushed "Red Savior" together. Then, in a stroke of annoying genius... I decided to follow the Bauhaus' idea that capital letters should not exist. So I dropped the caps and had redsavior. You can ask Carey Jarvis about how anal I was about the spelling. I really was. That's the story in all of its glory.

I love this guy...he totally inspires me! Keep on Lovin' It, Reds!

Hey you...wanna Sho' Ya Love for what you do? HIT ME! [4]shoyalove4edm@yahoo.com

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/ezine/10-2005-nov-dec/sho-redsavior.html>
 2. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/ezine/mp3/rs-teamweb.mp3>
 3. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/ezine/mp3/rs-yousaid.mp3>
 4. <mailto:%20shoyalove4edm@yahoo.com>
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4. 2006

4.1 January

How To Build A Local Scene: Part Three (2006-01-15 00:00) - gsynth

[1]Whether you want to promote events, start a record label or DJ agency, run a website, radio show or magazine, or anything else in the scene, the following tips should help you get started. Only you know what you uniquely have to give. Don't be afraid to step up, learn some new skills and make something happen. Once someone takes the lead, people are likely to follow and come along for the ride.

Whether you want to promote events, start a record label or DJ agency, run a website, radio show or magazine, or anything else in the scene, the following tips should help you get started. Only you know what you uniquely have to give. Don't be afraid to step up, learn some new skills and make something happen. Once someone takes the lead, people are likely to follow and come along for the ride. If you have a passion or desire to see something happen, or if you wish something could happen and you don't know where to start, why not do some soul-searching and see what God may have for you? Remember God never sent Isaiah until he said, "Here am I. Send me!" The following tips are divided into general subcategories and all concepts apply to just about any type of project you may carry out.

MINISTRY:

1. Put God first. "Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labour in vain." (Psalm 127:1) If it's about you, you'll fail. If you're doing this for God, let Him take control, give Him the glory, and you'll succeed. Even if only two people showed up at an event they may give their hearts to the Lord.

2. Prayer. You can start a ministry and struggle to get noticed... or you can spend two hours in prayer each day, and find people walking up to you asking how they can help (divine appointments). Every revival movement begins with people seeking the face of God. Commit yourself to a lifestyle of prayer and your ministry will be effective in time. Prayer and obedience are a supernatural combination. So are prayer and faith.

3. Get ready. Get knowledge in the field you wish to work in, and if possible get experience working for others first. You can learn from books, the Internet, career centers, courses, networking seminars, or from professionals. Learn leadership ability; learn to organize people and projects, and any other skills you may need to learn. Prepare yourself spiritually, through consistent prayer and reading the Bible, to walk in Christ-likeness.

4. Find support. If you go where fish are thick, you'll catch more fish. Show up often and network everywhere people might be who might be interested in your project. That may mean churches, young adults groups, music schools, networking events, DJ pools, industry events, festivals, concerts, etc.

5. Meet the need. Look for your opportunity. Find a need and fill it. If there are too many DJs, maybe what you need is not just another DJ but someone to coordinate a service to serve all the DJs, and get more gigs all around for everyone including yourself. Be creative. Look for what's missing and fill that need. You can achieve success this way, because what you have will be in demand. If you establish your own club night or record label, and create opportunities for others as well as yourself, it will keep you in continual contact with others in the scene, and establish you more permanently in the scene, rather than waiting for the phone to ring hoping for gigs. Likewise if you have a radio show where you can spin others' new music, or a website with events listings, you may soon find yourself a leader moving the scene forward. As for your audience, if the fastest way into their hearts is to meet their deepest needs, then look deep inside, and find out just what it is that you have that they really need. That may be your message. As an artist you may become like a friend to them, as you share your experiences from your heart, and reach out in compassion with words they understand.

6. You are the message. Who you are will be the lasting impression you leave. The quality of your work, attitude, and people with you will affect how people perceive you. Learn what you can from others who are doing what you want to do well. Have an attitude of excellence, and a heart for God and people.

LEADERSHIP:

7. Know who you are. Stay in touch with your soul. Your personality will show in everything you do. Know what makes you different from the competition. Be confident, step up and be a leader worth following. Know your strengths and weaknesses, and focus on your strengths, get help in your weaknesses. Take initiative and make things happen. Be

creative. Try new things sometimes. Don't be afraid to be different and on the cutting edge as long as you maintain quality. Keep your vision clear and focused. Enjoy the process. Always keep learning and growing. Read books on leadership and business to expand your mind and hone your skills. Be strong but remain humble. Be a man or woman not of too much talk but of action and consistency in word and deed. Ask questions in situations where you need to learn more. Learn to make decisions, keep your perspective, and execute well thought out ideas and plans through effective action.

8. Know the rules of the game. Research and know your business and industry inside out. Be familiar with contracts, and how the business is changing. Whether you use verbal agreements or written contracts, don't ever rip anyone off!! Negotiate win/win agreements and keep your word. Build trust into your business relationships. Be wise, and don't leave yourself open to easily get ripped off by others. If it happens, rise above the situation, be mature, cut your losses, and move on. Keep your integrity, and eventually you will come out on top.

9. Get organized. Write down your vision and ideas. Define your mission in one short sentence. Create clear goals and use checklists. Keep it simple and make it happen. Keep your contacts, any legal business documents, and financial records simple and organized.

10. Build a team and create a system that works. You may have assistants, partners, contractors, or volunteers depending on your project. Hold meetings, lay down the goals, delegate tasks, and use your checklists to put your vision into action. Be flexible and willing to serve. Know your roles but be willing to do whatever it takes, especially when it comes down to the last minute crunch.

11. Know your budget and break-even point. If you want to be a promoter here is a simple equation: [ticket/door price] multiplied by [paying attendees] subtract [all costs, including venue, performers, all expenses] equals your profit or loss. You need to know how many tickets minimum you need to sell in order to break even on your event. Use a proper budget sheet and checklist. Depending on your venue, you may be able to sell food or snacks, non-alcoholic drinks, and cool stuff like t-shirts to increase profit potential. You can also come up with some creative fundraising techniques, or pool your resources with others for a local event. Usually you have to place a deposit on a venue in advance. Record labels work on a similar break-even concept, with upfront manufacturing costs, and optional additional merchandise income. DJ agencies are a commission-based service. Media makes money selling advertising and sometimes copies or subscriptions, like magazines.

12. Treat everyone with respect. Give people from the media free guest list passes and free copies of your music, and be available for interviews, because their free promotional support is often worth far more than expensive paid advertising. Make sure when you rent venues that you clean up, and if possible leave the place in as good or better condition than when you arrived. When you hire out of town performers, make sure they have sufficient food, a place to stay, transportation, security if needed, and peace of mind so they can be in top shape to perform. When you speak to people on the phone, always treat them with respect. People will remember you, and you want repeat business and referrals.

13. Pay attention to details. Make sure people can find your website, contact details and event locations. Use spell check and double check addresses, phone numbers, websites, emails, and correct spelling of performer's names before printing thousands of flyers. Pay people on time. If you hire a performer, understand your obligations and don't leave anything out of the rider contract (they may request certain foods if they are allergic to others). Read and understand contracts and if you need clarification ask questions. (For record contracts, get a lawyer to look it over.) Make sure you or the venue have event insurance, and pay any required licenses for events. Don't break any laws. Never serve alcohol to anyone under legal age.

AUDIENCE:

14. Know your audience. Listen to them. Stay in touch with some one-on-one relationships. Know their subcultures and what's cool. Know their likes and dislikes and what matters to them. Find the keys to their hearts. Love them, encourage them, and invite their friends too. Know your competition, stay a step ahead of the game, be full of new surprises, keep them coming back for more. Create a heart to heart bond with your audience. Be real and they will respect you. Above all always love them.

15. Promote. Promote. Promote. Keep promoting. Still keep promoting. Reach out to your audience on every possible level, from the media, to the Internet, to the street, to their friends. Find cost effective ways of advertising and don't overpay. Over promote 200 times more than you think people may come. Make a list of every possible way you could reach out to get people to come, keep coming back, and bring their friends. Use what works. Here's a start: flyers, posters, street team, websites, email, message boards, mailing lists, media listings, feature stories, interviews, radio spots, local TV, co-promotion, licensing, networking, charity and festivals, word of mouth. Be creative, be cool, be quality. Be excited about your project and start a buzz... keep cool things happening so people will talk about your projects and tell their friends. Pray that people will come.

MAKE IT HAPPEN:

16. Prepare for problems. If anything can go wrong, have a backup plan. You could lose your shirt if you lost your venue at the last minute. I've seen one event lose their venue and top performer at the last minute, get on the phone and get a new venue, find some more local performers, drop the ticket price and pack out the new venue. For every piece of the puzzle have a few alternatives, and people you can call on short notice. Don't get stuck if your gear or sound system breaks down, or if someone is sick. Don't get discouraged, but view every problem as an opportunity to find a new creative solution. Find a way to make it happen. And if someone is depending on you, find a way to come through on time, one way or another.

17. Be persistent. Work hard and be committed to your projects. If you're an artist developing a skill, your growth and excellence will be apparent as you put in time in practice. If you want to be pro, be prepared to put in your dues learning, and slug it out for the long haul. Don't let minor setbacks or mistakes stop you. Learn from them and keep going. Use your creativity to find ways to overcome obstacles and solve problems. If you need to, fail your way to success, until you finally succeed, like many successful people have.

18. Don't try to do everything yourself. Know your areas of strength and focus on those. Delegate in areas you are weaker or don't have time to do. Build a team of people who have talent and leadership ability if you want to multiply your efforts. Don't reinvent the wheel if you don't have to, use existing supports. Make a list of resources available to you, and people who may be interested in helping you. Know whom you can depend on in a pinch. Know when to say no. If you're starting a business, know what you can and can't realistically do, and where your focus will be. For what you don't want to do yourself, hire people on contract agreements and commissions.

19. Stay in balance. Eat right, try to get enough sleep, exercise, pray and read the Bible. Love what you do. Keep relationships with family and friends in good standing. Have people you can call if you go through tough times, need support, accountability, and prayer. Keep your eyes on the goal, and enjoy the journey.

20. Start small and create something that works. Keep it simple with a clear and focused vision. Little steps one day at a time can add up to a big impact over a long time. If you write down what you want to do, brainstorm how you can go about doing it, then clarify your vision, create clear goals, make checklists and just do it, it will happen. Everyone starts somewhere. There's a saying, "All you need to start is a phone and a desk". I think maybe we can add "an idea, [2]business card, [3]website and email address". Tell all your friends what you want to do and see what happens. Don't give up if it doesn't take off right away, because sometimes it takes time for new things to catch on. If your ideas aren't perfect the first time, adjust them and get better as you go along. Nothing's ever perfect anyway, but if you don't step out and take risks, nothing will ever happen.

Consider this, if you really want a thing you will find a way to make it happen. God will strongly support you if you have a heart after Him (2 Chron. 16:9). He will provide what you ask for in prayer with faith believing (Matt. 21:22) and He will give the Spirit without limit (John 3:34). Be sensitive to others' feedback, but don't let negativity get in the way of what God can do through you. If I listened to people's opinions instead of the Word of God and what I felt in my heart, none of this would have happened. If you always remember where you came from before God called you, you will never stop reaching out to touch others like you. I will close with this from Isaiah 6:1-9:

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered

their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty." Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for." Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" He said, "Go..."

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/ezine/11-2006-jan-feb/localscene-part3.html>
 2. <http://www.vistaprint.com/>
 3. <http://www.under10host.com/>
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Introducing Tastyfresh Groove Fellowships (2006-01-15 00:00) - redsavior

[1]This is it; we talk about building a scene and seeing more parties on a national scale. Let's make it happen. The first thing that needs to happen is the development of small groups or fellowships in towns. These small groups would eventually, but not initially throw parties in their hometowns. The initial focus is simply to get the people of Tastyfresh.com out of the virtual world and into the real one.

This is it; we talk about building a scene and seeing more parties on a national scale. Let's make it happen. The first thing that needs to happen is the development of small groups or fellowships in towns. These small groups would eventually, but not initially throw parties in their hometowns. The initial focus is simply to get the people of Tastyfresh.com out of the virtual world and into the real one. These small groups can be house parties, prayer groups, bible study groups, handing out water at secular events, evangelism, it doesn't matter. The point is getting Christians who love dance music together in a meaningful way that builds real world relationships that go far beyond the bonds of Tastyfresh.com.

Who's In Charge?

Each small group is to be in charge of their own group. Tastyfresh.com isn't going to be your leader or commander. We are going to be your central communication hub however for sharing ideas, results, and questioning what to do next. We hope and RECOMMEND that the group finds a local church and pastor to help support the spiritual growth and direction of the group as well as to hold them accountable. As a whole however, the groups should remain largely non-denominational, but the church can be of any denomination willing to lend a hand.

Why Even Associate the Group with Tastyfresh.com?

There are at least 5 reasons why Tastyfresh.com should be the core hub for these groups. Here they are:

1. Find common base instructions on how to START (not maintain, group, act, etc...) a local community.
2. A place to share and discuss their struggles and successes in forming that community.
3. A place they can send people to (like churches) who may need to more information about these fellowships and the dance scene in general.
4. They will build off the reputation of Tastyfresh.com and make the groups seem more "legit."
5. Allow us as a "scene" to start as many communities as possible within a short period of time.

So, How Do We Get Started?

None of us here at Tastyfresh.com believe that we have all of the answers. We do know that we have over 300 minds posting on this message board. Together over the next few weeks we need to collectively work this out. DJ404 and Pat D have some valuable experience in founding their Groove Fellowship several years ago and I have some in founding the one in Atlanta (that hasn't met in a year now, but will be again soon). We also have people like Kevin Coffman, Brandon, Fatcat and others who have been throwing events since the 90's. We have tons of experience and just need to start sharing it here.

Here is what you need on the most basic level:

1. A place to meet. A house or an apartment is fine. It doesn't have to be fancy.
2. Some grub.
3. Directions to get to that place.
4. Some posts on this site and maybe flyers at your church to drum up interest.

5. Some prayer time prior to the event.

What Should I Expect?

Maybe nothing. Maybe Something. God will move when he moves. It's sometimes frustrating, but oh so beautiful when he does finally move. You may have one or two people at this event for the first few meetings. You might also have as many as fifteen or more. It all depends on your promotional abilities and the interest in your area. Just be realistic and don't be discouraged if attendance is low, it is something to build on.

What Should We Do at the First Event?

Keep it simple. Get to know each other. Find out what everyone's interests and skills are. Find out how flexible their schedule is. Find out how often they would like to meet. Find out what they ultimately might want to see happen in your town.

Why the Name Groove Fellowships?

It is just a name. DJ 404 and Pat D were using it for their group in California. It sounded decent, so I asked if I could use it here. As Tastyfresh.com is not going to be the overlord of these groups, you can call yours whatever you wish. Groove Fellowship can be used if you like though. Eventually we may have a logo and more for this. "A part of the Tastyfresh.com Groove Fellowship Network" may be a possible sticker/label/tag line. It is all up in the air and open for discussion.

In Closing

As I said earlier, we at Tastyfresh.com don't have all the answers concerning these events just yet. The idea is still in its infancy. I firmly believe that given what I have laid out, we should be able to iron out any problems and be able to build these fellowships throw discussion on this board. Yes, we may need to have some spiritual discussions about this. Since they would be related to building the dance scene, this IS one place they specifically are allowed. So, let's do this! Start asking questions. Start looking for people from your area. Start a Groove Fellowship!

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/ezine/11-2006-jan-feb/introgroove.html>

The Case for Fellowships (2006-01-15 00:00) - redsavior

[1]It's been about seven months now since I first made a post on the forums calling for the start of what I then called [2]Groove Fellowships. Through out a series of discussions on the site about the same time, it became clear that if we were going to grow this scene or if we were even going to help encourage each other in our faith, simply posting on a message board would not cut it.

It's been about seven months now since I first made a post on the forums calling for the start of what I then called [3]Groove Fellowships. Through out a series of discussions on the site about the same time, it became clear that if we were going to grow this scene or if we were even going to help encourage each other in our faith, simply posting on a message board would not cut it. DJ Rish, Carey Jarvis, DJ Saryn and myself pretty much developed a very rough concept of what was needed to help get the foundation for the next phase of growth in our scene. The concept, as I posted, was for local groups of believers to start meeting on a regular basis in homes and basically throwing small house parties with some time to just talk and hangout. That's right, we didn't feel that each group should start out hosting some massive event that will attract everyone and their cousin from out of state.

Event vs. Fellowship

For those of you who have not heard of this idea yet, you may be wondering why we felt that a large event or even an "event" should not be the goal. There is both a complex answer and a simple one.

The Simple Answer:

The fact is that many of us have never met in person before, many of us are not well connected to our local secular scene, and most of us lack the experience needed to put on an event of quality. So, what it boils down to is that if you do not simply meet and get to know each other first, you will not fully understand people's talents and where they would fit into such an event. You will not know about any personality quirks that someone might have or the things they struggle with that might cause problems with the event. You also as a group may not have the connections you need to acquire a decent sound and light system for the event or even a venue that will attract a decent crowd. To through an event with people you have only met over the Internet, while it might work, will be much more of a struggle and risk than if you took time first to know one another including your strengths and weaknesses.

The Complex Answer:

The formation of Groove Fellowships as a small group is really intended to take us deeper than simply throwing events. Many people on the boards have expressed an inability to connect socially in our churches. Our style of music is one that most Christians just simply do not get and many simply see the clubs as dens of sin rather than a place for ministry or even just relaxing (without doing drugs or getting drunk). There simply seems to be a cultural divide in many of our churches over this. Nothing is really wrong with that though because we are called to this scene while they may not be. As different parts of the body of Christ, this is to be expected. Unfortunately, this division is what has helped many of us to feel isolated from our churches and searching for that unity here at Tastyfresh.com.

So the first thing these groups are to do is to help Christians who love club music and the club scene to come together and fellowship like a church. It is here, in person, where discussions that might normally be too volatile for all of Tastyfresh.com.com to have online could be discussed. It is also here that we might be able to pray in person with one another. We also can see first hand God working in each other's lives and to physically meet the needs of our fellow members. It is also a place that should be open enough that eventually other Christians from outside the Tastyfresh.com community can come in and feel at home. These fellowships should also be open enough that a non-Christian who is seeking answers can feel free to come, have some fun, and see how God is working in our lives. Hopefully, this type of meeting will eventually change lives.

The second thing that these fellowships will do is to help all of us get to know one another better. We can say so much more through our body language and our mouths than we can in the short, fast-paced typing frenzies we often have on Tastyfresh.com While it's fun to post on the message boards here, it is way too slow for fully developed conversations that allow us to fully know each other and to see how we behave. Face to face interaction is important. One reason

is that we can express our love for one another better. An emoticon for a hug hardly compares to a warm, friendly bear hug from a 250 lbs DJ who's hyped up on sugar and caffeine. Meeting like this also lets us see how people really act. It also gives the group a chance to see its member's talents, strengths and weaknesses first hand which will help when the group does eventually throw down that huge event.

The third thing meeting as a fellowship does is it builds consistency and focus. An event is just that... an event. Events happen once and only once. Even a series still only really happens one event at a time. A fellowship however reoccurs on a regular basis and always picks up right where it left off. When you meet up the focus isn't on making sure your mix is perfect as the DJ. It isn't on making sure you collect enough in ticket sales to break even. It's not even on crowd control, concessions, what to wear, sound, lights or security. The focus is directly on people. It's on caring for one another and developing relationships.

This is exactly what Jesus focused on throughout His ministry. Sure He was here to save people, but He was here to restore relationships. He always had time to talk to people... even in times of crisis. His focus was not on the cross until He was near to the end, and even then, he was concerned about His relationship with his disciples. Almost every time He performed a miracle, He took time out to talk to the person whose life He was about to effect. If you want some examples of this, look no further than the woman at the well, Zacchaeus, and the dead girl and the sick woman.

The bottom line is that people's lives are not usually changed through throwing events. Events can be great fun, but they do not change lives in an eternal sense... normally. What will change lives and what Jesus Himself showed was to be a high priority was building relationships.

And that is what Groove Fellowships are about. Building relationships that encourage one another to grow in our faith, in our talents and abilities, in caring for others, and in allowing ourselves to be cared for. The most important thing for us to learn is how to be in a relationship. The Internet, while it can help people to meet one another, will never be able to help build a relationship as fast as meeting in person and on a regular basis will do. And when these relationships become well rooted, those big events we want will fall in place and start to happen.

A Picture of Fellowship

I honestly do not believe there is such a thing as a perfect model for these fellowships. I think there is a basic template that can be built on and improved upon though. That is what I want to describe here. The picture I would like to start with is this: A home with a nice sized living room, plenty of snack food, and some sort of sound system be it a boom box or a professional DJ rig. Add to that a group of at least two people to start with. During the night, the group talks about whatever is on their minds, they play music, help each other in their mixing if the gear is there (or music production), and at some point they sit down and talk about why they are there as a group and maybe discuss some prayer requests and scripture. Nothing gets too heavy because it's just the first time they've meet. At some point during the night, they say a prayer and leave, hopefully with a desire to come back for another gathering in about a month.

That's it. It's not a complex plan. It doesn't require tons of planning. In fact, it shouldn't. There are basically three things that the group needs to decide on before each gathering: whose house to meet at, who brings the grub, and who brings the sound system. The fellowship should be as free form and relaxed as possible. There shouldn't be any pretentiousness or sense of competition. The focus should be on letting God move just as He wants to among the members of the group and for that group to allow that.

Some groups may feel the need to be more structured than others and that is fine. Just make sure that all of the members of your group agree to that so that no one feels left out or uncomfortable with the structure. Some may think that even my picture is too structured. Loosen the reins then. The point is that your local fellowship should be your local fellowship.

Ideally, these groups should meet once a month. You need to meet at least that often at least to maintain contact with one another, but also because you need to build consistency. It will also help to encourage the group to grow.

Making It Happen

The point of this article is to hopefully encourage some of you to start a local fellowship. I hope that you will consider this. Like I stated, it doesn't have to be a big production because the point is to build relationships rather than host outrageous events. Over the past seven months we've had almost 1,000 posts in the Groove Fellowship board here on Tastyfresh.com. So the movement is starting to takeoff. We are also starting to see several of these fellowships take form across the US. My hope is that this becomes not just a US movement, but also an international one.

If you are interested in learning more about how I see these groups functioning, you should check out the Introduction to Groove Fellowships. If you would like to read up on the discussion that lead up to this idea, it is fully laid out in the [4]Groove Fellowship: Background Discussion thread on the Groove Fellowship board. Lastly, if you are interested in seeing if anything has already been started in your area or if there is interest in starting one, check out the [5]Groove Fellowship Board as well.

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/ezine/11-2006-jan-feb/case4fellowships.html>
 2. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/ezine/11-2006-jan-feb/introgroove.html>
 3. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/ezine/11-2006-jan-feb/introgroove.html>
 4. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/forum/index.php/topic,1038.0.html>
 5. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/forum/index.php/board,20.0.html>
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The Ohio Fellowship: The Electro-Spirit Crew (2006-01-15 00:00) - redsavior

Spending time and sharing with other people who have the same common bond of music that I do was the best thing to happen to my passion for DJing. Just about anyone in the electronic music scene can probably relate to a feeling of loneliness in world full of people interested in all other genres but our own. Especially if you are as passionate about music as I am. That is why I love spending time throwing shows, or just playing Halo with some of my groove fellowship buddies, because of that common interest in music. I believe that my Groove Fellowship may very well be the reason that I am still DJing today.

Spending time and sharing with other people who have the same common bond of music that I do was the best thing to happen to my passion for DJing. Just about anyone in the electronic music scene can probably relate to a feeling of loneliness in world full of people interested in all other genres but our own. Especially if you are as passionate about music as I am. That is why I love spending time throwing shows, or just playing Halo with some of my groove fellowship buddies, because of that common interest in music. I believe that my Groove Fellowship may very well be the reason that I am still DJing today. There is no doubt that what I have learned, and the encouragement I have received from the fellowship has inspired me to become a much better DJ than I could have been by myself. A Fellowship of music fans like the one I am in is not formed over night; it takes a lot of time, prayer, work, and communication.

Besides prayer and Gods timing, I believe the biggest part of the electro-spirit crew forming had to do with TastyFresh. Really, Reds didn't even pay me to say that. Tasty is where I would meet people in my area, and around the world. I can even remember how happy I was the day I saw a link to "Christ Centered DJ Culture" when Google searching for Christian dance music. Dan Bartow (heldbywill) was the first person I ever really got to meet on tasty from my area. I posted about a little show I was doing at my church, and Dan replied that he didn't live to far from the show, and thought he would drive up. Who knew that a few PM's later I would be connected to an entire team of electro heads in my area. TastyFresh is also where Dan and Greg Reynolds (DJ Glow) would meet, and talk about the first real dance party and form the beginnings of our crew (who was really just Dan and Greg at that time). I cannot really say where or what I would be doing if I never used TastyFresh to meet, and find new friends interested in the culture.

The Next huge element of great fellowship is throwing shows. The first time the core members of our group physically met was in December of 2003 at a show that took place at the old Underground in Cincinnati. We spent the day helping the Underground with their new building then we had a dance party that night. Only a handful of people showed up that night. Nonetheless, that was one of the most successful parties our crew ever had. During that show all the DJ's got to be great friends. We talked about what we did, talked about gear, and drank Cindy's awesome blends of secrecy, which kept us up the rest of the night. That time of fellowship inspired all of the DJ's to really get to know each other better, and encouraged us to use and push our talents to the next level. A few short months later Brian, a.k.a. Dunamis, headed up a show in Mt. Vernon, OH called Love Bomb. This show had a good crowd and just an awesome vibe the entire night. It seemed like every time we put on shows, we would talk about the next show we wanted to throw. It turned out that the best part about shows was getting into the lives and minds of the people around me. Building a community of friends, to encourage and build each other up.

Our community eventually led itself into meeting just to talk, and listen, and eat of course. The typical form of a groove fellowship isn't the shows thrown or reputation built, but rather it is a model of the Church. In my mind, a groove fellowship is just like the body of Christ. We know that in a church, all the members need to react, to know each other, and of course need to stay connect in order for the body to function. So in a Groove Fellowship the same things are needed in order to produce fruit, just like our bodies. A lot of our crewmembers even consider it to literally be a Church. A Groove Fellowship can produce fruit far more valuable than improving dance music, it also has the power to impact lives spiritually.

Groove Fellowships are a great way to witness to other people who listen and love the same music we do. Meeting in a home, with some food, and video games and talking music is such a great environment for a lot of techno freaks to feel comfortable, and open. Meeting in an environment that isn't always big party can reach people more intimately, and often reach a totally different crowd. I have read many articles, and posts on Tasty about getting the right vibe at a show that is not the stereotypical "Jesus Bass Praise" but still has impact on those who don't know about Christ. It is much easier to get this vibe and be a great witness to someone when you're being yourself in a smaller group and relaxed setting like a house meeting.

There is no cookie cutter on TastyFresh that is good enough to shape any given Groove Fellowships' dough. Being open to try, and experiment with different places and vibes is the best way to reach and meet more music fans in your area. The important thing to remember is to really get involved in your group, or start your own.

The Southern California Fellowship (2006-01-15 00:00) - redsavior

The So Cal Groove Fellowship started in 2001. The church I attend had small groups of every sort. There were men's motocross, book review, coffee club groups, and even a hiking group and paintballers that met. Why not something for us that where we shared a common interest and the love of God. It was birthed from a realization that other DJ's, producers and those in the scene or trying to create a scene were not getting connected. We needed a place where the importance of believers getting together and encouraging each other just as the bible says how iron sharpens iron came to fruition on a monthly basis.

"We are a hub of individuals; inspired by the Maker, enlightened by the Word, and entranced by the music"

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I am thankful that the meeting came about because it met many needs and we have a fun time too. There is plenty of time spent preparing for the event. dj404 is on the web updating the website, Adambomb337 is busy at his crib baking his famous Adambomb cake and I usually make reminder calls and invite people who haven't attended one.

One thing the fellowship has done is bringing people who were unsure what they should do with their particular talent. Our latest addition to the fellowship, DJ Mark B was at a point where many of us have been - that stage where you want to hang up the headphones and sell the gear because uncertainty of what to do with the decks and skill you have. He had no idea that there were these strange beings that existed on planet earth that loved God, loved music, wanted to express their talent and wanted to make a difference.

The devotional and prayer time opened hearts and brought healing. Many people don't like to share their hearts. The fellowship brought a safe place where "everyone new your DJ name" and you could feel it's all right to struggle with whatever and you had people who cared.

Another aspect of the fellowship is when the decks are opened up and we get a chance to broadcast on the net. For many of the artists & DJ's who show up it is their first opportunity to spin live and even better to spin to an audience anywhere in the world.

A thing we just acknowledged at our last fellowship is the number one reason people don't come is lack of knowledge that this even exists. Tastyfresh.com only reaches a very small percentage of people we want to reach. Therefore we need to get the word out on a grander scale. We need **MARKETING!**

Our current goals for 2006 are the following:

- to create a solid mission statement of why we exist
- to create greater awareness and buzz that we exist

- create a free So Cal Groove Fellowship promo CD for distribution
- put on events and take risks
- find resources to help fund Groove Fellowship
- to develop other dj's & artists to their full potential
- to bring the Good News to those that need Jesus

Our encouragement to everyone who is starting a Groove Fellowship is to just do it! For those of you who have had some tread wear on your tires look back at where you have been, where you are now and improve. Most importantly get prayer! We would appreciate your prayers for what looks to be our best year ever. If there is anyone in the Southern California area please drop by. Overnight guests from out of town are more than welcome to spend the night.

So Cal Groove Fellowship
DJ Pat D for
dj404
Adambomb337

Focused and Consistent (2006-01-15 00:00) - redsavior

[1]Petra's massive ministry could be boiled down to one simple little motto: Be focused and consistent. They never strayed from this simple live show script of opening with some fan favorites and new material, followed by praise and worship, followed by talking about World Vision and then presenting the gospel during an encore complete with an alter call. Even after 33 years, God moved at almost every concert they played and lives were changed.

Last night, I had the opportunity to go see one of the final Petra shows ever. That's right; Petra is calling it quits after 33 years. That's a very long time for any rock band to survive. Petra won dozens of awards, was always active in their community and focused everything on God. In many ways, Petra became jokingly known by one of my best friends and myself as the Christian version of Monudo because only one member stayed with the band for the duration. That man was Bob Hartman.

It's funny. Despite staying with the band for 33 years, Bob eventually did take a back seat in the final ten years. He was mostly just a studio artist during that time, but with the exception of one album, he wrote almost every song on every album. He, for all purposes, was Petra. He came back as a full member for the band's final album and he was there last night tearing up his guitar like I had never seen him do before and that's when it all hit me. Bob's band wasn't the best in the world. In fact, he has been known to write some cheese... a lot of cheese actually. Some how though, his music was almost always relevant, well written, and contained a message that always pointed back to his Savior and Lord. When headlining a show, his band always did two things consistently: dedicate time to praise and worship, and give a presentation of the gospel.

Petra's massive ministry could be boiled down to one simple little motto: Be focused and consistent. They never strayed from this simple live show script of opening with some fan favorites and new material, followed by praise and worship, followed by talking about World Vision and then presenting the gospel during an encore complete with an alter call. Even after 33 years, God moved at almost every concert they played and lives were changed. Their success led to the creation of other Christian rock bands and those led the way for more experimental Christian bands and somehow along the way as DJ Dual Core mentioned in his history article, the Christian dance scene was born. All of this happened because one man stayed focused and consistent for a 33-year career.

One thing I am sure of is that Bob never envisioned that Petra would go so far when he first formed it with some friends back in 1972. He didn't have any foresight into the future and I doubt God told him about everything that would happen. He just heard God's calling, acted and never strayed from that calling. Because of this, he (along with the other Christian bands active at that time) laid the foundation for the Christian music scene that we are experiencing today. Yes, it is flawed, but it is here because people like Bob remained focused and consistent when they heard God's calling.

With the momentum that many of us are gaining now as producers, DJs and promoters in both the Christian and secular scenes, we need to pay attention to the model Bob Hartman set for us. We need to stay focused and consistent on what God has asked us to do. It is clear that God does not have the same plan for each of us, but what should be clear is that God is using us to lay the foundation for the next generation of producers, DJs and promoters in our scenes just like God used Bob and his band throughout the past 33 years.

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/ezine/11-2006-jan-feb/focused.html>

The Business of Dance Music: Lesson 1: Sometimes Ya Just Gotta Work (2006-01-15 00:00) - KevinOneel

Dance music isn't the easiest business to make into a career. Trust me, I've been a DJ for over 9 years now, and I'm still trying. However, it's a dream that many of us still hold onto, and strive to achieve. The biggest thing that holds back many young, aspiring DJs and producers from taking that next step from amateur to professional is knowledge of the industry.

Dance music isn't the easiest business to make into a career. Trust me, I've been a DJ for over 9 years now, and I'm still trying. However, it's a dream that many of us still hold onto, and strive to achieve. The biggest thing that holds back many young, aspiring DJs and producers from taking that next step from amateur to professional is knowledge of the industry. Dance music, much like law or medicine, is a business where networking and knowing the ins and outs are of the utmost importance. It's so very important to know the who and how of taking the next step. In dance music, the old adage holds true; it's not always what you know, but rather whom you know. In this multi-part series, I hope to shed some light on how to take that next step from amateur to professional. We'll cover contracting, networking, copyrighting, making business decisions, and overall preparedness for making the jump.

The first thing an aspiring DJ needs to be aware of is the obstacles in their way to achieving their goal. I'm not saying pay more attention to your faults, but at least know what your limiting factors are. This is almost as important as having good technical skills. Reason being, sometimes you're going to have to work harder. In preparation for this article, I spoke with someone who faced some serious limiting factors early in their career.

"Getting started in East Germany was tough, because there really didn't have record stores or clubs" said Paul Van Dyk in a recent interview I conducted with him. "My musical education came from radio stations, and this is how I knew about it (Electronic music). My Grandma would go over to the West (West Berlin) and bring back mix tapes for me. She actually bought me my first record. It was OMD (Orchestra Maneuvers in the Dark). It was called 'Organization'."

Imagine trying to get started in a place where all creativity is stifled by an oppressive government. Paul basically worked with the knowledge brought to him through the radio. As Paul said in the interview, there were no clubs in East Germany. He had to overcome both lack of public knowledge and lack of access to music.

"I started making mixtapes as something for my friends and I to listen to on the way to shows. One thing I noticed after the wall came down and we started going to clubs was the music was very boring. Certainly not exciting as we know it these days."

One thing I've noticed from many now big name DJs is they created their own scenes out of necessity. Paul did this, as well as Anabolic Frolic, Soul of Man, etc... They didn't let this disadvantage get in their way to achieving their goals. As Timo Maas once said, "When you live out in the country like I did, you have to work twice as hard as the city boys." Sometimes, you're going to be in a situation where you have no choice but to put in that extra effort in order to get to the next level. For example, I live in rural Alabama. I know that I'm automatically at a disadvantage as opposed to people who live in Atlanta, Nashville, Orlando, Charlotte, etc... This just means I need to put a bit more elbow grease into what I do in order to become successful. I've tried to realize my personal limiting factors, and determine a strategy to get around them.

Paul said, "One night, I was at a show with some friends of mine. One of my friends overheard the promoter talking about how they were looking for new talent to play at shows. My friend walked back out to the car and got one of my tapes and gave it to the promoter. Not long after that, I got my first booking."

This is a prime example of networking. Remember that when you're in a disadvantaged situation, it's very important to make contacts with all the people you can. Especially remember that in Christian Dance Music circles. We are merely a microcosm of a scene. ANYBODY that can help you take the next step is a valuable person. Sometimes, the best results come from the most unlikely of places. When your limiting factor is living somewhere with not many people, expanding your network is important because you increase your list of secondary contacts. By secondary contacts, I mean friends of friends. Think of networking as being a giant pyramid, with you being at the top. From there, your number of potential contacts increases exponentially with each step down you take. Without that one

friend, Paul Van Dyk wouldn't have gotten that first booking, and potentially would have never become what he has become.

When I asked Paul if he had a message for DJs and producers trying to get started in the business, he said, "You see, the thing is: do whatever you do without compromise. Make the music the way you like it because at the end of the day you have to stand in front of other people and you have to be very believable that this is the best thing at that moment. And in order to do that, you have to stand 100 % behind what you do and that means no compromises when you're making music."

Most importantly, you have to believe in yourself. Believe in who you are, what you're doing, and where you want to go. Never get discouraged when it seems that your limiting factors are holding you back. That just means it's time to come up with a different strategy. Never let anyone tell you that you can't do something. One important thing to learn though, is getting used to the word "no." On average, it takes 30 no's to get one yes. View each no as being just one step closer to the next yes. Keep a positive attitude, and stick with it. Readjust your plan of attack as needed. If something's not working, decide what isn't working and how the problem can be fixed.

Limiting factors are something we all have. The real separation factor though is how each of us deals with the situation. If the scene is lacking, how do you create your own scene? If there are not many people where you live, how do you expand your network? If your area has a very small exposure to dance music, how do you expose it to more people? To take things to the next level, one must first commit to the next level. Ask yourself if you're really willing to put the work that it takes in, and are you willing to commit to work.

Next time: Promotions 101, or How (not) To Be Seen.

4.2 March

Effectively Bringing Unity to Our Scene Part I: (2006-03-15 00:00) - redsavior

This article is the first in what will be a series of discussions regarding unity in our scene. There is no doubt that we have been less united in the past, but are we really as united as we think we are and could we become even more closely united? This is exactly what I hope to examine over the course of the next several issues. Enough of the intro, let's dive into the meat.

If you have been one of the hundreds of people who have been around the message boards for a long period of time, you probably already know a reoccurring theme is unity. Some say we have it. Others say we don't. Some say we need stronger leadership. Others say weaker. This is a debate that has come up from time to time and yet we never have fully ironed out what should be done about it.

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Background and Apologies

Several weeks ago we had a rather huge debate regarding the upcoming Cornerstone 2006 event. Well, truthfully, my posts turned it into a heated debate. After the customary five pages of mudslinging, again... mostly by me, one person finally made a statement that stuck with me and put some of that debate into perspective. It was something quite simple, yet I didn't have a good comeback to at the time. I promise to get back with the person about that and well... it has taken longer than I first thought it would, but this article is start of my full response.

For the purpose of this article, I really want to step completely out and away from the original discussion that has spawned this article. I do want to share with you what got my attention and then move on from there. So, without dragging this out any further, here is a paraphrased quote:

The very thing you are doing is not unity at all. It is the exact opposite because you are essentially convincing people that your way is the only thing that should happen and anything else is wrong. We do have that unity, you just are failing to realize it, or some people are failing to accept unity. I am asking you, please try to look at this as a positive effort. If we stop this bickering now before the event starts, we can have unity between us and show that the Christian Dance scene is unified already and is ready for a bigger exposure.

I really have several points to make regarding this statement. First, I don't think we are all operating with the same definition of unity. Second, I think we still have several obstacles in our way before we ALL can be united. Third, I think there is a misunderstanding about disagreements in general and what they have to do with unity.

Before I go any further into this, let me say that I honestly could have handled the original discussion a bit more tactfully. I think the discussion was a good one to have, but I know I personally got a bit more heated than I should have at times and maybe made a few low blows...and actually I might have enjoyed some of those blows which was totally wrong for me to do. As I said in the discussion though, if God is truly telling someone to do something, they should do it regardless of whatever I say. I'm just another man with an opinion, an ego, and a rather large soapbox. God does call and should call the final shots, not me or anybody else in this scene. We just need to make sure that we really are listening to Him rather than listening to our own desires.

With that said, to all I offended in that discussion I'm sorry and I apologize. I should have treated the whole issue with more tact and respect. I failed you all in that regard and I am sorry.

So, now that all of that is behind us, let's start talking about unity and what that really means!

The Definition of Unity

As I sat in Miami, FL in between sessions at a conference last month, I wrote down what I thought unity was. Here's what I came up with on my own.

- Unity is working together in submission to one another.
- Unity is striving together as a group toward a common goal.
- Unity is following a clear plan toward that end together as a group.
- Unity is following clear leadership that is responsible for achieving the goal together as a group.

Dictionary.com had a few definitions as well:

- The state or quality of being one; singleness.
- The state or quality of being in accord; harmony.
- Singleness or constancy of purpose or action; continuity.
- The number 1.

The last one seems a bit odd though doesn't it? Until last Sunday, I would have ignored that definition and moved on, but of all things, we had a sermon about unity within the church. You see, our pastor left us for a new calling after 22 years. He has been the only pastor of my church. He built it from the ground up. Right now, there is evidentially a lot of tension between the contemporary worshipers and the traditional ones regarding how the church will proceed now. Our remaining staff and interim pastor finally made their decision that both styles of worship were needed in our church and announced that Sunday through a sermon on unity.

The key passage of that sermon was latter half of John 17. This is the longest prayer on record that Jesus said. It's just before Jesus was arrested and so his mind was focused not only what was to come for him, but what would happen to the seeds he had sown during his time on Earth. In verse 11 Jesus prayed for his disciples saying, "I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave me—so that they may be one as we are one." In verses 20-21, Jesus continues, "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me." So here's Jesus, literally hours before his crucifixion and of his main concerns is that the disciples and those who carry on the Gospel today live as one in the same way Jesus and God are one. Just like the definition from Dictionary.com.

One Body

You see the number one is the picture of unity. It is not being a group of people who only get along. It is about being focused in agreement on what the goals are and moving in one organized direction. Sure we will all take different roads, but our goals are to be clear and we are to be united in our individual tasks in such a way that they all build up to meeting that one goal. Jesus here clearly refers to the union that he has with God the Father and God the Spirit as the trinity. They have common goals; they act and think as one, yet somehow they act as individuals and their specific tasks vary. Christ is the redeemer. The Spirit is our intercessor in prayer and guide to God's will. The Father is the head of it all. That's a very loose explanation, but that is the picture of unity John 17:11 & 20-21 paints.

A more traditional explanation of how every Christian has a specific task or mission to perform is from 1 Corinthians 12 in the classic "Body of Christ" example. Here is what verses 14-20 say:

Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

Traditionally, I've always looked at this passage and viewed it solely as justification as to why I did not become a street preacher or minister of music and to justify whatever ministry I was into at the time... even when people were against me. What I missed was what it truly meant to be a part of one body. While a body made of just eyes cannot fulfill God's desire for the church, neither can a body that has all the right parts, but desires to go in different directions and has different end goals.

If the right leg wants to go north, while the left leg wants to go south, the body is not going to go anywhere. More than likely, it's actually going to fall down. It just is not enough that we know which part of the body we are. It is not even enough for us to know what each part of the body is supposed to do. We have to know when we are to do our part and to what end we are doing it.

Until Next Time...

So here's are some things I'd like for you to think about until the next installment:

- Who do you think are some of the current leaders in our scene today?
- Are these the same leaders or have they changed over time?
- Do these leaders seem to be listening to God's leading or their own?
- Are you listening for direction from God and the leaders of the scene or are you searching yourself out?
- Where do you think this scene is heading at the moment?
- Is it where God wants it to be?
- What is keeping us from reaching it if we are falling short?
- Are we moving as one body or many?

Well, that's it for the first part. I hope it gives you something to think about. Feel free to discuss this one on the boards. It's an issue that we do need to discuss. Next time we'll take a look back through our history and see how united we were in the past and where we stand today.

The Business of Dance Music Part II: Promotions 101, or How to (Not) Be Seen (2006-03-15 00:00) - KevinOneel

Promotions are an often-overlooked aspect of the business by many young artists, and even a few veterans. Anyone can go hand out CDs, but it's those extra steps that a person takes that can set them apart from the competition. In this issue, we will discuss a few common things that drive promoters (and sometimes even myself) up the wall, the art of the promo kit, and how to hit the streets.

So you've cut a killer demo and decided that it's time to take the next step and join the ranks of the professional DJ. You've finished the long, painstaking slow soul searching process that comes along with making such a life decision. After all, DJing can be a career, and should be treated as such. I know I would never think of walking into the law firm I work for and deciding that I'm only going to do part of my work that day. While having fun is important, it is also important to recognize that this is a business decision and should be treated quite seriously.

Assuming that these steps have been taken, it's time to get that first booking. Promotions are an often-overlooked aspect of the business by many young artists, and even a few veterans. Anyone can go hand out CDs, but it's those extra steps that a person takes that can set them apart from the competition. In this issue, we will discuss a few common things that drive promoters (and sometimes even myself) up the wall, the art of the promo kit, and how to hit the streets.

I understand that typically, it is more effective to give a list of things to do as opposed to things not to do. However, here are some common things that people do which should be avoided.

1. House sets should not be referred to as soulful, nor Trance sets referred to as uplifting. If I had a dollar for every soulful House DJ or uplifting Trance DJ, I would not have a day job. Be creative. Branch out. Use a Thesaurus. Do anything but use those words.
2. When taking promotional pictures, please take into account the background of the picture.
3. Chances are you have not created some mind blowing new genre. Do not make yourself appear as if you were doing Prog Trance years before Jam & Spoon made "The Age Of Love (Watch Out For Stella Mix.)"
4. Don't use the terms Soulful House or Uplifting Trance.
5. Here's a big complaint; when making promotional CDs to give out, make sure the CD is tracked. It is incredibly annoying to be 5 minutes into listening to a mix, and decide to skip to the next track, only to go back to the start.
6. Make sure you write a contact number or email address on each piece of promotional material sent out. Nothing is worse than having to reassemble the jigsaw puzzle of pieces when there is no reference material.
7. Have I mentioned not using the words soulful or uplifting when describing House or Trance?
8. Don't bug promoters the second you find out about a big show coming to your town. They've probably already arranged the talent by this point. If they say, "Let me think about it," assume the answer is a no. The old saying goes "It never hurts to ask." Maybe it never hurts to ask, but it does get annoying if someone constantly asks. No means no (except in those few circumstances where no means maybe.)
9. If you have been a bedroom DJ for 15 years, you are on the same playing ground as a kid that got into dance music by listening to the Mortal Kombat soundtrack two years ago. Keep your ego in check, and remember, the music business is very political. Learn to play politics.
10. By no circumstances should you ever describe House and Trance as Soulful or Uplifting.

Taking into account everything previously mentioned, it's time to make a promo kit! Please remember that the purpose of a promo kit is not to get bookings, but rather reinforce relationships. A promo kit is much more valuable sent to someone you have already forged a relationship with previously. Sending out promo kits as if it were a cold call is simply a waste of money.

A good promo kit should contain six things; a CD, a bio, a resume, a business card, flyers from previous events played, and a photo. The CD should be FLAWLESS. Small mistakes are okay in live performance, but totally unacceptable when recording. On the bio and resume, make sure to run spell check and grammar check. Nothing is worse than trying to decipher someone's errors, and it also gives the appearance of sloppiness. Also, for that touch of extra attention, print things out on either bond paper or card stock. Regular copy paper is easily destroyed, and can turn yellow with age. By using bond paper (also called resume paper in some circles), the yellowing potential is removed. Even better, you could find a reputable printer to make professional materials for your kit. Personally, I use Pro-Image LLC out of Birmingham, AL. Try to find someone in your area to help. Remember, you only get one chance to make a first impression. Make it count!

Promo kits are good, but mean nothing if you never get out. The NUMBER ONE source of bookings is through people you already have connections with. Promo kits are cold calls, whereas knowing promoters and other DJs are like references. Networking is effective! Plus, as a DJ, you need to be one step ahead of current musical trends to really make money. This not only means keeping current with music, but keeping current with electronic culture. Hitting the streets and meeting people is a very slow process, but a rather effective method. Most people lack the patience for this part of the process. I promise, hang in there and develop an effective street strategy, and you'll reap the rewards tenfold.

Promotions can be tricky. However, with a well thought out marketing plan and dedication to making a project work, you too can achieve your goals. Be aware of common errors and avoid them. Nobody likes to beat a dead horse. Make a promo kit. Include all the things needed to make a good first impression. Be neat and professional with the contents of your kit. Last, but not least, get out of the house and meet electronic people. Become friends with DJs, producers, and promoters. Make yourself known.

Oh yeah, and just don't use the words soulful or uplifting to describe house and trance.

Kevin Neely, aka Oneel, is a DJ/Producer/Remixer from Birmingham Alabama. He has been playing for over nine years, and has performed with some of the biggest names in dance music, such as Judge Jules, Ferry Corsten, Irene, Faust & Shortee, and Matt K.

Icon Collective: Getting Educated by the Pros (2006-03-15 00:00) - redsavior

A few weeks ago, Icon Collective approached me about their dance music production and vocalist programs. Naturally, as I had never heard of such a thing, I was curious enough to bite. I was also very skeptical. Was this the beginning of the end for the DIY training and street cred that we all claim to have when it comes to writing our dance choons? Was this a way to revolutionize and improve the quality of dance music overall or would this further vanilla coat it all down to one similar cheesy commercial sound?

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The Basics

TF: What is Icon Collective?

CW: We offer education for the independent artists. We exist to empower the people who wants to write, produce, mix, master and market their own music, and do so in a way that allows them to pay the bills and enjoy a creative lifestyle. With the development of technology and software, artists (for the first time) have a legitimate shot at connecting directly with their fan base, allowing them to cut out the corporate "Major Labels".

Before Icon Collective, nobody was connecting all the dots and putting them under one roof and saying, "here, this is the information you need to succeed". We firmly believe that Icon Collective is the future of Electronic Based Music Education and our graduates will be a strong contributing force to the future scene. In ten years from now, when people look back to see where many of the inspiring, groundbreaking music and producers were coming from, there going to notice that a lot of them came from Downtown L.A. here at the Collective Campus.

TF:How long has it existed and where is it located?

CW: Were located in downtown Los Angeles and we had out first classes in March of '05.

TF: How did Icon Collective start?

CW: David Valencia and I (Christopher Wight) were both working for a well-known music/recording engineering school and realized those programs were not catering to electronic artists. Those institutions are preparing people to become audio technicians. They don't understand the dance culture and are not addressing the needs of today's beat-makers, Djs, and Artists who have a passion for electronic music. We wanted to provide an environment that made aspiring producers/artists feel like, "Wow. This is my culture... my lifestyle... this was created for me." All of the gear, curriculum, teachers and location were methodically chosen to "cut the fat" and provide core information that these future artist/producers are looking for. It was our vision to create a haven that is both knowledgeable about their culture and creatively stimulating.

TF: Who are some of the "big names" backing the school?

CW: One of the most exciting aspects of this endeavor has been the support we've been receiving from the electronic music community. When David and I began informing people of our plans to open Icon Collective, we just got overwhelmed with emails and phone calls from artists and people involved in the scene who wanted to teach and help mold the next generation of up and coming artist/producers. I know we all wished there was something like Icon Collective when we decided to pursue an artistic, creative lifestyle. After setting up the courses and curriculum, we brought on Slimkid Tre (formally of the hip-hop group Pharcyde), DJ Irene who has been a supporter from day one, Mood Deluxe (Cameron Schroff) from liquid records U.K. and DJ Rap, to name a few. We felt this was a group of

well-respected, knowledgeable artists that could give our future producers some credible insight into making a living as an artist. In the end it's about creating your own future and living that alternative successful lifestyle.

TF: Are any of these people instructors?

CW: Yes, everyone involved gives as much time and effort to the collective that their schedule allows.

TF: What accomplishments has Icon Collective had so far?

CW: We've had many success stories in the short time we've been offering this course. We've already had students sign major label deals, to independent deal, to touring the world dj'ing and playing their music. Again, our goal is to not only teach the technical and creative side of the industry. We also put heavy emphasis on making a living doing so (booking gigs, shopping to labels, or independent online distribution).

Educational Theory

TF: Between 200-300 years ago, in order to have been considered an artist you had to attend art school. This process of formalized education eventually led a major lack of diversity in art until the late 1800's when this structure began to be rejected by artists everywhere. Considering how almost all EDM artists today are self-taught, is Icon Collective concerned that this might happen?

CW: No. Everyone involved with IC are artists themselves. So we all understand the importance of freedoms and individuality. But most art is being created differently today then even 10 years ago. There is a technical element that all artist must understand in order to express their ideas and visions. Of course some people could sit at a computer and spend their time understanding the programs (how do I over dub, how do the effects work, why is my mix muddy) but most artists want to be artists. So the quicker they can understand the tools the quicker they can be expressive. We exist to minimize the learning curve.

TF: How will Icon Collective keep this happening through their training programs?

CW: We teach techniques that have been proven, but we also teach that these are "guidelines" and that all "rules" can and should be broken. But artist are more creative and inspired when they're proud of their product. So if they can mix in their own song during the next gig, and it holds up with the other tracks then they'll carry that motivation back into the studio. Our goal is to inspire and teach artist to get the best song out of their soul... so what ever that takes we do.

TF: What are the programs that Icon Collective offers?

CW: We currently offer two programs. The independent artist program deals with all aspects of being an artist in the 21st century. This includes, producing, engineering, mixing, mastering, music business, and creativity. Then we have our Record Development program designed for vocalist. This program focuses on getting a record complete using all of our existing on-staff producers. So the artist can pick a track, or a producer they like and spend the next three months working on the songs. (hooks, vocal technique, music business etc). Plus we offer one-on-one private lessons in all aspects of music from DJ'ing, to piano, vocals and so on.

TF: How does each of the programs work? For the independent artist program, is there a strong emphasis on actual songwriting as opposed to loop creation? For the vocalist, is there some minimal singing ability required?

CW: We place our emphasis on each individual artist and what they need to achieve their vision. Some artists are going to need to understand loop creation if that's what they're going for and others not so much. We sit down with each person that comes to the collective to find out their long and short-term goals, and from there were able to set them in the right direction. As far as the vocalist are concerned, I've always believed you have to work with what you got. If you wanna be a vocalist and you have something to say...that's all that I need to hear. We can find an angle or approach that's right...cause the bottom line is self-expression. Some of the greatest vocalist of all time were awful singers, but so what. They moved millions of people with their thoughts.

TF: Since many people have been doing this without any training for years now and have been able to be successful, what will someone really get out of these training programs?

CW: Again, we're not sitting here and saying "you must come to Icon Collective in order to be successful in the music industry". To each there own, were a very humble and confident community. But I can't tell you how many successful and established DJ's have come up to us to say "man, I wish you guys were around when I was starting out, would have saved me about 5 years". We are here for those looking for help, guidance and inspiration.

Attending

TF: Who should attend Icon Collective?

CW: Anyone looking for the next step in their career. We've had artist straight out of High school, looking to start their musical endeavor, and we've had 40 something established musicians looking to get their finger on the pulse of the next movement in the music industry.

TF: What are the admissions requirements?

CW: It's very important to us that we keep the vibe and environment creative and positive. Nobody's going to feel creative and inspired if there are people with bad energy in the class, so first off, we like to chill and meet with all perspective artists. We want to make sure that not only are they going to add to the greater whole, but that we offer them exactly what their looking for. We're not just looking to pack as many people as possible into the classes, David and I are both committed for the long term of this vision and we are looking for people that have that same passion. If we see a strong desire to live a creative lifestyle and the artist is committed to being here, then it's just a simple process of filling out an application, submitting a high school diploma and choosing an available start date.

TF: Is the school accredited?

CW: Not at this time. Accreditation is a tricky thing that requires schools to teach very specific courses that we may not feel is right for our Producers. It keep us from being able to cut the fat of traditional programs and keep our "free flowing" course that allows room for individuality and freedoms. So until we can find an accreditation that would allow for this freedom we're not interested.

TF: What equipment is someone required own when attending Icon Collective?

CW: All producers will receive an Apple G4 laptop and programs that they get to keep when they graduate. This allows them to continue to build upon the foundation they created while they were studying here.

TF: How much will it cost per quarter/semester to attend Icon Collective?

CW: Our tuition is currently \$3,700 per semester and the Digital Music Program runs for two semesters. Even with the purchase of your laptop it is less expensive to study with us than traditional recording schools that have fees of at least \$5,000 per semester and typically much higher.

TF: When someone graduates, what type of degree will they receive?

CW: Degrees are meaning less in art. The bottom line is how good are your tracks and songs. Anyone who says differently is lying. You won't get a degree from Icon Collective, you'll get all the technical knowledge of the tools needed to express yourself, and you'll have a solid foundation for your career you can build on for the rest of your life.

So there you have it. Will Icon Collective leave its mark on the scene? It may be too early to tell, but with the backing of artists and DJs like Slimkid Tre, DJ Irene, Mood Deluxe and DJ Rap, they are off to a good start. If nothing else, there is a lot to be said about collaborating in a classroom with other like-minded individuals who simply want to make great music.

4.3 May

Violence in Culture (2006-05-15 00:00) - gsynth

✂ In September 2000 The Christian Herald published an article that began with this statement: "This past summer, Toronto's mayor, city counselors and law enforcement officers debated how to clean up the city's rave scene. A group of Christians are one step ahead of them, throwing dance parties with no drugs, no weapons, no drinking, no smoking, no sexually provocative clothing and no one being wheeled out on a stretcher." We didn't just not invite drug dealers and gangs in - we actively kept them out.

✂ I had a picture in my mind like a small pile of tinder and an unused match in my hand, in a huge dry forest. The tinder represented people I knew and the match was my own voice, lifestyle and actions. The forest was society and culture. It crossed my mind that if I lit the match and if the tinder caught on fire, the forest might soon be engulfed in flames, and the light just might be seen by the whole world. So I prayed, "God, let me light the match," and I got to work...

In September 2000 The Christian Herald published an article that began with this statement: "This past summer, Toronto's mayor, city counselors and law enforcement officers debated how to clean up the city's rave scene. A group of Christians are one step ahead of them, throwing dance parties with no drugs, no weapons, no drinking, no smoking, no sexually provocative clothing and no one being wheeled out on a stretcher." We didn't just not invite drug dealers and gangs in - we actively kept them out. We only hired performers that promoted positive lifestyle messages in their music and our rave flyers stated clearly "no drugs, no weapons, no markers, no bad attitudes" and "R.O.A.R." (right of admission reserved) or "come clean, free your mind, leave the drugs at home". We threw our events in safe venues with reasonable security, from community centers to church basements to clubs, and most of the time we served non-alcoholic drinks. We were all about the music, atmosphere, artistic and social experience, and a fun and safe time with our friends.

It wasn't that I'd never been exposed to the drug culture. The first people who invited me to raves when I was fourteen were drug dealers. Half my friends in high school were partiers or used drugs. Some of my most powerful memories in high school were when my friends died young from preventable accidents. When my friend's boyfriend died of an asthma attack when he was high on acid, a week after we were hanging out at the mall eating French fries and talking about music. When a close friend died as he choked on his vomit drinking alcohol. A new friend I'd just met at a house party, a week later died instantly when he hit a hydro pole driving drunk, seriously injuring six other people in his car. Four teenagers driving back from a soccer game died in a car accident after a few drinks. Two of my cousins died young - one was hit by a drunk driver in his little sports car, the other one commit suicide by heroin overdose and hanging himself. My close friend's brother and friend's housemate both died by accidental drug overdose. A schoolmate committed suicide. My first boyfriend attempted suicide with and because of drugs. I have more stories than I could ever tell here... but today I will focus on my own.

The increasing violence in our culture saddens me. I am saddened when I see on the news that a 15 year old stabbed a 12 year old in Toronto's club district late at night. I am saddened by increasing gang violence in Toronto, the underground illegal gun trade, the number of shootings and innocent bystanders dying for no reason. I am saddened as a woman every time I feel violated by song lyrics, record covers and flyers that depict women as objects to be raped. I am saddened that I don't feel safe DJing in any of the clubs in the nearest small city to where I live, and that I nearly died in a preventable accident in the last year due to a friend's struggles with drug use. I am saddened that I have been almost raped on more than one occasion. I am saddened by a culture with rampant drug use and addictions of every kind, and an increasing desperation in society, especially in youth, and also in adults. I am saddened that so many people who should be responsible adults are living lives overshadowed by the party and drug cultures, spending much of their time up to no good, yet consider their own lifestyles to be "normal" and even "status quo". I am saddened that some people look at my recording studio as something to be stolen to pay for their next stash of drugs. I have been lied to, taken advantage of, and people have stolen money from me for drugs. I am angry, I feel violated, I trust no one.

But in the midst of every situation, in the good and in the bad, we are always faced with a choice. Will we take what life has handed us or not handed us and turn it around into something good? Or will we use excuses to not deal with situations? Or worse, will we perpetuate the violence in our own lives and the lives of those around us? Not making a clear choice is - unfortunately - making a choice, and usually not a good one. It is so easy to choose, and stand by our decisions with our actions, and God has granted each one of us with the ability to choose.

When I was in high school I met someone who changed my life. This person was the most Christ-like person I'd ever met. He didn't work in a church; he didn't have a regular job. He had gone to school for music, but in the real world he ran a youth drop-in center and spent all his time talking to teenagers, getting to know them, visiting them at school, buying them lunch, starting up bands and playing out, and going into high school assemblies with huge movie screens depicting extreme sports athletes, heroes and ordinary people asking teenagers to think about important questions and choices in life. He never once preached at me or told me what to do or to believe. He just made himself available as a shoulder to cry on and a friend to confide in. It's quite possible that he is part of the reason I didn't commit suicide as a depressed young teen myself. This man was without a doubt the most influential person in my life, and his example will never leave me. And now in my own lifestyle, personal direction and choices, because of him I can understand the power of one person who chooses to walk a Christ-like lifestyle, and one person's ability to influence hundreds of peoples' lives each year - and how that influence carries on in their lives and the people they in turn influence, perpetuating to change more lives and bring hope to more people, over and over and over ad infinitum.

✕ Entertainment papers carry ads from companies looking for extras and models. I think that's exactly what we need: models, in fact role models. People who will live our lives in an exemplary fashion for others to follow, from our hearts, minds and souls, regardless of what business we are in. Sharing from our own personal journeys as we learn and grow each day, as we follow and learn from Christ, and our own role models too. Good role models are out there for us if we will search for them. For example, a pastor called Tommy Barnett is reaching his entire city for Christ, by building a church with weekly altar calls, running free buses into the inner city, sending out people to personally invite new people from every neighborhood, and teaching every new believer how to share Christ with their friends. Some new believers within one year have grown so much in Christ that they are ready to lead their own Bible studies and teach others about the life changing truth that has transformed their own lives. His ministry reaches deep into the inner city touching gang members and their neighborhoods, criminals, drug addicts, the homeless, children growing up in the ghettos, teenagers, and regular families. His son has a similar ministry in Los Angeles reaching out in the inner city. Four times a year huge outreach theatre productions casting hundreds of people in costumes, with video and special effects, attract new people from across the city for Easter and Christmas and stories such as real life gang violence. There is even a biker church, and every possible form of ministry popping up, as ordinary people turn their hobbies and pastimes, social events, abilities, ideas and everything they have into an opportunity to share Christ with their friends and neighbors. Masters Commission and an increasing number of discipleship schools are opening up to teach young adults how to live for Christ as true leaders. Youth for Christ is a social organization that reaches out to youth on a personal, individual level to "Love Them Until They Ask Why". Billy Graham is a clear example of how to share the gospel of Christ. Tons of books can be found that teach us how to do things, how to think, and how to live our lives, including the Holy Bible which is available everywhere. Lots of musicians who are Christians are getting out there with their own stories to share. There is no shortage of role models out there for us to find and learn from - now the real question is - will we be choose to be role models ourselves in our own circles of influence? Will we live as Christ did? We all influence our friends, workplaces and society - and it's up to us whether that influence is good or bad, and how we spend our lives and what we do and think about each minute and each day.

One of the most underrated truths in society is that you are what you think. You are what you read, you are the music you listen to, the media you pay attention to, the people you hang out with, and everything that influences you - processed through your own thought patterns and your ability to take those thoughts captive and control their direction - because your thoughts will then control you, and everything you do, consciously and unconsciously. There are no excuses. You have the ability to change the course of your life, by your thoughts and actions, and the lives of everyone around you by your influence. Feeding your mind the right constant diet, making right choices and spending your time wisely can impact your world more than you will ever know. What you spend your time thinking about will

automatically influence others around you. That is part of the reason why prayer and reading the Bible each day can be so powerful. As you renew your mind and focus on the truth of God, it literally changes the way you think, the direction of your life, and how you influence everyone around you. As God's truth cuts to your heart, the changes in your lifestyle and attitude will be apparent, and will open doors for you to share God's love and truth with others.

✠ Jesus said to his disciples, "The knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Whoever has will be given more, and he will have abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him." (Matt. 13:11) Romans 1 describes the progression of sin and mankind turning away from God: "...although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened... since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, He gave them over to a depraved mind... they have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity..." But Jesus promises "seek and you will find" (Matt. 7:7) and "the truth will set you free" (John 8:32). Participation in sin has a blinding effect on individuals and entire cultures, and as we participate in sin, we lose our knowledge of truth and our ability to discern right from wrong. That's why it is so important to take the truth that you know and apply it in your life, and continue to seek to discover more truth, and as you learn, grow and put what you learn into practice, you heal your mind and life, and day by day become the Christ-like person you were intended to be. Through this process we can also help to bring healing to others around us, as their eyes are opened to the truth they can see in us. Influence through proximity (friends) and through mediums such as radio, the internet, CDs people listen to, books, even single songs, and every form of art can affect the way people think and may influence their choices and direction. I can personally attest that a radio song prevented me from taking my own life twice as a teenager, as I contemplated my suicide for that evening I heard the words, "Hold on for one more day, things will go your way". Crime rates continue to rise as the next generation is inundated with messages of gang violence, drugs, murder, promiscuity, gun crime, dishonesty, manipulation and what some call 'seven deadly sins' (pride, greed, envy, anger, lust, gluttony, sloth). If we do not stand up for truth, we will lose the truth we have and our freedom, and become engulfed in bondage and the consequences of sin as an entire culture... just look at places in this world who do not have truth and freedom and blessings found in Christ to try to imagine what that may be like. The word I would use to describe an existence without Christ is literal hell. While on earth we still have God's grace and the ability to choose as individuals and as nations.

What people don't understand is that everything has a source, whether good or bad. Where there are drugs, there are drug dealers and ties with organized crime. In Canada, if you buy illegal drugs, you pay for the underground illegal gun trade, guns designed to kill people. Drug dealers kill each other over money as a way of life. Gang members steal and lie naturally, and violence is their way of life, including gun crimes. Most have lengthy criminal records. Most junkies are very good at hiding their drug habits. Don't believe what people tell you! Steer clear of the wrong people and don't get caught in the wrong place at the wrong time. I nearly died myself several months ago, in the wrong place at the wrong time, and no one would help me. When music, media and so-called friends try to tell you that drugs, weapons, promiscuity and violence are a good thing, whether they realize it or not, they are doing the sales and marketing for the illegal drug, prostitution and gun trades that tear apart our society and economy and hurt people. If you let these elements into your parties and social gatherings, don't be surprised when people get pulled into crime, form habits and addictions, get in car accidents or other accidents, get dangerously harmed or worse in fights, pick up STDs, and in the midst of everything become depressed, and caught in lifestyles not beneficial to anyone including themselves. These are natural consequences of these choices. Yet people from every level of society and every walk of life are involved with these habits and lifestyles, either because they don't know the truth or because they don't care.

Being a Christian is a heart choice, and a lifestyle choice. Knowing the truth, and applying the truth in action, is what will heal our minds and our lives. God gave us the truth in the Holy Bible, and teaches us how to live through the example of Jesus Christ, and through specific instructions and stories throughout the New Testament. He has given us everything we need. To know Him, and to live as Christ, will bring healing to us and bring the truth to people around us. Spending time with God every day, through prayer and reading the Bible, as we grow in relationship with Him. And as we learn the truth, putting it into practice (James 1:22, Matt. 7:21-27). "This is how we know we are in

Him: Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did.” (1 John 2:3-6) Some churches don’t teach how to have a relationship with God and how to walk as Jesus did. But all that is found in the Holy Bible, and if you read it, you will know the truth.

✕ We have power to reverse trends of violence in culture, or at least offer a clear alternative to people. We have no shortage of resources. We have knowledge of truth that holds power to change our lives and others. We have power through prayer, faith, and obedience. Twenty-five percent of Americans make up the most powerful force in the USA, known as Christians. People who work for good will find themselves supported by friends, family, churches, schools, social organizations, police, courts, media, communities, neighborhoods and local businesses. We have money and the ability to make money. We have our consciences and the common thread of humanity. We have our lifestyle examples, the ability to speak out and reach out, the power of positive peer pressure and real love in action.

Artists are a powerful voice to culture, and artists can influence more artists, media and culture. We can dialogue and come up with solutions. We have technology to speak to the entire world. We have our voices. As artists we can influence society, we can influence the media, we can lead people, we can lead the culture. Each one of us holds the power to influence and change our world. If a tiny acorn can become a huge oak tree in time, your work and what you do and say can influence a nation, your entire generation, and many more generations to come. Never underestimate the power of influence and truth and what a single voice can accomplish, and even more, what people who come together for a common purpose can accomplish. Never underestimate how far your influence and example may reach, especially if you pray and live for God.

And the subject of God is becoming a rising trend in entertainment. After the success of The Passion of the Christ, even atheists and practicing homosexuals are writing books and creating films to sell to Christians about our own faith. We may as well take the reigns and be the ones creating the culture. Other trends in culture are about violence, such as films depicting young people plotting murder. Now is the time to use our voices, gifts, time and abilities, using every good opportunity we can find to speak out in love and truth, and to live for Christ, as He gave Himself for us. Jesus said, "This is my command: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." (See John 15:9-17, John 14:34-35) If we were to live each day as if it were our last opportunity to make a difference in our world and to share God’s love and truth with people, we might begin to understand how Christ gave Himself for us. "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." (1 Cor. 13:13)

Effectively Bringing Unity to Our Scene: Part I – Follow-up Discussion (2006-05-15 00:00) - redsavior

The following is an archive of the discussion regarding part one of the Unity series. As I strongly believe that these discussions on this series are just as vital as the articles, I'll be archiving each one with the rest of the series. I hope you find this helpful. Some edits were made to assist in readability and grammar. Thanks to everyone who took part in this.

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Redsavior: This is going to be a touchy subject. I'm all ready for some fighting. I suspect the next part will spark some.

Full.o.Joy: I can't believe that I'm the first one to respond to this.

Well, you know Dave that we ARE one in Christ. We are ALL "hid with Christ in God" according to Colossians. We are all co-heirs with Christ. One body. That is pretty unified. So spiritually we are one (because a house divided against itself cannot stand), but how we operate and what our goals are is a different story.

I used to want to "be cool" and "be accepted" by the ravers. I wanted to prove that Jesus freaks can rave too. But I guess I am getting old, because now I could care less. I believe that when I spin at a show or throw one myself, if I just go and sincerely worship God (Not trying to be too spiritual, but not hiding who I am) through music and dancing, then I believe God will bless that and people will be attracted to it. They will be drawn through me loving Jesus. Does everyone feel this way? No. Is that ok? Yes.

I would hope that all of us have a common goal and that is to lead people to Christ and see them get saved. How we get there is through many different means by many different roads. But as long as we end up the same place, we are unified.

Now, I know some are believers who don't think about leading their fellow club goers/ravers to the Lord. That is ok too. They might just be believers who go to parties. They don't feel lead to tell those people about Jesus. Maybe they tell the guy at the library about Jesus. There was a time when I just wanted to throw a party to have fun and that was ok. I guess I am at the place in my life where I don't have much time to do alot (with a real job, wife, 4 kids, etc), so I want everything that I do have time to do to glorify God in the utmost way. But that is just me. And I hope that I can accept and encourage those who think differently.

I have found out over the past 10 years, through the parties I have thrown and participated in, that the parties where I was most obvious about worshipping Jesus were the parties that were the best and bore the most fruit. But that doesn't mean that I expect everyone to do it that way. So in that aspect I feel that I am in unity with the rest of our scene.

Redsavior: "Well, you know Dave that we ARE one in Christ. We are ALL "hid with Christ in God" according to Colossians. We are all co-heirs with Christ. One body. That is pretty unified. So spiritually we are one (because a house divided against itself cannot stand), but how we operate and what our goals are is a different story."

Remember, don't jump to far ahead here. That was just the first part of the series. My main point this time around is that we can all be part of one body and still be disorganized and fall flat on our faces. Christ is the head, but we still need to listen to him or the body won't work right.

"I used to want to "be cool" and "be accepted" by the ravers. I wanted to prove that Jesus freaks can rave too. But I guess I am getting old, because now I could care less. I believe that when I spin at a show or throw one myself, if I just go and sincerely worship God (Not trying to be too spiritual, but not hiding who I am) through music and dancing, then I believe God will bless that and people will be attracted to it. They will be drawn through me loving Jesus. Does everyone feel this way? No. Is that ok? Yes."

I'm not even saying that we should abandon this approach. That's part of the next article when I look at the history of how the scene developed and "oozed" over time.

"I would hope that all of us have a common goal and that is to lead people to Christ and see them get saved. How we get there is through many different means by many different roads. But as long as we end up the same place, we are unified."

And a common goal is partially the point here. Without some common goals and "strong" leadership we won't get to the same place.

"Now, I know some are believers who don't think about leading their fellow club goers/ravers to the Lord. That is ok too. They might just be believers who go to parties. They don't feel lead to tell those people about Jesus. Maybe they tell the guy at the library about Jesus. There was a time when I just wanted to throw a party to have fun and that was ok. I guess I am at the place in my life where I don't have much time to do alot (with a real job, wife, 4 kids, etc), so I want everything that I do have time to do to glorify God in the utmost way. But that is just me. And I hope that I can accept and encourage those who think differently."

Again, you're assuming the direction I'm headed. Believe me, there is a place for just having fun. The real question is where are we going as a scene. The individual level will always be somewhat different than the group goals and that's fine. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have one set of goals while the private has another.

"I have found out over the past 10 years, through the parties I have thrown and participated in, that the parties where I was most obvious about worshipping Jesus were the parties that were the best and bore the most fruit. But that doesn't mean that I expect everyone to do it that way. So in that aspect I feel that I am in unity with the rest of our scene."

Amen, but I still think that saying you're ok with others simply doing their own thing is the same thing as having a united scene or a functioning body. You brain gets concerned when your heart isn't doing as well as it used to right? Is your heart out of union then? Is your body functioning like it should then?

Brandon: Hmmm, I'm trying to figure out where you're going with this.

I've got a lot to say on the subject but I suppose I should hold my tongue until I see the other pieces in the series. There are definitely periods in the scene's history when 'unity' was more prevalent than it was now.

If there's anything to 'disagree' about in your article I suppose it would be your definition of unity. In the absence of a definition of what the 'scene' is and who it is composed of, it sounds like what you're saying is unity = follow the leaders. But which leaders? A scene is not a church, and our history has shown that the scene is far too decentralized for some sort of top-down hierarchy to be fitted over it. What decision-making mechanisms exist for determining 'goals?' Who takes part in the conversation?

I agree with the concept of unity as working together and achieving common goals, and obviously the 'one body' thing is important, but as far as a capital G goal for the scene, I don't know, I think there's more than one.

Anyways, I'll rein myself in and see what comes next.

Redsavior: "I've got a lot to say on the subject but I suppose I should hold my tongue until I see the other pieces in the series. There are definitely periods in the scene's history when 'unity' was more prevalent than it was now."

I totally agree.

"If there's anything to 'disagree' about in your article I suppose it would be your definition of unity. In the absence of a definition of what the 'scene' is and who it is composed of, it sounds like what you're saying is unity = follow the leaders. But which leaders? A scene is not a church, and our history has shown that the scene is far too decentralized for some sort of top-down hierarchy to be fitted over it. What decision-making mechanisms exist for determining 'goals?' Who takes part in the conversation?"

Those are ALL things we need to discuss. The series is to help us actually HAVE that discussion.

"I agree with the concept of unity as working together and achieving common goals, and obviously the 'one body' thing is important, but as far as a capital G goal for the scene, I don't know, I think there's more than one."

Of course there is more than one goal. Every business has several goals. We just have never defined what those goals are.

Dmitri Vaganov: I want to answer Dave's questions to see if it helps:

Q: Who do you think are some of the current leaders in our scene today?

A: Don't know.

Q: Are these the same leaders or have they changed over time?

A: I am new.

Q: Do these leaders seem to be listening to God's leading or their own?

A: Who are they?

Q: Are you listening for direction from God and the leaders of the scene or are you searching yourself out?

A: I am trying to do what I think will work to save souls.

Q: Where do you think this scene is heading at the moment?

A: From what I understand the emphasis is to cross over, get exposure in the secular scene.

Q: Is it where God wants it to be?

A: I believe God wants us to save souls. Are we?

Q: What is keeping us from reaching it if we are falling short?

A: Are we falling short?

Q: Are we moving as one body or many?

A: We are moving as many parts of one body.

Full.o.Joy: I would have to say that the most unified group of people would have been early "found". I would have parties at the Harbor in Mt. Vernon and people from found would come from Indiana, Wisconsin, Michigan, Kentucky, and Tennessee. There was mad support for everyone. When we had the first Found NYE gathering in Upper Peninsula Michigan people came from as far as California and Florida. There was never a question that we would go to support our brothers and sisters. And the people that came ALWAYS had unbelieving friends that they brought. We were allowed to be as real as possible and many people were influenced for the Lord. It was perfect.

Everyone talked constantly about what to do artistically and in ministry. It was a very focused group. N8 from D.C., Carrie Hunter, Hillary and John Stark and Michelle from LA (Galactic Girl) were the leaders (so to speak). Not because they forced themselves on us, but because they were willing to step out and DO SOMETHING and we happily followed. When I first heard about them and wrote to one of them Michelle sent me a package with a letter, flyers, stickers and a mix tape from someone. They sent it to me while I was a counselor at a summer camp. That meant SO MUCH to me at the time. That is leadership!

Unfortunately, when the "Found Tour" came around there were a lot of different ideas about how the tour should be run. There were some that wanted more Jesus, some wanted less, some liked to drink, others thought it was a bad image, etc. I think that came down to a lack of maturity amongst us. There were no true "leaders" in the group to help us to get on the same page. We were all young in the Lord and there wasn't a spiritual leader (pastor, teacher, evangelist) that we were all willing to listen to. I think we were all trying to get away from the "organized" church and their ways and that hurt us in the end.

Redsavior: And that is just one example of WHY I'm writing this article. The same thing that killed Found pretty much killed Amplified Life in some respects. It's also why after Scott left N*Soul there was a void for a long time. Our leadership is pretty much non-existent and many of us are still running from the organized church or even the THOUGHT of a faith based organization or group of being organized. It's EXACTLY what I mean by our legs are going in different directions.

Dmitri, You said we were moving as many parts of one body, but are we moving together or are many of us working against each other in trying to do what we think we need to do?

Dmitri Vaganov: I don't see anybody working against each other, but I see people moving in different directions. I also don't see everybody having the same goal.

Redsavior: There are some who are working against each other, but they don't see that they are. Since you are still somewhat new, I don't really expect you to see it. I especially don't since I don't think the people who are see it for themselves. I think it's that we're so absorbed with what we are doing individually that nobody is stepping back and looking at the larger picture. We still have people coming to this site asking when are we going to make a splash in

the secular scene.

Brandon: I'd echo most of full.o.joy's sentiments - from late 97 to late 99 was a time of real unity. As for the found tour, another way to put it could be: there were leaders, but people stopped listening to them.

Full.o.Joy: Unfortunately, there was also a wolf amongst the sheep: A young man by the name of Louis. I had known him from the secular scene. He lived with my friend Scott and I for a while. He got all "religious" so he could go on tour. When some of the FoundKids discovered that Louis had been dealing e and various sorts of things they asked him to leave. He then proceeded to bad mouth the FoundKids and sow seeds of discord amongst them. Also, Louis knew ALOT of kids in the scene, so he sent out the word about found. He said they were trying to tell everybody not to do drugs while the whole time they were drinking. He painted them as the ultimate hypocrites. They invited him along without knowing a thing about him. That was spiritually immature in my opinion. If you are going to go on tour and invade cities for Christ you better know who you are and what you are doing or the enemy will eat you alive.

Brandon: Fair enough...kind of ironic given that one of Found's guiding principles was "Be wise as serpents and innocent as doves" (Matt 10:16)

Redsavior: It still comes back to unity and leadership issues. At least it does in my book. That is an unfortunate story though... kinda like N*Soul's if you think about it.

Dj Du Nord: Good article. I'm not familiar with the argument but I've seen others on the site. I hope this discussion bears fruit and keeps us on track in a common goal.

Dave for President?

Redsavior: A lot of it has been behind the scenes I guess. Start looking for it and you'll see what I'm talking about.

Hazy (Pavel): [1] How to Be Inviting Through Body Language.

"Body language is one of the psychological discoveries (or fads) of our day. (Like others of its kind, my guess is that it is about ten percent discovery and ninety percent fad.) Proponents of body language claim that, subconsciously, in our conversation with other people, our physical postures are more expressive of our true feelings and communicate on a much deeper level than the words we speak. For example, if, when speaking to someone, I stand with my arms folded, I am actually indicating that I want to hold myself in. I am saying that I basically do not trust the other person enough to open out to him.

"Body language analysts claim to be able to read a whole glossary of such signals, and thus to be able to tell a great deal about what really is going on between people in conversation. Although we may have here a grain of truth swimming in a bucket of hogwash, body language can provide a means for getting at something very important regarding evangelism.

The body whose language is evangelism is, of course, the one Paul calls "the body of Christ." And this immediately points us toward a root distinction to which we will return a bit later, namely, that rather than being a delegated responsibility, evangelism is a function of the church itself, of the faith community as community, of the body as body. [[2] more]"

DJ Dual Core: "Our leadership is pretty much non-existent and many of us are still running from the organized church or even the THOUGHT of a faith based organization or group of being organized. It's EXACTLY what I mean by our legs are going in different directions."

Although I a involved in the organized Church I have to say that I am pretty leery when it comes to the idea of getting involved in any kind of formal organization related to Christian music. Unless I become a Republican and adopt the position that music is primarily for worship and evangelism I'm not going to fit into any Christian music organization that's connected to the existing CCM industry. I think that is true of a lot of other people as well.

Ideological and philosophical differences that SHOULDN'T preclude Christians from working together do. It's easier to deal with non-Christians who don't get your faith than to deal with other Christians who don't get your faith, especially when those other Christians are The Leaders. Ya, leadership is a good thing, but if the leadership of this scene and I fundamentally disagree, even if it is on debatable, not-addressed-in-the-Nicene-creed issues, I'm probably going to be elsewhere, just to spare everybody the conflict.

Redsavior: Man... You're miss reading me on the leadership issue. I need to clarify that as I get the time. I'm most defin. not talking about a seriously ridged OR restrictive type of leadership. I'm talking more in terms of figureheads, "Global" goals, and things like that. I'm not talking about person A must do what person B says simply because person B is in charge. Squashing flexibility and freedom is NOT going to grow this scene.

BTW, I wouldn't say that every one who believes in strong church leadership is a republican. Also, the Christian dance scene has pretty much been rejected by the existing CCM industry with Andy Hunter being a notable exception, so I don't think you need to fear becoming republican... although... I wouldn't mind that. Too each his or her own kool-aid right?

Full.o.Joy: Not to say that dualcore is in rebellion, but the believers that are against certain traditions in the church are actually in rebellion to God. God has set certain things in place. He gave us apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers and preachers. He gave us deacons and bishops. There is an order and structure in God's Kingdom. As much as we want to deny this order it is there. Now I totally believe we are free in Christ and that freedom is wonderful, but there is a structure in the church that God has put there so that the work of the church gets done. And if this scene exists to introduce people to the love of Jesus, then that is a work of the church.

Redsavior: That too. I'll go more into this in a later article too. I admit, I was being a bit too delicate in my earlier post. The bottom line is... that despite the fact that the church hurts some people; the church is the very structure God set up for His followers to be united within.

This gets a bit more political, but I'm honestly tired of people bashing and being afraid of the Church as though it's some evil organization while at the same time punishing and blasting those who are in their own organization or share MOST of the same view but express an individual voice at times contrary to what the group as a says. The prime examples here are Zell Miller and Joe Liberman regarding the Iraq War/War on Terror. At least Joe lines up VERY well with 95 % of the liberal agenda, but because he came out for the war, he gets blasted.

A liberal organization can be just as evil as a conservative one. If a conservative church can be evil and hateful, so can a liberal group such as moveon.org and others.

DJ Dual Core: Just in the interest of clarity, I am actively involved in a fairly traditional church, have no problem with Biblical Church authority structures and have no beef with The Church.

With that out of the way: Differences around politics and the role of music (worship vs evangelism vs. audience centered art vs. entertainment vs. artist centered art vs business) are going to be divisive whether you are talking about a tightly managed/lead organization (a music ministry) or a loosely lead movement. People like me are going to _often _ (not always) opt for secular organizations, movements and venues to avoid conflict.

I'm not talking about people with authority issues so deep they can't do church. I'm talking about a person like myself who simply hold different views anybody who is likely to be a figurehead in a Christian dance music movement.

The only way around this problem (that I can see) is to take issues that go beyond the core Gospel (Christ crucified, risen...) off the table as grounds for participation and points where unity is important. Naturally, people who DO agree will congregate together. The trick is for those sub-groups to be loving toward each other and SUPPORTIVE of each other, even though they disagree.

For example, I support the legalization of fiber and fuel grade hemp (*silly example*). Let's say I form a crew of like-minded Christians in the Midwest who promote and put on electronica events where hemp literature is distributed. What I am asking is that you tell whoever you want that you disagree with my crew about promoting hemp, but you don't tell them not to come to our shows and you let me loan you gear if you need it, because I still love YOU and want YOUR shows to fly.

I don't see this happening, but I think it is the ideal.

Redsavior: "With that out of the way: Differences around politics and the role of music (worship vs. evangelism vs. audience centered art vs. entertainment vs. artist centered art vs business) are going to be divisive whether you are talking about a tightly managed/lead organization (a music ministry) or a loosely lead movement. People like me are going to _often _ (not always) opt for secular organizations, movements and venues to avoid conflict."

Music is all of that and that is how it should be treated here. If I can't respect the person who only wants it for evangelism, how in the world is he going to respect the fact that I have invested a LOT of time and money into creating

it and that I need a buck or two to make the next album?

“The only way around this problem (that I can see) is to take issues that go beyond the core Gospel (Christ crucified, risen...) off the table as grounds for participation and points where unity is important. Naturally, people who DO agree will congregate together. The trick is for those sub-groups to be loving toward each other and SUPPORTIVE of each other, even though they disagree.”

That's exactly why we don't have political and spiritual debates here now. What I want us to do is get to the point where we can agree to one of the MANY creeds that have been written HUNDREDS of years ago like the Nicene Creed (sp) and move on from there. At least do that on a national/global scale. On the LOCAL scale, that's up to the individual group where it should be. Let's call it a "limited federal government" with a stronger city/state government.

Full.o.Joy: I wouldn't have any problem with you promoting hemp, IF you made absolutely certain to let people know that you weren't in any way promoting pot. (If hippies really want hemp to be legal they would stop smoking pot long enough for someone in the government to consider it.) BUT that being said, I wouldn't come out against you if you were pro pot, I just wouldn't support you, because there are much greater and eternal matters at stake here and not just if you have a good show or not.

Brandon: Didn't an older version of Tastyfresh in fact have such a creed? Why yes it did:

our beliefs

We believe in one God,

the Father, the Almighty,

maker of heaven and earth,

of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

the only Son of God,

eternally begotten of the Father

God from God, Light from Light,

true God from true God,

begotten, not made,

of one Being with the Father.

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven:

by the power of the Holy Spirit

he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,

and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day, he rose again

in accordance with the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,

and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

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Taken from: [3] <http://web.archive.org/web/19990209120726/http://www.tastyfresh.com/> I guess the question is, what purpose did having this creed on the early TF site serve, and why was it eventually taken down?

Redsavior: Ask Jamey when he started mucking with the site during the dance scenes dark age.

Brandon: "Dark age?" I think you meant to say "Golden Age."

Redsavior: No, I mean the period of time when N*Soul was involved in a power struggle that eventually almost destroyed this scene: shakey leadership, bitter hearts, and no clear path.

Brandon: Hmm, maybe we're talking about two different scenes then...

DJ Dual Core: "Music is all of that and that is how it should be treated here. If I can't respect the person who only wants it for evangelism, how in the world is he going to respect the fact that I have invested a LOT of time and money into creating it and that I need a buck or two to make the next album?"

Would that extend to nobody having to prove the ministry value of their music or even that they had "a ministry?" I ask this not just because people have different ideas and approaches, but because whenever someone is put in that position they are at the mercy of how the other person conceives of ministry PLUS that person's perception of their work.

Redsavior: If the members of the group are getting some spiritual need (to be defined by them) met through the group, I'd say some sort of ministry work has been done.

For some, mowing your sick neighbor's lawn for free is a ministry. For others, it's taking care of babies so that parents can go to a worship service. Still for others, it's just being there as a shoulder to cry on for someone mourning the loss of a loved one.

One thing that really cheeses me off is how churches often feel their preschoolers are not getting enough spiritual training because they are not memorizing bible verses or something like that. They're kids. They barely know how to walk. What is a 2 year-old really getting from memorizing John 3:16? They just need to be shown love and how to love. My mom was the director of a Methodist preschool for years and preschool director at our Baptist church years before that and stupid debates about how the preschool ministry should be run constantly came up.

I may not always follow it, but maybe the best definition of ministry is simply you showing concern or love to another and meeting their need where that person is right now.

DJ Dual Core: "That's exactly why we don't have political and spiritual debates here now."

So, in terms of being inclusive and having a big tent here at TF do you feel you have been successful?

Redsavior: It takes a LONG time for old wounds to heal. Part of why I'm pushing this now is to help keep us moving. We're a LOT better than we were 2-3 years ago, but it took some pruning of people to do it. I wish we didn't have to, but it came down to they didn't like the way this site was going and wouldn't simply leave on their own... so I had to force them out. I'm not proud of it and if you look at where they are now; they are still very bitter towards this site and me and openly talk about it. Heck, even I'm somewhat bitter about it too. One day, I hope we can be reunited again though. That is part of unity.

DJ Dual Core: I don't know how to spell Nicene either, but I think it's a fine place to start. Short, clear, to the point.

Redsavior: Great! See, we're already finding common ground. We can debate politics in person if/when we actually meet.

Full.o.Joy: I have no problem if you want to spin or throw parties just for fun. I would hope that you wouldn't feel "pressured" to have to "witness" in the scene at all if that isn't your deal. It would just come off fake anyways. For

the longest time now, people who have thrown parties or done "Christian" techno because they feel they "have to" or that God will be mad at them if they don't come off very self-righteous and religious. Not that they have to be like the world to win the world, but if they are not truly led of the Spirit or not having fun praising God then it won't be very effective (in my opinion).

Redsavior: I personally believe that at times every one of us will be called to lead someone to Christ. I in no way though expect that EVERYONE is to do this EVERYTIME. We're all called to be witnesses, but not all of us are gifted in that particular way nor are we called to do that as our primary ministry. It's not MINE. I have lead a handful of ppl to Christ... and then failed miserably to disciple them or at least get them connected in a Church. Anyway... I'm all for fun so long as it's legal and no one gets hurt... too bad.

Full.o.Joy: You were speaking about a ministry. To me, a ministry and preaching the gospel are 2 different things. Having a rave ministry would mean reaching out and loving (ministering to) ravers. Preaching the gospel to them is something different entirely. The ultimate show of love is to preach the Gospel of course...

DJ Dual Core: "For the longest time now, people who have thrown parties or done "Christian" techno because they feel they "have to" or that God will be mad at them if they don't come off very self-righteous and religious."

I knew a trumpet player who was like that. He did an event at my old church and punctuated everything he said between songs with "Amen?" as in, "you agree with my preceding pontification, right?"

I'm a big believer in being one's self. One of the things we can do for each other is to give people space to get to know themselves as artists and then be that person. One piece of that is not defining ministry (or art) for each other and not expecting anybody to follow a given model.

Once I saw Bash n' The Code there was a girl there with a big Suicidal Tendencies death's head on the back of her jacket. That show was probably her introduction to Christian rock and I've always wondered how fast she ran in the other direction as soon as the show was over. How real Suicidal Tendencies was is debatable but how real Bash was isn't. They were fake from stem to stern. I've also wondered what her friend told her about the band to get her to come. "They're punk. You'll love it!"

Gotta be real. Gotta be real. Gotta be real.

Full.o.Joy: True. True. I threw a party with Amplified Life once at a fairly well known venue in Charlotte, NC and the owner wanted us to stop in the middle of the show and preach. We literally fought about this for weeks, not knowing if the show was going to go on. I told her that I had no problem preaching, but I thought the best idea was to do it at the end of the show. Then if they want to stay and listen or go it is entirely up to them, they didn't need to be like a deer in the headlights. I didn't want to "trap" anyone into hearing the gospel.

As far as your punk show goes, I would invite punks to see Headnoise. Saw them at Cornerstone last year and they ROCKED! They are straight up about Jesus Christ, but they can rock out with the best of them.

Ecliptik: "Not that they have to be like the world to win the world, but if they are not truly led of the Spirit or not having fun praising God then it won't be very effective (in my opinion)."

My thoughts exactly. After the last Gathering, the exact same message came across us at the same time. I believe that a passion for lost souls to be saved, being humble to hear what God has to say at all times, and Prayer before the show, is a must. Unity? Through Jesus Christ? Yes!

Be humble unto the Holy Spirit. God wouldn't give us anything we couldn't handle.

DJ Dual Core: "Great! See, we're already finding common ground. We can debate politics in person if/when we actually meet."

Now that my kids are older maybe we'll meet up at Cornerstone.

Anyway, I had my creeds confused. I was thinking of the Apostle's Creed, which is quite brief and to the point. The Nicene Creed is longer, more poetic and doesn't mention Jesus descending into Hell.

I read them this morning during the children's sermon. They were in the back of the hymnal.

DJ 404: "Hmm, maybe we're talking about two different scenes then..."

No. The scene we have now is a result of that "dark age" that Dave was speaking of. The late 90's gave our "scene" a hard blow when the leadership over N*Soul changed. Rumors and facts spread about what was going on inside the world's number 1 Christian Dance label causing artists to become leery of signing with N*Soul, causing new releases to eventually stop. Artists began to release their own stuff on indie labels and now in 2006, the Christian Dance scene has a hopeful plethora of smaller labels with boundless opportunities for expansion. The wounds have finally healed from that debacle and a new generation of artists is now creating a scene.

The easy answer to unity is this: move on and work together.

Redsavior: Sadly, I still feel like some of the wounds are still there. They're scabbed over and almost healed now, but some people got hurt pretty bad. Those are probably the ones who were doing something before and just have well... pretty much stopped and fallen off the face of the planet. I'm not talking about the ones who simply left the scene and moved on like Jamey or AJ Mora, but others.

Brandon: I'm well aware of the hard times that befell the Christian dance music industry in the late 90s but to equate only the artists and personalities surrounding N*Soul with 'the scene' cuts out a whole other universe of stuff going on at the same time that had little to do with producers and record labels. I'm talking about Christian DJs out in the secular scene, event promoters, outreach ministries, ravers, and the grassroots networks that help make up a scene, that sort of thing.

When I said 'golden age,' I was referring to the time period when you'd see parties that were sponsored by Tastyfresh, N*Soul and Found. Foundkids chapters all over North America, collaborating with or at least keeping in touch with other ministries/promoters like Sanctify Productions, 360, Christgroove, YOU productions, Amplified Life, Unified Soul, Life Zone, etc. Outreach mix tapes and flyers getting into ravers' hands by street teams, etc. The 'community' side of the scene (for lack of a better term) was peaking around the same time as the industry side of the scene was about to go into its temporary death spiral. The community side certainly hit the skids as well after the Found tour and the breakup of some other ministry groups, but that downturn came well after the music industry's 'dark times.'

I guess it depends on how you define a scene, as a market/industry subset or a subculture...I don't want to minimize the importance of producers and record labels or anything like that but they're a part of the equation, not its sum total. That's all I was getting at.

Redsavior: What followed your 'golden age'?

I think the falling of the GA was the mechanism that has pushed us out of our shell. Things always are darkest before the dawn right

Brandon: Well it all comes back to John 12:24: "I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds."

Mp3.com and indie labels came along at the right time to pick up the forced slack left behind by N*Soul's sudden untouchability. (The rising popularity of CD decks didn't hurt either) The tastyfresh message boards and email lists like the DM4C came along at the right time to pick up the community slack left behind by the demise of a Found network. Heck, Found Ontario didn't start doing its own events until 2000. Illumination, Fusion, and other important events came along as well.

Now there was another crash in 2002/2003, but that's another story for another time.

1. <http://www.hccentral.com/eller4/part4.html>

2. <http://www.hccentral.com/eller4/part4.html>

3. <http://web.archive.org/web/19990209120726/http://www.tastyfresh.com/>

Effectively Bringing Unity to Our Scene: Part II – A Look at the Unity of Our Scene (2006-05-15 00:00)

- redsavior

The population here at Tastyfresh is very diverse in two specific areas: political views and spiritual views. No matter which side of these debates a person is on, their views of politics and God are mashed together in ways that seem diametrically opposed to someone else on the site. This isn't the root cause of our disorganization or disunity, but it is a conduit to quickly explain some of our issues.

"We do have that unity, you just are failing to realize it, or some people are failing to accept unity"

Going back to the original quote that spurred me to write this article, I think we need to take a look at how the scene has been united in the distant past, the not so distant past and now. Since the inception of this Christian dance movement roughly 14 years ago, so much has happened. We simply cannot look back and say: "Wow, look where we started out and how far along we are today!" Don't get me wrong though, in many cases we have shown great improvement, but we have had our ups and downs and our biggest rise and falls have been in the level of unity that we have shared over the past 14 years.

When we started this scene, there was pretty much Scott Blackwell, MYX Records, and about five "techno" bands. Scott, being the one with the most club experience, almost single-handedly, forged out this entire scene. I know I'm over simplifying, but he truly was the figurehead or poster boy for our movement. In him, we had a leader. No he didn't always know what to do and no he didn't always make the right decisions, but he was the leader. Everyone looked toward him when figuring out the next step for their local scenes. During this time, groups like Found united Christian club-goers around the US and NGM and those tied to the World Wide Message Tribe established active groups of Christians who were ministry focused and were united in their tasks and understood where they were going. They still had disagreements at times, but they worked through most of them without dividing each other and remaining focused on the end goal.

Starting around 1997, N*Soul Records started to suffer from internal divisions. We've rehashed all of this time and time on the boards, but the details are not important for this discussion. Scott eventually left the label and Phillip Kim was fully in charge. This change practically destroyed this scene. Many of us, those closest to Scott, allowed ourselves to be consumed with bitterness about what happened. Dance music started to disappear completely from the shelves at our local bookstores. Even our local scenes started to break up. By 1999, Tastyfresh.com was almost a useless site because we did not have message boards yet and there simply wasn't any information to add to the site. The community simply started to stagnate and die off because the leadership had either disappeared or simply stopped leading in the same capacity as it had for the past 5 years.

Starting probably about 2000, a group of people finally realized that if we were going to continue to exist, things really had to change. So, between 2000 and 2003, Tastyfresh.com started to morph into the online community that it is today, several members of the community started their own labels and we started to see the emergence of new leadership in the form of DJs, producers, promoters and even fans. The only problem was, we knew that we wanted the scene to still exist but we really didn't know how it should exist. Because of this, we all started to carve our own paths. This is where I feel we started to build a false sense of unity.

You see, at this point in time we recognized that we were all different parts of the body of Christ. We started to get a solid grip on the idea that some of us were called to minister in the church while others were called to ministry outside of the church. That was a huge revelation for us. What we missed was the fact that we needed to be fully united. We had not set any common goals. We lacked strong leadership to look toward and to submit to. We simply decided that we wanted to follow God's will and started to walk. Instead of being the body of Christ and truly walking in unity, we were an amoeba oozing our way in about 15 different directions. This was the Era of Self-Leadership. Everyone wanted to be a leader and so everyone became one.

As a body, we were falling all over each other. We were still holding on to the bitterness of the N*Soul split. We couldn't find enough common ground spiritually or politically to even have a deep discussion. Just about every possible division

that could arise did during this time. People chose to separate themselves from our community over all of these petty fights believing that nothing would amount to anything again with the Christian dance scene because it was a waste of time. Our egos and our tempers were out of check, sometimes for weeks at a time.

Between 2003 and really the first half of 2005, these same things held us back. Things have gradually been getting better, but we still are not fully united as one, not in the way Jesus prayed that we would be. I firmly believe that we are getting closer to this now though.

So today, we are starting to not only recognize that we are all parts of the same body, but that this body truly needs to work together and move in the same direction to accomplish our calling. "We do have that unity, you just are failing to realize it, or some people are failing to accept unity." That statement is not 100 % correct. I think a more accurate statement is: "We are deep into the process of becoming one, but we are not one yet." One question that would seem obvious to ask is if we can ever truly be one in the same way as Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Father are. The answer doesn't matter; we are called to be one regardless of how achievable that goal is. So let's look at what causes a body to not be united as one instead.

A Disorganized Body of One

The population here at Tastyfresh is very diverse in two specific areas: political views and spiritual views. No matter which side of these debates a person is on, their views of politics and God are mashed together in ways that seem diametrically opposed to someone else on the site. This isn't the root cause of our disorganization or disunity, but it is a conduit to quickly explain some of our issues. It is one of the main reasons why we don't allow or rather try to avoid such debates on our forums. Here's the picture:

Person A: Strongly believes in a free market economy, personal responsibility for ones actions without government involvement, help for the poor should come from individuals and corporations instead, homosexuality is a sin... just like stealing or lying, everyone has a right to live including the unborn, the elderly, and the disabled and that the Bible is God's holy word given to a series of authors over hundreds or thousands of years and can be taken literally.

Person B: Strongly believes that it is the government's responsibility to help the poor whenever and wherever there is need through a redistribution of wealth, that the free market system only creates more poverty in the end and should be regulated by the government on just about every issue, that homosexuality is a normal condition that there is no need to "cure," a woman should be able to end a pregnancy for any reason, the elderly should be able to end their lives anytime they wish and the disabled should have their families make this decision for them, and the Bible while a good book is flawed in areas and parts do not apply today although the teachings of Jesus are valid and worth trusting in and following, but just not too strictly.

How do you get these two people to work together? Both claim Christ. Both want to help build some sort of scene. Both disagree on almost every political and spiritual issue. Both believe that they are 100 % correct and have no doubts about it and can even back their positions up using the Bible and other sources. As proven in the past, this is a recipe for some major fighting. On top of that, you can infer that while Person A dislikes government involvement in their life, they probably believe that a strong church "government" is a good idea while Person B was probably hurt in the church during their youth and feel the exact opposite.

The follow-up discussion from the last article in many ways showed just that. This is the reality of Tastyfresh. We are a mixture of these two extremes in belief. Many of us are in the middle and sometimes they get lost there amongst the shouting of those on the extremes. Those in the middle just want everyone to get along and work together. Those on the extremes want to do the same, but feel adamantly that the group on the other extreme has to change their views before that can happen. It is as though the people on each extreme have set-up their leaders and expect everyone to simply follow them.

The truth is the people in the middle have it right. We need to just work together and let our extremes fall away. I'm not saying that those on the extreme should compromise their beliefs, but I am saying that they should really examine

them and weigh them against what God is trying to do within our scene. If we set-up a leadership for our scene that is more concerned with everyone's personal spiritual and political beliefs rather than the work God is calling us as a scene to do, we will miss out on what God has in store for the larger club scene and perhaps put up even more stumbling blocks in the lives of those in the club scene who are looking for real answers to the problems in their lives.

Until Next Time...

Between now and the next installment, I'd like for you to think about Tastyfresh and where the power of this site really comes from. Ultimately, it comes from God, but:

- How does Tastyfresh get it's power?
- Is it something that will always be here?
- Is Tastyfresh even really a power?
- What powers does it have?
- If Tastyfresh had a constitution, what would be the most important passage?

That's right, we're going to start talking about the politics of our scene. Heh... if we really even have one.

✠ I wrote this article once already. It was 3 pages (unfinished) and I figured you guys and girls wouldn't want to read every detail of what happened. So I'm just going to talk a little bit about what God did in me, through me and around me during my 10-day stay in Kenya near a place called Shimba Hills. I wanted to have some video and pictures for you, but I haven't received everyone's pictures and such. I'll be posting those on the forums here at TF.com as I get them from the other members of the team.

✠ I wrote this article once already. It was 3 pages (unfinished) and I figured you guys and girls wouldn't want to read every detail of what happened. So I'm just going to talk a little bit about what God did in me, through me and around me during my 10-day stay in Kenya near a place called Shimba Hills. I wanted to have some video and pictures for you, but I haven't received everyone's pictures and such. I'll be posting those on the forums here at TF.com as I get them from the other members of the team.

First off, the travel was pretty hard on me. I love visiting new places, but I hate traveling. I especially hate traveling long distances. It was a 2 day travel from Washington DC to Shimba Hills in a plane and on a bus. I never rest while traveling, so I got to Shimba really tired.

✠ The first night I prayed that I would rest well. I planned on starting to lie out the playground and get a general idea on the plan the next morning and afternoon. I woke up at about 3 am with a horrible stomachache. It was probably one of the worst I've had in a long time. So here I am, just finished 2 days of straight travel and trying to get some sleep for tomorrow and I'm really not feeling it. I get up and head to the squatty (yes, we had squatties) and about 10 minutes after that I walk myself outside and around the corner to get sick. So now here I am after 2 days travel, I'm sick and one of the other team members had sprained her ankle that night as well. So I get back in my bunk and I lay there asking God, "What is going on? If this is what You have for us this trip, I'm going to have to disagree with You." I put on my headphones and start listening to music. Before I know it, I feel 5 fingertips on my head and I hear one word in my head. "Rest." Now for a long time I questioned why I came. I knew that I had a few personal reasons why I wanted to go, and I wasn't sure that God really wanted me to go or not. At that point, and from that point on, I knew God wanted me there. I rested well that night; I wasn't surprised after God told me to rest.

✠ The next morning I woke up (on time at that) and ate breakfast with the team. We were going to go ahead and do orientation that morning, but we had to wait because, hey its Africa. I say this because it's a major part of something I learned. When we were there, I was really concerned about the amount of things we were doing. I coordinated the construction of the playground and did a lot of the work, but there was a lot of other things that I felt we could have done as well. I felt that because I was there to do things I should be constantly working, constantly doing. God turned that around as the days passed. He showed me, through basically being too tired to do anymore, that sometimes He has work for us and sometimes He has rest for us. He showed that to me very clearly over the course of several days.

✠ It came time for the kid's camp and it was my turn to do the teaching. Now, I haven't done a lot of teaching and I have taught even less children. I expected to have a lot of kids under the age of 10 and I was right. So God really showed me a lot of things, especially how to speak into young kids lives. I found myself just hanging and being around really young kids almost all the time and trying me best to disciple them as best I could in 10 days. A few days later I also led a guys discussion on what it means to be a man of God. At the time I thought it didn't go very well. The guys were kind of unresponsive and seemed like they didn't really care. It was good for me because I really kind of processed some things that God had been speaking to me. But the next day I spoke with the other guy on our team. He told me he had had a discussion with the local missionary that was with us to translate for us. He told us that he

had sort of dropped the ball when it came to really bringing the guys up in a Godly way. He hadn't made any real attempts to try and show and teach them about what it means to be a man of God because of the culture. The men are detached from the kids for the most part so the boys never really learn from their fathers. This really affects them because being detached from their families is not what men of God do and since that is what they saw as boys; that is how they are as fathers. We discussed with him some ideas on talking with the boys and left him a copy of a book called The Father Heart of God.

✕ The "main" project for me over those 10 days was the playground. It was the thing I worked the hardest on, and it was what I spent the most time on. As we worked people would come by and just watch us work. One time a bus stopped in the middle of the road and watched us for like 20 minutes. I knew that this was one of the only playgrounds in the area. What I didn't know when I started was this was going to be the only playground that the majority of the people in the area had ever seen. We spoke to the staff at the base and at the local church and schools and none of them had ever seen a playground at a school before. Some had never seen a playground. As we continued to talk with them and the locals, we discovered that this wasn't just going to be a place for kids to play and have fun at. This was a place that would quite literally be a place of community. We spoke with a man that said he was going to bring his daughter down to play when we were done and before we even left we had kids from the base already there. The staff and kids at the base now have a serious place to minister to the community. They now have a place to start conversations. I honestly see it as the place where change will begin to happen in the area. That it will be the center of renewal if you will. And here I was, thinking it was just going to be a blessing to the kids at the base and the preschool. God thinks so much bigger than we do.

One of the things that we really concentrated on understanding and realizing was that we weren't bringing God to Kenya. We were coming to experience and to be a part of what God was already doing there. I think that is so important for everyone going into the missions' field, whether you are going into an area that has never heard about Christ or not. If they have heard about God, then seeds are planted and you are watering, if you are going to a new place, God is already gone before you. When I went in 2004, I missed out on a lot of things because of some health issues, but this time I was completely involved in the events that were taking place. When you go into the field, not only does He work through you, but He works in you as well. Let me tell you, God met and worked in me powerfully in both trips. They were different meetings, but powerful nonetheless. These meetings sparked change that will be with me always. It made me ask questions that I may never have the answers to.

✕ Lastly I want to talk about provision. My trip to Kenya is a testimony of His provision. I got the money for my plane ticket in the most unlikely of places and only 2 days before I needed it. After the plane ticket I received support from people that I had not been in contact with in a long time. I was invited to a Super Bowl party and revived relationships with several people that supported me. I also received support from people who are a part of TF.com that I have never met in person. God provided everything I needed as far as money and strength. The work I did at that preschool was the hardest work. As I look back on the time we actually spent working, the conditions and the work we accomplished I am absolutely amazed. In my opinion, there is no earthly way we could have finished that amount of work in that amount of time with the heat and humidity we faced. I firmly believe that God not only gave me rest each night and strength each morning, but I also believe that God literally stretched our time to allow us to finish what He needed us to finish. I have no other explanation for it and that, my friends, is how God works. He came through in the nick of time and gave the team and me everything that we needed to complete the work He set before us. He is everything we need.

God bless.

DJ Saryn

The Business of Dance Music Part III: Join the Friends and Family Network! (2006-05-15 00:00) - KevinOneel

There's an old saying: it's not what you know, but whom you know. How true is this in the world of dance music! The most talented DJ in the world is still nothing if nobody hears their music. I know many DJs who are quite talented, but stuck toiling by themselves in bedrooms and basements all because they do not grasp the full concept of networking.

There's an old saying: it's not what you know, but whom you know. How true is this in the world of dance music! The most talented DJ in the world is still nothing if nobody hears their music. I know many DJs who are quite talented, but stuck toiling by themselves in bedrooms and basements all because they do not grasp the full concept of networking. You see, networking is of the utmost importance, because it generates awareness and visibility. Being a DJ is about being a leader of people, and being a leader of people means people know you and what you do. Being successful in music requires putting yourself around successful people, and learning how to utilize everyone's talents properly. In this business, networking is the most valuable skill to develop, second only to basic mixing ability.

How many times have I been at a show, listening to a DJ, saying to myself "How in the world did this guy get this slot? He stinks!" The answer is quite simple; he knew someone. Be it as a friend of the headliner, friend of the promoter, or longtime association with the venue, that froob on the turntables playing tracks mixed for the first time by the Biblical Tag Act Cain vs. Abel knew someone involved in the organization of the event. He didn't have to be some mind-blowing new talent. The entire promoter needed was a body to fill the 9pm-10pm slot. The bottom line is, he got the spot and you didn't. You're way more talented! You deserve that spot. This is the part of the night when you seek out the promoter, and begin to tell him about how you are the best thing since Grandmaster Flash invented the crossfader. If people don't know who you are, how can you expect to be booked? Make sure that promoter, and any other promoters in attendance, knows who you are before it is time for you to depart. Speaking of that subject, early in one's DJ career, mix CDs are considered to be the gold standard for self-promotion. CDs, however, require time to burn, label, and case. Also, any CDs you don't give away are garbage when you record that cool new mix four months from now. May I suggest instead of carrying CDs, carry business cards with your website address on them. That way, you don't have to lug CDs around shows, business cards are easier for people to carry than CDs, and the only overhead involved is web space and a domain name (which are two things you should have anyway.) All of my printing is handled through Pro-Image LLC of Birmingham Alabama (205.978.9934, tell them Oneel sent ya.)

I recommend them because they are a great Christian owned company, but any quality printer can help you out.

As I have said in previous articles, you need to get out of the house. Go to shows, meet clubbers and other DJs, and improve your circle of association. The more people you know, the more people will come see you; it's that simple. Everyone knows someone who can come to a party, make three or four phone calls, and have 20 people show up a few minutes later. Identify that person, and put them to work. Look around at your friends and associations, and evaluate everyone's talents. If they are truly your friends, they will help you with your journey. After all, nobody minds helping out a friend. If you have a friend who is a graphic designer, see if he can make some web graphics for you. Get that guy you know in sales to help develop a marketing campaign. Ask your popular female friends to help pass out flyers. Remember that no matter what you do in life, you are five minutes or five miles from every resource you will ever need. All it takes is time to unearth these contacts. This process is started when you get out of the house.

Remember that one of the keys to networking is the follow-up. I can send you to my website all I want, but if you forget to download the mix, then what good have I accomplished? None! If I have your email (which I should if I send you to my website) I should email you no later than one week after initial contact to see what you think. Follow-up is a difficult task though. Please bear in mind that there is a rather fine line between reminding and annoying. Cross that line, and you've damaged a perfectly good contact. Fail to remain within sight of that contact, and you've squandered an opportunity. Remember the communication chain of command: if calling doesn't work, write an email. If Email doesn't work, send a letter. If a letter doesn't work, forget about it. If someone doesn't promptly call or write back, then they probably have no interest in doing business with you. Don't take that rejection hard though. Think about it as if they have saved you lots of wasted time. Focus energies spent on those contacts in other places. If someone doesn't want to work with you, they just don't want to work with you. No amount of follow-up will change their mind. Following up on truly interested contacts is key!

Everything you need to be successful is right here. All you have to do is reach out and grasp the opportunity. Get out of the house and meet some new people. Make some friends to expand your circle of contacts. Find out unique skills your friends have, and put them to use in your army. Lastly, make sure to follow up with contacts. Be aggressive, but not annoying. Your friends and family are important in this business. They can help support you in difficult times. These are the people that care the most about your successes and failures. Make them an integral part in your work, and I guarantee you will not regret it!

Next Time.... The Business of Dance Music Part IV: USDA Value!

Kevin Neely, aka Oneel, is a DJ/Producer/Remixer from Birmingham Alabama. He has been playing for over nine years, and has performed with some of the biggest names in dance music, such as Judge Jules, Ferry Corsten, Irene, Faust & Shortee, and Matt K.

4.4 July

Effectively Bringing Unity to Our Scene: Part III – The Powers of Tastyfresh (2006-07-16 00:00) - redsavior

The first article in this series seemed to have raised some hot bottom issues. I knew that some of what I said would not go over very well, but it did what I had hoped it would and sparked a very productive discussion on the forums. The main concern that evolved in the discussion over last months article circled around one issue... a fear of inflexible central control. Let me assure all of you that such a thing was very far away from anything I was considering when I wrote the article. It has been a fear that I have been aware of for years now and it is one that I believe has kept us from growing and developing as a scene. In fact, you could make a very strong and convincing argument that there really isn't a Christian EDM scene... there is seemingly only Tastyfresh when it comes to a global movement.

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What Do You Mean There Isn't A Scene?

In many ways, I'd have to agree with it as well. After all, we don't see Christian club nights or outdoor raves popping up everywhere, we seem to only have a slow trickle of new blood flowing to this site, and none of us can make enough money to live on simply by selling our music in Christian bookstores or DJ services to churches. From a numbers standpoint ... we don't exist.

There are just two main counter arguments to this line of thought. The first is that when you attend the Cornerstone Festival, the dance barn is always packed with 250-300 people each night, most of whom have never even heard of Tastyfresh, but yet love dance music and are looking for ways to have some sort of Christian dance ministry in their area. If this is the case, it's hard not to believe that there are ten to a hundred times as many out there looking for Christian dance events. The second point is that an ever-growing number of Christians are extremely active in the secular scene and that the Christian scene is really just a transparent one that exists wholly within the secular one. The primary examples of this would include the DJ and production team of Shiloh, Q of Uberzone, Stryke and Alexandar East, better known to us as Sonic Boom of Love. The amazing thing is that the more I research I do ... the more people I find out are believers in the secular scene. The argument that the Christian scene is transparent may actually be the winning one. Keep this argument in mind for later.

Clearly, one thing we will need to think about in the future is just what exactly is our scene, can we even call it that, and how well do we really want to define it? Regardless of those answers, right now it is hard to argue that our known group of supporters is fairly small. Because strength comes in numbers and we need to or desire to grow our numbers to help better define our scene, we need to have some sort of leadership in place that will keep us focused and united. And with that, we're ready to get to the meat of this article which hopefully will outline what I am seeing emerge as a possible leadership structure for the scene.

The Tenth Amendment: Neal Boortz Is An Inspiration ... Of Sorts.

Anytime you talk about leadership ultimately it becomes a discussion involving politics. It's simply the nature of the beast. Since I have already stated that the last thing I want to see happen with the leadership of this scene is for it to become an inflexible centrally controlled structure, I think it's best to quickly explain what I mean.

Several hundred years ago now, there was a war fought between 13 individual colonies and a nation that for all practical purposes and rather quite literally was on the other side of the world and trying to control just about everything that happened within the colonies. The war was triggered mostly because the leaders in the colonies were fed up that this controlling nation that had no clue about life in the colonies and did not give them representation. They felt that they should be free to live the way they wanted to and after a brutal seven year long war, they were free.

Each colony had their own constitution and for all intensive purposes was it's own nation or state. They chose to ban together to form the United States of America however and draft a constitution for how the states will interact with one another and handle issues that involve all of the states such as defense. After the constitution was created (by the way, I mean after the more successful SECOND constitution), there was considerable pressure to amend it to give the people and the states guaranteed rights that had purposefully been omitted early. These amendments became known as the Bill of Rights.

[1]Neal Boortz , a nationally syndicated political radio talk show host, reminded me the other day of perhaps the most important of these amendments. At first, I thought he was referring to the First Amendment, which gives us the rights to have our own religion as opposed to state run one, freedom to say what we want (except for fire in a crowded theater), freedom to write what we want, freedom to gather together peacefully (although permits may be needed in some cases), and the freedom to ask the Government to right a wrong. I really did think it had to be the First Amendment. I mean, with all of that, how could it not be? Well ... the First does not do the most important thing, which is to limit the scope of what the Government can and cannot do. Enter, as Neal reminded me, the Tenth Amendment:

Powers of the States and People. – The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

Simply put, if it's not in the Constitution of the United States of America, then the US Government has no right to make a law regarding that issue. Now we could write some rather thick books as to how "well" the Federal Government has really followed that Amendment, but that isn't the purpose of this article. By now you should be wondering what my point is with all of that. Well ... here it is:

Tastyfresh and the global dance scene represent the federal government. Groove fellowships are the states. You are the people. The powers of the global dance scene should be limited so that it frees up the local scenes and an individual to do what they view is their ministry or purpose. Tastyfresh and the global dance scene simply exist to help facilitate the growth of the local scenes and individuals as well as facilitate co-operation and other forms of support between them. The last thing this scene needs is an overbearing federal government and there are plenty of examples in the world to show why that is bad.

The Powers of Tastyfresh

Truthfully, Tastyfresh only has as much power as people are willing to give it. It's all about love and submission. If Tastyfresh proves itself worthy, then it makes sense to submit to the leadership of the site when and where appropriate. If nobody is willing to do this, there is no Tastyfresh community to grow and the site simply becomes one of the million unread blogs already on the web. Everything, despite whatever the leadership here says is dependent upon your participation in this community. If the community ceases to exist, so does this site, and probably the global Christian dance scene as it will continue to shatter into smaller and smaller fiefdoms that do not interact or play well with each other.

Given the above, Tastyfresh does have a few powers. Just a few of these include the power to build an international community, the power to help the international community to establish local communities, the power to help decide what the scene's purpose is, the power to determine what goals should be met each year and the plan to achieve it. Again, none of this can happen without you and your fellow community members. Now let's take a quick look at each of these powers.

The Power to Build an International Community

If there is any one goal that Tastyfresh has met, it is this one. Every month, the site has visitors from countries from just about every continent on the planet. Granted most people are from the US, but we have people visiting from places like Ghana, Qatar, Ethiopia, Honduras, Algeria, Azerbaidjan and many more. We have long standing forum members from the US, the UK, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Canada and more. Tastyfresh in effect asserts this power simply by existing and providing a forum for discussion and articles for reading, but it is still empowered solely by your presence on the site.

Should you and the other 6,200 unique people who visit this site a month simply stop showing up, you revoke this power. In the past, N*Soul Records was one of the main online communities. That faded once Tastyfresh opened its forums. There was and still is Dance Music For Christ (DM4C) on yahoo groups. In 2001, this group close to 100 messages a month. That's not bad for a mailing list. In 2005 however, there were about 5 messages posted per month. There was another forum on christianraves.com for a while, but now it too is gone. People make the community and empower the ones they want to survive. Right now, Tastyfresh seems to be that community. One day, it won't be though and that is all right.

The Power to Help the International Community to Establish Local Communities

There have been people trying to establish local Christian dance groups since the first disk came off the presses at MYX Records in 1992 (or was that Metro One). There were probably a few people trying to do just that even before then. In the past, we have seen groups like Fusion, Amplified Life, Found and more than a handful more just within the US. Almost all of them no longer exist. In many cases, the leadership of the group was lacking. We'll talk more about that in a future article by the way.

Last summer, Tastyfresh started a LONG and slow going process of establishing local communities that are connected to Tastyfresh to help legitimize them and to help set-up a base structure for the groups. The point isn't for Tastyfresh to dictate what should happen in these communities, but simply to help them gain access to the support and resources they need to do whatever ministry they choose to do, be that simply praying with each other, fellowshiping/hanging out, putting on an event or something else. Coming late this year will be groove.tastyfresh.com, which will be a new site to centralize information about each fellowship.

The Power to Help Decide What the Scene's Purpose Is

To start off with a quote from Hazey on bluelikejazz.co.uk: "I would take issue with TF administration seemingly thinking they define what the 'Christian dance music scene' is ... but you know what? As of right now, they do!" Like it or not, because we have the majority of the community built here, we the community, not just the administration of Tastyfresh define what this scene is and determine its purpose. We should have a long discussion and determine these things, write them down and post them on the site. They shouldn't be some overly specific twelve-step plan. It also should not conflict with the purposes of the local communities. In the past we have simply avoided this topic each time it was raised out of fear that such a purpose would conflict with the local communities. In many ways, each local community is a leaf in a stream floating wherever the stream takes us rather than fish with a purpose within its school. Do not you think it is time that we put some solid framework around why we are here?

The Power to Determine What the Goals Each Year Are and Create a Plan to Achieve Them

Having a purpose is great, but you have to actively move in accordance with that purpose or it is meaningless. The Tastyfresh community needs to determine and set reasonable goals each year to help continually move Tastyfresh in the direction of its purpose. The goals are not just to give the scene something to do, but to keep us focused on why the scene exists. Again, these should be rather high-level and not interfere with any local community goals. These goals should be traceable though. We need to be able to look back on 2006 and see what we have been able to do through a spirit of cooperation and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

What Simply Doesn't Matter

Up until now, I've talked about what matters and what I feel is important. Hopefully, it will spark another good debate on the boards. Now that I've laid out a very high level idea of what I think we need to discuss and determine over the next few months, let's talk about a few things that simply do not matter in this discussion and shouldn't even be factored in.

Politics and Religion

First, this is a debate that should be outside of any politics and theological issues that do not directly relate to this dance scene. In other words, my like or dislike for George W Bush should not even factor into this debate. Likewise, neither should my preference in baptism practices or theological position on the rapture. This isn't saying that we shouldn't consider the theological ramifications of what we are deciding, but that debates that lay outside of the dance scene shouldn't be used as excuses to not work with one another in resolving our purpose and goals.

I say this knowing that I may be the worst example of this, as I know I have allowed walls to be built between others and myself because of their positions. That was wrong and well ... part of bringing unity will eventually mean I have to confront and resolve these broken relationships. Feel free to pray for me about this issue.

Who Should Participate in These Discussions

We could honestly stand around for days debating whom the core leadership of our scene is and who should be involved in determining our purpose and goals. The only thing is we have never established a system for determining that leadership. At this point, if you have some free time to chat about these issues, you are a leader; from those who participate in the discussions will naturally come our leaders. Some obvious examples of leaders in our scene now are the people who write articles for the zine on this site, the people who discuss the articles in the forums, the artists, the label representatives, and the DJs with residencies. Eventually, it would be cool to have a council of 12 or so to discuss and make final decisions about these issues, but we really don't need that at this time.

Submission

This is the toughest. Many people in our scene have issues with church leadership. Most of them do for good reasons too. I'm not trying to knock that here. The fact of the matter though is that the Bible does establish a clear leadership structure in the New Testament for the Church. Tastyfresh may not be a church, but in some cases, it is all the church some people get on a regular basis. Also, if we are going to grow in a goal-oriented manner, we will need to determine some type of leadership structure with various delegated duties and responsibilities. We need to not let our issues with submission stand in the way of accomplishing something God wants us to do. We should submit to one another in love as Christ submitted himself to death for you and me. This goes for leaders and followers as well.

Limiting the Definition of Ministry or Evangelism

As many local communities will no doubt have their own views on everything from politics to theology, the larger scene centralized at Tastyfresh should avoid forming ridged definitions around what can be considered a ministry and what cannot. The same goes for evangelism and probably a few other terms as well. When we say that only passing out water at a rave counts as a ministry, we limit our ability to accomplish what God desires us to do. We may want to focus on a water ministry, but we should not force another local group to do the same when they feel they are called simply to provide a spot once a month for people to hangout together and fellowship. Both are valuable ministries and have their time and place.

Well, that's the end of this book. Hopefully the next installment will be shorter and have some illustrations. The topic will be on the importance of actually having some form of leadership and hopefully focus on the consequences of having ineffective vs. effective leadership. Also at some point in the future I will dedicate space to dealing with our differences and disputes while maintaining our individualism. In other words: dealing with homogeny vs. hegemony. Until then, keep thinking about those questions I asked last time:

- Who do you think are some of the current leaders in our scene today?
- Are these the same leaders or have they changed over time?
- Do these leaders seem to be listening to God's leading or their own?
- Are you listening for direction from God and the leaders of the scene or are you searching yourself out?
- Where do you think this scene is heading at the moment?
- Is it where God wants it to be?
- What is keeping us from reaching it if we are falling short?
- Are we moving as one body or many?

1. <http://www.boortz.com/>

The Business of Dance Music Part 4: USDA Value (2006-07-16 00:00) - KevinOneel

In this series, we've primarily dealt with business aspects of electronic music. We've covered contracting, marketing, and networking. This time, I'd like to say a bit about something not normally covered along with business, and that's providing value. See, value is when someone makes an investment that returns more in reward than the initial cost. How do you provide value as a DJ/Producer? What can you provide to make your potential services more attractive? This can be summed up in three simple words; promotion, performance, and networking.

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When providing value as an entertainer, promotion is one of your most vital tools. See, if nobody knows who you are, nobody will want to book you. Why should a promoter spend good money on an unknown quantity? Unfortunately, the only way to get booked is by having some sort of visibility. People, I'm here to tell you that you're going to have to suck it up for quite some time and play free shows until you build enough visibility in the public's eye to ask for a booking fee. Bookings are just one arm of promotion, though. There's also the vast world of Internet promotions, as well as street teams and various media. If you are a producer, one great means of promotion is www.pumpaaudio.com, which is a site that places music in advertisements, TV shows, movies, etc. If you're a DJ, look for local college stations or other low power radio. They might be willing to give you a shot. Be sure not to overlook promotions, because this is where your value will increase the fastest.

The second leg of providing value is making sure you provide an outstanding performance. Any idiot can play music, but remember that as a DJ, you are an entertainer. As an entertainer, you should try and be unique. People remember Fatboy Slim because of his Hawaiian shirts, they remember Yoji Biomehanika because of his hair, and they remember Paul Van Dyk because of his chord progressions. What makes your act different from others? Is it a specific sound? Is it your look? Do you have a charismatic presence behind the decks?

Time for going off on a tangent... People, do not advertise one of your DJing qualities as being "Flawless Mixing." If you are a performing DJ, your mixing should be spot on. It is not something you should have to promote. Leave "Flawless Mixing" on the shelf alongside "Uplifting Trance" and "Soulful House."

Back to Earth... think about yourself as a DJ, and what sets you apart from all the little mugwumps out there. Listen to old mixes. Do you gravitate to a particular style? If so, think about how to market along those lines. Every DJ is unique; you just have to figure out what sets you apart.

Lastly, networking is key to value. Life is a series of people you know, and the network of people surrounding them. Sometimes to get into someone's visibility, you must go through someone else. Maybe it's your friend who is friends with a big promoter. Always try to work with people one step ahead of you. That ensures that you are always moving forward. Part of your value as a DJ is whom promoters and club owners can get to through you. For example... A promoter is trying to book Trance DJs Rowland & Wright. The promoter approaches my friend Lavender, who is a trance DJ in Vegas. Lavender calls me, because I'm a close friend with Dave Wright of Rowland & Wright. Lavender pulls his leverage here because he has a piece of a connection the promoter needs. I have leverage because I know Dave, and can ask for a booking in return for the contact. See how this works? It really is whom you know!

Value is extremely overlooked when it comes to electronic music. DJs never think of it as a piece of their overall appeal as an artist. Remember that being a tool of promotion for the promoter is your most vital piece of value. Provide the best possible entertainment for the money invested, and you remain a good deal in the eyes of the promoter. Lastly, use your connections to network people with other people and develop booking leverage. Now, put these skills into action, and try to get a booking within two months. PM me here and let me hear your success stories!

Next Time: Summary Time Blues.

The Survival Instinct & That Enigmatic X-Factor (2006-07-16 13:50) - gsynth

✖ It's often the hole in your heart that drives you. Some of the best artists were driven to create their greatest works out of their tragedies and some of the best music is made out of heartbreak and yearning for healing. A person who understands the pain in others, because of what they have been through in life, are often the most qualified to communicate to others in music and in words; sharing the insights they've learned along the way, the truths that kept them here and kept them going each day, that kept them reaching for their highest aspirations and goals, and persisting against obstacles large and small all along the way. No one is immune to problems and struggles, but those who reach for healing often find they have a voice, and something to say about the problems in the world and in the human soul, as they reach for and find answers in their own lives and in the world around them.

✖ Often people say the enigmatic "X-factor" is the quality of an artist that can draw in audiences and keep their attention over time... as they morph from one phase to the next, continually evolving, leading an audience with them and picking up more fans all along the way. I've been reading a book called "Bono on Bono: Conversations with Michka Assayas", and in this book, Bono of U2 is very open and honest about his struggles and his life, and at the same time has some astounding insights into life and the reasons why he is the person that he is, and why he has achieved what he has in his life so far.

At one point he makes mention of the survival instinct. He says he has a very strong survival instinct. I can relate to that myself in some ways as I've nearly died many times in my life and so many of my friends died young. Since I was very young I was looking for my opportunity to leave home and live on my own – since the age of five in fact – and I always found the entire world an easy playground compared to the complex tragedies of my family life. Bono goes on to talk about how his mother died when he was 14, the crime in his neighborhood growing up, his father's emotional distance and the dysfunctional relationships between his father, his brother and himself. He said a rock star is a person with a big hole in their heart, and that it is no accident to find yourself in front of 20,000 people.

It's often the hole in your heart that drives you. Some of the best artists were driven to create their greatest works out of their tragedies and some of the best music is made out of heartbreak and yearning for healing. A person who understands the pain in others, because of what they have been through in life, are often the most qualified to communicate to others in music and in words; sharing the insights they've learned along the way, the truths that kept them here and kept them going each day, that kept them reaching for their highest aspirations and goals, and persisting against obstacles large and small all along the way. No one is immune to problems and struggles, but those who reach for healing often find they have a voice, and something to say about the problems in the world and in the human soul, as they reach for and find answers in their own lives and in the world around them.

Often the best music comes from the least likely places. Some of the Psalms in the Holy Bible were written when David was running for his life from Saul, living in caves and those songs have lasted and encouraged people for thousands of years. Some of the books in the New Testament were written from jail cells, and people still draw strength from their words today. I have often found myself in situations where I feel crushed within from outward circumstances and in those situations God shows Himself strong, in the midst of my weakness, His word becomes the light for my eyes and mind, and He becomes my deliverer, even at the 11th hour, in the most unexpected and miraculous ways.

Bono also points out that you should never trust a performer completely, as performers "lie" for a living much like an actor, but a writer is forced to be honest as they reach inside and tear out their heart to give to the world. There is a price to be paid for being a true artist. That price is being totally honest with yourself. It is similar to living an honest walk with God in which you are seeing the ugliness in yourself, as well as the gifts and redeeming qualities, and striving to become a better person all the time, striving to make an impact in the world around you, giving yourself to reach out to others with your words, heart, mind and life regardless of what kind of response you may find from people. You do this in spite of rejection, coldness, apathy and cynicism, in spite of the dark sides of fame, the industry and people, ever working to touch those who find courage in your words, strength and inspiration amidst the problems and boredom of life.

The life of an artist is not an easy one. Many live in near poverty, others work full time to support their full time

passion to create and communicate in music or their artistic gift. It can be very rewarding, or it can be very empty at times, and even dangerous as you find yourself cut off from friends and in situations and places you never imagined yourself in. But you draw strength from the same things that brought you there in the first place – prayer and faith in God and the persistence to go on and find that light at the end of the tunnel or that weakness in the wall to break through to the place you need to be.

And ultimately artists are called to live openly before the world. You don't need to trust everyone but generally your expression is quite personal. And today it struck me that God, Himself is a person, and His Son is a person, and God took courage and sent His Son to a cold hard world that mostly rejected Him, and ultimately caused Him to die yet in every moment Jesus Christ gave everything He had. He loved people. He reached out to the poor. He strengthened and encouraged the weak. He healed the sick. He offered forgiveness for people's wrongs and the power to begin again with a fresh start and a new outlook and a hope beyond this life for eternity.

If you are totally honest with yourself, and you give yourself fully every day to reach out to others with the truth you have found in your own walk in knowing God it is not likely that your world will remain unchanged. It is likely that your attitude will rub off on others, your insights inspire others, and even your most difficult lessons change others around you even for years to come. Only you know what you may be called to and often it takes a leap of faith to learn what you can and cannot do. And in doing so, you will find God is faithful. He will always be waiting for you at the other side of the gap you have to leap or at the top of the hill you have to climb. In fact, more than likely He will walk beside you, encouraging you at each step, refreshing you with water and humor and fun, and when you are too tired, exhausted or discouraged to continue, He will carry you.

Ultimately the greatest gift in life is love. Love is not just a cheesy pop song. Love is the life of Christ. His example is spilled across the pages of the gospels and history. His love is visible in the sunrise, sunset and starry nights, in every drop of rain, every leaf on every tree, and every blade of grass. You will never know how much He has done for you. But while you are alive, you can give back what you can, in a life lived in awe and worship of God your Creator.

4.5 September

Apathy and The Spiritual Struggle (2006-09-15 00:00) - redsavior

Ironically, I was planning on writing an article about how our scene lacks self-support and then I became apathetic about the article and the topic in general. That's when it hit me. I realized I would just be beating a dead horse. We all are (or should be) aware that we don't support our own artists, DJ's websites, record labels, etc...

We talk about unity on the message boards a lot. We talk about new releases. We talk about events. We talk about a lot of things. What are we doing? What is our motivation that we can talk about things so much and never actually do anything? To make matters worse, those of us who do try to do things, no matter how small they may be, suffer from the curse of apathy.

I am starting to think that the reason why we are not growing as a scene is not because we don't want to support the efforts, it's just because we don't really care. We have allowed ourselves to become apathetic. We may not realize it, but in our Christian Dance Scene, we are still in a spiritual battle.

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. – Ephesians 6: 10-18

Sure the music and the parties and the releases may not be "spiritual" but some of us are trying to spread the gospel and reach people for Jesus. We need to all be strong for our fellow brothers and sisters out there who are trying to make things happen and not let the enemy cloud our zeal. Who knows how far God wants to take us? We will never know unless we unite against our own apathy and stand firm behind each other. Let's move beyond where we have been. Let's show support to all who are trying to make things happen in the Christian Dance Scene!

To quote a fellow Christian DJ/ Producer:
Rise to the top! I got to make it to the top!
Keep on working, never stop! Gonna keep on pushing!

God Bless.

The Business of Dance Music Part 5: Guide To Networking (2006-09-15 00:00) - KevinOneel

Networking is the single most important thing you'll do as a DJ/Producer. I CANNOT stress this enough. Networking is something you do 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The best thing about networking is the fact that it is so simple and natural to do.

I've had plenty of people message and email me lately about how do you get noticed in electronic music, so I thought I'd post this here as a freebie outside my normal articles in the E-Zine.

Networking is the single most important thing you'll do as a DJ/Producer. I CANNOT stress this enough. Networking is something you do 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The best thing about networking is the fact that it is so simple and natural to do.

The Bible tells us we are to enter into fellowship with other believers. Church is a form of networking, because we are associating with likeminded individuals. You're only as strong as the people you surround yourself with. Surround yourself with the right people, and you can accomplish big things. Believe it or not, but by reading this message, you've taken the first step into networking by associating with likeminded individuals. We are all people who are Christians that enjoy Electronic music. You are here with likeminded people.

The biggest piece of the networking puzzle is finding common ground. One place I find that frequently is the fact that I attend Winter Music Conference in Miami. (BTW...All WMC consists of is one big networking meeting. Where else could I hang by the pool with BT, eat at IHOP with Milo, chat with Andy Moor over a drink, and trade business cards with Chris The Greek and Natachya Van Dyk over a 5 day period? If you're really serious about this, make plans to go to WMC (www.wintermusicconference.com) . I'll be happy to help with some pointers. Another place to find common ground is music festivals, sports, places you've been, common friends, etc. You're going to have to work to find common ground, but once you do, you're set! Chat with people. Become their friend. Once you get over the star factor with bigger named people, you'll realize you have more in common than different. (Examples...BT and I share having lived in Los Angeles. Mylo and I are both writers. Judge Jules and I are both from the Legal field by trade.)

Do you have open lines of communication? Do you have business cards? Do you have a website and/or Myspace? If you're really going to be an ace networking ninja, make sure people have a way to contact you, and you have a way to contact them. What good is talking to Paul Oakenfold for 30 minutes about the crisis in Darfur if you never speak with him again? Sure, you just talked to Oakey himself, but he may have been able to help you with something. At the very least, you make a really good friend by staying in touch. I can't tell you how many great friends I've made simply by staying in touch after a networking opportunity. (Example...I met Kenneth Thomas at a show where he opened for Oakey. The day after, I emailed Kenneth. We keep in touch, and now he's a great friend. BTW...For those of you not in the know, Kenneth is very much a Christian as well! Check him out sometime) Make sure you have a way to contact people. Never go to a show without business cards, an ink pen, and something to write on in your pocket.

ALWAYS try to work with people one step above you. Those people have wealth of knowledge that they'd more than likely enjoy dispensing. My first time doing this was with Matt K, a Hard Techno DJ from Columbus, GA. I was playing Hard House/NuNRG at the time. I was booked at a show with Matt, and we kept in touch. When I'd have difficulty with industry issues, I'd contact Matt for his advice. He was always more than happy to help me out. Find those people above you, and talk with them. DJs all have monster sized egos, so we all love talking about ourselves. Kick back and listen to what someone has to say. You might just find a new angle on a problem you've been having.

On the flip side, I think more experienced people have an obligation to help people just starting. Knowledge is a very valuable resource, and it's one that costs nothing to share. Don't be stingy with that knowledge, Vets. Spread it around freely. Always feel free to message me with a question. If I know the answer, I'll happily share.

That wraps up my networking rant. Let's review, shall we?

1. Find common ground!
2. Have open lines of communication

3. Seek experienced people.

Hope this helps all of you.

4.6 November

Effectively Bringing Unity to Our Scene: Part IV – A Tale of Two Laodiceas (2006-11-15 00:00) - redsavior

Laodicea was a town in the southwest of what today is Turkey. It is also the site of one of the earliest Christian churches. Laodicea is mentioned in two places within the Bible. The first is in Paul's letter to the Colossians and then again in the book of Revelation. The contrast between these two mentions is astounding. In fact, it is so astounding that it is something we really need to think about as we are discussing not only what it means for our scene to be united, but as we decide what direction this scene will take and what the cornerstone theology of this movement will be.

Well, it's almost been a year since I started this series. I hope that it has been insightful for you. I may have one or two more articles on this topic still before I fully put it to bed, but this is the bridge article. After this, we're going to collectively start doing some soul searching in the forums that will feed directly into the last articles in this series. For now though, let's do a quick review of what has been discussed already.

In the first article, we learned that God's picture for Christians was one of unity. Not agreement on every issue or belief, but in the spirit of cooperation as different parts of the body assist each other to do a specific task that the brain (Christ) gives us to do.

The second article retraced the events that got us to where we are today. We learned from experience that placing our leadership primarily on the shoulders of one figurehead rather than completely on Christ showed us how easily we can become scattered, broken, and disorganized when that figurehead is removed. We looked at how many of our divisions are rooted in political and theological differences, but we also learned that there is hope in finding unity again if we can step toward each other and leave some of our more extreme right and left viewpoints outside of Tastyfresh. In other words, we saw that we needed to figure out what our most important common theological beliefs were and to use those (and especially our relationship with Jesus) as a foundation to build unity between us.

The third article tackled the issues of power and control. Who gets to have it when we are united? What has to be given up to obtain it? What will happen if we don't? The base belief expressed in the article was that God will use Tastyfresh.com if we are united, and the only way we will be united is if we give "power and control", not to the leadership of Tastyfresh, but to the community of Tastyfresh. The only reason why Tastyfresh has been able to survive the 10 years it has is because, collectively, we have been willing to lay aside our differences and cooperate when it really counted. We also talked about how the international Christian dance scene should be as noninvasive as possible on the local scene, but still able to guide and support when and where needed.

And so now we begin part four in this series.

A Tale of Two Laodiceas

Laodicea was a town in the southwest of what today is Turkey. It is also the site of one of the earliest Christian churches. Laodicea is mentioned in two places within the Bible. The first is in Paul's letter to the Colossians and then again in the book of Revelation. The contrast between these two mentions is astounding. In fact, it is so astounding that it is something we really need to think about as we are discussing not only what it means for our scene to be united, but as we decide what direction this scene will take and what the cornerstone theology of this movement will be. The irony is that this is the prelude to the article I thought we didn't need to have. I'm grateful today that DJ Dual Core pushed me on this a few months back.

So, what does the Bible have to say about Laodicea? Well, Colossians chapter 2 offers some pretty huge insights into both the dangers that face us philosophically and the freedoms that we have in Christ.

In the beginning of the chapter Paul writes:

I want you to know how much I am struggling for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally. My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. For though I am absent from you in body, I am present

with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is. – Colossians 2:1-5

So Paul starts off as usual by trying to encourage his audience and reassure them that what he is saying is out of love and concern for them. The interesting part is in verse 4 – “I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments.” One of Paul’s main concerns was that we as Christians might get swept up by theological and secular reasoning that really has no scriptural basis and can be/is harmful to our walk with Christ. Considering the temptations that some of us can face in secular clubs while we perform our ministry (be that helping a kandy kid on a bad trip, handing out water bottles, or directly sharing the Gospel), this can be a real concern. However, it would be foolish to assume that we could only be led astray by our activities outside of our churches. Regardless, Paul’s warning was just the preface for the next part.

Paul continues on with his warnings about falling into flawed human philosophies, which were defeated on the cross, but rather strengthening our relationship with Christ. But things take an odd twist starting in verse 16:

Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”? These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence. – Colossians 2:16-23

What seems to have been a chapter about falling into all the temptations of the world has seemed to turn into a chapter more about falling into theological philosophies that bind the body of Christ into a mold that it wasn’t supposed to fit into. In essence, Paul warns the Church about specifying what a Christian should look like or how a Christian should act beyond what is clearly defined in the Bible. It is in effect a warning against the various things that many of us complain about in our own Churches where our leadership may be more concerned with the style of our music than with the condition of our hearts. It is as though Paul looks into the future and sees that the Church that he is helping to build through the Holy Spirit can slip back into the very pharisaic ways that Christ had come to free us from.

The freedom we have in Christ is the very thing that allows us to do God’s will. The number of steps we can take on the Sabbath does not bind us. We are not to be judged harshly for healing the lame on the Sabbath either. In fact, it would be fine for us to talk to a prostitute on the street for the purpose of showing her what real love is. And for you naysayers, yes, hiring her to perform her “arts” would still be sin. That would fall back under a fine-sounding human argument and host of other commands in the Bible. Isn’t it funny how sin always seems to be the logical choice when we do it, but later on we realize that it clearly wasn’t logical at all and we always regret it?

The Gospel was meant to be told to whoever was willing to listen. Sharing it is also one of the things we are commanded directly by Jesus to do. How can we share it if we do not allow ourselves to go into the dark and be a light? If we only stay with other lights, we glow brightly, but we end up hoarding that light in a cultural closet rather than spreading it through the universe like the stars in the heavens do.

That about covers it for the first reference to Laodicea. Now let’s look at the second.

In Revelation, John is presented with a vision of seven existing churches. These churches have in many ways become archetypes for all of the churches that have existed since then and those that will when Jesus finally returns. So, while this Laodicea may not be the specific one talked about in Colossians, it is the archetype of the church discussed in Revelation. With the exception of the Church in Philadelphia and maybe the Church in Smyrna, all of the other churches failed miserably in the eyes of God. So, what was said specifically to Laodicea?

To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation. I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

– Revelation 3:14-22

What brought this on? Back in Colossians, Paul laid down some instructions that should have freed this group of people up so that they had absolutely no barriers between them and what God planned for them to accomplish. They had been freed from human-made philosophies both based on secularism and religion, yet they still failed. They had become lukewarm. They neither chased after the “sins” of the world nor the things of God. Instead, it seems like they simply did nothing despite their freedoms except apparently collect paychecks and focus on materialism.

In many ways, this is the picture of many churches in America today. They come together on Sundays to worship. They come in their finest clothes, in their finest cars, and listening to their finest Christian music, yet... they can't even defend their faith from the weakest of arguments or have a clue of what God wants them to do with their lives. They feel everything is going just fine, despite signs that say otherwise.

This is the danger the Christian dance scene faces. After 14 or more years since the first MYX Records release, we still don't have a basic statement of belief or a clearly defined mission for the scene, and we certainly don't have a fully developed plan of action. We even argue about the need for such a thing. What we do have are many small groups that are focused on rebuilding the wheel over and over again. How many lists of Christian DJs do we need to have floating on the Internet (most of them being out of date) before lives begin to change en masse? How many times must we debate if God can use secular music? How often must we look back at our history and cry because it didn't go as we expected it to? We constantly are retreading old ground because we don't have a path and vision for where we need to go next.

We have to do better than this if we want to succeed. We'd better define our basic beliefs and our mission and develop a plan that takes advantage of our freedoms in Christ, but yet pulls people into a growing relationship with him. And this is exactly what we will start doing in the next installment of this series – starting with a basic collection of beliefs and scripture to back them up. Want to contribute to this first pass and the next article? Sign-up and jump in on the discussion of this article in the Tastyfresh.com forums. Keep in mind though that I am not necessarily talking about what defines us as Christians, but what justifies and defines our actions in this scene. Let's back up what we do with scripture, and then we'll set some goals.

Nobody Understands Me (2006-11-15 00:00) - redsavior

✕ It's my 30th birthday today, I am sitting here at my friend's house in Ibiza and there is not a cloud in the sky and all that has put me in a very reflective mood. After trying several times to come up with a nice well thought out subject to share my view on, I am still stuck on finding one single subject to talk about. It's not that I can't think of anything to say, it's just that each topic seems to open up so many thoughts that I would end up writing a book instead of page or two. So it got me thinking, how did I end up where I am today.

In 1997 I finished my college course (I studied computing) and took a full time job in the supermarket that I had been working at on Saturdays while I was studying. It was around the same time that I had decided I wanted to live a different lifestyle. I was known as always being the one at company parties to be dancing on the tables by the end of the night and saying all sorts of offensive remarks to the managers, and up until this point, I was very pleased with that view. I had made a decision though, I had been brought up as a Christian, and had taken it seriously, but felt very caught up in two different worlds. Worlds that as someone brought up in a Christian background during the 80's & 90's you were taught that are very different and that you should stay well away from anything that wasn't Christian. So my decision was that from that moment on I would be a different person. That I would like as I felt Jesus would have lived, with his values and character as much as possible.

Just a few weeks after this I can remember my old pastor giving a sermon about the ethics of work. It was one of the few talks that I have ever heard in my entire life that I can still remember to this day. The shortened version of this talk was that no job has meaning; you have to take meaning to the job. It didn't matter if you were a fireman, shop assistant, factory worker, banker, lawyer etc. etc. If you didn't take the meaning to your job then it was worthless. There is obviously a lot more to that discussion, and I am not looking to go into the theology of that now. But that one talk changed my life. I decided that if I was working in a supermarket I was going to be the best worker that they had. Instead of trying to get by with just doing what I had to do, I would make each day a personal challenge to get every item out of the stock room and onto the shelf, and it was great. I would listen to people in the staff room moaning about how much work they had and how a much better job must be waiting, yet I was loving it. There was now no one else in the store that could fill a shelf as fast as me, I was working harder than ever, yet I was really enjoying it. Something had really changed and people noticed it too.

Within a few weeks it was a regular thing that the other lads on my department and I would be loading up trolleys full of stock higher and higher in a bid to work faster than the others. It made it fun. It meant we worked harder, our bosses were happy and the relationship between us all improved to the point that we started hanging out a bit outside work. I left there to go and work on a farm, and took the same attitude with me. Although it was now about 4 years ago that I left that job, I am still very good friends with the owner and the other guy that worked there (there were only 3 of us).

I had started DJing while I was at college at friends' parties and went on to do bigger and bigger events as time went on. While working on the farm I had my own radio show for a while and also setup Rubik Records with Doug. After leaving the farm I worked for a Church as a youth worker and also the local council as a youth worker (at the same time). It was only in late 2004 that I became full time as a DJ/Producer. In 2005 my wife and I moved to Ibiza to work with 24-7 Prayer ([1]www.24-7prayer.com) to establish a base on the island. So that's where we are now. I still run Spearhead Records, which I setup in 2005 (Doug now runs Rubik Records). I am working on some new music that should be released next year, and then giving a lot of time to 24-7 Ibiza (as we have now called it). You can check out [2]www.24-7ibiza.com for more details.

So I guess that doesn't really tell you anything about how to set up a record label, how to DJ or anything that

seems directly linked to music. However, this is what I believe is the key. We need to focus on character and not gifting. We have all been given different gifts, but gifts are given for free, it's about how we use them that counts. That is where your character comes in, and that you can constantly work on.

A couple of years back I felt challenged about this whole work ethics thing again. I was really feeling like no one else around me really understood what I was trying to achieve. I had set up my record label and in drum 'n' bass circles it was doing fairly well. But if I wanted to talk to someone at Church about it or get some support, no one really seemed to understand. Just as I was getting myself worked up about it all, that old talk came back to mind. Then I thought about a friend of mine that is an architect, who owns his own business and is very successful in that field. Another friend came to mind, whose job I don't even really understand, but I know he is very well respected and is often asked to write articles for well known world wide publications. It suddenly became obvious to me that no one really understands what I was doing, but I didn't understand what they were doing either. That's when I realised that it didn't actually matter. We needed to focus on what we did understand about each other, share the common ground, and help each other to develop our character. I may work with vinyl, my friend may work with houses, but the reality is, we all work with people. People that have the same needs as each other, people that want to be listened to, people that want to be shown kindness, and people looking for the truth.

I was a hard working shelf stacker, I am now a hard working record label boss. I love to make people laugh, inspire people and take things further than anyone else ever has done. And that would apply to any job that I decided to do.

So if I have got one clear point to make here, it's that we need to work on our character. The time has come to stop worrying about others not understanding what our job is, and to start understanding that we are all in this together.

That's all for now.

Steve

P.S. If you want to know more about music stuff then you can check out [3]www.myspace.com/bcee or [4]www.myspace.com/spearheadrecords.

1. <http://www.24-7prayer.com/>
 2. <http://www.24-7ibiza.com/>
 3. <http://www.myspace.com/bcee>
 4. <http://www.myspace.com/spearheadrecords>
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Taking the Leap: Going Pro (2006-11-15 00:00) - gsynth

One of the questions I am most often asked is, how can I make a living with my music? The most obvious answer is "charge for your services" if you don't already, but it goes deeper than that - you have to have a business mindset if you want to make money. If you're only interested in doing it for fun, and don't want to make it a business, don't expect to make much money.

What Do You Really Want

Making a living in music can be much harder than getting a job. You may work three times as hard and get paid half as much. Most artists create because they are compelled to. An inner driving force, perhaps a need to feel understood or to communicate, drives them crazy until they express themselves truly, and then they can relax, set free from their inner turmoil until it strikes again, usually within a day or two. Others create for fun, but if they have the talent, are just as likely to make it as anyone else.

But when you think about making it, where do you want to go? Life can be like a rat race, people rushing everywhere, but not really getting anywhere. Forget the hype, the 'buying a lottery ticket' mentality, and get to work and build a real business. Where do you want to go? You will have to create a road map, a business plan, and carry it out step by step.

What Do You Have To Give

If you already have a product or service that is competitive on a level with other pros in your area, you may be set to go and just have to sort out the business aspect. But if your skills don't rival or at least come close to the pro guys in your field, then you'll have to work on what you have to give. You may need some more practice, education or training, or time to work out what you will give. The only ways to make money are to offer a product or service that people are willing to pay for, and then getting to work, getting gigs and doing a great job of it.

When I first became interested in studio engineering, not even smaller studios would let me volunteer. But when I went to school to study producing engineering, I had studios fighting over me, and was not willing to work for any of them unless I got what I wanted. So education and skills, talent and experience can make a huge difference in what people are willing to pay you or what they think you are worth.

Do some research. Find out what pro people are doing and what it will take for you to be as good as or better than they are. Also teach yourself business and get all the training you require, because knowledge is power: it will keep you in business, and business savvy separates the pros from the rest.

Do The Math

Figure out specifically how much money you need to make, and break it down into exactly how you will do it. Aim high - most things take twice as long and cost twice as much as people expect to get off the ground. Also, if you are paid well, you are more likely to stick through the tough times and want to go to work, than if you are paid poorly. And you will take more pride in your work, which will show and will ultimately lead to people having confidence in you, and hiring you for better jobs. So be about your best business possible. And if you do the math and do exactly what you said you would do, you will most likely come close to the target you aim for. (You can adjust your strategy if you need to as you go along. And if you find you're not self-motivated, and if you don't stick to your goals, maybe business isn't the best way for you to make your living, but keeping a part time job on the side will ensure you always have an income.) So be reasonable, but aim for what you want to hit and find a way to get yourself there.

Don't forget to count the cost, because there is give and take in every situation. If you have a family, maybe being a pro full time DJ is not the best job for you, because it will affect the rest of your life. There are other options, part time work and part time DJing, branching out in the field, maybe doing studio work as a business or for other companies. Most people are surprised how many different skills they have to offer if they take the time to brainstorm all the things they could do for money, and with a bit more knowledge or experience, can turn their skills into reasonable business. Build a career that will work for you.

Try It Out

Once you feel your product or service is ready for market, then do a few test jobs first - whether that's DJing for your friend's house party before you hit the clubs, or producing a few demos for local artists for free before you start charging for your studio services. When you're comfortable with your skills and feel you can hold your own, then take the next step - and get the word out.

Market Yourself

One of the best ways to market yourself is to do one gig, and do such a good job of it that you get repeat (paid) gigs and constant referrals through word of mouth. If you can create a demand for your services, your phone will always be ringing off the hook, and you won't need to go out in search of work, it will come looking for you, and you will be able to choose which gigs you want to take.

But if you're not there yet, you will need to get out and do some networking or advertising, to let people know what you have to offer. Get a business card, run a few ads if you need to, get out and show up where the other pros or potential clients in your field hang out and start building your name and reputation, getting work, and building your business. Often you get what you ask for, so name your price and give them their money's worth. Be reasonable, and do a good job, so that people will recommend your services to others.

Repeats & Referrals (Getting More Work)

Once you have a steady stream of clients coming in, you can hold off on your marketing until things start to lag, and pick up the marketing again. Some businesses have up and down times, or seasons, others are nonstop work and you have to force yourself to take days off. When it comes down to it, your original business and marketing plan, as you stick to it and adjust it as you need to, will be your essential guide to keep you on track, going in the right direction, and in business for a long time.

The Big Picture, The Future, Your Options

The more education and experience you have, the more prepared you are to do business. Keep in mind the overall picture of what you want your business to be, and what you want your life to be. Perspective is invaluable. Often creativity and flexibility can solve a lot of problems. Don't have unrealistic expectations of yourself or your life, but build something attainable, enjoyable, and with potential to last or change with time. If you know what your options are, you're more likely to stay in business longer.

Don't be afraid to dream and be creative, but when it comes down to it, build a future for yourself that you know you can do. Some people prefer to work full or part time and do their music on the side. Others make it their full time business, or build a business out of a variety of skills that may involve performing, recordings, studio work, teaching, and any other combination of skills. Some build two simultaneous careers, in the same or in different fields, so that when one job doesn't pay the rent, the other will. That can take the stress out of life if you get less work one month than you were expecting, or if a project goes overtime but doesn't pay more.

Ultimately, it's your life, and what you do with it is up to you. No one is going to hold your hand and make your living for you. So figure out what you want to do, and go do it. If things don't work out how you plan, at least know what your options are. Also, you may find that you don't enjoy making music for money, but would rather do it as a hobby only, which frees you up to explore other options for making money. And there's no shame in having more than one simultaneous career. Lots of famous artists have had other careers and jobs that they took just as much pride in as in their art, and some have had more money and more comfortable lives for it. Always enjoy your work as much as you can, but the reality is, once you do music for a living it becomes just like any other job. You may as well work in a job you love, no matter what you decide to do in life, and you'll probably work several careers throughout the course of your life anyways. So enjoy what you do, be yourself, be real, have fun and do your best. Stick to your true ideals in life no matter where you go and what you do, and you'll be happy. See you out there.

The Business of Dance Music Part 6: The Basics of Event Promotion (2006-11-15 00:00) - KevinOneel

Imagine walking into a venue with hundreds of people dancing as hard as they can, totally lost in the moment, enjoying themselves like they never have before. As you walk around, you're thinking about profit margins, what the door is looking like, and just where have those headliners of yours run off to? That's right – You're a promoter! This is your element. This is your night. After months of planning, it's time to make it all happen. In this issue's article, I'd like to share some insight about event promotion I've gained while working on this past November 3's "BTU Weekend Live featuring Shiloh" at Club Red.

To start off, please be aware that I'm writing this article from the standpoint of promotion in a secular environment. Your situation may vary.

With any venue, one of the first things to secure is a signed contract outlining the usage of the venue. Who gets how much of the door? Who operates the door? Who gets bar/refreshment revenue? These are just some of the things you'll need to think about. First off, I suggest having personal liability insurance. This covers you in case anything happens. Someone slip and fall? No prob., your liability insurance covers it no problem. It never hurts to be a little paranoid when it comes to these things. Got your insurance now? Good! Let's go to the venue and negotiate a bit. Here's the deal you want....

1. Promoter gets 100 % of the door. Venue gets 100 % of bar/refreshment revenue.
2. Promoter's staff works the door. Venue provides change to start.
3. Promoter controls operating hours.
4. Venue provides security.
5. Promoter is allowed to do promotions in the venue prior to the show.
6. Promoter has TOTAL control over the VIP area.

Got that? Good. Don't be afraid of being overly aggressive. Venue owners are going to attempt to take you every chance they get. Don't be afraid to stand up for yourself and demand a quality deal. If the venue doesn't want to give you what you want, then just move on to somewhere else.

DO NOT skimp on your marketing budget. Order an initial run of 5,000 flyers, and be ready to order 2,500 more. 10,000 flyers in an average place is way too much. Forget about radio advertising unless it's free. Find the local alternative media sources (Here in Birmingham it's Black & White and Birmingham Weekly. Atlanta has Creative Loafing. Find free weeklies like these) and make sure to send press releases to them with the info about your show. Try to think of creative promotional methods you can easily use to create buzz. Also, in your marketing, remember that time is a commodity, and should be accounted for. Where will your time best be spent? How many people from certain surrounding cities will actually come? What's the drawing power of your headliner, and how well will their name promote? If your headliner is Sasha or Paul Van Dyk or Sander Van Doorn, then promotion is much easier because people recognize the name. However, if you're promoting a Rowland & Wright or the like, promotion takes more time because the artist may not be as well known. This is when the promoter needs to account for creating knowledge about the artist. As a promoter, your number one job is to get people in the door. Make sure your marketing package is strong.

Lastly, make sure to surround yourself with people willing to work. Promoting an event the right way is something you can't do on your own. Get a group of people who are willing to give up Fridays and Saturdays to pass out flyers. Have a few people willing to help with Internet promotion. Let people do what they can do well. Play to your staff's strengths and let people help. I can't stress this enough. Make sure to surround yourself with quality people.

Putting on a show the right way is tough, but incredibly rewarding. I highly recommend throwing your own show at some point, but be prepared to work. Make sure to work out all issues that might come up with the venue. Protect yourself with personal liability insurance. Be sure to set aside plenty of money for marketing tools. If people don't know about your show, they won't show up. Also, make certain you have a team of quality people ready to help put on your show. I can't wait to hear about your successful events!

The Enemy, of Evol Intent, Talks Gear With DJ Dual Core (2006-11-15 00:00) - redsavior

✖ It is hard to distinguish yourself in Drum N Bass.

There is so much DnB out there that getting lost in the crowd is always a danger.

Evol Intent has beaten the odds.

Not only have Evol Intent's three members; The Enemy, Knick and Gigantor; collaborated with some of the best in the industry (notably, Dieselboy), they make Drum n Bass records that grab my attention and make me say "Oh ya...that's cool!" in stead of "Uh-huh...DnB..." And so this month, it is an honor to have The Enemy take time out to answer a few questions about Evol's production process and gear for us.

DC: Can you give us a quick run-down of the hardware and software you use most?

TE: I don't use much hardware, as far as synths and samplers go. I mostly just use a PC with dual [video] monitors, Mackie HR824 [audio] monitors, a MOTU soundcard, Mackie mixer and a small army of MIDI controllers.

I work a little differently depending on the project I'm on.

For solo work I am a big fan of Cubase SX and Native Instruments. I use Kontakt as my primary sampler and love Reaktor, Absynth and FM7 for synths. The main effects are used are just Waves compressors, limiters, EQs, reverb, and a few other VSTs like Antares Tube or PSP Vintage Warmer.

For audio editing and modifying sounds I usually just use [Sony] Sound Forge and do a lot of manual cutting/pasting/layering/pitching/etc. tricks.

On Evol Intent tunes we sequence and write in [Propellerhead] Reason for it's cross-platform and self-containing capabilities.

Once an Evol Intent tune is 'finished' we'll ReWire Reason into Logic and a Mackie [32 channel, 8 bus recording console] and do the mix-down there. Gigantor also has a great analog tape machine that he uses quite a bit to run sounds through.

✖ DC: How has your gear setup changed over the years?

TE: Only about five or six years ago I was on a not-so-great Compaq with a 15-inch monitor, \$40 computer speakers and whatever soundcard came with it.

I did have a lot of band gear left over from my punk days but it wasn't that useful.

I ended up selling a lot of it before I moved to Atlanta.

Once I was out of college and making money most it went into musical gear, so my collection has grown greatly.

Lately I've been buying more 'live' equipment again, mostly due to a few of the side projects I'm involved in. I've got a 1973 Fender Rhodes MK I, which is my baby.

I also have several guitar amps, a Gibson SG, Fender Stratocaster, few other guitars and basses, Pearl drum kit and a lot of other random fun things.

DC: Do the three members of Evol Intent still do most of your production separately?

What are the mechanics of collaboration within the group?

TE: Yes.

For the most part we just send files back and forth until we're all pleased with the tune.

DC: How about live performances?

TE: We've never done a 'live' performance.

We all three just DJ.

Most Evol Intent shows are one of us DJ'ing.


If the promoters book all three of us we'll do a tag-team DJ set.

We're working on an actual live show right now and hope to launch it early next year when our LP drops.

DC: When you do remix work, in what form do you usually get the original?

TE: It's usually just a folder of .wav or .aif files.

If the producer used Reason sometimes we'll get the Reason file but end up ripping the sounds out, reprocessing and starting from scratch.

 DC: Evol Intent mixed Evol Intent Assemble The Monster, Disk Two of Dieselboy's Human Imprint retrospective album The Human Resource.

What was the technical side of that project like?

TE: Dieselboy basically gave us the back catalog of Human Imprint plus a lot of brand new exclusive remixes and asked us to put our touch on the mix.

We picked out the tunes we thought would work best and got them in the order that made most sense.

Then we put each individual tune in Ableton Live and made edits and added or cut parts, mashed up some of the songs.

We took some parts out and REXed them and imported them back in so we could play with the tempo and layer them in other areas. That's how most of the mix went.

The only exception was on the Barrier Break remix, during the slow 'chopped and screwed' breakdown that Hochi and Infiltrata did, I basically just took that out, imported it into Cubase at the correct tempo and manually chopped and edited the audio file, bounced it back out and replaced that section in the original tune.

DC: Have you recently started using anything new that you are excited about?

TE: It's not really new, but I'm still raving about [Native Instruments] Guitar Rig 2.

Some of the features are just amazing. I also picked up a Heil Talk Box and a Yamaha DX-100 a while back for a funk project I'm doing.

It took a while to get used to but I love it and mess around with it at least an hour every day."

The Echoing Green: Life, Producing and Pristina (2006-11-15 00:00) - redsavior

X The Echoing Green (Joey Belville – music & vocals, Chrissy Jeter - vocals), has released a steady stream of uplifting hope-filled electronica and synth-pop for over a decade. Since their 2004 album “The Winter of our Discontent” that signaled a new musical direction, they have been strangely silent. I caught up with Joey to discuss what they’ve been up to in the last couple years, where their music is headed, the new Pristina project, and his recent passion of producing for other artists.

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JL: Why the 2 year hiatus since your last major album?

JB: All kinds of reasons... mainly other musical projects as well as “life stuff” - like both my wife and I as well as Chrissy and her husband had our 2nd child each in that time - but also I did the new Leahdorus album, the Ever album, the new Monica Schroeder, as well as worked on Pristina during that time.

JL: Why have you transitioned more into a producer role recently?

JB: It seemed a real logical transition for me at this time. I’m a studio geek more than a stage performer by nature. Also - producing is a great way for me to be involved in music - even when I don’t have the inspiration to write it. It’s nice to embrace the vision of others once in awhile.

JL: What’s the story behind the Pristina project, and when will it be released?

JB: Pristina is the female vocal project I’ve been wanting to do since 1998. It feels so good to flex some different musical muscles. The Echoing Green is the only thing I’ve known for so long... I just needed a different outlet. Plus - it’s almost always “ladies night” in my cd player (or iPod). I’m a sucker for great female vocals... esp. in real dreamy musical scapes. SO... I teamed up with female artists I’d made friends with over the years and we all made this labor of love. There wasn’t a budget - it didn’t make a difference - we really did it for the art of it.

The limited edition of the record is actually out now. You can get it at ADD [<http://www.adifferentdrum.com/>]. It contains a bonus disc with remixes from Venus Hum, Iris, Rename, and others...

JL: What other artists are you working with on this project?

X JB: I worked with:

Sarah Masen. I only knew her in passing, but was familiar with her music. It was Jon Foreman of Switchfoot (who is her brother-in-law) who got us together. I told him about my project and he thought Sarah and I would really hit it off - and he was totally right. Even more important than the music - I got a great friend out of the experience.

Alicia Luma. I’ve known Alicia for YEARS - since before I used to tour with Five Iron Frenzy. It seems to me that she came and crashed at my house with Velour 100, I think...? I actually don’t remember when we first met. She’s gonna punch me if she reads this. Either way it was a long time ago. We lost touch for a bit, but then her mom actually tracked me down on the Internet and kept me updated on all her exploits. Alicia has always been the musical bridesmaid, but never the bride - so to speak, in that she has been the “live” singer for bands like His Name Is Alive and Velour 100 - but never recorded on their records. Which is their respective loss, because she’s CRAZY good. Not only that - she’s one of the best lyricists I’ve ever known.... ever. We were originally only going to do 2 songs together and we wound up doing 7. 5 of which are on the album.

Anita Robinson of Viva Voce. I got to know both Kevin and Anita from the Viva years ago. Then Kevin actually played guitar on the Supernova album for The EG. We managed to stay in touch fairly well since then. Both her and Kevin

are "lo-fi mad scientists" so-to-speak. Recording up at their place was pretty different. I documented it in a podcast you can check out on iTunes (just search for Pristina)... it was silly fun.

Chrissy Jeter - don't need to explain that one too much. She's not only the closest thing I have to a sister, she's amazing.

Monica Schroeder - this was the only person I worked with on the record who I had not actually met in person. Todd at A Different Drum was a big fan of hers and suggested her. I checked her stuff out and really liked it. I sent her a rough mp3 of a couple tracks and she picked the hardest one (in my opinion, anyway) to write lyrics over and pulled it off. She tracked her vocals in Toronto, and sent them down to me and I edited them and slapped them in to the track. We talked on the phone a lot during that time. So since then - she really liked my work on the song and she asked me to produce her next record. So she flew down to New Mexico and I finally got to meet her and we did her record. She was great! It was a fairly weird way to make a record - but it worked.

JL: What other projects are you currently working on?

JB: Besides the new EG, I'm doing a lot of remixes. I'm finishing up a remix for Venus Hum as well as a remix for Project 86, Iris, and Ultraviolet. I have kind of a love/hate relationship with remixing. I almost always really love what I come up with - but I usually hate getting started. But I keep plowing through regardless.

Wil Foster, Chrissy, and myself have also begun working on a new vocal-trance side project called Hotel. We're still kind of mapping it out - but it's mainly just for fun.

JL: Do you have an album coming out soon? If so, will the musical style be influenced by the other types of music you've been producing lately?

JB: Yes - I hope to have the new EG done by this spring and out in the summer. We made the first track "Suffer" available on Myspace for download and we have also started a remix contest for it. Musically, it's not really influenced at all by Pristina or Leahdorus or anything like that. Actually, working on the other projects has cleared our vision and we really know what we want to do this time around. "Suffer" is very indicative of the new sound. It's a logical progression from the Winter album - I really don't feel like we need to reinvent ourselves - like a lot of bands do.


JL: How has your musical style changed over the years?

JB: I've definitely been liberated from making bubbly, major-key synthpop. I feel like the overall tone and sound has gotten a bit darker and moodier (sonically, not spiritually), which I think is good. Don't get me wrong - I *love* good hooks and will always have a pop sensibility that I couldn't get rid of if I wanted to - I'm just finding new and better ways to get to those hooks.

JL: In your more recent albums, you've switched to distributing exclusively via a Different Drum, a secular synth-pop label. What were your reasons for moving to this label? Has it been a positive move? What are the challenges of producing Christian music for a secular label?

JB: Although ADD is a small label - they've been consistent. Big labels have come and gone; yet Todd at ADD still prevails. Todd has always believed in the EG, and there haven't been too many challenges to speak of, when it comes to our beliefs and our music. Being on ADD has actually given us an artistic validation that we've been craving for a long time. While Chrissy and I are both strong believers, we've never wanted to be stereotyped as a "Christian" band. Not because we're ashamed, or anything lame like that - it is simply because there is SO much bad luggage associated with the term "Christian Band" that most non-church-types will not want to even give us a chance because they automatically assume that we're super-lame and cheesy. We lose on both sides of the spectrum, because a lot of conservative Christian music circles don't think we're Christian enough - I guess because our lyrics aren't CCM-Trendy enough to make good youth group t-shirts... not that there's anything wrong with that.

JL: What are some of the latest toys in your studio? Do you have a favorite?

 JB: Oooh - gear list stuff. I've not made one of those in awhile.

Hardware wise - my main vocal microphone is a Brauner Phantom C, as well as a handful of others.

My main Mic Pre is a Universal Audio LA-610. I love this thing... I swapped out the factory tubes with some Mullard (British) tubes and it rules. I also tend to use my Grace 101 and Presonus Eureka from time to time.

I recently switched from a Motu 828mkII interface to an Apogee Ensemble... I'm not quite used to the way the control panel is, but so far it sounds fantastic.

My main recording software is Logic Pro. I *love* it. I love it so much I became an Apple Certified Trainer on it and teach it at the University of New Mexico in for some night classes once a quarter. So, obviously, I'm a total Mac Geek. I feel like I'm entitled to be vocal about it since I used to be a PC guy to the core and thought all the mac people were horned-rimmed-chai-sipping-stuck up snobs. Then I realized Chai Tea is kinda good. (and the switched to mac changed my music-making life)

I monitor through a Blue Sky 2.1 speaker system. Probably one of THE best changes I've made in a long time.

Then, of course, I have a TON of plugins... too many, to where I think it bogs me down a bit.

JL: Can you offer any production tips for the TF audience, based on your recent experiences?

JB: Get a good microphone. Seriously. Don't be fooled by the \$100 fancy-looking condenser mic. It's cheap for a reason. Not that you have to go out and buy a \$2000 mic - but I would recommend at least mics in the \$300 range. It really is worth it - one of the best mics I've owned, and I used on most of the winter album, is the Rode NT-1000. I think it clocks in around \$299 or so.... TOTALLY worth it - and that thing holds its own with the expensive guys... and no I'm NOT endorsed by Rode! But really - a good mic and a quiet room is really important. Even if you have to thumbtack sleeping bags to the wall to deaden the room (which I did on tracks like "Ceremony" in the past) it's worth it.

JL: What are some of your biggest challenges while producing? How have you overcome them?

JB: That first question has two different scenarios and answers. If I'm producing EG stuff - it's a bit harder because I'm paying attention to both the artistic aspects as well as the technical - and sometimes one (usually the technical) gets neglected. Which is why I've been having Chrissy do more and more technical stuff - she actually tracks and produces all my vocals and writes alot of my harmonies - as well as all of her own.

The other side is when I'm producing other people's stuff. That's a bit different in that I'm mostly paying attention to the technical. This is one area that has been so good for me. Spending so much time on other people's stuff has helped me get my technical game back up to par, so-to-speak.

The challenge (or at least one of them) in producing other peoples stuff is that a lot of guys have what I call "demoitis" - where they are SO comfortable and attached to the demos they made that they're just totally closed to any new ideas. That can be pretty frustrating.

JL: A constant thread throughout your albums has been a message of hope. Why has hope played such a central role in your music? How has it played a central role in your life?

JB: I, like a lot of people, came out of a tumultuous childhood filled with tragedy, abuse, and hurt. I've always responded better to people that have been in my shoes rather than people who had "answers" yet have never suffered. I'll take empathy and compassion over an instruction book any day. If you think about it - Christ had the same approach. He could've showed himself in the clouds and told us what to do with a booming voice from Heaven - but instead he became a mortal and walked in our shoes - giving him a tangible credibility that changed the dynamic of our relationship with God forever.

JL: What's in your MP3 player right now?

JB: I've been listening to the new Shiny Toy Guns quite a bit. Also in heavy rotation is the latest Muse album, BT - This Binary Universe, Acceptance - Phantoms, Pitty Sing, and I can't stop listening to the new Venus Hum - The Colors In the Wheel.

JL: Who are some of your musical influences?

JB: I'm a big fan of Bjork and BT. That may not be super evident in my music - but they influence and inspire me nonetheless. I also love Wolfsheim, and pretty much anything New Order puts out. Lately, I've been influenced by records from Team Sleep, and Halou... absolutely brilliant.

JL: What are you reading right now?

JB: "Relentless" by Robin Parrish. I'm also a big Ted Dekker fan - as well as Stephen Donaldson.

JL: What advice do you wish an industry veteran would have given you when you were starting your career?

JB: I wish they would've warned me about how fake some "industry" types can be. Of course, this is no secret - but I guess I was pretty wide-eyed when I started. Not that I'm jaded now, but I'm just quite a bit wiser.

JL: What has God been teaching you this year? How has He been working in your life?

JB: He teaches me a lot through my children. The way I try to teach them and protect them from themselves and other things is a direct parallel to the way He has been trying to get things through to me all my life... I'm finally starting to get it.

JL: What other musical genres would you like to spread into if given the opportunity, if any?

JB: Mainly the ones I've already started to - down tempo female vocal stuff, as well as vocal trance type stuff. Now - I TOTALLY realize that vocal trance is quite possibly the oldest and lamest idea anyone has ever had - and I'm way past the point of being relevant with it... BUT it's my total guilty pleasure. I'm just doing it because I LOVE it - not to make any kind of breakthrough... lol. I can't help it - as cheesy as it is I can't help but cranking up an ATB or 4 Strings record and being in heaven... I know it's stupid, but I refuse to be ashamed - at least I can admit it's lame.

JL: What are some of your other career goals that have not yet been realized?

JB: I've always wanted to do a soundtrack. To either a video game or a film. I've done a small bit of soundtrack work for an indie short film last year - but I'd like to do something more elaborate.

JL: What legacy do you want to leave behind with your music?

JB: I would love to know that our songs have touched lives.

Of particular interest to TF readers, Joey is running a remix contest for his new track called "Suffer". If interested, all submissions are due by January 1, 2007 and the winner's track will be included on the next EG album. [1]Sign up

Related Links:

- [2]Echoing Green website
- [3]Echoing Green MySpace page
- [4]Pristina website
- [5]Pristina MySpace page
- [6]A Different Drum
- [7]Leiahdorus MySpace page

Buy Joey's Music:

- [8]Pristina "Stars and Sirens LTD" (2 CD)
- [9]Echoing Green "The Winter of our Discontent" (CD)
- [10]Echoing Green "The Story of Our Lives" (EP)
- [11]Echoing Green "The Evergreen Collection" (2CD)
- [12]Other EG Music

1. <http://www.echocentral.com/suffermix/>
 2. <http://www.echocentral.com/>
 3. <http://www.myspace.com/echoinggreen>
 4. <http://www.pristinamusic.com/>
 5. <http://www.myspace.com/pristina>
 6. <http://www.adifferentdrum.com/>
 7. <http://www.myspace.com/leiahdorus>
 8. <http://www.adifferentdrum.com/artist.php?n=ADDCD1265>
 9. <http://www.adifferentdrum.com/artist.php?n=ADDCD1147>
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 12. <http://www.adifferentdrum.com/search.php?query=echoing+green&x=17&y=18>
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5. 2007

5.1 January

Excellence and Influence (2007-01-15 20:57) - redsavior

A few months ago I was sitting in my church's business class. The teacher had asked us a question – "What verse might best describe your purpose for starting a business?" As we went around the room, the answers ranged from verses on prosperity to verses on ministry to John 3:16 to the great commission. Since I was sitting near the back of the room I had a moment to think about my answer. The verse that kept coming to me was different than everyone else's verse. I kept thinking of "Do you see a man who excels in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before unknown men." (which turns out to be Proverbs 22:29). In a way, that surprised me. My purpose for starting my business was because I wanted to stand before Kings and priests?

Of all the stories in the Bible, one of the most well known is that of David and Goliath. Even if it wasn't told to you in felt-cutout characters and coloring books in Sunday school, you no doubt have heard the metaphor used to describe just about any underdog story. It is the classic boy-faces-giant-and-comes-out-on-top tale that we all love.

But whenever I read the story I am always struck by the fact that David was allowed to go fight the giant. How did a non-soldier, who was essentially was just bringing lunch, end up saving all of Israel from the Philistines? With all of the ranks of the Israelite army arrayed for battle, how did one teenager get to pick a fight with the giant?

There was a lot at stake here. Goliath, a nine to twelve foot giant, was telling Israel to send a champion to fight him. If Goliath won, all of Israel would be overrun by Philistine captors. Strategy would tell us to pick our biggest, tallest, most fearsome fighter in the army and send him. Fight strength with strength. But King Saul was convinced to let a teenage boy go in against a giant with the fate of Israel resting on the outcome of the battle.

So, what convinced King Saul? Well, from a straightforward reading of the chapter, I would say it was David's skill at fighting the bear and the lion. At first, being so accustomed to the story, this doesn't seem like much - surely not enough to send a young man into battle against a well-trained giant. But then I think hang on, this is a bear and a lion. A bear and a lion! David ran down a LION, and killed it. He didn't shoot it with a gun from a distance. He chased it, grabbed it and put it down with his bare hands. No wonder King Saul was impressed. I would be too.

A few months ago I was sitting in my church's business class. The teacher had asked us a question – "What verse might best describe your purpose for starting a business?" As we went around the room, the answers ranged from verses on prosperity to verses on ministry to John 3:16 to the great commission. Since I was sitting near the back of the room I had a moment to think about my answer. The verse that kept coming to me was different than everyone else's verse. I kept thinking of "Do you see a man who excels in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before unknown men." (which turns out to be Proverbs 22:29). In a way, that surprised me. My purpose for starting my business was because I wanted to stand before Kings and priests?

But the more I think about it, maybe that's not such a bad reason for investing my talents and expanding my skills. Acquiring an expertise is a great way to land you in prime opportunities to influence people. I mean, the Olympic committee didn't approach Tiesto for the opening ceremonies because he knows how to play a record. Bono doesn't speak before Presidents and Prime Ministers because he can hold a C-note. When you are the best at what you do, you draw attention. And like King Saul was with David, many people can be influenced by someone with expertise.

And I am not talking about fame here. I am not talking about striving to be the best so you can make it onto the A-lists of important people. That is the self-indulgent, ego-driven mission that is far too prevalent in much of today's culture. What I am suggesting though is that your talents and skills will open doors that may be closed to anyone else. These

open doors are perfect opportunities to be used by God to make a difference in the world.

So, let's bring this down to the applicable side for a minute. What do you excel at? Whether you are a DJ, a producer, a dancer, an event organizer, a writer, or a web designer, your skill will put you in divine appointments for influencing people. Add this to the list of reasons why you strive to be the best at what you do. When you become remarkable people take notice. Maybe you will find yourself in the Oval Office because of your DJ skills. Maybe you will find yourself on television because of your music production talents. Maybe you will find yourself on a prominent committee because of your event planning talents.

I have no doubt that there are some giant-slayers on TastyFresh. In fact, I could probably make a list right now. But we may never make it onto the battlefield unless we have a lion or two on our résumé. When you strive for excellence in what you do, and dedicate yourself to making the most of your skills, you open a door for God to use you in amazing ways. Imagine where you might end up. Imagine what God might have planned for you. Imagine how many giants you might slay.

You may just find yourself standing before a King Saul, but only your lion killing skills will get you onto the battlefield.

Josiah-Fingaz (2012-02-01 14:19:59)

Loved this article. I preached a similar message a while back. Good stuff.

Discipling Tastyfresh (2007-01-15 21:07) - redsavior

Shiloh. Andy Hunter. Kubiks. Uberzone.

What do you think when you hear these names? Do you think, "Man, that guy is certainly doing the work of God"? Do you think, "That is where Christians need to start being"?

Over the 4 years or so that I've been involved on TF, and especially lately since I started getting more involved, I've seen a trend take root. That trend is the belief that only those that are in the secular scene, working with the lost, influencing the people, are doing the work of our Lord. I've seen several large-scale arguments about the place of Christians in the general music scene, both secular as well as Christian. The majority have almost always said that being in the clubs, "being the light" (which is interesting because we cannot be the light, only a reflection of the One True Light) in the clubs, is the most important thing we can do. I've seen some people question the purpose of putting the label Christian on music and say that we should simply make music.

However, I think if we asked that question to those who are deep in the secular scene, we may just be surprised to the answer. They would answer the question something like this:

"The most important thing is to walk the path God has constructed for you. If that is being in the clubs, be in the clubs. If that is being in the studio, be in the studio. If that is supporting others, support others."

I think, as a body, we have missed the point of a passage we all know and many quote.

Matthew 28:19 says, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." We missed the meaning of disciple. We generally use this verse as a call to go into the nations, to preach the Gospel. But this verse does not exclusively mean that. The Greek word used here is "matheteuo", which is best translated to something like "to enroll as a scholar". We want to preach, but God wants us to start enrolling people. I think, as a body, we have placed too much emphasis on outreach. I think, as a body, we have made reaching the nations an idol. I think, as a body, we need to take a step back and look at what is the most important thing.

There was a thread not too long ago that really got me thinking about how this community needs to run. I remember back a few years ago when we were really trying to figure out what God wanted to do with us. What direction we needed to head in. We started the idea of Groove Fellowships so that TF would be a meeting place and the Fellowships would be a place to get local and work in the way God wanted them.

I have yet to see this take place. I have seen several people trying to start a Fellowship in several areas around the US, Canada, and the UK, and from what I have seen, they have all pretty much flopped. Many said they would attend, few did.

I would ask why, but I think I already know the answer. It's the same reason that so many college students, as many as 80 %, turn their backs on God. There is almost no follow-up. There is almost no discipleship. We have stopped teaching as soon as we get a person enrolled. You could say, "Well, we are a missions-oriented body." I agree. We should be missionaries to the lost, but not at the expense of being missionaries to our community.

So what does this look like for TF? I cannot say for sure, other than to offer one more Scripture and a bit of encouragement.

Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully. – Romans 12:4-8

I point this Scripture out because I think it shows exactly how we need to run. Each person needs to serve with his gifting. We need to look at our gifting and seek how God would use it. Those with the gift of reaching the lost need to be out looking for them. Those gifted with prayer need to pray for both those looking and those lost. Those with a gift of encouraging need to encourage those who are in need.

Let's look at this a different way. Those with a gift of reaching the lost, your calling is pretty self-explanatory. But, we are also called to teach each other. The Bible talks about building each other up. The people I mentioned earlier have an incredible ministry where they are. But they also need to understand that there is also a responsibility to train those who will take over that ministry later. That means teaching others the trade and giving pointers on where people can improve and how to improve. Something that I would love to see is those out there in the clubs using TF effectively. One idea is saying something like, "Hey, I'm going to be in this place this day and wanted to see if anyone wanted to get together and hang out and work together a bit."

Those with a gift of prayer need to keep lifting the body and its members up in prayer. There is such great need in this body, and we need to have people praying for it and its members all the time. We need to have people praying for those out in the fields searching as well as those back in the house resting and healing.

Those with gifts of encouragement need to be encouraging. Something that REALLY blessed me the other day was on New Year's Eve. I got a last-minute invite to spin at a youth outreach. Right after the New Year came, I got a phone call from a friend on TF. I was still spinning, so I sent the call to voice mail and kept going. About 2 minutes later, the phone rings again. It's my friend. I had just gone over to a new track and figured a small break wouldn't kill me. I grabbed my phone and ducked into the bathroom, the only place where I could hear. He says, "I just wanted to wish you a happy New Year brother!" I got off the phone and ran back to keep spinning. I didn't realize it at the time, but he is in a different time zone. He had called me to wish me a happy New Year when it came for me, not when it came for him. It blessed me so much. Those who have been called to encourage need to encourage. Sometimes a simple email, phone call, or private message is such a blessing. They are maybe having a crappy day, and all they need is someone that will call and say, "Hey man, I was thinking about you today. I just wanted to say that God loves you and that I appreciate you."

We need to do something different. Instead of saying we need to be this or we need to be that, we should look at where each person is and minister, teach, encourage, and train them. Instead of telling people what they need to do, we need to support them in what God is calling them to do and trust that they know what that is.

I firmly believe that, when I get back from my own training in the UK, this body can be something it never has been before: a single body with each of its members exercising its gifts in a way that supports others and reflects God's glory to those around us. The Word says that people will know us by our love for each other. We should start showing that love by serving each other. It is not difficult, especially for those who are not actively called to reaching the lost. It is not hard to say a quick prayer for a brother. It is not hard to send an email, private message, or phone call of encouragement. But everyone will know the love we have for each other if we do it.

We will know the love we have for each other if we do it.

The Business of Dance Music Part 7: Keeping Records While Making Them. (2007-01-15 21:13) - KevinOneel

Music is an expensive business, isn't it? There are pressings, CDs and mastering. Then there's equipment, travel, promotional materials, administration, and did I mention that every once in a while, you might like to purchase new music. Before you know it, expenses are running rampant, and you are left holding the bill for everything. This doesn't have to happen. With a little caution (and a lot of receipt saving) you can make your music happen on a small budget. Here are a few tips on how to make it happen.

1. **Create your own sounds.** Instead of buying expensive sample CDs that get outdated quickly, look into programs and VSTs that allow creation of original sounds. As your music changes, you can just make new sounds instead of having to buy new sample CDs. Don't get me wrong, samples are nice, but learning to create your own is way more cost effective.
2. **Start a studio club with like minded people.** You should never master your own tracks. ALWAYS get a fresh set of ears on a track at this point. You'll be surprised on how much of a difference this makes. By starting a studio club, you can all shoot files around for inspiration and collaboration. Also, each member takes turns mastering the others tracks. With some practice by everyone, this can become quite effective.
3. **Save those receipts.** Remember that music production and DJing is a business, so business expenses can be written off on your taxes. Purchases online, gas receipts from driving to shows, and even meals on the road are all business expenses. Little things add up. For more info, please talk to an accountant.
4. **Forget about pressing CDs or Vinyl, mp3 distribution is the way to go.** Most people into electronic music are, how should I say it...electronically inclined. Send MP3 links for promo copies of tracks. Try to get accepted to one of the big MP3 sales websites instead of having a bunch of CDs made. Selling MP3's has ZERO overhead. Take advantage of this!
5. **Do some research!** Learn all about copyright law, distribution, and marketing. Learn how to be a business owner, and how a business is supposed to work. Be aware of trends and angles in the music business. Do everything you can to be a student of the industry. Remember that in music, the important thing is not changing with the curve, but rather ahead of the curve.

I've been quite busy myself in the world of electronic music business lately, so I really wasn't able to dive deep into a topic like I usually do. However, this is the start of the year, and recordkeeping is something that honestly should be on your mind. Don't let a lack of bankroll keep you from trying to achieve your dream of being in the music industry. Remember that by using your head and saving some dollars, you too can make it happen.

5.2 March

Putting Your Gifts to Use Where God Wants Them (2007-03-12 22:04) - redsavior

I used to chuckle at a Calvin & Hobbes comic that my mom kept on our refrigerator when I was a child. It had a picture of Calvin making a grumpy face with a caption that read, "God put us on earth to accomplish a certain number of things. At this point I am so far behind I will never die." But somewhere along the line, one of my parents had crossed off "number of" so it read; "God put us on earth to accomplish certain things..." It was a silly little comic, but I never really forgot the concept behind it. As I began to get to know and love God on a personal level, I always kind of wondered how much truth was behind that. Did God really put us on earth to accomplish specific things? Did He really give each person only a part of the puzzle?

I began to figure out what I am best at. I figured that would be my strong point – my combo move so to speak – for me to accomplish the most for the Kingdom. Is it music? What about art? What about writing? And are there things I am specifically not good at? Sports for sure. Math and science probably a close second. So, those talents can be left up to someone else. They can be the puzzle piece that fits where I fall short.

It is interesting to think of the huge plan God has laid out. It includes all of us, and all of our talents. To think that He would fit all of us carefully into a place in history, with specific talents, to accomplish certain things so that it all lines up for His glory. And not only does He do that but He ups the ante with the Holy Spirit empowering our talents.

For instance, let's look at a man named Bezalel in Exodus:

"Then the LORD said to Moses, "See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts—to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of craftsmanship." – Exodus 31:1-5

So, God creates this man, Bezalel, hand-made in his mother's womb, all geared up for a specific plan and purpose. Then at an appointed time God drops the Spirit into the mix to couple with Bezalel's talent in craftsmanship and gifting in wisdom. Sounds like a lethal combination against the enemy, and a huge potential for glorifying God. But in case you are wondering, you happen to have a similar combination built into your life.

Ok, Bezalel is commissioned by Moses to be the head craftsman. He has specific powerful talents, a good dose of the Holy Spirit, and a commission. Watch what happens when Bezalel begins to operate in that three-fold purpose:

"Bezalel made the ark of acacia wood—two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high. He overlaid it with pure gold, both inside and out, and made a gold molding around it. He cast four gold rings for it and fastened them to its four feet, with two rings on one side and two rings on the other. Then he made poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold. And he inserted the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark to carry it.

He made the atonement cover of pure gold—two and a half cubits long and a cubit and a half wide. Then he made two cherubim out of hammered gold at the ends of the cover. He made one cherub on one end and the second cherub on the other; at the two ends he made them of one piece with the cover. The cherubim had their wings spread upward, overshadowing the cover with them. The cherubim faced each other, looking toward the cover." – Exodus 37:1-9

What is Bezalel using his talents on? Well, it is none other than the Ark of the Covenant. The very object that God's presence and glory would hover around for years and years to come. Think about some of the stories that surround it. There was the Uzzah fiasco, the incident with the idol of Dagon getting floored, the immense blessing of the house of Obed-Edom, and don't forget the parting of the Jordan with the Ark at the forefront. This was a very important sacred object! And, because of his talents, Bezalel was the man of the hour.

God anointed Bezalel for craftsmanship, Bezalel was faithful in that talent, and therefore God was glorified through the result. God likes to work that way. He does that in your life, too. He has placed his Spirit on you to work in direct relation with your talents and giftings. So be faithful, worship through your talents, and glorify God.

Realize that you follow a Creator God who put some of that same creation power within you. When you use that creation power flowing through your talents and giftings, you will produce things like the Ark, which was a symbol of God's glory for hundreds of years. When the Spirit of God anoints your talents and giftings, many times they will create objects or bring about effects that will glorify God and His kingdom long after you have left this earth!

Do you write music? Your music will glorify God for years to come. Do you paint? Your paintings will be glorifying God in some gallery. Do you teach? Your teaching will effect kids who will someday effect more kids and on and on, glorifying God through the generations. Are you a leader? Your leadership has a pioneering force that will breakthrough for the next generations. See how God can be glorified through your talents and giftings for ages and ages? So harness those things God gave you!

Let's take another look at Exodus.

"The Israelites did as Moses instructed and asked the Egyptians for articles of silver and gold and for clothing. The LORD had made the Egyptians favorably disposed toward the people, and they gave them what they asked for; so they plundered the Egyptians." – Exodus 12:35-36

Soon after all the plagues, Pharaoh finally sends the people of Israel off to worship their God. In the process, we see God, through Moses, telling the people to ask the Egyptians for their riches. With God's favor, the Israelites venture into the desert with more than a camel-load of wealth. They have gold and silver galore. But don't think that God would send them into the desert with all these riches just to brag to their grandchildren. This gift from God (remember, it was His favor that sparked such generosity) was meant to be used for His glory.

Soon we see God calling Moses up to the mountain to talk and God says:

"Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for me from each man whose heart prompts him to give. These are the offerings you are to receive from them: gold, silver and bronze; blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen; goat hair; ram skins dyed red and hides of sea cows; acacia wood; olive oil for the light; spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense; and onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the ephod and breastpiece." – Exodus 25:2-7

These people are stuck out in the desert, and God is giving them a grocery list of riches He wants them to collect. Obviously they are not going to go digging through the desert sand or looking under nearby rocks to find this stuff (especially that porpoise skin). God expected the Egyptian riches to be put to good use.

So why do they need all these things? Next verse:

"Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them." – Exodus 25:2-8

Ah, yes. Here is where we once again see God being glorified through our gifts. He gives us gifts and we utilize them, but in the process we are able to bring glory to Him. Egypt's riches were transferred to Israel through God's favor and then God calls the people to use those gifts to build the temple. The temple, like the Ark of the Covenant, was a symbol of God's presence and glory for generations to come.

Of course, that isn't exactly the first thing the Israelites did. They didn't immediately spring in to action, excited to do the Lord's bidding and begin work on the temple. No, first they decided to give us a lesson in what not to do.

God and Moses are talking. God is telling Moses about all the collecting of gold and materials for the temple as well as commissioning Bezalel and his men to be the official craftsmen. Let's let them talk for a bit and sneak over to the edge of the mountain and have a peek down below. What is happening?

"So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.'

When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, 'Tomorrow there will be a festival to the LORD.'" – Exodus 32:3-5

Let me point out two interesting and similar points.

One, God is telling Moses to have the people collect the gifts to be used to build the tabernacle. But instead, the people are taking the gold, which God gave them, and giving it to Aaron to build a false idol. Not only are they using the gifts for the wrong purpose, but also they are rebelling against God by doing it.

Two, while Moses is being told to commission Bezalel to be the tabernacle craftsman and that the Spirit will fall on him, Aaron is down below playing with the gold like he knows what he is doing. I can just imagine the ugly idol Aaron made. It was made out of all gold earrings and fashioned by a man who was not anointed to do so. The thing could just as well have been made from play-dough.

God has given you giftings and talents to be used for Him. If you begin to align your talents with the world, you will only succeed in making ugly idols and not glorifying God. If God has given you specific talents or gifts, then use them for Him. If He has anointed you in the Spirit and commissioned you to be the "tabernacle craftsman", then do it. Recognize that God has given you riches (and sometimes robbed Egypt to do so) and wait for your appointment to use them in worship. God loves when you use the gifts He showered upon you to worship Him.

Eventually Israel did shape up and begin to realign with God's vision for those Egyptian riches. Although some tough times fell on them because of their misuse of their God-given gifts, the people repented and listened to Moses. They collected their gold, silver and other riches and gave them to God. The tabernacle was crafted and erected by Bezalel and his men, and we see God glorified.

"Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." – Exodus 40:34-35

So, I encourage you to sit down and make an assessment of those things God has blessed you with. What is your zone? What is your secret weapon? Write down every talent and gift. Then pray that the Holy Spirit will fall upon you so that you will be able to worship in spirit and truth. Then go into all the world and use that combination in worship to God.

You have the resources to glorify God! Worship Him through what He gave you!

Stayin' On Top with Deepsink Records (2007-03-12 22:36) - redsavior

This month, our special guest is Wim van Wingerden of Deepsink Records. We caught up with Wim via email and he conversed with DeepLife about a new release schedule, faith in Christ, a history of Deepsink and much more!

This interview originally appeared on the DeepLife Records Blog (<http://deepliferecordsonbeatport.blogspot.com/>) and is used by permission. Please add DeepLife's blog as another site to check out regularly – Editor

This month, our special guest is Wim van Wingerden of Deepsink Records. We caught up with Wim via email and he conversed with DeepLife about a new release schedule, faith in Christ, a history of Deepsink and much more!

Andrew: Wim, first of all, let me wish you and everyone at Deepsink a Happy New Year! I trust that the Lord is good to you all the time, especially with you and your label in 2007!

Wim: And a very happy new year to you as well my friend! Yes we depend on Him in all we do!

Andrew: Your label Deepsink Records has established itself as one of the premier Christian dance music labels in my eyes. Please tell give us a little history of your label, how it came about?

Wim: Thank you for that compliment, we are only trying to do what God wants us to do! It all started after putting up some small alternative festivals and shows with my good friend Arjan Nihot. The Brainwave Festival featured some awesome bands such as Blindside (first show outside of Sweden ever), Selfmindead, Eso Charis, The Blamed etc. Our mission was to give a stage to underground (unknown) Christian bands well worth a listen.

After like 5 years we decided it was time to start something else. By the time I joined the festival/label there were already some releases in the hardmusic section (the scene we originally came from) to support our festival. Also the second Dance in Motion album (they were with LowRoof before I was) just came out around that period. After many talks and prayers we decided to try to boost the dance scene by setting up a compilation series of 4 albums, all trance music produced by Christian artists. We decided to do this since nothing much was going on these days, only a few labels that did some stuff but mainly set up by producers trying to put themselves in the picture. Not a bad thing, but an independent label to support the artists just wasn't there and it seemed like the right thing to do.

Over the years the Osmotic concept became what LowRoof is all about. Giving producers a stage to display their talent; trying to round up the best producers I could find willing to cooperate and fill up the album with the best quality music by young, up and coming producers.

Every artist I work with is a Christian but whether they decide to carry out a message or not, that is up to them. Every person has a different relationship with God and I do not think He wants us all to get up on a soapbox and start preaching. Some are much more needed in the secular scene to spread some light by just being there. Therefore we do not specifically ask for Christian lyrics or something; just good quality music made by Christian artists.

Next to the hardmusic releases we did in the beginning (subdivision: Intensive Elements), we have our dance-division Deepsink you are well familiar with including the Osmotic series plus some releases by several other awesome producers such as Tresice and DJ Phase. And lately we also are into the hiphop scene in the Netherlands. There is not much going on there, most Christians are rock-fanatics (something you guys overseas might recognise) and the hip-hop scene, well, doesn't really exist. Still there are some emcees definitely worth a listen so we give them a chance as well. The hip-hop is being released under our Skilltone subdivision.

Andrew: Deepsink Records has an unprecedented line-up scheduled for 2007. What goals do you have in 2007 as a Christian label? What influence does faith in Jesus Christ have in your music ministry?

Wim: Our goals for 2007 are mainly to continue what we are doing. We just released the fourth and final Osmotic album and there is one more awesome electronic release coming up in a few months by William Higgins. Next to that we are also putting up demo releases, meaning we give a producer the opportunity to release a professional demo (pressed disc with good artwork) in order to shop for bigger labels and have a really good-looking demo to present themselves with. The very first demo was released by Out of This World, an acid techno producer from the northern part of the Netherlands. He is an excellent producer in his style and the limited edition disc he produced is pretty

awesome, including great artwork and personal testimony. There are some more demo's coming up on our Skilltone division; supporting artists is our main thing; LowRoof is here for them!! Without good producers and artists LowRoof wouldn't exist anymore!!

Then we teamed up with Andrew from DeepLife Records, you might know the guy, and together we are realising the release of our digital music. The first digital release comes from Quillroader who made a great maxi-single with 4 mixes of One More Chance (ft. Morgan Casey).

I do not really have a release schedule since all the producers I work with are having daytime jobs (including myself) and I cannot work with deadlines since it still remains kind of an exploded hobby.

Faith in Jesus Christ means a lot in my life! If you really understand what the sacrifice on the cross meant, it makes your life so much more worth living!! And it does influence our ministry, if you like to call it that.

On our website we state: "The people behind LowRoof are Christians and with this label want to create an opportunity for Christian artists to display their talents and create a positive sound in this world."

That is what we are about.

Andrew: Please tell us a little bit about the Osmotic Series.

Wim: As I said this compilation series is mainly about supporting producers. It is awesome to see what happened over the years. For the Osmotic Hype release, which is the first one, I had to ask the producers to produce a track for me. For the second one (Osmotic Wave) already close to 20 people sent in music. And by the time the fourth disc was here I had over 35 producers sending in over 100 tracks from which I could select.

For every new release I invited several producers and dj's I knew (all Dutchmen since I live here) to listen to the tracks and give some advice on technical aspects. Those were really great days talking about the music; we had fun listening to all the entries. After that I'd get back to the producers and tell them whether we liked the music or not and what they could do to improve. That is really the key, it just encouraged many to produce their best track and try even harder.

A release on a compilation by an official label always looks good on your c.v. and we were able to release the discs for a fair price. So there you have the win-win situation. The featured producers have a release and the buyers have a great compilation for a nice price!

Andrew: What Artists are you currently working with? Do you plan on signing on additional producers in the upcoming months?

Wim: Take a look at the website and check out all the artists we worked with so far. I know them all and I still am in touch with many of them. Currently we are mainly working with the artists we released music with, such as Tresice, Timo Rozendal, Quillroader, Coretex, William Higgins etc.

Talking about signing on additional producers that really depends on what I come across. If I receive a demo I always check out the music and get in touch with the producer about it. Now when I am really impressed I talk to the producer about their plans and vision and that way we might end up working together on a release or project. So keep those demo's coming!

Andrew: Where do you see the music industry headed in the next few years? Do you see mp3's and CD's staying around for a while?

Wim: Well for me personally a CD (or vinyl) is something really physical and collectable. And I am not the only one, so I do think there will remain a market for CD's. It might be smaller than it used to be though. Then again I do see the rise of digital music and digital releases are the future. At this point in time everything is being switched to digital format from our TV (cable is sooo passé) to our telephones including the music industry I guess. So this means I really think mp3 will stay around for quite some time!

Still I prefer a CD over a download, but I'm an old guy I guess...

Andrew: What kind of live shows do you enjoy participating in, and in what capacity (as a label, promoter, producer, or other)? Can we in the U.S. expect to catch Deepsink Artist(s) on tour, or perhaps performing at Cornerstone Festival in Bushnell, IL, Florida, or California?

Wim: I love checking out our DJ's on stage, always a pleasure to visit a party with someone like DJ Phase, Marco Faralley or DJ Joost Dekker spinning (those three are probably my favourite DJ's from NL at this moment).

I love checking out my hip-hop friends from the She'erith Nation (a dutch crew similar to Deepspace 5 with a range of emcees and acts able to put up an excellent show individually or as a collective) or other dope hip-hop acts.

I love checking out some of my hardcore heroes such as Norma Jean, Blindside or Benea Reach (awesome Norwegian band). In fact Facedown Records is one of my favourite labels ever; their work is amazing!

It's awesome to visit a fest like the Flevo Fest where you can enjoy many styles of music; it's not really the style that appeals to me, but the quality of the music I enjoy.

And about Deepsink artists @ C-Stone...I'd love that; I can imagine what a Deepsink Dance Night would look like (sweaty, steamy, catchy, funky) and finally meeting so many of my US-friends I've made over the years but never got the chance to see in person. I am very open to suggestions and the organisation of C-Stone can always talk to me about a dance night and maybe a tour.

Do you view your Record Label as one way to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ through music? Do you have a story regarding helping someone come to faith or perhaps someone strengthening your faith in Christ?

Wim: I do not really see my label as a way to communicate the Gospel. I work with Christians, whether they choose to communicate the Gospel is up to them and not my responsibility. I merely create options for them to develop and grow and offer them a platform to display their talent and to be heard. Nevertheless I pray daily for LowRoof and I ask God to work through me and the people I work with to reach His goal. And He does bless LowRoof.

One example is a 16-year old boy who came up to me while I was selling CD's during a dance-night at Flevo Fest. He told me how he struggled with faith since his parents told him his favourite music was from the devil. He bought one of the Osmotic albums and told me he had an awesome worship experience while playing the record. After that he talked to his parents and played the record to them and there finally grew some understanding between them. Things like that happen and I am very thankful for that.

Creating awareness is also important; it is very possible to be a Christian and enjoy good quality dance music without listening to music you really do not want to hear due to the content of lyrics or atmosphere surrounding the style.

My faith in Christ is strengthened by running LowRoof; it's both a struggle and a blessing and I do experience some spiritual battles going on.

Andrew: Finally, what qualities do you expect from a new producer seeking to release material on your label? What is the best way to go about submitting material? Do you feel that the Artist and Label can mutually benefit from a recording contract, or do you prefer to license copyrights from the owners of the songs?

Wim: a new producer to me should produce quality music and preferably display his own style, vision and ideas. I like people who artistically are doing things no one else does. I like people who are growing and learning and I enjoy to see people grow while working with them.

The best way to submit material is via a demo-CD in the mail. I receive so many downloads that digital demo's really tend to 'get lost in the crowd'. A CD always catches my eye and I always check those out. My address is found on our website www.lowroof.nl

Surely artist and label can both benefit. That is what I'm here for. If an artist has a label supporting him, he always stands stronger. Even if it's me. I mean I'm just Wim, and I'm doing my thing, but still a release on LowRoof can be very important and really stand out on your cv. It can trigger things or help you get signed to major labels. Anyway I am here to do whatever I can to help artists, give them advice or tips. That is what I think is beneficial.

Mainly I do not want to buy copyrights since I believe whatever you create is really yours and I do not wish to own that. I merely ask permission to release so more people can enjoy the music.

Andrew: Wim, thank you so much for your time. I sincerely look forward to hearing more from Deepsink Records this year.

Wim: Thanks Andy, I am very happy with this opportunity to talk about LowRoof. Anyone reading this go on and check out our website, visit our store and buy some music so we can continue to do this! Our latest releases include the new Osmotic album, the (too-good-to-be-a-demo) 'demo' from Out of This World (limited edition, so get one while you can) and several other projects coming up. DJ's or radio-people can always contact me for some cool, free digital downloads.

I encourage all of you to search for Gods will in your life and work for your dreams!!

Crime, Corruption & Integrity (2007-03-13 21:13) - gsynth

✖ This article is not an official article written by the police or the news, it is written from personal experience from someone who has seen more in this world than I would hope most others have. It is also written not just for this generation but for the next, the generation where kids bring weapons to school and murder each other on city streets. This is for you, kids, because I was one of you once, and I remember growing up in a confusing world and trying to keep my head screwed on straight. I would read the book of Proverbs because I found it pointed out a lot of wisdom and direction for a kid trying to grow up in a world by myself with no real authority at the time and terrible role models. I found God is faithful when no one else can be found or trusted. Even if He sometimes comes through for me at the very last minute, literally at one second to midnight.

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Integrity

Integrity is living honestly, from your heart, mind, and soul. It is practicing what you preach, doing what you say you do, and being who you say you are. It is keeping your word, and being honest and trustworthy. It's admitting when you make mistakes and taking responsibility for your actions. It's the opposite of hypocrisy. It's doing the right thing because it's the right thing to do, even when no one else is watching, and no one will ever know except for you and God (who knows even your thoughts! and still loves you anyway). In this article I'm pretty blunt and straightforward, so whether you laugh or cry or both... think about your life.

Sex, Drugs, Rock and Roll

It's no surprise to anyone that "what's bad is good" in Hollywood entertainment. Crime and corruption make great stories of mystery and intrigue. But in real life, it doesn't translate... have you ever noticed they always leave out consequences of bad choices in the movies because it's depressing and doesn't sell movies? No one ever gets STDs, criminals don't get caught or go to jail. Everyone smokes, drinks, and uses drugs but no one ever gets sick or in car accidents. The 'good guy' never dies. Also people get shot all the time and it's not a big deal. That's because, at the end of the credits, everyone's still there. If it were live drama, everyone would come back to life and take a bow at the last curtain call. Most TV and movies are really fake. In filmmaking school, they actually teach people to put a "twist" into the movie to change the viewer's perspective. Whether that means feeling sorry for the mentally ill killer, seeing through the eyes of the stalker, or realizing at the end of the movie that what's "bad" is "good" after all.... Don't shut your brain off when you flip on the TV or movies, because unfiltered garbage might seep into your brain and become part of your mindset.

In the music industry, it may seem like everyone is trying to "out-sex" each other and "out-bad" each other because they really believe it will sell more music. People go overboard on a marketing whim blown out of proportion by the media (e.g., "sex sells"), and they forget about quality content or anything worthwhile to say. Basically it's a "marketing gimmick".... Like little kids trying to get negative attention, it may seem entertaining at first but gets annoying after awhile. "Badness" might work for a "lucky" few for a short while, but in the long run, good quality music and good marketing and business practice sells more records, and doesn't get banned from radio.

Some people believe nightclubs are a thinly veiled cover for organized crime, and I guess that would depend on what nightclubs you are going to. Some places are about good quality music and a fun time, while others are about partying until you can't remember your own name. It's a good idea to be well aware of your surroundings, and always keep

your eyes and ears open, because you can't just assume everyone there is harmless and has good intentions in mind. If you suspect illegal activity, crime, or violence, find somewhere else to hang out. Keep your head screwed on straight where it belongs. Be very clear on what is entertainment and what is reality, what is right and what is wrong, and where things you do might lead to in the future.

Alcohol

Why do people drink? The reasons people drink can be telling. Do they have one or two when relaxing with friends? Or is alcohol a way for them to forget their problems, or become totally plastered and out of control? Also alcohol has different effects on different people.... Know your why, and know your limits. For some, their limit may be no alcohol at all. For others, it may mean only certain drinks and only certain amounts, and definitely no driving. All it takes is one car accident to destroy your life. Alcohol has a tendency to cloud your judgment, so be smart and be careful. Don't expect your friends to stop you from going too far, because your behavior and decisions are your responsibility.

Sex

This is such a big topic it deserves its own article.... The bottom line is to respect yourself and others, and don't do things you or others will regret. If you don't respect sex as a way to express love and intimacy and bring two people together in a romantic love relationship that is meant to last a lifetime, you could end up with unwanted pregnancy, STDs, destroyed relationships, and broken families. I personally believe most problems with sex in our culture stem from a lack of understanding of love. If God created sex for love and intimacy to bring two people together as one soul for a lifetime journey together... and sex is special when it's reserved for your one true love... then be the kind of person your ideal lover would want, and choose that person carefully. True happiness and real love, intimacy, and friendship are more precious than anything else in this world. You don't have to have sex to express love in casual dating relationships. There are tons of ways to show affection, and sex means more if you wait and build a strong relationship based on mutual trust. In our generation, people come from all backgrounds, and it's not too late to change your ways and respect yourself and others if you are not accustomed to doing things the way God would want you to do.

Idolatry

Idolatry is placing more importance on things in your life than you should, especially anything more important to you than God. This can involve physical things (materialism) or the love of money (greed). This can be yourself (narcissism), or your boyfriend or girlfriend or crush. This can be anything in your life that is out of line with right priorities. God said, "You shall have no other Gods before Me." (Exodus 20:3) It is the first of the Ten Commandments. If God is first in your life, everything else will fall in place. "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well". (Matt. 6:33) It is not wrong to have things, but everything in your life should be second to and subject to God.

Drugs

Drugs are similar to alcohol in some ways, except that they are illegal in most places. This should mean off limits, but since some people aren't concerned about breaking the law, I will point out that not only can you be charged and get a criminal record, and you need to be concerned about it, but also you give money to criminals when you buy drugs and you support their crimes. As far as the effects of drugs on people, these can vary from person to person. Some drugs may have less visible short and long term effects on some people, while on others, the drugs can be very harmful and lead to accidents, sickness or death. It should be noted that mind-altering substances are generally not healthy or safe for you, period.

Addictions

Addictions are the point where people have lost self-control over their 'habit', and perspective on life, because the drug or alcohol starts to take over. People generally need outside help and a friend for accountability to deal with these situations. If they were really in control, it wouldn't be an addiction. Often the desperation can lead to erratic behaviors such as theft, and sometimes violence, to get money to buy drugs. And it's really sad because people start to lose their humanity, because the drug is in control and they really aren't. People with addictions need help. But

you can't force anyone to change their ways. Sometimes people with addictions can be dangerous, and if this is the case, it is probably better for you to not get involved.

Theft

Theft is a crime. Some people seem to think it's okay if they don't get caught, but eventually it will catch up with them. Even if no one sees, God sees. For every lie you tell, you have to tell more lies to cover up each lie. The momentary thrill theft may bring is overshadowed by its consequences... a criminal record, time in jail, the loss of trust of everyone you know, loss of respect for yourself. Theft could cost you your future, your reputation, trust of your friends and family, your job, your freedom, and the life you have built for yourself. It's not worth it. If you like thrills become excellent at something... sports, music, travel... something you love that matters to you and leads to a better future or time well spent. If you like things, get a job and learn how to make money, and build your future on solid ground. Don't envy others for what they have that you don't. Money and things are not what's important in life. Happiness, Truth and Love are what matters. Stay honest and do the right thing. Learn skills that lead to a good life. Spend your fun time in productive ways and choose your friends wisely. You don't want to get caught or blamed for other peoples' crimes.

The Illegal Drug Industry

Most people who buy drugs don't think about where they come from. The illegal drug industry is run by criminals, greed, threats and violence. It's an industry with no guarantees because people can get killed or beat up and maimed over disagreements and money. Some young criminals will tell you the early retirement they expect to see is 'jail or dead'. The thing about illegal drugs is, it's easy to get involved in and can be very difficult to get out. 'The first one is always free' to hook you, because it's the first step in a direction that leads toward addictions or a life of crime. Either way they want your business for life, even if they start selling you drugs at 12 years old. Drug dealers are not concerned if you overdose, they are business people and they want your money. A lot of lies are told and 'peer pressure' is used to get people to buy drugs. Usually if you say "no thank you" and move along, they will sell their drugs to someone else.

Pornography

Pornography is everywhere today. The actual pornography industry involves a lot of abuse of people (including children for child pornography, which is obviously illegal). Porn plays on people's sexual desires to form sexual addictions to hook them. Basically it misses the point of sex, which is not only for pleasure but for love and intimacy between two people, and through repetition destroys that precious sensitivity of mutual love and respect in a love relationship, and any respect for people in general, because they become disposable objects based around the user's self-gratifying pleasure and not real human beings with hearts, minds and souls.

The Prostitution Industry

Some sex trade workers work for themselves. Others work for pimps. It's a dangerous trade and a woman never knows when she or her 'friends' in the business may find themselves in situations where they may be dead the next morning, buried in someone's field, or their bodies thrown in a ditch or in pieces in a garbage can. Many get involved in the sex trade as very young girls, age 14 or even younger (sometimes only 10 or 12 years old), when they run away from home and 'get a job' on the city streets. They are actively sought out by pimps, who use intimidation and subtle threats to keep their self esteem low and money coming in, as the girls sell their bodies and give the lion's share of profits to the pimp, often with very little left for themselves. In most places this kind of work is illegal. And even when it isn't, it is still dangerous, not just for the risks of death or harm, but also for sexually transmitted diseases (of which most probably have at least one), and the working and living environments are often very dangerous as well.

The Gay Community

There's a big difference between gay lovers and the gay community, and gay activists and gay people. Politically some people might want you to believe that all gay people are monogamous lovers for life who were born differently. But some statistics say an average North American gay male has sex with 500 or 1000 men in his lifetime and his life expectancy is age 45 (due in part to STDs). Many are introduced to homosexuality in childhood, through pornography,

sexual experiences or sexual abuse. Many more are introduced into the gay community at age 14-18 or are recruited in college by others in the gay community. For some, orgies become a way of life. Sometimes people choose a gay lifestyle because they've had very bad experiences with women or in life in general or for other reasons. Some are in abusive or codependent relationships just like heterosexual lovers. Before you judge people from this type of background, or any background for that matter, listen to their stories. There is usually a reason why people are the way they are, and most people need compassion, forgiveness and acceptance, not judgment. The promiscuity of the gay culture is not all that different from the promiscuity in the club culture and the world at large, except maybe they take it further in some ways.

Gangs

Most kids get involved in gangs because they are looking for a place to fit in in this world. The gang becomes their family. Sometimes gangs have initiations where people have to endure violence or commit violent crimes to be accepted into the gang. Other times gangs are like-minded friends who hang out, steal cars, steal money from shops with weapons like knives, break and enter, get into fights, and generally live the criminal lifestyle. (According to the police, three people who consider themselves a gang technically are a gang, because they are capable of the same kinds of crimes including mass shootings.) Some gangs have connections from city to city and are responsible for shootings on city streets where they murder each other and anyone else accidentally in the way. People in gangs often end up dying an early death or in jail for crimes or murder. Regardless it is a very harsh lifestyle that may involve murder, crimes, secrets, lies, jail, theft, violence, deaths, and betrayals of friendship and trust... not the family they were hoping for.

Criminals

This is a general term... some people are lifestyle criminals or commit violent crimes due to abnormal mental conditions. But if you consider a criminal to be anyone who has a criminal record, you can get a criminal record for dangerous driving, drunk driving or driving without insurance. Or you could get a criminal record for armed robbery, stealing cars, violent crimes against people, murder, rape, or theft. You could get a criminal record from dealing or smuggling illegal drugs, which may be illegal in some places but not in others. You could commit crimes and might not get caught, or only get caught for some of them... you could be criminally minded and cruel but technically never carried out anything 'illegal'. Sometimes people 'get off' and don't pay the penalty for crimes due to a judge's compassion or a loophole in the law. A criminal record could prevent you from ever leaving your country to travel. Crimes could land you in jail or custody. You could be partly responsible for crimes if you were there and never reported them. You could live a life in fear or on the run. Some criminals get killed in jail by other criminals.

Generally the shortcut that crime appears to provide has a very high cost and does not pay off in the end. "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death." (Proverbs 14:12) Sometimes people land in jail because they were framed for something they didn't do. Sometimes the law seems completely unfair when penalties may seem too light or too harsh for their crimes. Violent criminals may end up back on the street while political or financial crimes leave people in jail for half a lifetime. Some places still have capital punishment, while in other places people may get six months in jail. Laws can be changed without warning. Also some places may have laws that seem silly while other places have no laws against some things. The human legal system tries to be fair but it is imperfect; however, God's law is perfect. "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Luke 10:27) God is the perfect Judge who knows all things and in spite of the strengths or weaknesses in our human legal systems, "man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment" (Hebrews 9:26). Only God can truly set us free from our crimes, pardon our sins, and pass out judgment as He chooses to anyone who does not follow His laws. He has put authority in place for us to follow, but He is the ultimate authority that all authority answers to.

Weapons

Even a body part can be considered a weapon if it is used in violence against another person. But more obvious weapons involve knives and guns that are illegal to own or carry around, or perhaps legal but used in crime to harm

another person instead of its intended purpose (like cutting up dinner or hunting). Like the illegal drug trade, there is an illegal weapons trade to sell guns to kids in gangs, to criminals, and passersby. It doesn't pay to be involved anywhere near this, as you can get charged for owning an illegal weapon, it can get stolen and used in violent crimes, accidents may occur, or you may use it in the heat of anger when otherwise you might have made a better, less costly decision. Some people may live in dangerous areas, or for whatever reason training in self-defense may be important, but usually there are plenty of options available like avoiding bad areas and situations, alarm systems, cell phones and 911, and leaving justice to the police not you. Owning illegal weapons and giving money to criminals who sell them is asking for trouble. In certain places it is not illegal to own certain types of weapons, but depending on your situation I would say it's not recommended unless you need it for a very good reason. Also be aware that in some places laws are so tight that you can get ticketed for parking two inches too close to a fire hydrant, and in other places violent crimes could happen and no one would ever find out, so be fully aware of your surroundings.

The occult

The occult can refer to anything from religion to entertainment to Satan worship. In its most dangerous forms, it may involve animal or human sacrifice, consulting with spirits, brainwashing and suicide. Often people become interested in the occult through 'magic parlour tricks' or in search of power and control over other people. Some people are self-styled satanists who read the Satanic Bible, while others belong to actual groups that meet and practice religion or witchcraft together. There is also a wide range of entertainment available such as psychics and spiritualism, books and movies, music and roleplaying games that are doorways that lead into Satanic practices. Some popular entertainment may seem harmless while others are purely demonic. Be aware, and remember that Satan is the father of lies, and that nothing he promises ever materializes in the end. He is the destroyer of souls, and God will destroy him in the end. God created him, like He created us, and God can do what He wants with His own creation. Remember the Spirit of Christ is far more powerful than anything, including demonic power, and He is one prayer away.

Suicide

Suicide is often an act of desperation because a person has given up on all other options to solve their problems. It's been called "a permanent solution to a temporary problem". To teenagers, emotions and problems seem bigger than they are. All problems seem hardest to overcome the first time you face something, or when you're young, and you feel you have no control over your life and the world around you, especially for anyone going through problems alone. Don't go through anything alone if you have a choice, because other people can help you put things in perspective. If you have to go through things alone, learn to depend on God, because He has the bird's eye view of your life and the world, and He will help you get to your destination. Pray, and keep praying, and don't give up. When I was a teenager I heard a song on the radio, "Hold on for one more day, things will go your way". Remember that. Someday you will live somewhere else, you will have a job and life that you choose, and your generation will rule the world. Hold on, because when you are ready, that day will arrive, and in the meantime, there's a lot of learning and preparation to do. If you have problems that are too hard for you, get help, and if that help doesn't work, keep looking and keep looking until you find good help. "Seek and you will find" (Matt. 6:33) ... because the answers are out there and you can't give up easily. You have to keep trying until you make it, because you will when you keep trying and don't give up. Remember, God is bigger than all your problems; He controls the universe and lives in eternity beyond our little world and our problems and our daily life. Pray, because He can and will help you... and keep holding on until that answer comes. God will always provide a way out in all your problems, and will never give you more than you can handle. Have faith in yourself, and hope for your future, because God has a plan for your life. "'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.'" (Jer. 29:11-13).

Family Problems

This is probably the hardest thing anyone can go through. Your family problems affect you in a way that no outside problems ever can. This is where the real test of keeping your head screwed on straight comes in, because even when

you relax and sleep, you still have to keep your head screwed on straight, and this can seem impossible. Your family can be your best friends and your worst enemies. Do the best you can to work toward solutions and not be part of the problem. Your family will outlast everything else in your life except your relationship with God. Some people leave their families because the problems are too much for them, and in the case of violence or addictions or if you are unsafe, this can be a good idea but it isn't always. What you need to do is find friends or people you know to help you sort out what's going on inside of you and in your family, whether it's a trusted adult friend, a counselor at a youth shelter, a pastor from your church, a teacher or mentor, or several different people you can learn to rely on and trust. Sometimes they can see what you can't. They can help you get through the tough times. Balance is very important, and if you are stressed, be sure to take time off every week just to have fun and laugh. It will ease the rest of your week. Laughter is a great healer. I used to read a lot of psychology books as well as the Holy Bible to help me understand people and the world, and to hear what people's different perspectives were on situations.

Money

It's important to understand that money comes and goes and is not a goal, it is only a means to provide what you want and need in life. Some people go overboard and do wrong things for money and pay for it later in greater ways. All you really need is enough to live on, and then to save some money for a rainy day and later on for retirement. Money can be helpful in life, but it's not worth 'selling your soul for' or doing wrong things for. Most people who are promised 'fame' and 'wealth' to do wrong things never get those things anyway. If having a lot of money is important to you, learn about business and how to make money in the right ways, and then use your extra money to support good causes to make the world a better place. For most people, it is more important to love your job and life than how much money you make, as long as you have enough. Always remember to try to set aside some of your money to help out the poorest in society and in our world, and for causes that support people with real physical needs.

Responsibility

Ultimately you are responsible for your own thoughts, words and actions, and how you interact with the world around you. Your responsibility is first of all to God, who made you, then to yourself and your family, then to your friends and society. If you are a leader in some way, you are also responsible to some extent for your influence or how your actions affect others. You can't control other people's behavior, but you can influence them in right or wrong directions, especially at important turning points in their lives or in decisions they make. If you care about people and our world, you may consider it important to not only keep your own life in order, but also to influence friends and people you come into contact with in right directions through living your life as an example of God's love. It's important that you understand yourself and your true role in life, and stay true to yourself and to God. Knowledge and wisdom are very important to keep you on the right path. You should be learning new things every day, whether through prayer and the Bible, talking to God, or people and the world around you. Understand your priorities, and keep your life in order.

Conclusion

A lot of crime and corruption boils down to people taking advantage of other people. People motivated by sex, money, power, greed, evil... Love and Truth are about treating people with respect, and in the same way you would want them to treat you. It starts with an understanding of yourself and how God sees you, the value of human life, and the fact that all people are individuals loved by God. He's kind of like a shepherd who loves each one of his sheep so much, that he would leave ninety-nine sheep in a field to go searching for one lost sheep... YOU. I was one of those people... an individual who didn't fit into the system easily, not always accepted by the mainstream church, but accepted by God, the only one who matters. The One to whom all governments must answer. The One who knows all things and created each one of us, and gave His life for us to pay for our wrongs against each other and against God's perfect law of truth. Even if you were the only one on earth, He would have died for you on the cross. Even if you are a criminal reading this God's love can reach you. When Jesus Christ died on the cross between two criminals, one of them said to Him, "Remember me..." and Jesus said, "Today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:32-43). God's Love and Forgiveness is beyond our understanding. God's Love conquers all... He lives in eternity way beyond us. "Sin" literally means "missing the mark". If you aren't perfect, you need God. We as humans are all on the same level in this regard,

for "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). In a confusing world, God is still perfect Love, and the perfect solution to all our problems. While we as people work out our situations here on earth, God is there to guide us and lead us into His perfect Love, which forgives us of our sins, heals us of our past, sets us free to love ourselves and other people, and guides us into Eternal Life in His eternal purpose. The details are in the Holy Bible, and in prayer and relationship with God. If you seek... you will find. (Matt 7:7-8)

5.3 May

A DJ at GMA (2007-05-27 22:27) - redsavior

"You know you're at GMA when you drink more cups of coffee than hours of sleep you had the night before". That was my epiphany when I found my self-telling people "Good Morning" at 4:30 Monday afternoon. There is a lot more to GMA than coffee and music. The following article is my general ramblings of a DJ's view of the GMA experience.

First things first, I guess I should tell you a little about me, my name is Michael Joseph (MJ) www.immj.com. I don't only DJ. I am a vocal artist, Producer / Remixer, host of a radio show called "In The Mix" and I do interviews for a TV show called "MXTV". All of this I do to tell others about God's Love and Grace. It is a calling that sometimes tests me to my limits and always shows me how powerful God's Grace is because I couldn't do any of this without Him.

Secondly, in case you don't know, I should tell you about GMA. Some people (who have been there before) may say GMA stands for "Give Me Attention". Although that is a good description, it really stands for "Gospel Music Awards". GMA is mostly spoken of as the week before the GMA aka "Dove Awards". The GMAs are held every year on a Wednesday. GMA week is the 4 days before the awards, where everyone who is in, or wants to be in, the Christian music industry converges on the town of Nashville Tennessee for what seems like an endless stream of showcases, interviews, seminars, junkets and meetings; thus the need for all the coffee.

This was my fourth GMA and what a year it was. I may sound a bit "tainted" by what I've heard and seen over my many years in the Industry but by the Grace of God I think I have held together quite well. For anyone who has tried to take their "ministry" beyond their hometown can testify what a brutal machine the Christian music Industry can be.

Don't get me wrong ... hang with me ... God is still at work and I will tell you what keeps me coming back to GMA year after year.

I may have lost my "rose colored glasses" along the way, but it's just tuff to hear bands who are signed to major record labels with #1 hits on the CCM (Contemporary Christian Music) charts say things like "It's time to put the GOSPEL back in GMA". Has the industry lost its true direction? In its defence, the industry has made a momentous shift in the past three years alone. The change in the way music is sold and bought has left many labels LOST. Major labels close their doors on a Friday and the artists and staff don't find out until they show up for work on Monday. Some of them have lost why they do what they do and whom they do it for. I've even heard of a band, with a song still in the top 5 of the CCM charts, get dropped by their "major" label because "they weren't selling as much as we thought they would".

Not to mention the whole DJ culture, both Hip-Hop and Electronic genres being lost to a million rock bands that are all trying to sound like each other. Hip-Hop is one of the number one styles of music in the world and it gets one or two plays an hour. Electronic music doesn't even get played. One of the showcases I was a part of this year had 60 bands over two days and there were 2 Hip-Hop acts and NO Electronic Acts. Can someone say "Cookie Cutter"?

In the past 2 years, I have heard on more than one occasion that the industry is not looking for "Christian" music but "Positive" music: less Jesus and more positivity. Not everyone thinks that way. I was a part of another showcase this year where the head of a major label said to me "This is our anti GMA Showcase". Others share those same feelings. There are many bands, managers, producer and artists that want to make ministering the hope of God more important than moving a ton of units. It is a business but are we Christian entertainers or Christians who entertain?

If you want to find out which you are GMA is a good way measure ... but I warn you ... it is like jumping into the fire and waiting to see if your refined gold or just burnt up. It's easy to get caught up in all the "selling of self". This is where what I like about GMA starts to shine.

If you are a "seller" it shows. That's ok to a point because that is a part of what GMA is all about. It's when you join with other artists from other band, to pray together on a street corner of an over crowded showcase, which is when it all starts to click. It's meeting other people for lunch and just for that, not for selling, but to talk about what you do outside of ministry, your family, your church, and your hometown. It's about making industry friends for non-industry reasons.

GMA can be very hard to take unless you remember it's all about connecting with others who have the same passion and calling you have. It's God's people coming together for working reasons and getting relationship results.

It is a great experience every year. I have gained some very dear friends at GMA. In fact each year is kind of a of a reunion of people that I have met at GMA, friends I've met at different show across the nation and even meeting some of my "Internet Friends" for the first time. It's also not uncommon to get to hang out with some of your favorite big name artists in the industry, just standing around, people watching like you are.

If you ever decide to spend a week at GMA, my advice for you is, prepare WAY a head of time. Have lots of promotional material, business cards, flyers, CDs, DVDs and anything else you can carry in your pocket to exchange with other. You will come home with a big pile of cards and sticker of people you meet. Try to make some contacts in the industry before you go. There are only a few showcases open to unsigned acts and they will usually cost you a couple of hundred to perform on them. That is not the only way to be noticed. Contact agents and promoters who will be there, they might give you 5 minutes on the run that may turn out to be very beneficial down the road. Remember it's all about making connections. Connections – Connections – Connections.

I have to say that GMA week one of the toughest weeks of my life every year, but I would never trade it for anything. Great Friends, Great Music, Great Caffeine ... That's GMA.

The Business of Dance Music: Episode the Eighth (2007-05-27 22:36) - KevinOneel

Ever heard of a man named Andrew Carnegie? He was an industrialist back in the 1800's who founded a company called Carnegie Steel, which later was bought by J.P. Morgan and became US Steel. He came from humble beginnings as a Scottish immigrant, to becoming one of the wealthiest men in the world. He achieved this through hard work, dedication to a task, and having good people around him. Carnegie is one of the people I try to model myself after because of his work ethic, but also because of a little philosophy he had called the "Gospel of Wealth."

In his book Gospel of Wealth, Carnegie used the following words, and I quote....

"Man does not live by bread alone. I have known millionaires starving for lack of the nutriment, which alone can sustain all that is human in man, and I know workmen, and many so-called poor men, who revel in luxuries beyond the power of those millionaires to reach. It is the mind that makes the body rich. There is no class so pitifully wretched as that which possesses money and nothing else. Money can only be the useful drudge of things immeasurably higher than itself. Exalted beyond this, as it sometimes is, it remains Caliban still and still plays the beast. My aspirations take a higher flight. Mine be it to have contributed to the enlightenment and the joys of the mind, to the things of the spirit, to all that tends to bring into the lives of the toilers of Pittsburgh sweetness and light. I hold this the noblest possible use of wealth."

It was this philosophy that made Andrew Carnegie one of the greatest Philanthropists the world has ever known. Ever been to a library in Pennsylvania? Andrew Carnegie probably gave the startup money for it. Ever watched Public Television? The Carnegie Foundation, which he started, is one of its biggest supporters. To this day, people all over the world know of Carnegie's goodness through his works.

By now, you're probably asking, "What does this have to do with the business of dance music?" The answer is quite simple; we need to help each other out.

You've seen my writings on networking, getting started on a small budget, throwing events, etc. The bottom line is we ALL come out better if we pool our collective resources and help each other out. This is a big step in networking, as well as friendship and fellowship in the Lord.

What can you do? Well, there are many things you can do! The first on my mind, which also happens to be the most important, is being supportive. We're all in this thing together, so there's need for petty bickering and complaining. We have a common goal, and it's best if we put differences aside and help each other. Being supportive means many things. It means buying music from others within our scene. It means giving honest feedback on works if someone asks. It means showing up for events and making yourself known amongst the community as a person who's always down to help in whatever fashion. As musicians/performers, we all get discouraged at times. Sometimes, all that's needed is a friendly note or message of encouragement. These shouldn't just happen when people are down though. We should encourage each other every chance we get. Someone's just had a major accomplishment? I'm sure they wouldn't object to an email saying "Hey that was really good, and I'm happy for you." This is a community, after all. Let's try to be there for each other as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Another thing to do is find a local group of likeminded people. This can be within your Groove Fellowship, or it can be with other Christian friends in the area. Pool your resources and try to make something happen in your area. You don't have to spend thousands of dollars; it can be as simple as a gathering at someone's house. If you are the type to go out on weekends, the money that you'd spend over a month or two going out can be converted into putting on a really nice show. That was a thought thrown at me by a friend that has WAY more experience than I do, and has been quite successful at his endeavors (and I hope you're reading this, brother. I'm pretty sure you are!) Making something happen is more about setting a timetable and achieving goals than having a large bankroll. The most important thing, I'd say though, is start off small and work your way into larger things. Getting in over your head is no fun whatsoever, and very likely to influence you into never wanting to do anything again. That being said, don't give up! Sometimes it takes several events before you notice any sort of impact. It takes a business on average three years to turn profit.

Don't expect any less from your events. Look at the money put into an event as an investment, as well as money you are willing and able to lose. Turn a profit? Congrats! You've just leveled up!

Lastly, we can share knowledge with each other. Sure we all have proprietary knowledge that we don't want others to know. After all, having something different is what sets musicians/performers apart. We can be helpful to others in our scene without giving away all our tricks. I'm in favor of us starting a collective knowledge database where we each share our talents. Are you a good writer? Then you need to write. Have a knack for hearing those miniscule frequencies only heard by South American Albino Alpacas? Then you need to do mastering. Millionaire at age 25? You need to share business tips. Bald and fat at age 26? Then you need to be writing this article. We each have talents. We've been instructed to not hide our talents, but rather bring them out in the world and use them for God's glory. I challenge all of you to do this. What are you particularly good at? How can you use these abilities to help your fellow Christians? Are you going to just sit back and hide your abilities, or are you going to use them for good? There is no such thing as a useless person.

Support structure is important for anything. As Christians, it's our duty to support our brothers and sisters in our walks. We can do this by simply being there for each other. A kind word every now and then is essential to building a true fellowship. We have to remember to be supportive of our community, and support those who support us. We must get involved in things. Start your own Groove Fellowship with friends. Find a church that is supportive of your activities. Nothing going on in your area? Get something going then! Use teh internets to it's fullest potential by sharing your knowledge and abilities with the world. Don't hide your talents, but instead let everyone know what you can do. Just remember; as a Christian, you never walk alone.

It was dark and raining harder by the minute. I was in the center lane of the freeway in a car that wasn't mine. Usually I don't mind freeway driving, but on this particular night the rain, the mist from a hundred tires and the glare from the streetlights were making it nearly impossible to see the lines on the road. This may not have been a big deal if the highway was a straight shot, but this road was curving around the edge of the city and had numerous sweeping turns to navigate. In short, driving conditions were dangerous and I was driving an unfamiliar vehicle.

So, I did the only thing I really could do. I turned up my drum and bass CD, clamped my hands on the wheel, squinted through the rain and drove like a warrior. For the next twenty minutes I braved lane-drifting SUVs, road hogging semi trucks and the occasional slow driver who insisted on traveling in the fast lane. And since I couldn't see the lines I had to navigate according to the brake lights of the car in front of me. It was crazy. I don't know what was racing faster, my heart or my mind.

When I finally pulled into the driveway and turned off the car I was feeling amazing. I was wide-awake, hyped on adrenaline and in a completely different mood. I think I may have been glowing. I felt alive.

The little rainstorm driving experience left me reveling in life. The Greek word for this kind of life is zoe. It is a noun meaning the absolute fullness of life, the active vigor and vibrancy of life. Jesus used the word when he spoke of bringing abundant life in John 10:10. He wasn't speaking of bringing extension to your years or even of abundance in wealth or possessions. He was telling us that He was bringing an abundance of life – of zoe – to our world. Jesus came bearing this commodity called life and wasn't about to be stingy on it.

Jesus spoke often of this kind of vibrant active life. In the gospels alone there are over forty references to zoe. And He didn't differentiate between the eternal and the temporal. The same vibrant, vigorous life that we will experience in heaven is available (abundantly) to us now. Our physical earthly life will come and go, but vibrant active life starts now and goes straight on through eternity.

As I write this, there are over six billion living breathing people on this planet. They are all alive in the physical animated sense. But how many are alive in the vibrant active zoe sense? How many of those billions live the life that Jesus came to give?

I read recently that there are five types of prisoners in a POW camp. The first type consists of prisoners who believe that they won't ever make it out alive and have resigned themselves to die with dignity. The second type is of those who also doubt rescue, but work to improve their personal conditions inside the barracks and camp. On the third level are those who may hope for rescue, but in the meantime negotiate with their captors to improve conditions for everyone in their camp. Fourth are those prisoners who believe that rescue is probable, but not willing to wait, conspire to take over the camp. And the last type represents the prisoners who aren't willing to simply wait for a rescue, but instead organize efforts to take over their camp and once that is done to liberate other surrounding camps.

I think this is a good analogy of views on life. You have those who are under the impression that "life sucks, then you die", so they have already given up on even attempting to live a vibrant life. They trudge through a self-made bleak existence refusing to find happiness. Then you have the next level of people who think life isn't that great, but try to make the best of it. They put all their efforts towards getting a nice house and a fast car and good career. They fill their time on earth with attaining and maintaining personal comfort. At level three are those who figure that it might be nice to do something for other people too, so they help other people get a nice house and a fast car and a good career.

But then you have the people who think “Wow, this life pretty much rocks and I am going to try to live it to the fullest.” They attack this thing with everything in them and explore it from interior to edges. They find enjoyment in the very act of living and look for ways to experience life. And finally there are those who are totally immersed in abundant life, who go out and spread the life to others, and who show the world how to really live (most often through example).

I think I usually fall into one of the last two categories. I find great enjoyment and vibrancy in life and wake up every morning expecting some new adventure. I have made it one of my life goals to spread the message of zoe-life to as many people as possible. In an interview the other day I was asked to describe my personality in two words (whoever writes those interview questions has too much time on their hands) so I said enthusiastic and joyful. I love life. I find zoe in every corner of this existence.

But I am also aware that some people have a hard time experiencing this zoe-life I am speaking of. Some of you feel it is hard find a handful of real life, let alone an abundance of it. You know there is vibrant life to be had, but haven’t managed to grasp it yet. Well, allow me to step into type five and give you a bit of advice on how to connect with life.

Connect with the Source Yes, this might be an obvious one. But it is so important. Jesus said He is the way, the truth, and the life. You cannot experience really living until you meet the source of life – the Source of Zoe. Every time you connect with God you receive the active life that He is. The more you focus on Him and lead an active spirituality, the more you will connect with the very core of true vibrant life. Every other effort will fall short unless you first lock into God as the source of life.

Seek the Truth I find that most often I experience the feeling of zoe-life when I learn of some previously unknown truth. When I find out something amazing is true my heart swells and I get little joy bubbles down my spine. The world and the enemy work so hard at covering up truth and deceiving us that sometimes just a little unknown fact can make you come alive. “Whoa, you mean that is actually true? No way! God rocks.” Then you walk around full of vitality because you learned a truth that breaks the burden of lies.

Embrace the Challenge Yeah, things get hard. Sometimes really hard. But you have what it takes. You have the tools and weapons and gumption to rock your situation no matter how tough it is. And when you come out on the other side you will feel invigorated and alive. And believe me, a little danger never hurt anyone. Every time there is a big storm coming I get all excited. “Maybe there will be rain and wind. Maybe the lights will go out. Maybe our lives will be in danger!” I half-jokingly tell my friends. I think part of the reason why my little freeway story above left me feeling so invigorated was because one wrong move could have proved disastrous. Sometimes I wonder if people hold so tightly to this earthly physical life that they don’t have strength left to embrace zoe-life.

Enjoy His creation When I became a Christian one of the first and longest lasting changes in my mindset is that I started seeing the pleasure God took in making everything. I mean, you can’t tell me He didn’t get a kick out of making squirrels and sparrows. And I am sure He was showing off a bit with those Giant Redwoods. (Don’t even get me started on dinosaurs.) With the right perception you can see the joy that radiates from all of creation. From that mindset comes life. That’s why a great scenic view can be invigorating. And I am sure anyone with children can attest to feeling very alive the first time they held their child. There is zoe-life in everything God touches and if we have the right attitude – the right perception – we can receive life from seeing things as He sees them.

Simplify A big part of experiencing this kind of life is making room for it. Packing your schedule with less than important things just to feel busy (or because you can't say no to people) is going to burn you out eventually. I had to learn this a few years ago. I was doing something with ministry every night and working every day but Sunday. It was hectic, but I thought it was a good thing to be "active". I was only wearing myself thin. So, spend time just chilling and enjoying life. Free up your schedule a bit. Plan a weekend away. Give yourself some room to breath. When you subtract some of the activity and busyness from your life you leave spaces for the zoe-life to fill in.

Those are just a few ways to harness life – full-fledged, vibrant, vigorous vitality – and the power that it holds. This life has power to cancel depression, discouragement, sorrow and stagnation. This life will see you through the darkest pits, the strongest attacks and ultimately even transcend death. And the best part is that He wants to give this life to us in bulk. He wants to open up floodgates and let this life wash over us, starting today if possible.

So, I encourage you to begin seeking life. Begin praying for God to open up your eyes to this life-to-the-fullest that He offers. Try some of the above advice. No matter what situation you are in, or what circumstance is plaguing your time here on earth, you can begin living eternal life in your spirit and heart even now. It may come slowly as you awake each morning with a little more vitality, or it may come more quickly in the midst of a rainstorm on the freeway, but it will come if you ask for it and seek it.

Having eternal life is not a slogan; it is a reality which can be demonstrated and exhibited in this present hour . . . God wants us to learn how to let the resurrected, glorious and all-victorious life of Christ to be expressed in every portion of our being. He calls us to renew our vigor daily and hourly by Him. This is precisely our true life. Even though our body is still animated by our natural soul life, we no longer live by it because we have trusted in the life of the Son of God Who infuses energy into our members far more abundantly than all, which the soul life could impart. Watchman Nee

5.4 July

The Business of Dance Music: Episode Nine – From Birmingham to Bushnell: Making Cornerstone Happen (2007-07-26 21:21) - KevinOneel

I just wanted to go into showing everybody what it took to make an event like “After Hours – The Cornerstone Dance Barn” happen. Dave and I started talking about the possibility of taking over the Dance Barn back in December. After getting the blessing from the previous management we got started planning the week’s events.



Oneel dancing a jig

Whew! It’s post-Cornerstone, and boy am I tired! After seven months of hard work, haggling about budgets, and organizing logistics, we pulled off a very successful initial version of “After Hours – The Cornerstone Dance Club.” I’d like to start out by thanking everyone involved; Dave Richards, Alex B, Doug Theodore, Fitzpatrick, Adam Sean, Jeremy Kadinger, Joel Armstrong, DJ Stryke, Kenneth Thomas, and Chris Salisbury. Special thanks also to Deeflash, Jeff Stoltzfus and their awesome wives for putting up with us, Glow for just being himself, and everyone else who helped out over the course of the week. More special thanks go to John Herin of Cornerstone Festival, Meredith Fisher of Chaotica Management, Ralph and Karen of Harmony Productions, and our super sound tech, Wil Jones.

Really, I just wanted to go into showing everybody what it took to make an event like “After Hours – The Cornerstone Dance Barn” happen. Dave and I started talking about the possibility of taking over the Dance Barn back in December. After getting the blessing from the previous management (Thanks Chris and Cindy! You guys are AWESOME!) we got started planning the week’s events.



The first thing on our agenda was rebranding the barn. For years, it has simply been known as “Dance Club.” Dance Club is about as exciting and intriguing as “Trash Pile” or “Gravel Pit.” We decided that in order to draw a wider variety of people, we needed to remove the word “Dance” from the name, as to not scare off people who don’t dance. Many names were thrown around (including Tastyfresh Afterdark Arena and That place You go To Jump Around Like Idiots) but we finally settled on “After Hours.” That’s about the time we found out that our rebranding wouldn’t be available in time to make the programs, so we tweaked the name one more time to be “After Hours—The Cornerstone Dance Club.” Cornerstone agreed to provide new signage for the building to reflect us occupying the facility, alongside the fine folks at Flickerings, who run the Cornerstone film festival. Yea! We have a new name and a new sign!

Next came headliners. Knowing the budget constraints we were working under, we decided that our best course of action was to attempt to book headliners we already had connections with. The first headliner we booked was DJ Stryke. He played Cornerstone the previous year and absolutely did an awesome job. Greg also views playing Cornerstone as being a part of his outreach ministry, so it was our pleasure to invite him back for another year. Next, after consultation with Justin Moreh of Shiloh and Jeff Belfi of Blue Room Project, we decided to book Joel Armstrong. Joel represents everything that After Hours is right now, and that’s up and coming, with a world of potential. Lastly, we decided on Kenneth Thomas. KT represents the Christian that comes to God after being involved in other things. Kenneth represented the new beginning that we had with Tastyfresh taking over the Barn this year. So, now that we had the main attractions, it was time to select those who would perform around them.



AfterHours stage

Unfortunately, the selection process had to be hurried along due to time constraints. We were given the green light from Cornerstone rather late, so we had little time to do booking. All the applications we received were outstanding, so it made selecting a few to play the festival rather difficult. This process was made even more difficult when we decided to roll back from three acts per night to just two. Even though it cut down on the amount of people involved,

it gave those playing more chances to shine. After sifting through all the entries, we decided to give the nod to three veterans; Doug Theodore, DJ 404 and Jeremy Kadinger. All three accepted, and now we had our lineup set!

The next part is where all you, the reader/family of Tastyfresh.com came into play. We decided that Tastyfresh sponsoring a generator stage to draw attention to electronic music was a good idea. Jeremy Kadinger graciously volunteered to head up the generator stage, so he compiled a list of everything we needed. Thanks to the help of everyone here at Tastyfresh, we were able to procure a nifty little Honda generator to power the stage. Jeremy upped the ante by volunteering the services of his van by cutting a hole in the top, thus letting the DJ perform in what turned out to be the absolute neatest generator stage all week. The plan for the generator was made complete by covering it with an awning and flying the speakers from the awning supports. Jeremy handled all the lineups for the now-dubbed Tastyfresh Sound System, completing preparations for the generator stage.



Kenneth Thomas, Joel Armstrong, Alex B and of course... Oneel

Logistics were fun as well. BTU mostly handled the logistical end of the week, having to make sure everyone was where they needed to be, and that the sound system arrived on time. All in all, 2 members of the After Hours staff traveled from Atlanta to Bushnell, stopping in Mt. Vernon, IL, 5 members of BTU traveled from Birmingham, AL to Bushnell, IL, with one stopover for two days at Eldon Hazlet State Park in Carlyle, IL. 3 members of the Harmony Productions crew traveled directly from Birmingham to Bushnell (Which is about a 12 hour drive.) Harmony brought a 16 foot box truck with 8 dual bass cabinets, 4 tops, 2 Technics SL-1200 m3d turntables, 2 Pioneer CDJ-800 CD players, 2 Pioneer DJM-600 mixers, Ortofon Concorde needles, 8 techno beam lights, a light board, two turtledoves, and a partridge in a pear tree. BTU was also responsible for the transport of Joel Armstrong from Lambert Field in St. Louis to the festival grounds. (BTW...I'd like to thank Leslie and Alex for making the trip to tha Lou to pick up Joel.) The last logistical nightmare was making sure we'd secured a hotel reservation for Kenneth Thomas. Thanks to the fine folks at Cornerstone, as well as Taylor Singer and Meredith Fisher at Chaotica, we were able to handle the situation.

Honestly, the easiest part of the whole process was when everyone arrived in Bushnell and it was time to make things happen. The cost of this entire show? \$7,000. Pulling off one of the best EDM stages ever at Cornerstone? Priceless!

Once again, thanks to everyone who work, and everyone who attended. [1]PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE email the people at Cornerstone and let them know how much you enjoyed After Hours. Also, please be active and help us make next year's After Hours even better!

1. <http://www.cornerstonefestival.com/ContactUs.cfm?pID=20>

5.5 September

The Price of Discipleship (2007-09-15 21:59) - redsavior

Mark 8:34

"Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: 'If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.'"

"Deny himself." "Take up his cross." "Follow me".

I want to start off this new section with small article about counting the cost of following Jesus. I don't think I really need to say much more on this verse. Jesus, as usual, makes it pretty clear what the cost is in this verse. But what does it mean for us to deny ourselves, pick up our crosses and follow Him.

When I was in Africa in 2004, I remembering asking my friend what it meant to follow Jesus, how I knew I was following Him, not going left or right. What does it mean to be a disciple? He told me I would know, that if I was seeking Him daily for what His will was and do it, that I wouldn't have to worry about anything else. This has been an area of interest for me since that day. I have always been fixated on what it really means to follow Jesus, to be a disciple of Christ. Through the years I have done things that I thought I had to do in order to sort of earn this title of Christ follower only to find that what I was doing was trying to earn an identity I was already given. My friend told me once that discipleship is learning to live consistently with who we already are. This is not about learning to how to perform, it is about learning to live the way God intended you to.

Let's take a look at a classic example of Jesus telling someone what it really takes to be a disciple of Christ. It takes place in Luke 18:18-29.

¹⁸A certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

¹⁹"Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. ²⁰You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.'"

²¹"All these I have kept since I was a boy," he said.

²²When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

²³When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was a man of great wealth. ²⁴Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

²⁶Those who heard this asked, "Who then can be saved?"

²⁷Jesus replied, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."

²⁸Peter said to him, "We have left all we had to follow you!"

²⁹"I tell you the truth," Jesus said to them, "no one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God ³⁰will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life."

Jesus asks the young ruler if he had obeyed the commandments set down that dealt with other people. He had since he was a boy, but Jesus then ups the ante. He asks him to sell off all his possessions, and then come and follow him. We should notice how Jesus redirects the question from what is required for salvation to what it takes to follow Him. Salvation is the beginning of the journey, of the relationship, not the end. Here he has a decision to make. Is Jesus really worth giving it all up? Is Jesus really worth selling everything, giving up what he held so closely? Or is Jesus only worth the bare minimum that the law requires? It is a question that Jesus proposes to all of us.

So what does it look like for us in our daily lives? For this rich young ruler, it meant that he was to sell everything he had, give it to the poor and follow Jesus. While this did include his material wealth we don't often think of what the next part cost him. He was to leave his old life behind, his life as a ruler, a person of influence and authority. Suddenly the cost is so much more. It was not just his wealth but his position, his job. For me right now, it means going to a foreign country, starting new ministries in areas I have no experience in and living with no financial security, which is a scary prospect to say the least. The only way I will be able to do it is with God's strength working through me, just as it says in verse 27.

But why does God ask these things of us. Why would He ask us to give up the blessings that He gives us? It is so important for us to understand why God is asking us to say yes to all He asks of us. If we do not understand why, then it turns from a response to God goodness and love to something else, some sort of obligation. God does not want us to do the things He asks out of some obligation. He wants us to respond to Him, to do them out of love for Him. God asks us to do these things for several general reasons. He always has specific reasons for specific things He asks, most of which we will never know. The first general reason is because of the life we live as we respond to Him in the way He asks. Those that have stepped out in faith in a serious way, financially or in their time, know what happens when we do that. God meets us in powerful ways, ways that He does not meet us in in "normal", everyday life for the most part. We are blessed when we step into those things. God has a plan for us, and that plan includes us giving it all up for Him because we were created to do just that. We feel most alive when we live that life, when we live to see that plan completed. It is a life filled with all the things that make life worth living. This doesn't mean it is easy, the Bible is pretty clear on that. But God's love covers over all those things and makes it all worth it.

The second general reason is love. In any health relationship there is a give and take from both parties. One side gives sometimes and the other gives in other times. The same is true with God, even though He doesn't really need anything. But God gives to us the things we need and desire when appropriate because He loves us and we should do the same for Him. We should give our time, our money, and our hearts because we love Him and want to give Him things, to bless Him. In a marriage, one spouse gives spontaneously to the other because they love them, they want to bless them and make them happy, for no other reason, at least ideally. We should do the same for God, without the expectation of something in return.

So I will ask you to ask yourself, are you living the bare minimum like the rich ruler? Are you just doing enough to get by? Or are you living the life that God has planned, a life that is completely surrendered to God? Are you stepping out in faith in your finances and time? Maybe for you, the cross that Jesus talks about in Mark is a financial cross. He wants you to give more, either to your church or to someone in need. Maybe the cross is a time cross. He wants you to take that vacation time and do a short-term missions trip or your Thursday nights to help out with the church's youth groups or possibly spend more time with your family. Take some time. Examine what is going on in your life and don't always look for what you can do. Look for those things that God wants you to step out in faith to. Ask God to tell you how to bless Him and bring Him joy. When we live for that, we live the life God created us to live.

Groove Fellowships: The How To (2007-09-16 22:02) - redsavior

Electronic rhythms pulsate from speakers inside a fellowship hall. Dj's wield their skills behind a set of turntables. A group hovers around a Bible and prayers go up. A laptop sends a music stream to listeners across the globe. The So Cal Groove Fellowship is a wide assortment of dj's, music producers and music enthusiasts who meet together once a month for support, food, a live internet broadcast and networking.

Our So Cal Groove Fellowship was birthed in the early 2000's at a Denny's after a talk about a lack of connection among dj's in the area. We saw all types of ministries pouring out of churches but nothing focused on a key group in our culture; dj's, electronic music and the club & rave scene.

The idea of SCGF was to bring together EDM dj's, music producers and music enthusiasts, clubbers and ravers who share our faith & trust in Jesus as the only way to receive salvation. A Groove Fellowship should offer a place of spiritual growth, encouragement and help inspire participants to use their talents above and beyond their personal limitations.

A successful Fellowship can be accomplished. First and foremost we suggest prayer and lots of it! Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain (Psalm 127:1) Make sure you are asking for wisdom and guidance. Also seek input from others who have done the Fellowships. We are always open to answer questions if you need further guidance.

Another key is committed people. We have seen many people come and go to the dj fellowship. There have only been a select few who are in it to win it. Without people like DJ Shwabang and Mark B, our fellowship would not be what it is. Also, I must add that we lost an integral member, dj404 who was a try blue member.

In the past we have met in my former home in Norco and Corona. We had no problem raising the sound levels at these venues. Our new venue is also a plus because there are no neighbors to complain if the volume is blasting. Make sure your location offers minimum restrictions with sound levels.

What would be a gathering without food? What we have done is have everyone chip in for pizza and beverages or potlucks. Either way get some grub for your groove! Consider all the costs you incur and have members contribute to the expenses for marketing, supplies, food, drink and miscellaneous expenditures.

Publicity and marketing seems to be one of the top factors in the success. We have done much of our marketing via TastyFresh, Myspace and word of mouth. Also, it might be good to design a myspace page and search in your local area for Christian dj's & producers. I have logged over 15 hrs just searching for them on Myspace. We actually found several prospective GF members through there.

If you can do a live webcast it makes for a more fun and lively fellowship. One time when we were doing the fellowship we invited the pizza delivery guy to get on the mic. For many of the artists & dj's who show up it is their first opportunity to spin live and even better to spin to an audience anywhere in the world.

Here is what a typical fellowship looks like for us.

Set-up 2 hrs before start of 7PM

Prayer

Open decks for an hour and a half

Start live broadcast

Intros/devotion/prayer

Live mixing

Board games, video games and other stuff to make the evening more enjoyable

In the future we plan to do dj clinics/dj training and intro to production. Our hope and goal is that people who attend will walk away feeling more connected to God and to each other, be encouraged and ignited with a renewed passion & vision, that they would consider if they don't already know how the Lord wants them to be involved and that they would invite a new person for the next one.

Pat D

So Cal Groove Fellowship

5.6 November

The Business of Dance Music: Episode Ten - Bringing it all Together (2007-11-27 19:13) - KevinOneel

It's been my pleasure to write this series for the past two years. When I started writing "The Business of Dance Music" two years ago, it seemed as if all you Tastyfreshers knew where you wanted to go, but had no idea how to get there. In that two year span, I've seen many new faces come aboard, and many old faces step up their game. I've seen Christians take their production levels up to a standard that is now acceptable in the secular scene, as opposed to just settling for "good enough". I've seen Christian events and events with Christians pop up all over the world on par with a product capable of standing on its own. I'd like to think that my advice has played some small part in this, but in reality, it's the Christian Dance Music microcosm stepping up and deciding to put out a better product. For that, I am very proud of all of you.

As I wrap up this series to begin a new chain of articles, I'd like to take a moment and go over the core of what I've tried to get across for the past two years. Please be aware that I don't mind if you email me for advice at any time. As brothers and sisters in Christ, we should promote each other's personal growth. As your brother, I want to see you succeed. With that being said, here are the basic principles for making it in the music industry.

Like Paul Van Dyk told us in the very first article, don't let your personal situation hold you back. Paul grew up in East Berlin, behind the Berlin wall. His only exposure to the music came from radio broadcasts from the West and records that his Grandmother smuggled in to him. Paul didn't let this hold him back. He kept working, kept plugging along until his situation changed. The Berlin Wall came down and Paul's career rose. Paul said that we should never compromise what we do and remain true to ourselves and the music. As long as you do that, you will succeed.

Make a good press kit and get to know people. I cannot stress the value of a good press kit enough. Have someone write a bio for you. Take some really good pictures (being aware of background) and cut that killer demo. Do not call your house music "soulful" or your trance music "uplifting."

Remember that it's not what you know, but rather who you know. If you're not getting out and meeting people, you're not getting booked. How can you expect to be booked if people don't know who you are and what you're all about? Take advantage of networking opportunities. Go to conferences, big shows, meetings; whatever you can do to increase your visibility. It takes 29 points of exposure for someone to decide to buy. Remember that your services as a DJ or producer are a product, and the promoter/label boss is the consumer. Don't forget that the real key here is the follow up. Send someone your information, and remember to follow up with them. Don't annoy them, but a gentle "Hey, did you get my information" is quite acceptable. If someone says "no", it really means "not right now". Don't give up on that person until it's clear that you're not getting in.

It's all about value! What value do you provide as an act? What sets you apart? What do you do that makes you unique? If you want someone to book you, there has to be a reason for them to make the effort to bring you in. Is it your connection to someone else? How about the fact that you do a Live PA show? Maybe you're full of energy and provide an exciting, electrifying performance. It's crucial for you to show the promoter that they're getting value for their dollar spent.

Networking, networking, networking! Never stop networking. Get to know as many people as you can. Beat down the doors to find the promoters, A & R heads, influential parties, magazine editors, etc. It's these people that will get you to the next level. Make friends with other DJs and producers who are doing things similar to you. Take interests in their careers. Find things outside of music that you have in common with those people. In other words, become a real friend.

Promoting an event isn't easy. Make sure you've set aside enough money in your marketing budget to get nice flyers. Crunch the numbers on everything so you get the best value per dollar spent on your show. Line up a nice venue and the best value talent you can find. Get as many people as you can on your team to get the word out. Remember that if your headliner isn't quite as well known, it takes more effort because you'll have to make your potential attendees aware of your headliner's work. They have to be given a reason to come out.

Treat your music as a business. If you don't take yourself seriously, how can you expect anyone else to do the same? Save those receipts to write off on your taxes. Start sample pools with your friends to share sounds you've made.

Look for all those free refills and wav sounds on the net. Learn all you can about business, copyright laws, distribution, and contracting issues. The more knowledge you arm yourself with, the less likely you are to be taken advantage of by some shady label boss or sketchy venue owner.

Be supportive of others in our little microcosm of a scene here. It's important to be supportive and provide a good word to others when they need it. Let's face it; there are not many of us here in the Christian EDM scene. We have to stick together and help each other out whenever we can. We're too small to be divided, so it's important for us to present a unified front as we struggle for acceptance within Christian music circles. Remember the Andrew Carnegie "Gospel of Wealth" and how it applies to us in our daily lives. Remember that we all have things we can add to the whole for the common good.

Like I said, it's been really fun writing this series and I hope you all take something away from it that can help advance your career. Remember that I'm always here to help, and I'm praying for your further success. I appreciate the time you've taken to read these articles. As I wrap this up to start a new series, I leave you with this thought.

It's all about relationships...

6. 2008

6.1 January

Andy Hunter: Colour and Expelled (2008-01-16 15:16) - redsavior

✎ I had the chance to sit down with Andy Hunter this month to discuss his new album *Colour*, scoring the film *Expelled*, getting back on tour and what is next for him. It was a great conversation and let me assure you that you can expect great things from Andy in the next few months.

We started off the conversations by talking about his new album, entitled *Colour*. I asked him to talk about what made this album different from *Life* and *Exodus*. He said that all of his albums grow with him as an artist and a DJ. *Exodus* was an expression of where he was in life and a reflection of the musical influences in his life. *Life* was very much an experiment with live instruments. The 12 track *Colour* is much more focused on the lyrics, more song based. His involvement in the club world has still influenced the album, however. It has a newer sound but expect there to be quite a bit of 80's influence. Andy teamed up with Robbie Bronnimann for the album for the first time since *Hydro*. The partnership started in January or February when Andy started working on the album and asked Robbie to write a track with him. They got together, the first time in several years, and wrote the first track together, *Sound Pollution*. It worked so well that Andy talked with his label, NETTWERK, and asked if Robbie could come on board and help finish the album. It took the rest of the summer and finished it up in August of 2007.

I asked Andy how his focus on worship would come through on this album. He said that each of his albums has a central theme that inspires most, if not all, of the album. The theme for *Colour* is color, obviously, colors that we see in the world and colors that reflect God in some way. *Stars*, for example, is inspired by the color orange. He was looking out his window at the street lights and felt God speaking. He said that we live our lives under these lights, we follow them home. But we can't see what is above them in the heavens because of the glare they cause. *System error*, inspired by green, is about "green issues". It is about his son's future and how our decisions are going to affect that. *Fade* is about how God accepts us as we are and how He changes the black and white back to color, bringing us back to how He created us before we became faded by sin.

I was listening to *Exodus* and *Life* a few days before I sat down with Andy, and noticed that *Life* seemed to be less "DJ friendly" than *Exodus*. I asked him if that was the direction he was heading in. In a sense, yes, he replied. He didn't think that many people would spin much of *Colour*, other than 2 of the tracks. However, he said that there were plans to release singles and remixes. He still loves DJing, still loves the 12" mix and the "four to floor", but it when he gets into the studio he just wants to write whatever he is feeling. He wants to be more creative in his writing than just the typical dance club track. The first single *Stars*, however, already has one remix finished by Guiseppe Ottaviani (signed to Vandit) and Network is looking at doing one more remix for *Stars*. So Andy's DJing background is still affecting his albums.

Andy told me that NETTWERK is looking at releasing the CD on March 18th, but they are trying to have the album released on iTunes and possibly one other digital distributor by the end of January. We should be able to expect some remixes to come out soon after the CD release.

✎ Andy paired up with Robbie Bronnimann again to score the soundtrack for the upcoming documentary *Expelled* featuring Ben Stein. Andy has had several of his tracks used in television trailers and films before, but this opportunity was greater than all of them. The opportunity opened up when Andy met a lawyer several years ago in Vancouver while touring. He said that some friends of his were starting an independent film company and asked if Andy would be interested in writing for a film. He took it lightly, figuring that they just wanted to use *Go* or *Come On*. In the fall of 2007, his lawyer friend called him and asked him he was still interested. He wrote a few tracks for them to preview. They liked it and he and Robbie flew out within a few days to Vancouver. After working for a few days, the producers wanted Andy and Robbie to write the entire soundtrack, all 120 minutes. Robbie and Andy flew back to England and worked for 6 weeks straight to finish the work.

All this production work hasn't left Andy any time to DJ. His last gig was in September but he is excited about getting back on the road with the release of *Colour*. I asked him about his thoughts on the future of DJing. He said that he has moved away from the vinyl he moved on to Pioneer CDJs and has even played around with Ableton. But when he does large festivals like *Flevo*, he prefers to use traditional CD or vinyl decks so that people see some movement

instead “looking like I’m checking my e-mail”. But in clubs, he feels that it doesn’t matter what format you are using as long as you are really doing well. He said that he prefers CDJs, but is thinking about working more with Ableton with the release of Colour to allow him remix his tracks live. He is also thinking about trying out Traktor Scratch in the next few months as well. Ableton, however, is more attractive for him since it allows him to be more creative.

The last thing I asked him was about what this year holds for him. He really wants to go live with Colour and get out and start gigging. He wants to do a bit of remixing and scoring. He really wants to really be out there in the industry and in the clubs, being the salt and light. He wants to continue leading worship at Christian festivals. I asked him what God had been speaking to him about lately, through his new album and through other avenues. He said he really wants just be more sold out for God and to learn to trust God for provision. He said that it is easy to trust in record deals and gigging and stop trusting God for that provision. But he really wants to really trust God. Music and gigs can dry up but God is constant. He had to trust God fully during one period when he wasn’t on salary with NGM to pay for all of his musical needs but he feels that he trusts God more these days since he has a family and more responsibility.

I would like to thank Andy Hunter again for taking time out of his schedule to talk with me and discuss life.

Tastyfresh.com presents "The Freshies": The Best of 2007 (2008-01-16 17:27) - KevinOneel

For the first time ever, Tastyfresh presents the Freshie Awards, an acknowledgement of achievement amongst members of the Christ Centered Electronic Music community. After taking into consideration your nominations and considerations, our staff has compiled our first ever list of winners. So, without further delay, here are the Freshie Award winners for 2007.

Best Event or Show

Afterhours: The Cornerstone Dance Club



Rebranded for 2007, Afterhours is firmly established as the premiere event for Christian EDM. Following on the traditions of such acts as Shiloh, The Enemy, and many other big names in EDM culture, 2007's Cornerstone stage featured performances by Perfecto's Kenneth Thomas, Substance's Greg "Stryke" Chin and DotDot's Joel Armstrong. Supporting acts included Jeremy Kadinger, DJ404, Doug Theodore, and BTU Artists AlexB, Adam Sean, Fitzpatrick and Kevin Oneel.

Producer of the Year

Shiloh - Colin & Justin Moreh



They released the first Baroque Elements CD, which is a two disc compilation featuring one CD of music by all the original artists, and a second CD featuring a continuous mix of the originals, all given a Shiloh twist. The boys from BC continued their fast rise to the top in 2007 with a release on Nick Warren's Hope Recordings and remixes on numerous other labels. Shiloh is firmly affixed into the upper echelon of the worldwide electronic music scene.

Global DJ of the Year

Kenneth Thomas



When someone is consistently touring with the likes of Paul Oakenfold and Hybrid, it's difficult to argue that they shouldn't be the top act of the year. Kenneth plays across the States and overseas as part of the Perfecto On Tour experience on top of headlining shows on his own and maintaining a frantic production schedule. Over the past two years, KT has established himself as one of the top up and coming talents in the world.

Tastyfresh.com Homegrown DJ of the Year

Doug Theodore



Basically put, he's the #1 most requested electronic music act at Cornerstone. Doug isn't just known for his incredible performance at Afterhours though; he's also a staple amongst the Southeastern EDM scene. Doug regularly plays in the Atlanta metro area, various venues in Alabama, on top of traveling to other shows across the country.

Breakthrough Artist of the Year

Joel Armstrong



Joel really exploded in 2007, signing tracks to labels like Baroque, Ascension, dPulse and Proton. His remix work is also in high demand from some of the hottest artists in the electronic music community. Joel has also started booking more DJ appearances, having headlined his own night at the 2007 Afterhours stage at Cornerstone and played at the renowned Hush in Victoria, BC. Joel is easily one of the fastest rising stars in electronic music.

CD of the Year
Baroque Elements 01 by Shiloh



This was the debut of the Elements series by world famous label, Baroque Recordings. The release is a two CD set featuring one CD of original tracks from the compilation, and a second CD with a continuous DJ mix by Shiloh of tracks remixed by Shiloh. It's a groundbreaking release in the world of DJ mix CDs because of it's complex nature, being an entire CD of remixes by one artist. The release features tracks by such artists as Joel Armstrong, Gareth Emery, Filo & Peri, James Harcourt and Shiloh themselves.

Tastyfresh Ezine Story of the Year
"The Setup: Building An Ableton Live DJ Template That Works For You" by Chris Reiche

Just search "Ableton" on Google, and you'll see why Chris Reiche's article won this award. It's simplistic nature and easy to understand flow has made this article one of the most referenced Ableton template articles in the internet. Website after website references Chris' article as the definitive source on how to quickly and easily build a custom Ableton DJ template setup. This article was also the most read article on Tastyfresh in 2007 with 18,900 hits.

Most Important Happening
BTU presents...Tastyfresh! podcast



As the official podcast of Tastyfresh.com, BTU presents...Tastyfresh! has really taken off over the last year. Its popularity is due to the quality of guests on the show each month, and a slanted view towards featuring forward-thinking artists and DJs. BTU presents...Tastyfresh! has garnered much popularity not only amongst Christian EDM fans, but mainstream audiences as well.

Significant Achievement Award
Shiny Toy Guns



There's no way we could complete the first installment of the Freshie Awards without mentioning a monumental achievement by one of our own. The band Shiny Toy Guns, featuring our own Jeremy Dawson, was nominated for a Grammy Award in the category of Best Electronic/Dance Album for their work "We Are Pilots." Shiny Toy Guns currently tours the US and Canada in support of their album, on top of appearing on numerous television shows.

What Solomon Lacked: Tools for Faithfulness (2008-01-17 22:50) - redsavior

Solomon started right. Right after being crowned king over Israel, God asked him what he wanted. Solomon said he wanted just one thing, wisdom. God loved this response and gave him wisdom and more. Solomon ruled for many years, but eventually something happened. Something changed. See, Solomon loved women. And when I say he loved women, I am really not kidding. The Bible says he had 1000 wives and concubines (2 Kings 11:3). God didn't want Solomon to marry outside of the nation of Israel because they would lead him astray, they would become an idol. God knew Solomon better than he did and warned him about a temptation he couldn't withstand. The combined influence of 1000 ungodly women was too much for him and Solomon began building alters to other gods to please his wives and lovers.

How could he do this? God appeared to Solomon on two separate occasions. How could he throw it all away? Solomon knew something about faith. But he was lacking in what it took to walk in faithfulness. Faithfulness requires more than just a moment of faith, it requires the stubbornness, determination and guts to keep standing when all else says to sit back down. It requires supernatural strength to not just stand but push through all barriers that the world and Satan can put in front of you. It requires everything you have, everyday until God takes you to heaven. Because falling before the end is not an option on the table.

The last few months God has really been speaking to me about faithfulness. I was thinking about what I wanted to be remembered for when God takes me to heaven a while ago. I decided that I want to be known for my faithfulness. I want to be known as the guy that never gave up on anything until the proper time. If anyone in the Bible knew what it was to stand until God took him home, other than Jesus, it was Paul. In his letter to the Ephesian church, Paul tells them what he believes to be the keys to standing in a world that hates you.

First of all, Paul makes it clear in chapter 6 verse 12, that our fight is not against physical things. It is against the temptation and sin around us. This needs to be fully understood or there is a danger of becoming Christian hermits, never leaving the safety of our churches and church friends. Paul uses an object lesson that everyone in Ephesus would understand to describe the keys to standing.

The first piece of the armor is the Belt of Truth (Ephesians 6:14). Truth is essential for accountability, which is in turn essential for faithfulness. We all fail. That is just a fact of life. It is incredibly important to be in relationships where we are honest with our faults, failings and victories. We need people in our lives that we can both celebrate victories with and that will kick us in the pants when we need it. I know that I cannot be the man God intends me to be without a group of close friends that will kick me when I am being stupid. Truth is also what keeps us safe from lies. We all know that Satan is a liar. There is no question about that, it is in the Bible. But the scary part is, sometimes it is so subtle that we believe it. We need Truth in order to be able to stand against those lies. If Satan can't topple you by force, he will attack your foundations. He will come at you with lies saying you cannot stand. If you doubt in the strength of God to keep you standing and the strength God has given you, you will fall. It is just a matter of time. You must know and understand the truth of your identity and the character of God in order for you to remain faithful to the end.

The second piece is by far the most important, I firmly believe. It is the Breastplate of Righteousness. This is what Christ gave you the day you accepted Him as Lord and Savior. The breastplate is what protects your heart, the one thing that pumps your blood and keeps you alive. Christ has covered it with the one thing that can never be pierced by anything on this earth or heaven or hell, His blood. His blood has made you righteous before God and just like the breastplate, it is the core of every protective system. If you have nothing else, you have to have this one

piece. You must be saved by Christ in order to have any chance at standing until the end.

The third piece is “your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace” (Eph. 6:15). You have got to be ready to move when God calls you to. Sometimes it is a small move, just enough for you to dodge an attack that Satan or the world is throwing at you. But, it could mean something larger. God doesn’t always want you to stay standing in the same place and if we are too stubborn to move when God calls, we will be knocked over. And we need to have the peace about moving on when we need to. It is one of the hardest things. I have done a lot of work in my church with youth and I have built a lot of relationships. When God told me He was sending me to England for two years, it was very hard. I didn’t want to leave those I had invested so much time in. I didn’t want to leave those that needed me. But I had to come to peace about it and learn that on the battlefield, there is a time to stand and hold the line and there is a time for units to move in order to cover or attack other areas.

The forth piece is the shield of faith. In Paul’s letter, it is a piece that is used to protect you from flaming arrows. It is a mobile piece that takes a lot of hits. Our faith takes a lot of hits as well. Sometimes in the line of duty it takes hits that never should be taken. Sometimes arrows put holes in it. Life tends to do that. I know in my life I have had many tests of faith. Times like when my friend almost lost her life to a flesh eating bacteria. It was hard and a hole was made in my shield. But that is what a shield is made for. Life tests our faith. It is the only thing that can be damaged under “normal” circumstances. But, a shield is much easier repaired, but it takes time. In this fight, you are going to need to back off and repair that shield sometimes. And that shield is going to have to change and evolve as the fight continues to withstand the type of attacks it needs to. But the rest of the armor stays the same.

The last armor piece is the Helmet of Salvation. This piece is closely linked to the breastplate. Both protect the things that are essential for your survival and both come from Christ’s sacrifice. The head is what controls the rest of the body. Salvation by grace is the greatest thing on this earth. It is what makes Christ different then all other religions. The Bible tells us that it is grace that teaches us to say no to ungodliness (Titus 2:11-12). It is the greatest gift.

The last thing that Paul talks about is the only offensive weapon in the set. It is the Sword of the Spirit that is the word of God. Now to properly understand this piece you must know that this refers to the spoken word. The Greek word is rhema. Having the spoken word of God is so incredibly important. I cannot stress it enough. There are times in my life where I have been on the bottom and God pulls me to a section of Scripture or a promise He had me and just says, “Son, I have not left you” It is the only thing that has kept me standing at times. Knowing Scripture is vital. Remember that Christ used Old Testament Scripture to confront Satan after the 40 days He was in the desert. An old friend of mine told me once that if I wanted to be a man of God, I had to be a man of God’s word. I have stuck to that for years and I cannot tell you how many times simply knowing a piece of Scripture has helped me, both in strengthening me to continue to stand and to say the right words to someone.

This year, I want to encourage you to stand. Stand in situations you would normally run from. Stand in the gap for those in need. I know that Christ has given you all the tools you need to stand. But the choice is ultimately yours. Will you stand until Jesus takes you home? Or will you fall before the end like Solomon? The choice is yours.

6.2 May

Dave Linton: DJ Workshops (2008-05-16 05:00) - jpuddy

In 1997 a Christian nightclub opened up in a seaside town not far from my, then, home. Its vision was to provide entertainment for young people in a safe and credible alternative venue. Three years after opening, when I was old enough to go, I was given the opportunity to DJ one Saturday night. This resulted in me being a regular performer and provided the venue with an alternative to rock music. This opportunity led to me getting bookings at other clubs and events. During this time I also did one to one DJ tuition with young people and in 2005 I was asked to run DJ workshops at three different music festivals around the UK. At the workshops participants learn the basics in DJ'ing from mixing to scratching using all the latest DJ equipment and technology.

Dance music and Christianity are sometimes looked at as a strange combination and not seen as something that goes hand in hand due to the negative reputation that the clubbing scene sometimes has. My aim has been to maintain and champion the positives within this industry and scene.



The principal purpose of the DJ workshops is to relate to young people and build relationships with them in a positive and safe environment. It is so important for them to have positive role models, especially in the area of music. It's all about showing the young people that you have time and patience for them as well as showing God's love through your own attitude and the art-form of DJ'ing. The young people love having a go on the decks and it really lets them express themselves and helps them develop and improve their own team working skills. The DJ workshops are a useful tool in building their confidence and self esteem as well as being practical, educational, informative and fun!

The DJ workshops are a great way to keep young people motivated and away from negative influences and provide them with an alternative to anti-social behaviour and crime in a format that has street credibility and is meaningful to them.

In particular, I remember this one young person who was getting involved in street crime and from running the DJ workshops in his area it really benefited and encouraged him and led him away from the bad influences he was involved in. He has since then been so keen and eager that he has saved up his allowance and got help from his family members, etc and bought some DJ equipment and now he is DJ'ing at different places in his own community including his own church youth events! It's really amazing to see that from running a DJ workshop for a couple of hours, it can spark something off in young people and put an interest into their hearts and minds that they didn't know was already there.

[1]www.djdavelinton.com

1. <http://www.djdavelinton.com/>

6.3 July

On Location with Alex Bedwell (2008-07-16 05:00) - redsavior

Alex Bedwell headlined on Wednesday night playing progressive house. It was an amazing set. We were able to sit down with him a few days later to chat about his set, his music and his label, Pastdeux Music.

TF: So how was headlining this year?

Time one. 45 minutes compared to 2 hours. Also when you are animated as I am, that tends to wear you down. I love to dance, jump up and down and yell. My music selection was very different. I thought I brought enough music but 2 hours ate up more than I thought. I will greatly diversify my music when I play out from now on. It was a lesson to have to play what I was going to play after the last DJ.



TF: How often do you play?

When I started producing, I reduced my gigging to little or none, for the simple fact that my drive is to make music. By the time I want to gig, I want to be able to bring something new to the table. People will know that I am bringing something professional, something solid.

TF: How has your production progressed?

Its funny, I started writing from scratch. I had no music training and in the first month or 2, I had actually written my first song. I sent it to people and they were tripped out because it was pretty decent. I wrote a few, and then To Russia with Love and people loved it and then I got writers block. I couldn't write anything. I quite using Reason and went to Ableton. I switched in April and its going well. The more I pour out into it, the more it makes sense. I quit playing with stuff until something works. I have a sound now and if I can't do it, I figure out how to do it. I have something in my head and I sit down and work on it. Sometimes I have to keep myself in check. I don't really have a process that I go about.

TF: How is Pastdeux Music doing?

The label itself is doing ok for being so new. For myself, I don't care much about sales or money making. I just love being a part of a label. Its awesome. But first and foremost, beyond sales, hits, or floor killers, I want to release good, solid tracks, track of the year or not. From production, it is sort of scary. The other guys have really challenged me to step up in production. It is hard to focus sometimes so being part of the label helps me keep focused on production. But I would rather wait until I have a few quality tracks, rather then release a dozen that are aren't any good.

TF: What has God really been teaching you over the last few weeks?

After Cornerstone, I came back with a very refreshed, not in my outlook, but feeling. I felt like I had become complacent. I talked with a drummer with a powerful testimony and I feel like I had a different perspective. It wasn't something I tried to do, maybe I was just ready to stop claiming Christianity and not acting like it.

Alex Bedwell wished to send a shout out to Paul Hamilton, the Chuck Norris of pizza.

For more information check his MySpace at [1]www.myspace.com/djal3x. Also check out Pastdeux Music at [2]www.myspace.com/pastdeuxmusic and [3]www.pastdeux.com.

1. <http://www.myspace.com/dja13x>
 2. <http://www.myspace.com/pastdeuxmusic>
 3. <http://www.pastdeux.com/>
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On Location with Alex Laine (2008-07-16 05:00) - redsavior

TF: You weren't booked to play at Afterhours. How did you manage to get to play this year?

It is actually a pretty long story. But basically I was planning on coming and just playing for the Gospel for Asia stage. So I had my gear and everything and was sort of prepared to play. I was planning on playing a hard hitting electro set. When Dave Richards and the Birmingham crew picked me up from the airport in Peoria, I asked them how Justin was doing and if they had figured out who was going to play. That's when they told me that they wanted me to open for Alex Bedwell. I was pretty amazed. It was bittersweet though, since the only reason I was able to play was because Justin had emergency surgery. I was excited to play, but saddened because of how it happened.



Alex Laine opened Wednesday night with an hour and a half of electro. It was a perfect set for the crowd. We sat down with him to talk about his set and his plans for the future.

TF: So what were your expectations and how did they play out?

I didn't really have any before coming. I mean, I wasn't planning on playing other than like an hour set or whatever at a generator stage and just hang out with the Tastyfresh crew. How hard is playing a generator stage? I didn't expect to be opening up the second night for about 250 people. The thing that I really did not expect though was not having any light racks in the Barn. But we all pitched in and got them all up. I was really happy to get them all up. Next year we won't have to worry about dealing with those.

TF: What was it like to play at Cornerstone?

It was pretty intense. I mean I came into it without really knowing what was going on. I just sort of had to learn as I went along. I didn't really know the crowd too well so I just paid a lot of attention to the guys who played on Tuesday, what worked, what didn't. I paid a lot of attention to what Brother Brooks played and how Topher Jones structured and mixed. But it was really exciting to play; I just went out and figured, "I'm just the opener. I'll play some of my favorite music and try to warm up the crowd as best I can." And it worked. I played a great set and the crowd responded really well, much better than I expected.

TF: What are your plans from here?

I am actually really starting to try to get some gigs lined up over the next few months. Richmond is somewhat dead as far as dance music goes. So I am going to be looking into playing in DC. Cornerstone was a great jump start for me in my confidence level. I knew that I could DJ pretty well. But there is a difference between knowing you can play and knowing you can play, if you know what I mean.

TF: So how does your faith play out in daily life?

I do a lot of youth ministry with my local church, youth group, Sunday school, small groups, one on one discipleship, the whole deal. I have also been involved in foreign missions for the last 4 years pretty consistently and I am actually working on heading into the missions field full time in the next few months with an organization called Youth with a Mission.

TF: What has God really been working on in your life over the last few months?

He has really been teaching about what it means to really love people. I have a lot of business and ministry contacts and sometimes I feel like I only talk with some of them when I need them. I hate that feeling. It is so hard sometimes,

especially when it seems like everyone you minister to seems to be making bad choices. But that is really where the test is, can I love someone despite what they do?

Check him out on MySpace at [1]www.myspace.com/djalexlaine.

1. <http://www.myspace.com/djalexlaine>

On Location with Brother Brooks (2008-07-16 05:00) - redsavior

Brother Brooks opened for Topher Jones on Tuesday night. His set set the stage for Topher Jones to rock the house. We sat down with him a few days later and talked to him about his set, Aesias Finale and TekTak Music.

TF: You were brought on pretty late in the game. Was it difficult to have so little time to prepare?

I didn't really have time to learn the in and outs really. I just sort of had to put together a set that I knew was going to make the house to crazy before Topher Jones got on. They had told me there would a lot of indie music fans and Birmingham had sort of these indie nights and electro just sort of goes well with that. I practiced for like 2-3 hours each day. I just had it in my mind that it would be flawless; I didn't want to let anyone down. I am a firm believer that you set yourself up for success so that's what I did.



TF: What were your expectations for Cornerstone and your set?

I had heard from last year that it would be pretty energetic. I had watched some video of last year but it didn't really prepare me for what these kids were like. They were just getting down all night long.

TF: What are you plans for your future in djiing?

I think me and Kevin are going to start tag teaming more and more. I write music not only for Aesias Finale but for myself; which is completely different. It's down tempo and breaky. And I was going to try to hit up places other then clubs. I want to play in places like bars and places that are really chilled where people just come and listen.

TF: What productions are you working on?

I have written my first album. It's like 14 tracks and I am really just trying to get a title and such. As far as Aesias Finale goes, I tend to write faster then Kevin. Production sort of fuels my life a lot. And I mean a lot; I average 1 or 2 tracks per week. Even if they are really bad, I still finish them and lock them away in a vault that no one will see. But I need to finish them for myself.

TF: What is one technique or sound can you just not make a track without?

I don't really like using the same thing over and over. I never want to be classified or gimmicked. I can make a list of people who do, but doing it well. But I do use a reverse crash with a "45 angle" ping pong delay on it. I manage to use that all the time and I tend to use the same structure for my intros and outros; it just makes it really easy to mix in and out of.

It has been a great year, I have really enjoyed Cornerstone. The people are really nice and it has a real underground feel I haven't found else where, sort of a 1999/2000 feel.

Check out Aesias Finale on MySpace at [1]www.myspace.com/aesiasfinale and TekTak Music at [2]www.myspace.com/tektakmusic.

1. <http://www.myspace.com/aesiasfinale>

2. <http://www.myspace.com/tektakmusic>

On Location with Dave Richards (2008-07-16 05:00) - redsavior

TF: What were your expectations for your performance this year?

Honestly, I had a lot of expectations prior to the festival. I wanted to do a set that progressed from tribal and electro into more tech house where I could just hand things off smoothly to Stryke and let him do his thing. Once I got to the fest and got into "stage manager" mode, I didn't have time to think about what I was going to do or anything. Fortunately, I had a few days to watch the crowd to see if they had changed from last year and to focus on my set. In the end, I played what I felt like playing which turned out to be more electro than anything. Once again, I was shocked to see how fast an hour and a half passes.



Dave Richards had the pleasure of opening up for Stryke on Thursday. We had some technical issue that night, but it didn't stop Dave from dropping a great combination of tech house, tribal and electro. We sat down with Dave shortly after to discuss his set and his music.

TF: How was your set this year different then your live PA last year?

Well, that's it. Live PA versus a DJ set. I was controlling sixteen audio tracks at one time last year versus controlling just two channels of audio this year. I enjoyed myself because it just took less effort and was more stream of conscious in nature. Of course, the crowd helped too. With my unscheduled live PA last year, I had like four ten year old girls dancing for an hour. I pulled in over a hundred for my DJ set this year though and then Stryke finished packing the house. The odd thing about it was that despite all of my preparation to prevent technical issues, I still encountered them in the form of a dead battery in a wireless microphone. Until Will, our sound engineer, finally figured out the problem. So, we had static in the system throughout my set and Stryke's.

TF: What was going through your mind before and as you played, knowing that you were opening for Stryke?

Well, we were trying to figure out the microphone problem around 10 pm. We already had a crowd gathering outside and I was just testing the sound one last time. About ten after, the crowd kind of muscled their way into the barn and it was all over. I could either go with what I had playing at the time and call that the start of my set or I could have cut it off like a jerk and tried to tweak things around some more. I wasn't being much of a jerk at this point during the week so I just kept going. So, part of me was concerned about the sound. Was the static in the monitors or out on the floor. It was a bit frustrating to deal with, but I survived. The second thing that was going through my mind was Stryke. He had gotten caught up in holiday traffic and road construction. Apparently the State of Illinois shows no mercy, even on the fourth. So, the other half of me that wasn't concerned about my track selection and that static problem was wondering if Stryke would show up in time. Fortunately, he did. The only issue is that by the time he was ready to go, I was ready to keep going. Oh well. I wasn't the headliner and I certainly don't hold a candle to his skills.

TF: So what are you going to be producing for the foreseeable future?

As most of the people on Tastyfresh know, I've been really busy working on the next version of the website and with some freelance design work as well. There just hasn't been much time for me to write music since last September. The good news is that I need long breaks and they only make me come back stronger as a musician. Well... I think they do anyway. So, I really haven't written much of anything since last September. One of the main things I decided to do last year was to stop using Cakewalk's Sonar and move into Ableton Live. I've always been a fan of the loop creation system in FL Studio. It's been great for drums among other things and Sonar worked better for synths and arranging.

The problem with this setup is that it had me working in basically two different DAWs to write a track. Ableton's loop creation ability and session editing mode really freed me up and allowed me to work in an ideal environment.

So... that led me to producing two tracks before Cornerstone. The first is Pushing 2 Hard and it is on the Afterhours Vol. 1 CD that we gave out during the festival. The second is Free My Soul. Free My Soul has yet to see the light of day on anything, but I did play it out on my Cornerstone set and the crowd loved it. I can't wait to get one more created and to shop them around. Hopefully Next Dimension will pick up one of them and I'll get another label or two to take on the others. The other thing coming down the pike is a remix of Reborn's Freaky Filthy, another track off the Afterhours CD, which will be released by Oneel's new TekTak Records.

TF: In production, what is the one thing that makes your music different then everyone else? What is unique to Dave Richards?

Well, there is the cowboy hat, either leather or straw... it is the one thing I get all my creativity from, without it I would be absolutely horrible. Seriously. No, not really.

I don't really think there is anything that is specifically unique about my music. There are plenty of guys that are better than I am. Heck, I just opened for one. They've also been doing it longer then me so how can I say that I have something unique or better. Then again, I did start producing just about ten years ago now. Wow... I'm old. What I do have is an addiction to drums. I love percussion. I love tribal beats. In just about every track I write, there's a little bit of tribal. Sometimes there's a lot like in the case of Hear the Drums. The tribal influence is coming out a bit differently right now though with Free My Soul and Pushing 2 Hard. The other thing that comes to my mind as a signature sound are really nasty, overly compressed baselines. Usually, I'll write two and use them to counter each other. Once you through some distortion and compression on 'em, you have pure sickness.

So what's unique about Dave Richards? Well, I'm the only one.

Check out Dave's MySpace at [1]www.myspace.com/daverichards101 and his music on Beatport.com at [2]www.beatport.com/artists/dave_richards.

1. <http://www.myspace.com/daverichards101>

2. http://www.beatport.com/artists/dave_richards

On Location with Deeflash (2008-07-16 05:00) - redsavior

Deeflash started opened Afterhours 2008 with an awesome electro set. It was a great start to the week. We managed to catch up with him the next week to talk about his set and his future plans.

TF: So how was it to be the first dj to play at Afterhours 2008?

I was a little nervous but excited too. It was great that I could play whatever I wanted in opening the night. It was



great to set the pace and tone of the night.

TF: How was it different from the rest of your djing experience?

Well, the kids were more open to all types of music. It's a music festival, so people are in the mind set to find new music and have a good time. It was exciting because they came in ready to have a good time, rather than standing on the sidelines waiting for something to happen.

TF: What is your focus as a DJ, the church or the secular venue?

I am interested in both. In the church, I like to set an atmosphere where people can be free and have fun. I also would enjoy DJing at secular venues as well, because I love to meet new people and just have a good time.

TF: I have heard that you are starting to produce. How long have you been doing that and where are you at with it?

I've been producing for a while, but I am just now sending them to people. Lately, I've been sending tracks to Kevin Oneel and he picked up 2 of them and he's getting some remixes of those tracks. They should be released soon. I am also looking at getting a few more tracks done and released soon.

TF: How does your faith work with your DJing and production?

It started out when I was playing in a worship band. It got me interested in producing and writing music. Then while I was looking for new Christian music, I found Andy Hunter. I had listened to quite a bit of secular dance music while I was in my "Jonah years" (Walking, I mean running, from the call God had on my life), and I had not yet found Christian dance music that compared to the secular scene until I heard Andy. I then started to find out a bit more about DJ Led Worship and started going to Club Worship in Reading, PA each month. I got into DJ led worship and that opened my eyes a lot and it has just grown from there.

TF: Where are you spiritually?

God has been speaking to me and my wife about building relationships outside our church. Not disconnecting from the body, but reaching those who are not inside the church. Which is why I enjoy DJing, you can mix a set and then you build relationships at the party or club and get to know the people there on a one on one basis instead of seeing someone walk in the church and back out and never get a chance to talk them.

Check out Deeflash's MySpace at [1]www.myspace.com/deeflashmusic.

1. <http://www.myspace.com/deeflashmusic>

On Location with Greg 'Stryke' Chin (2008-07-16 05:00) - redsavior

Greg 'Stryke' Chin came out on Thursday to headline the night and threw down an incredible minimal/techno set. He had to run right after his set, but I was able to sit down with him the next week and chat about his set, his gear and his music.

TF: Your set on Thursday was awesome. What were your expectations coming back to Cornerstone this year?

Thanks much, Alex. It was a pleasure to be back, for my 3rd year in a row. As far as expectations, I only expected a young, friendly crowd. They, of course, delivered in spades. The kids were just so happy to be there and dancing and having a good time with their friends.



TF: How was this year different then last year?

I have to say, that Dave Richards and the gang really went all out production wise this year. I really wasn't expecting that level of production. That's not to say it was bad before. But, Dave really stepped the game up. Both in audio and video. It was quite a surprise to walk in to that area!

TF: Obviously Cornerstone is different than most gigs you have. How is it different and what do you like most about it versus your normal gigs?

The first thing is the age of the crowd. It's obviously a lot younger for the most part. But, I have no problem with this. As long as they're having fun, and in a safe environment. Obviously, this is a faith based event. That in and of itself makes it a different. It's a great change of pace for me.

TF: Now I noticed that you didn't use Traktor. What did you use for your set and why?

I am now using M-Audio's Torq software with their Connective hardware to control the music via turntables or CDJs. I still love Traktor. But, I always want to keep my performances fresh and exciting. One way of doing that is trying different things out. It's a great piece of software in that, I can loop on the fly, and use up to 3 different f/x on each virtual deck AND add one of my favourite vst f/x into the mix. Pretty powerful stuff. It's keeping me on my toes! It's still pretty new, and I look forward to the stuff they'll add to it, in time.

TF: What is it like for you to be on tour as much as you are?

It's a real blessing to be able to do what I love. Being on the road a lot has its advantages and disadvantages. I love to travel, see new cities and countries, as well as visit some of my lifelong favourites. I do tend to get a bit homesick however. I especially miss my dog, my family, my fishtank, my studio and my entertainment center downstairs. I'm quite a bit spoiled! But, I do love the opportunity to interact with my fans as much as possible. It's something I hope I never take for granted.

TF: How is touring, spiritually speaking?

Well, not being in church every Sunday can be quite tough. But, I do my best to lead the same life on the road, as I do at home. There are a couple of cities where I have good friends that I can go to church with (if I can wake up the morning after a gig). The hardest thing is eating on the go. I find eating healthy to be more difficult that being spiritually sound! All kidding aside, I try not to separate my home life from my touring road life when it comes to my spirituality. God follows me everywhere, there's no hiding anything from him.

TF: What is your release schedule looking like?

Wow. Let's see. I've got a ton of remixes coming up soon. Right now, the following remixes are just being released:

- Skylark – Who Cares (Stryke Remixes) (Saved/NRK)
- Nikola Gala – Blueberry (Stryke Remixes) (Plastic City)
- Oscar G. – You (Stryke's Back To You Dub) (Nervous)

The following remixes will be out in the next couple of months:

- Lemon Inc. – Like Feuw (Stryke Remixes) (Discoteca)
- Alex Flatner – Soul Jones (Stryke Remix) (label unknown)
- Danny Howells – Untitled Project (Stryke Remix)
- Darin Epsilon – Tahitian Sunrise (Dissident Music)

As far as new original stuff, I'm working on that as well:

- There will be a remix EP of stuff from my "Narrowest of Paths" album on Plastic City
- Oscar G. feat. Stryke – Angel (w/ Steve Lawler Mix) is out now on Nervous
- Oscar G. feat. Stryke – Lost (I'm still recording the vocals for this)
- New EP Soon

Also, I'm about to start compiling the first volume of my DJ mix series for Plastic City! I'm quite stoked about that one!

So, yeah, quite busy at the moment.

TF: What do you think is the most important thing newer producers need to learn and learn early?

There's a ton...On the "human" side of things, remain humble, keep your eyes open. It all sounds cliché' but it's all true. On the music and theory side of things, I always say to learn everything you can about all sides of music. I feel really blessed to know as much as I do not only about writing and creating music from my 30 plus years as a classical pianist and composer. But, also the time I spent studying synthesis and engineering. It's helped me to be a really well rounded musician, performer, engineer, etc... That knowledge is invaluable. Always strive to keep learning! And love it!

For more information check out Stryke's MySpace at [1]www.myspace.com/djstryke and check out his music on Beatport.com at [2]www.beatport.com/artists/stryke.

1. <http://www.myspace.com/djstryke>

2. <http://www.beatport.com/artists/stryke>

On Location with Kevin Oneel (2008-07-16 05:00) - redsavior

After popular demand, Kevin Oneel started an hour and a half early and rocked the entire night. It was an amazing set. We sat down with Kevin and talked about his set, Afterhours 2008 and his future with Aesias Finale and TekTak Music.

TF: What were your expectations for Cornerstone this year?

I was kind of hoping we could at least keep up the progress from the year before. I was really hoping for about 500



per night which would have made me very happy.

TF: How was this year different than last year as far as planning goes?

We actually had more time to plan. Instead of finding out we would have the stage in February we knew that we would have it right after last year. So we had the entire year to plan it.

TF: How was your set this year compared to last year?

Honestly, they don't even compare. I played on the BTU Recordings night. We split it 4 ways and I played 45 minutes. I played trance for the last time ever. This year was definitely much better. I was more in my comfort zone this year.

TF: The last year has been pretty busy for you, BTU, TekTak, Aesias Finale. What has it been like for you?

Well, obviously the BTU breakup was difficult. But it was a necessary evil. It was a partnership that wasn't going anywhere so it was the best thing for all of us. Since starting TekTak and Aesias Finale, so many doors have opened. Brooks and I have had so many opportunities come to us that there is almost no limit on what we can do. We have had some great feedback on our material and Brooks and I are just working to take those opportunities.

TF: What is the future looking like for you, TekTak and Aesias Finale?

For me, I am focusing my attention on getting TekTak and Aesias Finale started. What I do personally isn't as important as Aesias Finale. We are working with a major artist on a major label. It will shoot our careers forward. With TekTak, we are trying to sign new artists and expand a bit. We are really about releasing music we enjoy and not putting out music that is popular. And it seems to be working.

TF: What are goals as far as DJing goes?

We always focus on production because that is what gets you gigs. As far as gigs go, we are going to be booking as Aesias Finale and really pushing the partnership forward.

TF: How does your faith work out in your music and in the club scene?

It influences everything I do. It's part of me. If I took it away I wouldn't be me and I can't take it away even if I wanted to. I think your best witness is being a positive influence on the people around you. It would be sort of like asking me to remove my face.

Check

out

Kevin Oneel's MySpace at [1]www.myspace.com/oneelishere , Aesias Finale at [2]www.myspace.com/aesiasfinale and TekTak Music at [3]www.myspace.com/tektakmusic .

1. <http://www.myspace.com/oneelishere>

2. <http://www.myspace.com/aesiasfinale>

3. <http://www.myspace.com/tektakmusic>

On Location with Matthew Hyatt (2008-07-16 05:00) - redsavior

Matthew Hyatt came down from Michigan to play on Tuesday night. His mix of techno and tech house kept the house going his entire set. We managed to sit down with him the next week to talk with him about his first Cornerstone experience, his music and Giantslayers.

TF: This was your first time playing at Cornerstone. How was it?

I thought it went really well. It was cool, different not being around a bunch of scenester kids. People were there who really enjoyed the music and didn't have any preconceived ideas about the music. I just had a great time.



TF: How was it different from the rest of your djing experience?

Well, I guess the main difference is it was a Christian festival. It wasn't really different in the sound and lights and dancing. But it had a different vibe in that regard. The few times I've played in been a bar or whatever back in the day, people were getting wasted and stuff.

TF: You have been in production for a number of years. How would you describe your music?

My style, well, the interesting thing about my style is it's always changing. It's hard to put an exact sound but I do a lot of techno and house genre oriented tunes. I never got into the zone for an exact style. I'm working on stuff for a label that is progressive and I'm working on some techno and tech house. My main influence was Chicago and Detroit. I have a lot of influence from guys like Richie Hawtin, Derrick Carter, so in the end I just do what I want to really.

TF: What was your vision in creating Giantslayers and how is that going?

Well, Giantslayers is of an outlet for my friends and I and it is a learning experience for me. Right now I am in the process of relaunching it. My style has gotten newer and I am getting new artwork and logos and have been stockpiling music. It's going well. Sales aren't great in the industry but I have met a lot of people. What it really has done is when I release records, I get better. When you release things it forces you to grow. I took a 4 month break while I upgraded software and hardware. I have some stuff lined up for the last quarter. Having your own label isn't for everyone. Its good to start with other labels and get your name out there before you start a label of your own. But with the digital age you have more control over it. I am just trying to put out good tunes and get better with every release.

TF: What, in your opinion, is the most common mistake made by producers and what is the key to making quality music?

Well, if I can use myself as an example, the biggest is that they put stuff out too early. Too much rush. Let's leave it at that, they are in a hurry. When you start out people say your music is good but putting out is a totally different thing. I think some of it is, obviously, experience, time. In my case and others its about making enough bad stuff to know what the good is. It's about gear and knowledge and knowing what you want and knowing your gear. I am a gear maniac. I think as you go on a journey, you upgrade your studio and be creative and bounce ideas off people as you go.

TF: So what is your release schedule looking like?

I have a release called Sonic Dayjob coming out on Tekfunk in August. I also have a remix I am doing for DOT DOT Records most likely due out early fall. . I have some material ready for Giantslayers, but it won't be ready until I relaunch it here shortly.

For more on Matthew check out his MySpace at [1]www.myspace.com/matthewhyatt and check out Giantslayers on Beatport.com at [2]www.beatport.com/labels/giantslayers.

1. <http://www.myspace.com/matthewhyatt>

2. <http://www.beatport.com/labels/giantslayers>

On Location with Topher Jones (2008-07-16 05:00) - redsavior

Topher Jones headlined Tuesday night, bringing the first night of Afterhours 2008 to an explosive close. It was an amazing set. Topher graciously stayed up for an extra hour to talk with us about his first time here at Afterhours and his career.

TF: What were some of your expectations for Cornerstone?

It would be sort of unfair to have expectations. I was just hoping that we would have some kids that would come and enjoy themselves and it turns out that we had a fun crowd.



TF: What was going through your mind before hand?

I just try to stay really chill. I didn't want to get worked up. I just walked around and check out some of the other tents. It was just great to sort of get away and just unwind and pray.

TF: What has your schedule been like?

It's been really good, a few in Chicago with Tiesto in June. I have some tracks coming out really soon on some big labels so that will hopefully end up with getting some more gigs lined up. I've been spending loads of time in the studio lately and I couldn't be happier with how the tunes are coming along. Just had a handful of them signed to some huge labels which is always great.

TF: What is your release schedule?

I have a track that was just released called Otherside with Christopher Norman on Tiesto's label, Black Hole and 2 tracks on Spinnin' in August and a handful more on Black Hole, Spinnin' and Intuition for later in the year.

TF: What are you plans?

Where ever the music is going is where I want to be going. I love music and I'm passionate about it. I really want to be going wherever God is pulling me. There are some great things in the works and I'll just have be patient and see how it all plays out.

TF: What is it like being a Christian in the Dance Music Industry?

I find it to be exciting. You meet so many people with very interesting stories and perspectives on life. There are so many great opportunities to build relationships with people and be a light in the lives of many. Dance music is very spiritual for me so it feels very natural to be in a club or around the music.

TF: What would be your advice to Christians either currently in the dance music scene or trying to enter it?

Stay true to your faith and who you are most importantly. Start producing and writing music. Anyone can be a DJ so you can separate yourself with production. If you aren't producing, you won't make it anywhere these days. Go out to clubs and shows and meet people. Networking is very important. Last but not least, work hard. Take it serious and people will take you serious.

TF: Where are you with Jesus?

It's been a tough summer and a really interesting year. I've been on staff with Young Life and it is great but it is really challenging, doing youth ministry outside the city can get sort of lonely. God has really been softening my heart and

molding me and changing me from the inside out. It has been really hard. It is never fun to go through that, but its necessary. There has been great stuff and low stuff. He is definitely working and that is encouraging to know that He is there and He is working. I have also been learning a lot about grace lately, been reading a lot of books.

For more information, check Topher Jones' Myspace at [1]www.myspace.com/djtopherjones1 and check his music out on Beatport.com at [2]www.beatport.com/artists/topher_jones.

1. <http://www.myspace.com/djtopherjones1>

2. http://www.beatport.com/artists/topher_jones

6.4 September

When I was younger I used to have vivid dreams and visions of places and events that were safe parties. I still have many dreams and visions but not all of them relate to rave culture. Many of them have come true while others are of heavenly places I have never been.

Picture this, like the room you are in is glowing. Everyone is filled with an energy, the very breath of life, given by God. We are all luminescent, glowing with this energy, the essence of life itself. And deeper inside, some of us are filled with a white light much like a torch of fire: life-giving Spirit, the very life that leads to eternal life in heavenly places with God.



Not all of us have this yet. But many of us who do are like stars shining in a dark place, piercing the darkness. Lights shining where people can see and uphold us as their example as we stand... and sometimes all we can do is stand, even in our weakest moments... and that life in us is a life-giving Spirit that draws other people and ignites them with eternal life, the very Life and Love of God.

Jesus was a controversial figure, loved by some, hated by others. He went out to the highways and the byways, lands of foreigners, and stopped on the street to show mercy to people in need. He stood in front of crowds and told stories. He was with us momentarily and then he was gone - and in His wake, He split time from B.C. to A.D. and showed us that God raises the dead to life, physically and spiritually.

So why do we settle for some replication of Life when the Source Himself is available to all who are open to Him? Why do we turn from Truth when it has the power to heal us? Why do we turn from Love when Love can transform us? Why do we turn from Life when it is our true meaning and everything we've longed for? To know God, our Daddy, our Creator and Lover of our Souls, our Guide, our Deliverer, our Protector, our Shelter in the Storms and the One who knows our every longing, and desires to fulfill us because He put those dreams there so He could show us His mercy and Love for us? Why do we turn from Him and fail to trust Him?

Right now the world is full of young people who are settling for anything they can get. It's like they are eating sand when they are craving water. Yet water is the most abundant resource, most available - why are they thirsty when the answer, what they need and crave, is right in front of them? Is it possible they can't see it? Is it possible their minds and hearts must be opened supernaturally through prayer... is it possible they are not seeing the connection: the reality of a true Christian walking the walk in the footsteps of Christ, so they can see the living reality of God's transforming Power at work in the life of someone they can relate to?

Have we fallen asleep? Have we closed our eyes to the need around us? Do we pray for our coworkers? Do we befriend the lost? Are we so concerned with the matters of daily life that we have forgotten why we are here? Or have we heard it so often that we have become deaf to the cries around us, so full we are bloated while others are starving within arm's reach? I am talking spiritually - people who have never known the Love of God. And if we tell them, and it falls on deaf ears, it's because we have not SHOWN them the Love of God. And we probably aren't

praying for them - because prayer is powerful and God hears and answers the prayers of those with a heart after Him. Pray and do not give up - because the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Like a man who threw a banquet and none of his friends would come (they were too busy with the affairs of daily life) and the man filled his party with people from the streets.

I won't go on about society and culture... drugs, violence and crime. We can all watch the news and see it all around us: what a state our world is in. But let me challenge you. The Son of Man came to seek and save that which was lost. We once were lost and now are found. We know who we are and whose we are. We are eternally safe.

I would encourage you to look around you and reach out in Jesus' name to the people in your community. Pay attention to their needs, pray for them, be a listening ear and a true friend. And be open to what the Spirit of God may want to do in and through you.

Your Label, Your Way: Part 1 (2008-09-17 05:00) - KevinOneel

Getting signed is tough. I would know. I've been going down that road for several years now. Getting noticed is only slightly easier than picking the winning superfecta in the Kentucky Derby. Maybe that's why you decided to start your own label. Perhaps it's because you do a genre of music that isn't in demand much, or maybe even before it's time. Anyway around it, you're probably starting a label as a means to get your own music out to the masses. Well, kudos to you! You are joining the entrepreneurial club of people the likes of Paul Oakenfold, Nick Warren, and Deep Dish. Any of those people can reaffirm, however, that starting your own label on a whim is not exactly something you want to do. Starting a music label requires dedication, commitment, and perseverance.



I'm aware that all three of those words mean the same thing, but being successful in music requires a stubbornness that most people don't have. With this series, I hope to shed some light on how to start a label, and be at least slightly successful.

Let us review the three main reasons to start a label. The first is as an outlet for your own music. The second is as an outlet for others music. The third is as an outlet for rare music. We'll discuss those in that order.

You've been sending out demos for years, but never once even had a bite. You say to yourself that maybe it's time to start your own label. I still recommend doing this, because it's a great experience to see something you start work up and be successful. However, before blindly jumping into the boat, let's review a few things. The first is, why haven't your tracks gotten any attention from the labels you've sent it to? I would ask myself this question again and again. Sometimes, there are A & R reps at labels who just don't get your vision, and don't understand that the tracks you are making really ARE incredible. However, it's usually because what you're making isn't up to par. Perhaps your production values aren't very good. If that's the case, then step back and review what you're doing. Check the mastering....Is everything muddy-midrange sounding? Maybe you need to change DAWs. It could be your arrangements. Anyway around it, pass your tracks around to people you know you can get an honest response out of. These people are your goldmine. Maybe they aren't accepting your tracks because their label is a bad fit for your style. Are you sending deep house tracks to Mute? Send that Jungle track to Hed Kandi? Take the time to learn about the labels you're submitting to. That way you won't submit your Florida Breaks track to LOT49(a nuskool/electro breaks label) when it should go to somewhere like Kaleidoscope or AfterDark. If these aren't the case for you, your production is tight and you're submitting to the appropriate labels, then maybe it's time to consider starting a label to support your releases.

So you have many very talented friends, but they have no place to release their music, eh? Maybe that's why you are starting a label. Once again, this is all well and fine, but it does come with a few drawbacks. First of all, are these friends going to have an operating interest in the label? If so, then clear responsibility boundaries need to be drawn. Make sure everyone knows where they stand within the label so you aren't stuck with a lack of leadership. Also, make sure you can retain the friendship within a business context. Wanna kill a friendship in a hurry? Become business partners without a solid plan of doing so. Make certain that everyone involved is mature enough to handle the ramifications of business not going the way you hope it will. This is where having the right mixture of people is so very important. If you are running the label and your friends are simply providing tracks, it won't be quite so tough, but make sure that you still get everything in writing so there's no questions. You need to make sure you go above and beyond for artists signed to your label though, because this is where your revenue comes about. IF you don't have artists making good tracks, then your label won't make money. If you mistreat your artists, then they won't be

inclined to submit to your label again. Remember that music is a business of relationships, and it's very important to maintain these relationships.

Lastly, maybe you are starting a label because the music you do isn't very common. All I have to say is "DANGER!!! DANGER, WILL ROBINSON!!!" Give this one some serious thought. Maybe the music just isn't that good. There's really no need to spend much time on this subject, except to say remember to be very cautious about such an endeavor. If your music is ahead of it's time, just be patient and eventually everyone else will catch up (Just ask Jean-Jacques Perrey. Search him on Wikipedia.) If your music is behind the times (Be real with yourself on this one, please! It's very important) then you need to evaluate what type of market is out there. If it's not very big, then adjust your expectations accordingly.

If I had to sum all this up in one sentence, then I would have to say make sure you're starting your label with the right intentions. If you're starting one to distribute your own music, and then make sure your music is up to par with commercially acceptable standards. If you're working with friends, make sure everyone has clearly defined boundaries and responsibilities. If your music isn't very common, then grab onto your seat and expect a bumpy ride. The most important thing with all three scenarios is to not give up and expect the unexpected. Stay positive, stay current, and stay at it.

6.5 November

Djing and the Ten Commandments: Part 1 (2008-11-16 05:00) - redsavior

Here's a thought. As Christian DJs, we are witnesses to others about our faith in Jesus Christ. This is regardless of what your position on evangelism is. One thing is certain; there are days when we are going to succeed as a witness in this area and other days where we fall flat on our faces as hypocrites. It might seem a bit trite, but the reality is that when we focus on God's basic commandments and apply them in our lives as guidelines to live by when we're out at a club as either a patron or a performer, we can limit the degree to which we might fall. It is these Ten Commandments that God gave Moses to help guide his people and even thousands of years later, they still hold true.

Sure, we live by God's grace, but we are also called to be holy as God is holy. That's a tough standard to live up to and I know I could use all the help I can get in that regard. Failure sometimes feels like my middle name, but in Christ, or rather because of Christ, I am able to move past my failures and succeed in the long run. So, let's take a quick look at these commandments from the perspective of a DJ.

This time out, we'll cover just the first four commandments. These commandments deal specifically with our relationship with God. They aren't there to scare us into obedience or for us to blindly follow. They are fundamental for keeping your relationship with God in check as a DJ. If you aren't sure exactly where these commandments can be found, check out Exodus 20.

Commandments 1 & 2: You shall have no other gods before me and you shall not make for yourself an idol

This isn't simply about you following some other religion. As a Christian, you proclaim Christ to be God. Not just any god, but THE God. The Alpha and Omega. The one and only true God. All others are false. That's a basic fundamental for us, but how does that relate to DJing?

It relates to you as a DJ in how you treat DJing. The first thing I would ask you to consider is what is more important to you: DJing or God? Is it more important to you that you push forward in your career as a DJ or more important that you push forward in your relationship with God? If you would rather be a DJ than a Christian, then there is a priority problem in your life. You are placing DJing before God and making it an idol for your worship.

This can become evident in the amount of time you spend practicing, gigging and even shopping for music. If you can do all that and still find time daily for prayer, you're probably alright. If you find time for both pray and read your Bible, then honestly, I think you are a superstar. I can do the prayer myself easily, but reading the Bible daily is hard. The point of this is to keep your focus on God first.

In Matthew 6, Jesus said "... seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." It's true. When I seek God's will, He adds to it the other things that I want as well. Not that God is a magical gum ball machine, but that as we seek Him, His will becomes our desire and we seek what is best for God, not what is best for us. In some cases, that is becoming a globetrotting DJ we want to be. In others, we may find that DJing isn't where we need to be, but when that happens, letting go of it will be something we want to do. Christopher Carl and Doug Theodore are evidence of that right now on this very site.

A great Biblical example of seeking God first was King Solomon who in 1 Kings 3 asked God for wisdom. Because he asked for wisdom rather than wealth or a long life, God granted him both. You'll never know what God will bless you with until you put Him first in your life. It's for your own good, not His, but it is what God deserves.

Always remember: the DJ is not God, nor is DJing a god. Don't put yourself or your art above God. Ever.

Commandment 3: You shall not make wrongful use of the name of your God

This is a hard one for me and just about everyone I know. I never say "Oh my g-d" I simply won't do it. I can't even make myself write it out here, but I have slipped a few times and used Jesus' name at least in my mind out of anger and frustration. Why in the world would we want to take the very person who we claim saved us from our sins and use his name as a gutter curse? It doesn't make sense. In fact, if you have been working hard on keeping the first two commandments, you can pretty much say you blew them if you broke this one.

My reasoning on this that if you drag God's name through the gutter, then you are at the same time denying that He is the only God worthy of worship, the only One that is holy, and the only One capable of saving. It also is a slap in

the face of someone you say you love. My mother's name is Kathryn. I would never think about using her name as a curse, so why is it so easy to use God's?

Beyond that aspect of the commandment, it also flows into the music you play as a DJ. Be careful of what you select to buy and play out. If the track disrespects the name of your Savior and the things He stands for, don't buy it. It's that simple. You'll be better off for it and honestly, I think we all can agree since the advent of digital music, there's plenty more tracks to pick from that don't disrespect our Savior.

Commandment 4: Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy

This may be the hardest commandment to keep. One problem with club culture is that it happens mostly on the weekend. Another problem is that it happens late at night so mornings almost have to be optional. Throw in the usual issues of touring and you almost can't follow this one. So, what do you do?

First, you have to make God the priority in your life. Second, you have to be determined that you will worship Him and keep at least one day of the week set aside for that. I'm not going to get into some legalistic thing about when the Sabbath is. That's really missing the point. The point is that you dedicate time to spend worshiping God and fellowshiping with other believers. If you can do that on Sunday, that's great. Just don't get upset and worried if the only time you can do that is on Wednesday nights when you are back home.

The purpose of keeping the Sabbath with others is really two fold, one to set time aside to give God the honor and respect that He deserves and two to give you real and personal connections with other believers so that you can share each other's burdens with one another. Galatians 6 says "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." And it says this in specific regard to guarding yourselves from sin. Through this fellowship with other believers we strengthen one another as we give God praise together, pray together and share with each other what we are struggling with.

Keeping the Sabbath holy will help us in our struggle to be holy as God is.

So, what do you do if you are DJ and you have to spin on a Saturday night or in a strange town? Well, that's one of the things Tastyfresh.com is here for. You can use this site to find and get to know people from all over the world. When you are heading to a town where another member lives, you should see about attending their church. If that doesn't work out, see if you can meet with them before the show and at least have some fellowship and maybe worship with him then.

If you are in a city where you don't know any Christians, head out to a church on your own. Do it in the evening if you got in real late. Watch a service on TV or read your Bible. Some solutions may not be ideal, but spending time with God should be the priority. And like I said earlier, if you simply have to worship God on another day besides Sunday, do it. Don't let spending time worshipping God fall to the side simply because you are too tired, busy or lazy every day of the week to do it. Keep a day open for God, fellowship with other believers and rest.

One globe-trotting DJ that I know has told me several times that when he's back home; one of his favorite things to do on Sunday is to start out at a club where one of his buddies is spinning. After the show, the two of them walk down to his buddy's church and attend sunrise mass there. I can't think of a better way to start the Sabbath than that and, if the two of them can spend all night in a club and still go to church in the morning, why can't we?

That's pretty much it for this now. I'll cover the other six commandments next time. Remember this though. These four commandments deal with your relationship with God. They aren't simply something to be blindly obeyed, but they are measures of how you are developing as a Christian and how strong your commitment to God is. Am I where I need to be on this? No and I may never be. I can be a pretty bad friend at times. I get lazy. I get distracted. But the thing is, when I come back to God, who is my source and start over again. By following these commandments, we will cling more closely to Him and through Him we will be victorious in whatever He has set before us.

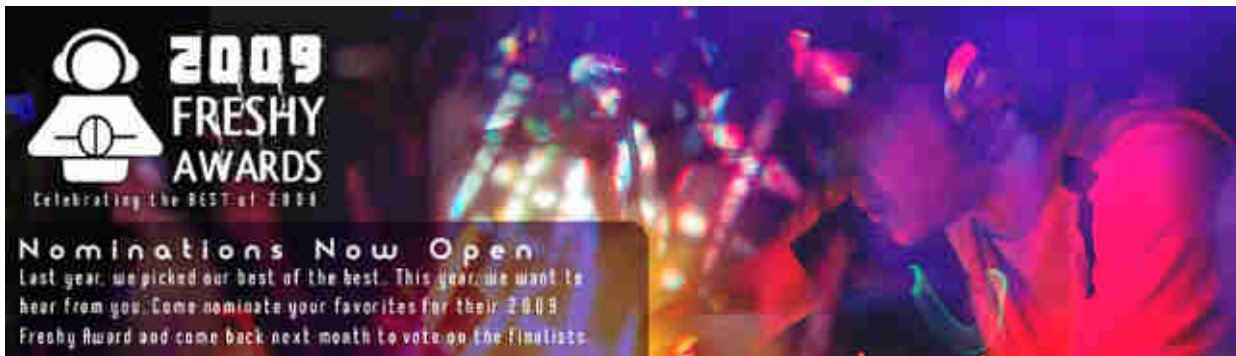
If God is a DJ, be the record. Be the track that God would want you to be. Be the tool that can be pulled out at just the right moment and set the club on fire.

7. 2009

7.1 January

The 2009 Freshies (2009-01-23 05:00) - redsavior

Last year, Tastyfresh.com gave out its first awards. The music industry has the Grammys. The television industry has the Emmies. Tastyfresh has the Freshies. They Freshies are our way of recognizing the achievements that Christians have made over the past year. In 2008, the senior staff picked the winners. This time around, so do you. We're going to have the staff picks and the community picks. This month, you will be able to nominate people for the various awards and next month, you will get to vote for the winner of each category. The staff will weigh in with their own collective picks and all will be revealed in March.



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Our categories this year are as follows:

Best Event or Show:

Best Event or Show is all about Christian produced events. It's not about some Paul van Dyk show. It's about Christian promoters who took things to the next level and put on a show that would rival anything PvD would be seen at. It's about providing inspiration to the next group of Christians who want to throw a show. So, who did the best job in the last year?

Producer of the Year:

This award is to recognize production achievements. Which Christian in your opinion has produced some of the best original tracks and remixes last year? Who has stepped up and out done every other producer out there.

Global DJ of the Year:

Many Christian DJs have broken out of their local scenes, but few of them have broken out of their country. Kenneth Thomas for example regularly opens for Oakenfold. Topher Jones opens for Tiesto from time to time. Kyle Geiger was Adam Beyer's break-out DJ from last year's DJ Mag list. Who do you think has really stepped up and become the Tastyfresh Global DJ of the Year.

Homegrown DJ of the Year:

Homegrown DJ is all about the up and coming Christian talent. It's about recognizing the growth and achievements of the DJ who isn't quite on Kenneth Thomas's or Kyle Geiger's level, but should be there soon. Who do you think should be our Homegrown DJ of the Year.

Breakthrough Artist of the Year:

This award focuses on the people who have broken out and are now playing in the big leagues. It's about the Christian DJ or producer who has just gained the respect of the industry and is showing signs of being able to make this DJing thing a fulltime, globe-trotting job. Who do you think has done that this year?

Release of the Year:

Thousands of albums, singles and EPs get released each year. A handful of those are by Christians. Which release stands out as the best one for the year?

Tastyfresh.com Ezine Story of the Year:

Our online magazine puts out more than 24 articles a year, which one did you appreciate the most.

Most Important Happening:

Every year, something big happens in our community. In the global scheme of things, that might seem small, but for our microcosm of the world, it's a pretty big deal. What was the most important thing that happened within the Christian realm of EDM?

Significant Achievement Award:

Each year we want to recognize someone, some group or something that drastically effected us in some way. Last year, it was the nomination of Shiny Toy Guns' We are Pilots for a Grammy. What deserves it this year?

Well, those are the categories and a little explanation of each. Please take some time out to give us your nominations and then come back next month to vote on the winner.

To all those hoping to win, we wish you the best of luck. Now, get your street team working. You know you want to. [1]Submit your nominations here.

1. <http://survey.tastyfresh.com/index.php?sid=36643&newtest=Y>

Djing and the Ten Commandments: Part 2 (2009-01-23 05:00) - redsavior

Last time, we took a look at the first four commandments. All four of those deal directly with our relationship with God. As Christian DJs, this is vital. We work in a subculture where people often hope to become the focal point. In some regards, just about everyone wants to be DJMag's top DJ. We have songs about how the DJ is a god. We have DJs who stand up in front of crowds demanding praise. So much of this subculture of dance music runs counter to our place in God's creation and what we should be striving for as Christians. Our job is not to become a god, but to reflect God.

Doing this requires a combination of humility, respect, dedication and determination. This alone often seems like an impossible task, but that's where the attitudes that Jesus talked about during the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5) come into play. We'll have to go into those later, but for now, let's continue on with the next few commandments.

Commandment 5: Honor your Mother and Father

A few months ago, I received an email from someone seeking my advice. He was probably around 17. He and his buddy had gotten into DJ a while back and felt they were ready to start spinning out. They saw an opportunity at club's amateur night and wanted to get involved. There was only one problem, outside of his age, the club turned out to either be a strip club or was performing a lingerie show that night as well. They could have gotten in as part of the night's entertainment, but this guy's mother was putting her foot down.

Most of us reading this are probably adults and have been out on our own for a while, so it may or may not seem to apply to you all that much. The fact is that we are to honor our parents. There isn't a time limit on that. Unless you have a severely dysfunctional family (and I know a lot of you do), your parents are looking out for what is best for you. In the case of a 17 year-old djing in front of a number of either naked or half naked women, that's probably not a good thing and might even facilitate the breaking of another commandment we'll get to later on.

When your parents tell you "no", you always have three choices. First, you can simply obey them and not do whatever it was that you wanted to do. Second, you could go ahead and do it anyway. Third, if you know that it is something you either really want to do or you feel you need to do you can discuss it with them. In the case of DJing, some education may be required.

When choosing your response, you always need to look at it from the perspective of what will show honor and respect to you parents.

Obeying them, so long as they want you do stay within the law, always shows them the honor and respect they deserve. Colossians 3:20 says "Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord." Through our obedience, we please God. Ephesians 6 :1-3 says "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother'—which is the first commandment with a promise— 'that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.' This is a reminder that obeying them is has some reward to it.

Discussing things such as djing with your parents will go a long with as well. You are showing your parents that you understand and hear their concerns. It also helps them to understand why this is important to you. This helps to build a true loving relationship between you and your parents. You may think that they don't understand you and truthfully, they may not. The thing to remember though is that they were once your age and they too went through similar struggles... even if the crossfader hadn't been invented yet.

No matter what, disobeying your parents will not bring honor to them. It will only harm your relationship with them. The older I've gotten, the more I've come to realize the importance decision God made in creating us the way He did. We start off young, inexperienced and weak, but ambitious, curious and inspired. Our parents were once like us, but they grew up and now they have the experience and strength that they lacked at our age. Our parents, in many ways, see things through eyes similar to God's own eyes. They can see the pitfalls we're heading toward just like God does, but that's not all, they learn through your rebellion how God feels about our own. Honoring our parents helps to train us to honor God.

So, what do you do if your parents don't deserve honor? This is a tough subject. I didn't grow up in a dysfunctional family. I am friends with some who were and I married into one. I've tried to find the exception to this commandment.

I can't. As a Christian, we are called to love God first with every fiber of our being. That is the first and greatest commandment, but Christ didn't stop there in Matthew 22:37-39, he went on to talk about the second greatest: "And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

Regardless of what your parents have done to you, God still wants you to love and honor them. It's not easy. I know that. God doesn't always make things easy, but he is there for you when you need his help. If you are in this type of situation, please pray to God about helping you to learn to love and bring honor to your parents. That's all I will ask and that's honestly all you can do. Let God worry about whatever hatred and resentment that you have for them or they toward you. Having a right relationship with your parents is not only critical for your relationship with God, but your relationship with others as well.

Commandment 6: Do not murder

You don't see this as much in our club culture as you do in say the hip-hop culture, but it still happens from time to time. Perhaps the most famous story recently is the famous club shooting in Caracas when Carl Cox was performing in 2007 ([1]<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/7082966.stm>).

One thing I would like to point out here is that there are several translational differences here. Some translations use the term murder, others kill. There is a world of difference between the two words. Kill would cover everything from killing a fly to killing a man regardless of whatever the reason. Murder specifically talks about the unlawful taking of life. The original Hebrew word used in this case is the one for murder, not kill. So, this commandment specifically talks about the unlawful killing of others.

As with many things, when Jesus came he brought new light into the law that existed. He put it up to a standard that really shows just how far mankind has fallen and how much we need him. Jesus was always more concerned about the condition of your heart and mind than he was the actual actions you have taken. And there is a difference between your actions and what you harbor in your heart. When Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount he drove this point home time and time again.

In the case of murder, Jesus had this to say: "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell." – Matthew 5: 21-22

As Christians, according to Jesus, hatred has no place in our lives. Harboring hatred in your heart, be that the raw hatred that drives someone to physically murder another or just petty jealousy, is considered by God to be the same as actually committing murder.

John in his first letter to the early churches had this to say about hatred's effect on the soul: "Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness. Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him." – 1 John 2: 9-11

As Christians, we simply cannot allow hatred to take hold of our hearts because it will destroy us. Remember the second greatest commandment: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Jesus didn't put any conditions on that commandment. We have no excuse and yet, often times, this is such a hard one to follow. Our thought life is more important than our outward actions. This is because our outward actions are born first in our minds before they are unleashed into the world.

Well, that's enough heavy reading for now. I'll cover more of the commandments next month. If you take anything away from this article, let it be this: In whatever you do, do it so that your parents will be proud of you. Don't embarrass them or your family. It's a matter of respect for both your parents and God. Also, examine your thought life. Are there some people you harbor jealousy and hatred toward? Have you not forgiven them for actions they have taken against you? Pray about finding a way to forgive them.

Until next time, let God be the DJ and you the record. Live like he designed you to live. In this you will find more freedom, peace and opportunities than you've ever imagined.

1. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/7082966.stm>

7.2 May

[1]



It's All Mind Games. It's 1:30 in the morning. You've been Djing for the past hour and a half. Your set is almost over and just about the entire time, you've had this girl staring at you from across the room. She's fixated on your every move. She's dressed very provocatively. She slowly starts moving toward the booth, dancing seductively as she comes. She finally works her way up to the booth. You know that as soon as you stop your set, she's going to want some kind of attention from you. From the perfume, the clothes, and the body language, you know she doesn't just want to compliment you on your DJing ability. You're a Christian, you know that you've made commitments to God, but what's the harm in talking right? You know it's not really going to go anywhere. She seems nice and lonely... and maybe a bit vulnerable. She probably needs a friend. Nothing could go wrong. It's all so innocent. You wonder if she's a good kisser and you've already lost the battle before it even started.

It's all about mind games. Forget the physical act of sex. The 6th commandment is so often taken out of God's intended context and limited to only mean sex with someone who isn't your spouse while you are married. Jesus however brought startling clarity to what God really meant with the 6th commandment in his sermon on the mount. It was there that he said "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Matthew 5:27-28) In just two sentences, Jesus took adultery from a physical act of betrayal to a sin that anybody can slip and fall over if they aren't constantly guarding their hearts. It seems so extreme by today's standards. Surely, God didn't create sex and expect us to only have sex with one person did He? Everything from God is good right? What's the harm in it? I'm not even married.

So what if I looked twice? Ultimately the reason why God defines adultery differently than we humans do is because God understands fully how sin is born in our lives. Sin does not start in a physical act. It starts in our thought process. We let an idea into our minds. We put it in the deepest recesses, where nobody would look for it and where we can have our own little secret. We then bring it out from time to time and focus on it for a while. We put it back and a while later... we bring it out again a little longer. As we focus on it, we stop focusing on God. This idea becomes a bit of a drug to us. We get pleasure from it. As we take that pleasure we allow ourselves to go a bit deeper each time. Eventually, we exhaust that thought and we seek new ones. Our hearts crave for more. Our minds figure out ways that we can have more. And... our thoughts become more and more captivated. It slowly grows into an addiction and that addiction eventually comes into the light through our physical actions. In a way, this is what the 6th commandment is all about. It's that slow trading of loyalty, not just to God, but to your current or future spouse. As a Christian, you made a commitment to God be loyal to him. You committed to love him more than anything else. You promised to let him live in you and to change your life. Well, if you are hiding things like lust in your mind you aren't exactly following through on your commitment are you? And as your lust grows, your relationship with God stagnates. One of the more amazing things about marriage is that it becomes a symbol of our relationship with Christ. Each partner willingly lays down their life for the other. The two not only become one in living with each other, but physically through the act of sex. Sex outside of this commitment then is like trying to have a relationship with God without making a single promise to love him first. As your lust for others grows, it starts to come through into your marriage. You compare others to your spouse. Not just the physical looks, but the actions, the job they have, the possessions they own and everything else that might come into play. Eventually, you start replacing parts of your married life with what you have developed in your mind. It becomes a dual life. This can happen even if you aren't actively seeking to have an affair. The affair is merely the last physical manifestation of adultery. And it is for this very reason that Jesus put the emphasis not on the physical act, but the thoughts that lead up to it. During these mental mind games, your thought process will be altered. You start to see members of the opposite sex, not as individuals with rights, purpose, and family, but as something to possess, dominate, and explore. It is a stripping of humanity. It's what makes it fun and it's what ultimately brings you down. This is why pornography becomes such a struggle in a Christian's life. Everything that happens in your mind when you are mentally committing adultery ultimately perverts the way you see others. Rather than feeling compassion for them, you wonder how you can use them. You don't see a woman dancing naked on a pole as she really is, someone who may be hurting deeply inside who needs the money and can't get it any other way. All you will see is a woman dancing naked and you are taking pleasure in her suffering. That is about as far from what Christ intends for our lives as you can get. Beyond that, what you see being performed is just an act. It's not real at all. The people you are looking at are paid to look like they are enjoying whatever it is that they are doing. Sure they might be, but that doesn't make it any less of an act. In fact, it's often worse than that. They actually want out and many of them are dying with no chance of ever having a normal sex life as God intended. Here are just some of the facts to think about: "Most girls who enter the porn industry do one video and quit. The experience is so painful, horrifying, embarrassing, humiliating for them that they never do it again." – Luke Ford, quoted by CBS News

- The Adult Industry Medical Health Care Foundation, a health-care clinic for porn workers, carries out 600 AIDS and STD tests per month – How One man Unleashed the porn Plague, Andy Butcher. Charisma Magazine, November 2003.
- 66 % of porn performers have Herpes, 12-28 % have other STDS. [2][http://www.courtTV.com/talk/chat _transcripts/2001/0723mitchell.html](http://www.courtTV.com/talk/chat/_transcripts/2001/0723mitchell.html)
- 26 porn performers have committed suicide since 1990. [3][http://www.shelleylubben.com/articles/Suicide _deaths.pdf](http://www.shelleylubben.com/articles/Suicide_deaths.pdf)
- 45 porn performers have died from drug overdose since 1990. [4][http://www.shelleylubben.com/articles/PI-Drug _Related.pdf](http://www.shelleylubben.com/articles/PI-Drug_Related.pdf)
- Out of about 90 HIV positive porn performers, about 25 are living. [5]http://www.indopedia.org/List _of _HIV-positive _individuals.html

Those are pretty sobering facts. Sadly, these are facts that are not just because people want to get into porn. They are mainly because we have turned pornography into one of the biggest entertainment industry in the world. Again, some facts:

- There are 800 million rentals each year of adult videos and DVDs – Overdosing on Porn, Rebecca Hagelin. [6]www.worldandi.com, March, 2004.
- 11,000 adult movies are produced each year – Overdosing on Porn, Rebecca Hagelin. [7]www.worldandi.com, March, 2004.
- Half of all hotel guests order pornographic movies. These films compromise 80 % of in-room entertainment revenue and 70 % of total in-room revenue. – Sex-Film Industry Threatened With Condom Requirement, Nick Madigan. The New York Times, 24 August, 2004.
- According to 2004 IFR research, U.S. porn revenue exceeds the combined revenues of ABC, CBS, and NBC (6.2 billion). Porn revenue is larger than all combined revenues of all professional football, baseball and basketball franchises. The pornography industry, according to conservative estimates, brings in \$57 billion per year, of which the United States is responsible for \$12 billion. – Internet Pornography and Loneliness: An Association? Vincent Cyrus Yoder, Thomas B. Virden III, and Kiran Amin. Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity, Volume 12.1, 2005.
- Non-Internet pornography can be purchased or used through the Internet and is estimated to produce \$20 billion in revenue worldwide (IFR, 2004). – Internet pornography statistics. Internet Filter Review, 2004.
- Playboy's third quarter profit rose to \$3.2 million from \$1.9 million in 2005. – Porn may be on the way for iPods, Rebecca Barr, [8]www.azcentral.com, 2005

This mental adultery is a battle that the entire world is losing. In fact, they don't even know that they are losing it. I truly didn't set out to write this article about porn. Despite filling the article up with stats and focusing specifically on it, what I really want you to understand is that this commandment is something we break slowly over time as we simply go through our lives. If I were a betting man and someone asked me to bet on whether or not any random Christian walking on the street was struggling with porn, I would have to say yes in almost all cases. Here are the last stats I'll refer to this time:

- For every 10 men in church, 5 are struggling with pornography – The Call to Biblical Manhood. Man in the Mirror, 6 July, 2004.
- According to pastors, the 8 top sexual issues damaging to their congregation are: 57 % pornography addiction, 34 % sexually active never-married adults, 30 % adultery of married adults, 28 % sexually active teenagers, 16 % sexual dissatisfaction, 14 % unwed pregnancy, 13 % sexually active previously married adults, and 9 % sexual abuse. – More Sex, Please. Christianity Today International, Winter 2005.
- Roger Charman of Focus on the Family's Pastoral Ministries reports that approximately 20 percent of the calls received on their Pastoral Care Line are for help with issues such as pornography and compulsive sexual behavior.
- A 1996 Promise Keepers survey at one of their stadium events revealed that over 50 % of the men in attendance were involved with pornography within one week of attending the event.
- In 2000 Christianity Today survey, 33 % of clergy admitted to having visited a sexually explicit Web site. Of those who had visited a porn site, 53 % had visited such sites "a few times" in the past year, and 18 % visit sexually explicit sites between a couple of times a month and more than once a week.

- Out of 81 pastors surveyed (74 males 7 female), 98 % had been exposed to porn; 43 % intentionally accessed a sexually explicit website National Coalition survey of pastors. Seattle. April 2000.
- In his book, "Men's Secret Wars", Patrick Means reveals a confidential survey of evangelical pastors and church lay leaders. Sixty-four percent of these Christian leaders confirm that they are struggling with sexual addiction or sexual compulsion including, but not limited to use of pornography, compulsive masturbation, or other secret sexual activity.
- 34 percent of female readers of Today's Christian Woman's online newsletter admitted to intentionally accessing Internet porn in a recent poll.
- In March of 2002 Rick Warren's (author of the Purpose Driven life) Pastors.com website conducted a survey on porn use of 1351 pastors: 54 % of the pastors had.

As you can see, it is unfortunately normal that we as Christians struggle daily with a screwed up perception of sex. While most of us know that we have problems with it, very few of us openly admit it. It would not surprise me if the above numbers are actually lower than they should be. Something is deeply wrong with Christians today. The question now is what we do or rather YOU do about it. "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Matthew 5:27-28) Are we truly ready to start living as God intended? I hope so. I've had my own battles with this and every year I come to a better understanding. I know many of you have as well. If you are looking for help in this area of your life, please check out [9] www.xxxchurch.com . Yes, you read that right. They are a church organization that is focused on sexual addictions and pornography. They have tons of resources there for you as well as a large support network. If are reading this and you've been involved in the porn industry, let me encourage you to visit Shelly Lubben's website ([10] <http://www.shelleylubben.com/>). Shelly left the porn industry several years ago and is now a Christian who is trying to help those who are like she was. And let's get back to that scenario I laid out at the beginning of this article. You as a DJ are going to be in a club and part of that club life is about adultery, at least in the secular clubs. You have a responsibility to the club owner to play music that attracts members of the opposite sex into the club for the purpose of making him money. Often times that money comes from things that may be at odds with your Christian beliefs. While you are working there though, you cannot forget your obligations to God. You should not be putting any stumbling blocks in the way of those who are there. I would never claim that someone is responsible for making someone else sin, but think about the music that you are playing. You don't need to play music that is overtly sexual in nature. You don't need to encourage any more people to break this or any other commandment. In fact, you are in total control of the music. Play the best music out there. Make the people who head to your club come there because the music and the atmosphere is the best. Don't play music that makes it a great place to pick up a guy or girl for the night. Make the club a place that people can really come and enjoy hanging out at. Oh, and as far as that girl coming toward you after your set goes, be polite, be nice, be friendly... but guard your heart and mind with God's word so that you don't fall into a trap. Keep your eyes on God and let him lead you to the woman of your dreams. That's what I did and we've been married now for over 11 years.

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2009/05/17/djing-and-the-ten-commandments-part-3/alexandgroupy/>
2. http://www.courttv.com/talk/chat_transcripts/2001/0723mitchell.html
3. http://www.shelleylubben.com/articles/Suicide_deaths.pdf
4. http://www.shelleylubben.com/articles/PIFDrug_Related.pdf
5. http://www.indopedia.org/List_of_HIV-positive_individuals.html
6. <http://www.worldandi.com/>
7. <http://www.worldandi.com/>
8. <http://www.azcentral.com/>
9. <http://www.xxxchurch.com/>
10. <http://www.shelleylubben.com/>

chris-carter (2012-01-09 21:35:51)

Great article Dave. Stats were eye opening. Well done.

Jason Collins (2012-04-23 16:39:09)

amazing. thanks for this. you have a great gift.



TF: How did you get involved in electronic music?

I discovered synthesizers by way of Depeche Mode and New Order, after moving and living in the US for a couple of years. I had already been playing piano since the age of four, and had already been composing. I got heavily involved with synthesis after that. I started DJing when I was about 13, after seeing a couple of my Uncles mix at a family reunion. It all just kind of came together into one big musical pot for me. As far as house and techno, my older cousin Wayne, was DJing in college in New York and sent me a mix tape one summer. It was him DJing at a college radio station, with early house and techno; Todd Terry, Transmat stuff, etc... I was hooked.



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TF: Can we look for any new projects or remixes coming from you soon?

Absolutely! I've just finished remixes for Tom Budden on his Alive label, 3 guest vocals (2 of which I co-wrote) on the latest Oscar G album, as well as a remix for his first single "Back To You". I also just did a remix for the latest Lobotomy record called "The Vessel" by an artist named Danny Bonnici. Also, I started a new label project with my good friend Oscar G, called Three-O-Five Digital. The first EP entitled the "Made In Miami EP" features stuff from myself, Oscar, as well as Lazaro Casanova and Noise Artistry. Oscar and I will be doing more stuff for the label ourselves soon, as well as remixing some of the projects we sign. Hopefully, after the summer, I'll get to writing and pre-production of my album followup to last year's "The Narrowest of Paths".



TF: How has producing music changed for you since you first started?

The landscape has changed quite a bit. When I started, I was still using tape and all analogue sources. My studio is now 100 % digital. But, I'm still able to use any of my old classic gear I want to. It's crazy how a studio really now is honed down to what computer and software you're using, as well as the controllers you use to find your way around your D.A.W. and V.I.s. And, of course your monitors. It's pretty nuts. Some of the best music I'm hearing lately has been made on a basic laptop, a basic D.A.W. and a whole lotta heart and soul!

TF: Lets get inside your studio a bit. Can you tell us what products you are using on a daily basis and what that process looks like?

I'm probably going to sound like a company man here, as I'm officially endorsed by Avid (Digidesign/M-Audio/Sibelius). But, I won't talk about, use, or promote something I'm not a firm believer in and user of. So, let's see...

Computers:

Main Studio computer: Alienware Area 51 Quad Core desktop

Auxiliary studio computer: Music XPC M6 notebook

DJing/road production computer: Apple Macbook Pro

Digital Audio Workstation:

Pro Tools 8 LE [studio & road computers]

Pro Tools 8 M-Powered [road computers]

Auxillary Software:

Sony Sonic Foundry 9 [studio computer]

Pinnacle Studio 12 [studio computer]

DJ Software:

Traktor Scratch Pro (with Audio 8 Interface) [road computer]

Torq (with Connectiv Interface) [road computer]

Plugins (short list/favourites)

Digidesign A.I.R. Full Instrument Bundle (Hybrid, Strike, Structure, Velvet, Transfuser)

Native Instruments Reaktor 5

Native Instruments Battery 3

Waves Mercury Bundle

McDSP Emerald Pack/Retro Pack
Flux Full Pack
Audiorealism Bassline II
OhmForce OhmBoyz Delay

...and a few hundred others...these are just some of my favourites at the moment...

Hardware/Interfaces:

Digidesign 003 Control Surface (with a Digidesign Command 8 as a fader pack)
Digidesign Mbox 2
Digidesign Mbox 2 Micro
M-Audio ProFire 2626
M-Audio ProFire 610

MIDI Controllers:

M-Audio Axiom 61
M-Audio Axiom Pro 49
M-Audio Trigger Finger
Korg PadKontrol
Stanton "DaScratch" SCS.3d (x2) (for controlling Traktor Scratch Pro & Torq)

Studio Monitors:

M-Audio EX-66s
M-Audio DSM1s
M-Audio BX10s Subwoofer

Monitoring Headphones:

M-Audio Q40s
M-Audio IE30s (for DJing)
M-Audio IE40s (for DJing)
Sony MDR-V6s

Microphones:

Shure KSM32
M-Audio Sputnik
M-Audio Luna
M-Audio Pulsar II (matched pair)
M-Audio Aries

External Recorder:

M-Audio Microtrack II
Sony PCM-R500 DAT Recorder

Synths/Drum Machines/MIDI IO/Sync:

Kurzweil K2000 VAST
Roland JD800
Akai S6000 Sampler
Korg TR-Rack
E-mu Audity 2000
Roland SH101
Roland MC202

Roland TB303
Roland TR606
Roland TR727
Roland TR808
Roland TR909
Yamaha QY70
Roland R8 MKII
Korg KMS30 Sync Box
Kenton ProSolo Sync Box
Steinberg Midex 8

Effect/Compression/Gating:

Ensoniq DP/4+
Alesis Quadraverb 2
Boss SE-70
DBX363x Dual Gate
Electrix Filter Factory
Alesis 3630 Compressors (2)
BBE 462 Sonic Maximizer
Behringer Ultrabass Subharmonics Synthesizer

Mixer:

Mackie 32x8 w/ Meter Bridge

And some other stuff...



TF: There seems to be a trend with a lot of high profile artists having other people mix and produce there material. How do you feel about that and do you do all your own productions?

If you're not a medical doctor, don't walk into a hospital and say that you're ready to see patients. I abhor the idea of someone having another person create a song for them. It's unreal. Picasso didn't outsource his stuff. That whole thing needs to stop. Producing an artist is one thing. But, having someone else just do all the work is just...I don't even have a word for it. If you can't create, write, or produce music, go and do something else. If you have to use a sync button to DJ, go do something else. I don't mean to sound mean. But, I think it's a total spit in the face to those of us who have worked so hard on our art.

TF: Is there any one piece of equipment or software that you can not live without?

My Brita water filter! Oh, you mean in the studio? I can't see myself living without Pro Tools. It's become this really

amazing creative juggernaut. I'm proud to have had something to do with some of the "stuff" in version 8. And, of course, the conversion and audio quality is unmatched.

TF: Do you have a crew of people that you bounce material off of before you release it to the public?

Sure. My 12 year old Dalmatian, Jak, hears everything first. Actually, he's with me in the studio at conception. If he leaves the room, I know I must be doing something right, because he seems to hate Techno. He does love when I play classical piano though. I'll run stuff by Oscar G quite a bit. I trust his ears almost more than mine. And, it's really convenient that he lives down the street. I can pop over to his place and listen on his club system in his studio. Also, my good friend Santos, in Puerto Rico. But, for the most part, I trust my gut, instincts, heart, soul, and ears. At the end of the day, it's what I'm trying to express and communicate. No one else can do that for me.



TF: Mastering has become more sought after for many artists, especially with more and more digital tracks being released. Do you send your material out to be mastered or do you do it yourself.

I've been mastering my own stuff now for a couple of years. I started mastering about 8 years ago by accident. I started learning the craft, and over the years have become comfortable mastering my own stuff. I also master stuff for a few other people. There are times with my own stuff that I just don't feel like I can do it justice. For those times, I trust 2 different people/companies: Oliver Lieb or Time Tools (who also master stuff for Depeche Mode).

TF: If you could offer any advice for up and coming producers what would it be?

Just about anything I'd say here is going to sound cliché'. But, I'd say #1 is to stay humble. Listen. There's a lot to learn from those who know what they're doing, and from those who have no clue what they're doing. Learn from everyone and everything. Practice, practice, practice. And pray...a lot...seriously. Prayer and faith has gotten me through every difficult situation I find myself in within this crazy industry.

TF: Thanks for your time Greg!

7.3 June

[1]



This morning when I got to work, I text messaged Chris Reiche like I normally do and the first thing he texted back to me was "Did you hear about Chris." Obviously, Chris wasn't talking about himself. I popped on the Tastyfresh.com boards and I instantly saw what he was talking about. Pat D has made the post that one of us always has to make: "Christopher Carl passed away." This post marks the third member of this site to leave us to go home to God. Like the other three, Chris was in his 30s and had been diagnosed with incurable cancer.

Where do I go from here? That's a hard question. When Brian Scroggins of Prophecy of P.A.N.I.C. died a few years ago, a large chunk of our history as Christian EDM lovers died. The death of Christopher Carl is no less than that.

Chris was tied into the early days like hardly anyone else. Perhaps only Carey Jarvis of the Dance Chapel rivaled his position back in those days. Chris was a radio DJ back in California and worked tirelessly to promote Christian dance music to the world. He was so committed to that mission that he eventually became an intern with N*Soul Records where he compiled the first few Eclectica compilation releases. Over the past few years he started several internet radio stations, shows and media outlets, Cast the Fire was perhaps the most successful and best known of those.



Chris always wanted to be bigger in life. He wanted to have that world class DJ lifestyle. It wasn't a matter of the fame, but it was a matter of the love he had for dance music and the love he had of making others happy as a DJ. When

Chris was dead on with his mixing and track selection, he was amazing. Regardless, for whatever reason God did not have this path in mind for his life. In this though, was the secret to why Chris' life is so worthy of honor. You see, in Chris' death we all saw what he was really made of and even Chris himself saw it.

Chris was a man of God. A true man of God. Despite his failures and short comings (who doesn't have these), Chris was put to the test in his death and proved himself a faithful servant. His mother died of cancer in her 30s. When Chris first found out that he had cancer in 2006, he was shocked and scared. We watched him deal with that and slowly come to grips with it. He constantly turned to God. Becoming angry with him never, at least publically, was an option. Even when you talked with him in private, the most he would admit is that he didn't understand why God had allowed this to happen to him.

Over time, we witnessed his hopes rise and fall based on new treatments and some pretty amazing results. God was faithful to him in that these treatments allowed him more time on this world to impact the lives of those around him. He began to take this opportunity to restart his blog and to focus a good portion of it on his cancer. He had several opportunities to witness to other people through it. Through it all, God's grace, hope and love showed throughout his life.



There really isn't much more that I can say about Chris. He was quirky, funny, serious, always focused on music and God. He was a loving husband and followed his wife to Kansas to help her support her mother despite his heart always being set in California. Yeah, he made some stupid decisions from time to time, but even those were learning experiences for him and those around him. In the end, none of those mistakes caused him to be less of a man or more importantly, less of a man of God.

Chris, like Brian before him, has set the bar high for the rest of us. When we are faced with the impossible, will we embrace God's hand for guidance or will we reject it and in doing so turn from the one who has always provided for us up to this point? Nobody can answer that honestly until after they have passed through to the other side of the crisis, but we can learn from those who came before us and in doing so, learn to trust God.

Last week Chris and I had our final chat. In it I told him what an inspiration to everyone he has been. I can honestly say that I don't know many people in this world who could face what he has had to face and deal with it like he has. I went on to tell him that win or lose, God has been with him. The amazing thing is that when you are a Christian in a situation like his, when you lose... you win.



Chris is now in heaven with the one who saved him and radically changed his life. One of the very first articles we published in the magazine here was Chris' testimony. In it he talked about how he had grown up in church but he had become determined lose his virginity in high school and after months of clubbing and sex with his girlfriend, God got a hold of him and changed his life. When he met God, God gave him a burden for those like him and even in his death, that was his purpose.

I have been proud to have not only known Chris on the boards here at Tastyfresh, but to have performed with him at Cornerstone and had him on as a writer, reviewer and moderator here. Chris has enriched the lives of thousands through his ministries. He may not have lived the life of an international super-star DJ, but he had just as many fans and an impact that was so much greater than that of Tiesto, Oakenfold, Sasha or just about anybody else you could mention. The impact you have on someone's spiritual life is a lasting one. Follow Chris' example and make it count.

And to his wife Crystal, thank you for sharing your husband with us. I don't know how God will fill that fresh wound in your life, but he will. Hold on tightly to God. Chris was always impressed with how well you have held up to this point. He loved you more than you probably know. You were a sweet couple and your love for each other showed brightly. If you need anything, just let us know and we will try to help you out. Like you, we will miss him and we never will forget him or what he has done for us.

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2009/06/11/well-done-christopher-carl/dj404playing-full/>

DJ eXtol (2012-01-20 20:27:04)

Wow! I may be really late to respond to this one but MAN! This goes to show you the impact of DJ404. I'm So crushed to read this and find out the story behind the man! Just six years ago I had just graduated college to go work at a dead-end desk job. I found "Cast the Fire" and DJ404 was there to bring me back to life during my days chained to the desk.

Thank you brotha for your faithfulness to push on through all adversity and pave a way for the new sound of Worship. You've helped paint a vision and give the rest of us wings to do what we do today. Enjoy the awesome "Beat" of heaven!

Mark Dahl (2012-01-27 18:05:43)

Wow, way back in 2004 I remember listening to dj404 with the QDawg on RealLifeMusic Show. It was fun to listen to!

I was listening to Spotify yesterday and played the Smashups album with TN Bwoys vs. You Already Take Me There and I thought of dj404 and wondered what he was doing now.

So sorry to hear that he is gone. But he is probably got a big party going up there.

Thanks dj404 and QDawg if you are out there Thanks to you as well.

7.4 December

Artist Spotlight: DJ Modulation (2009-12-15 18:57) - redsavior



This week I had the privilege of interviewing someone I met this summer, [1]DJ Modulation from Arizona. I really enjoy his music and think that you will too. So here we go, an inside spotlight on a great Christian DJ.

Real Name: Sandro Porres

Band/DJ/Artist Name: I go by many names...but I'm not like the other "goes by many names". DJ Modulation is what I've kind of gone by for my solo/live PA sets. But I have two Christian Electronic bands: Modular 7 and KriSand. I also do remixes for other artists under my real name, Sandro Porres.

Genre of Music: The various sides of electronic music.

How/Why You Became a Musician: I was always around music and instruments. Pretty much from birth, if not before, lol. So I guess I was just meant to be doing this.

Is There a Purpose/Vision to your music? Explain:

Yes! Very much. I'm on a mission. It's a spiritual warfare mission for souls. I really believe that all music seeps into the subconscious and can very much influence us. That's why It's important for me to promote a good message and positive lyrics that point the way towards Jesus. Some of the remixes I do are not by Christians artists. But I am, so my hope is that people will still find a way to at least wonder why I like Jesus so much.

Best/Favorite Music-related Experience (doesn't have to be related to your music): I've had so many. But I'd have to say the best experiences are when people genuinely get lifted up by the message.

What did you grow up listening to? I grew up listening to pretty much all types of music. From the Beatles to led

zeppelin. Stryper and Amy Grant. Metalica..Classical, Dance music....

Your music sounds like (ie: other bands/DJs people might like): I'm influenced by royksopp, depeche mode...so some of that probably comes out in my music.

Links to your music/Contact you: [2]www.myspace.com/djmodulation

Anything else you want my readers to know: I

believe it all starts from God, our creator. You don't have to look far, and everywhere you look, you will see how creative God is. He is the ultimate artist. From amazing sunrises to sunsets. To our planet and universe. The human body and all living creatures. God's masterful artistry is everywhere and in everything.

So with that in mind, I feel that humans make God happy when we are creative too. I imagine God smiling and enjoying all his little creations attempts at creativity. I actually think that God wants us to be creative and has put a little different talent in all of us. It's sort of each persons purpose to discover these talents and use them in a way that serves a good and Godly purpose.

I just want to thank Sandro for taking the time to share a bit more about himself and his music. Please take the time to check him out: [3]www.myspace.com/djmodulation and [4]download his set from Cornerstone Afterhours 2009.[5]

Editor's Note: *This interview appears with permission from Jessica Reiche at [6]Proverb31girl.com. Check her site out for more insights into life, God, dreams, girl stuff and music.*

1. <http://www.myspace.com/djmodulation>
2. <http://www.myspace.com/djmodulation>
3. <http://www.myspace.com/djmodulation>
4. <http://sovdesign.net/wp/2009/08/04/afterhours-2009-sets-dj-modulation/>
5. http://tastyfresh.com/rokdownloads/podcasts/specials_ah2009_djmodulation.mp3
6. <http://www.proverb31girl.com/>

Artist Spotlight: Fitzpatrick (2009-12-22 05:00) - redsavior



I'm extremely excited to introduce you to one of my favorite artists, who I just happen to be friends with! Meet Fitzpatrick from Birmingham, Alabama.

Real Name: Fitzpatrick Mauldin

DJ/Artist Name: Fitzpatrick

Genre of Music: Progressive / House / Techno / Various Electronic

How/Why You Became a Musician: My love for music started first through movies and listening to classical music with my dad. Years later, after getting into video games, I discovered electronic music in an old game called Star Control II. I wanted to create music that sounded like that. I never actually made music just like that game because well, it was utter cheese. But it inspired me to get into playing keyboard and guitar which is where I started from. I loved the idea of creating worlds that people could get lost in made of sound.

Is There a Purpose/Vision to your music? Explain: It has always been my aim in music to be a vessel. I personally put my faith in something higher than myself which I believe to be the one true God. I am merely a short stop for this music to take before reaching the ears of others. My aim is creating worlds, not just sound, places that when people listen they are transported into another reality so to speak.

Best/Favorite Music-related Experience (doesn't have to be related to your music): This is a really hard one since I have been blessed to have so many experiences, but still one of the greatest nights of my life was in a small club in Atlanta called "The Mark." John 00 Fleming was playing to about 500 sweaty energetic people. The connection between the audience and "J00f" was incredible and that is what kick started me to get back into music production after a 2 year hiatus.

What did you grow up listening to? As a child

most of what I listened to was classical music on NPR (Composers like Bach, Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Wagner, Brahms). Later on though I got a lot into industrial rock (Circle of Dust, Mortal, Nine Inch Nails, Front 242, Aleixa) and alternative music (even some metal). As I grew into adulthood I went back and started listening to a lot of 80's music which is a big influence on my production as well.

Your music sounds like (ie: other bands/DJs people might like): I

would say that if you are a listener of artists such as Sasha, Gareth Emery, Nick Warren, Shiloh, or the like, then you will enjoy what I work on. Lately I've been fascinated with combining Progressive House, Electro, Tech-Tribal, Synthpop and some breaks into a cauldron of mind twisting sound.

Links to your music/Contact you:

[1]<http://www.whoisfitzpatrick.com>

[2]<http://www.myspace.com/fitzpatrickbook>

[3]<http://www.pastdeux.com>

Anything else you want my readers to know: I think

it is important for everyone to know that, God I think your doing a great job and all, I'm gonna let you finish and all, but Sega had the best Genesis of all time. Well, not really just kidding.

But I would like to say, *just because something is not perceived to be popular does not mean that it is not good.*

Next time someone makes an ignorant statement like "techno is so 1990's" or "people don't like that music anymore" take a look at the world around you. People can only be into what they are exposed to, if you love something then you should share it with those closest to you. That goes with anything, not just music.

Editor's Note: *This interview appears with permission from Jessica Reiche at [4]Proverb31girl.com. Check her site out for more insights into life, God, dreams, girl stuff and music.*

1. <http://www.whoisfitzpatrick.com/>

2. <http://www.myspace.com/fitzpatrickbook>

3. <http://www.pastdeux.com/>

4. <http://www.proverb31girl.com/>

8. 2010

8.1 January

Artist Spotlight: Joel Armstrong (2010-01-04 05:00) - redsavior



This week I have the privilege of sharing my interview with Vancouver's Joel Armstrong. I've known Joel for a few years now and have always enjoyed his music. I hope you will too!

Real Name: Joel Armstrong

DJ/Artist Name: Joel Armstrong

Genre of Music: House Music (electronic)

How/Why You Became a Musician: I first heard electronic music in 1994 and to this day it never fails to excite me. I love how depending on the melody or groove of each track, the experience can be different each time. I appreciate the complexity of writing music and when I hear music that has been written with care and an understanding of the audience, there's just something amazing about it to me. I started messing around with writing music in 2002 when I was lonely in a new city, it seemed natural to me and one of the only things that could keep my attention for more than a half-hour at a time haha.

Is There a Purpose/Vision to your music? Explain:

The purpose has evolved slowly over time from more of a fun hobby to a vocational goal. There's a lot of risk but for some reason I get energized by the challenge to do well and succeed. I feel there's a place for me in the whole mess of club nightlife, I get a lot of chances to talk about my faith even though at times I fail. People warm up to me, are much more open when they see that having faith in Jesus doesn't make me more important or better than them.

Best/Favorite Music-related Experience (doesn't have to be related to your music):

I think my favorite music-related experience is actually coming next month when I've been asked to play a couple festivals down in New Zealand, one for New Years Eve called [1]Rhythm & Vines, and the other a festival called [2]Parachute.

What did you grow up listening to? I grew up listening to John Michael Talbot, Richard Clayderman, John Denver, Nicolas de Angelis and Michael Card.

Your music sounds like (ie: other bands/DJs people might like):

Um, I dunno. It changes all the time haha. Um, artists/DJs I love though: Butch, Nima Gorji, DJ PP, Reboot, Ramon Tapia, John Digweed

Links to your music/Contact you:

[3]<http://www.myspace.com/joelarmstrong>

[4]<http://www.joel-armstrong.com>

[5]<http://www.facebook.com/joelarmstrongmusic>

[6]<http://www.youtube.com/user/joelarmstrongmusic>

Anything else you want my readers to know:

Shortlist of my all time favorite movies: UP, WALL-E, The Scarlet Pimpernel, The Fall, The Mission, Star Wars: A New Hope, Return of the Jedi, The Empire Strikes Back, Little Miss Sunshine, Pan's Labyrinth, The Royal Tenenbaums, Slumdog Millionaire, Princess Bride, The Life Aquatic, Rushmore, This is Spinal Tap, Snatch, Lock Stock & 2 Smoking Barrels, Pride & Prejudice (Colin Firth version)

Editor's Note: *This interview appears with permission from Jessica Reiche at [7]Proverb31girl.com. Check her site out for more insights into life, God, dreams, girl stuff and music.*

1. <http://www.rhythmandvines.co.nz/2009/lineup/lineup/>
2. http://www.parachutemusic.com/festival/index.php?option=com_content&id=12:line-up
3. <http://www.facebook.com/l/d39a8;www.myspace.com/joelarmstrong>
4. <http://www.facebook.com/l/d39a8;www.joel-armstrong.com>
5. <http://www.facebook.com/joelarmstrongmusic>
6. <http://www.facebook.com/l/d39a8;www.youtube.com/user/joelarmstrongmusic>
7. <http://www.proverb31girl.com/>

Artist Spotlight: Kevin Oneel (2010-01-15 19:20) - redsavior



This week I'm excited to introduce you to Kevin Oneel from Birmingham, Alabama. He's great guy with a great vision and (not to mention) a great live radio show Friday nights on boost.fm!

Real Name: Kevin Neely

Band/DJ/Artist Name: Kevin Oneel, Aesias Finale, No Future Fan Club, Harry Hotspur

Genre of Music: House, Electro, Breaks, Electronica

How/Why You Became a Musician: I was the A/V geek in high school. I also always had an interest in music. When I was a kid, I used to record music from my parents old records and pretend that I was a DJ on a radio show. Now, I do the same thing, except with my own music and I occasionally get paid for it.

Is There a Purpose/Vision to your music? Explain: Honestly, I just do what comes naturally. I don't like to act like there's some big, purpose-filled mission to my music. I simply try to use the talents God has given me to their fullest. Along the way, I hope I get the chance to show God's purpose for all of us to those who might be receptive. Being a DJ/Producer has given me the ability to reach people I may have never been able to reach. It provides that common ground I need to speak to people. I'm a pretty introverted person by nature, so having a bit of a persona helps me reach out. Goes to show you God can use all types, yes? Know who else was introverted and had a hard time speaking to people? Moses. Not comparing myself to Moses by any means, but it does go to show that God helps us overcome our weaknesses for His glory.

Best/Favorite Music-related Experience (doesn't have to be related to your music): I'd say it was hanging out on the beach in Gulf Shores, AL with Shiloh. Colin and Justin Moreh are like my horribly removed brothers. We spent the morning standing around on the rather windy beach, talking about all sorts of things. Sometimes, it's not about specific music happenings, but rather things that happen because of music.

What did you grow up listening to? Everything! My mother's side of the family is quite musical. My mom plays piano, trumpet and accordion. My grandmother played the piano. My grandfather was a pretty good guitar player, but was mostly into radio and recordings. Dad's side liked music, but lacked the talent mom's side had. I grew up listening to old 45's and 33's and whatever was on the radio.

Your music sounds like (ie: other bands/DJs people might like): Fatboy Slim, Crystal Method, Prodigy, 3!OH!3, Fischerspooner.

Links to your music/Contact you: Just go to Facebook and search "Kevin Oneel Unlimited" and [1]<http://www.boost.fm/kevinoneel>

Anything else you want my readers to know: People are wayyyyy too serious with music. Create music and listen to music that makes you happy. None of us are guaranteed our next breath, so don't waste what God has given you. Also, remember to use whatever talents you've been given.

Editor's Note: This interview appears with permission from Jessica Reiche at [2][Proverb31girl.com](http://www.proverb31girl.com). Check her site out for more insights into life, God, dreams, girl stuff and music.

1. <http://www.boost.fm/kevinoneel>

2. <http://www.proverb31girl.com/>

8.2 February

Artist Spotlight: Frankie Vibe (2010-02-02 05:00) - redsavior



This week's spotlight is with Gospel House DJ, Frankie Vibe. My husband and I have had multiple opportunities to spend time with Frankie and I'm being honest in saying that he's one of the most interactive, entertaining DJs I've ever known. I hope you enjoy this look into the man behind the speakers!

Real Name: Frank Horvath

Band/DJ/Artist Name: DJ Frankie Vibe

Genre of Music: House

How/Why You Became a Musician: Was inspired to be a DJ when I first saw Tony Humphries spinning at Club Zanibar in Newark, NJ

Is There a Purpose/Vision to your music? Explain:

To let those who believe or unbelieve in Jesus Christ that He is involved in the Dance Culture through the genre of Gospel House Music.

Best/Favorite Music-related Experience (doesn't have to be related to your music): When I got the opportunity to present this music over the airwaves at 89.1 [1]WFDU-FM in NJ for the first time.

What did you grow up listening to? The Beatles, The Jackson 5, Earth Wind and Fire, Stevie Wonder, Kraftwerk.

Your music sounds like (ie: other bands/DJs people might like): Not sure who to be honest

Links to your music/Contact you: [2]www.godsds.com/djfrankievibe@newinspirations.org

Anything else you want my readers to know: Doing what I do is a lot of fun but a lot of work as well, but more importantly a lot of prayer. Have a support system around you, you are not alone in doing this if Jesus is first place in your life.

Editor's Note: This interview appears with permission from Jessica Reiche at [3]Proverb31girl.com. Check her site out for more insights into life, God, dreams, girl stuff and music.

1. <http://www.wfdu.fm/>
 2. <http://www.msplinks.com/MDFodHRwOi8vd3d3LmdvZHNkanMuY29tL2RqZnJhbmtpZXZpYmVAbmV3aW5zcGlyYXRpb25zM9yZw==>
 3. <http://www.proverb31girl.com/>
-



During the summer of my junior year in high school I attended a week long art camp at Denver Art Institute. It was supposed to be one of those once in a lifetime, career charting experiences, but I remember practically nothing about it. The only thing I recollect is the last day; the closing ceremonies party. About twenty-five of us were gathered in a parking lot behind one of the buildings enjoying the outdoors, the Denver skyline, the complimentary snacks and a live DJ spinning top-40 under a tent in back. I was watching the DJ. He was thoroughly enjoying his craft even though no one in our little crowd was paying much attention to him. He was mainly mixing for himself. At one point he picked up a record, smiled at no one in particular and placed it on his turntable. Then, as if everyone suddenly noticed there was music playing, people started dancing. It was an up-beat song: a four-on-the-floor kick, a euro-dance synth, and a bouncy female vocal singing something in Spanish. The groove was catchy and our group loved it. One of the students leaned over to me and answered my unspoken question, "It's called the Macarena."

Now, commonly cultural phenomenon take 2 years to reach the midwest. So, even though I had been as close as Denver, it was another 7 months before I heard the Macarena again. This time during a basketball halftime routine by our cheerleaders. Excitedly running up to their instructor after the game, I made it embarrassingly obvious that I too loved dance music. She must have found my passion useful, because, for the last few months of my senior year, I was the cheerleaders' supplier of quality EDM. This wasn't a hard task, of course. The spring and summer of '96 could be considered to be one of those golden eras in pop dance music. LaBouche, Ace of Base, Real McCoy, Snap, and other electronic music acts graced the airwaves. At the same time I was discovering my own niche amidst the diversity of the genre; buying all the compilation CDs our local Mr Goody could provide.

In the fall I started college. A few months into the first semester I stumbled across a Roland keyboard, and, on a whim, began playing with the sequencer. Messing around for a few weeks proved fruitful. I built my first loop, wrote a few simple melodies, learned to record and suddenly I was more than a fan. I was a producer. It wasn't long before I was making and distributing cassette tapes with my musical creations on them. As they made their way around campus, I began to feel I was achieving a glimmer of success in what was still very much a hobby. But it was enough to draw me deeper. Over the course of a few years I co-hosted an EDM radio show, threw a couple of parties and a small-town rave, tried to start a record label and had my music released on a compilation CD.

Then, without telling the entire story, I found myself in Rhode Island dating a culture-saturated candy raver. She was very excited about my passion for dance music and thought the next logical step in my EDM adventure was to take me to an actual dance club. I wasn't so sure, but played along. She took me shopping for proper club attire, spiked my hair in some fancy style and figured out which club would be easiest to get into on a Friday night. And so, less than a month after settling in, I found myself donning a bright green "techno shirt", braving big city traffic and nervously waiting in line with my ID to experience clubbing in Boston. To this day I don't have words to fully describe it. Amidst the flashing lights, ear splitting music and too many sweaty, slightly intoxicated people, I completely lost the desire to join the ranks of club culture. It was too much for this small town electronic music fan to handle.

See, I didn't originally get involved in this EDM thing because of the frills. It wasn't because of the glow sticks or the famous DJs or the colored lights or even the clubs. It was because of that sound. Oh, that wonderful sound. The sound of strings and synths and sound effects and the feel of a good kick drum. And for some that sound can lead you into the club culture. But for others, like me, it can lead somewhere completely different: a culture of worship.

Allow me to rewind this story a bit. Let's go back. Back past the Boston club, the radio show, the "Hey, Macarena", and even past getting my first CD player. I still can picture it now. I was poking around our local Christian bookstore, and came across a single copy of World Wide Message Tribe's Take a Long Hike on cassette tape. Somehow I talked the store manager into letting me open the plastic wrap so I could listen to it. I popped it in the deck, donned the pair of broken headphones and pushed play. That was it! That sound. I bought it and raced home to play it for months on end until the tape wore out. I did the same thing with Zero's Ravenous, and then Motion Factory and then a brightly colored Manic Panic by Prophecy of P.A.N.I.C. These albums were the first of many forays into this thing we call electronic dance music.

While it may be called "dance" music, I more often found myself sitting perfectly still, eyes closed, lost in the music. I would just let the sound wash over me. But, in closing my eyes and listening to instrumental music, I began having my first in depth conversations with God. Electronic music became a door into the spiritual realm. My prayer life blossomed while listening to Prodigal Sons. Devotions became more enjoyable to the grooves of Scott Blackwell. And I had my first real, vivid experience with the Holy Spirit during a Rhythmsaints song. Nearly every spiritual experience had an electronic music soundtrack. In some ways my spiritual growth echoed the growth of my EDM collection. This symbiotic relationship continued as I matured in my Christian walk.

And then I started producing. As my worship became no longer just hearing, but doing, my passion for it grew. I began seeking to use my own music to lead people into the presence of God. My cassette tape creations were laced with Godly samples and electronic worship surfaces. My radio show was one of a few Christian shows on our college station and the only one that featured electronic music. The parties I threw were for church fellowships and the small-town rave I hosted was purely to evangelize and raise some money for missions. I led worship for my church congregation with my EDM and my first CD to be released on a label was written after an intense Spirit-filled worship service.

My entire experience with any kind of electronic music culture was rooted in my spiritual walk. So, I am sure you can understand the culture shock I experienced that night at the Boston club, not because of the music – I already loved that – but because, to me, their worship was foreign. The dance floor that night was filled with something altogether different than the kind of worship I was used to. I left that night vowing to continue utilizing electronic music to direct my heart towards God and lead others into a holy place.

I realize that this is a personal testimony, and not everyone can echo similar experiences. But MacKenzie Wilson observes in Andy Hunter's Pandora bio that "dance bridges music with a higher spirituality," so I believe such experiences cannot be entirely uncommon. These days, instead of finding rare cassettes on dusty bookshelves, a few mouse clicks will pull up a myriad of custom live-stream stations and secular record labels are releasing Christian producers. Anyone can live miles and hours from a club, and yet enjoy just about any kind of electronic dance music they want. There is now a far better chance for people to connect with the music without embracing any specific culture.

So, it would seem that, as a Christian, I have a huge opportunity – dare I say mandate – to monopolize that bridge between higher spirituality and electronic music. In much the same way that Paul utilized the altar to the unknown god, I can use the music. I can be their guide. Through the sound of strings and synths and sound effects and the feel of a good kick drum I can promote a different kind of culture: Christian fellowship and a closer walk with God. I pray I always keep that in mind while composing an EDM track. Or laying out a DJ mix. Or popping in a good CD. Or simply striking up a conversation like, "Hey, remember the Macarena?"

Business Models for the Underground (2010-02-16 20:05) - gsynth



There was a time when people did not really discuss money in underground artistic and ministry circles, but I think it is becoming far more widely acceptable that many people make all or part of their living in the music and entertainment business. Everyone has their own opinions and viewpoints on where they feel comfortable, some feel their music should impact the mainstream, others feel it should be kept for ministry or artistic purposes, and most listen to all types of music, and find their own balance somewhere in the spectrum. If you want to make all or part of your living from music, you should understand, depending on your choices, it is not always easy, but here are a few options.

Get A Creative Job

Some work full time where others pay them for their work. Companies may have jobs available in the film, TV and radio industries. Sometimes music stores need front line sales staff. Some jobs pay well, others may be in the low end, and may or may not have perks. This offers some stability. Studios and record labels used to have jobs available too, but with the changing economy and technology, are not a very dependable option right now. There are a long list of creative jobs at every link in the creative chain, music gear distributors, songwriters for major companies, computer jobs, background work in the film industry and live shows, etc.

Get A Full Time Job

Some people are able to balance a regular full time job or career and keep music as a hobby. Time-wise this can be a challenge for most I think. But if you view your music as more of an art form and not a business, this might work, if you have time to do both.

Work Part Time

This is a great option for artists that want to have time to create but also want a steady paycheck. Some opt for jobs outside the entertainment industry if they offer a better paycheck. Others work in local clubs on the weekend DJing or performing, and this can sometimes be lucrative if you pull in a good size crowd or work for high end clients. Some run sound boards in live clubs, or book the acts and open for them, etc.

Start A Business

If you're good at basic business math, and can stick to your goals, you might succeed in running your own business. Be creative in considering how to constantly improve and increase your business, while still staying focussed on your bread and butter products or services to keep existing business. This can pay off well if you are well organized and know what you are doing, or could be a struggle if you are not prepared, or too dependent on others to stay in business. It is also affected by market fluctuations, the economy, and supply and demand. Do everything you can to tip the odds in your favour by choosing a good business.

Own A Few Businesses

I always remember the story of a famous sculptor who used to own two businesses: one that made ordinary cups and plates out of pottery (where he probably hired a few employees), and one for his passion, sculpting, which he sold only occasionally for high prices. This model still works today. I've worked for people who own three related but different businesses.

Financial Freedom

Yes, you read that right. If you have a paycheck coming in with or without your physical presence that covers your living expenses, you are technically financially free. Popular options include real estate investing or owning a business where the employees can operate without the owner. Don't laugh – U2 and probably most successful entrepreneurs in the music industry invest in real estate too.

Simultaneous Careers

If someone is a musician and an actor, singer and drummer, guitarist and hairdresser, DJ and chef, or any two things, they might actually have two simultaneous careers. Some might have even more, or overlap careers at different times in their lives.

Hire A Manager

Mostly I included this as a joke. I hope some of you laughed out loud. I understand this has worked out well for a few, but in my experience, if someone else controls my paycheck, I don't get paid at all ever. If you can find a trustworthy person with a good work ethic and exceptional business experience who cares about your career even more than you do, you might succeed. There are a lot of acts that would be nowhere today without their manager. Beware the sharks and timewasters and only hire the real thing. If they don't improve your business and career, fire them. You might be better off to employ some office staff if your business is too busy to handle and you can afford it. Be in charge of your own career.

Be An Agent

If you are good at sales and negotiations, you might like to represent other artists. Typically you are paid on commission on the price you are able to negotiate for your clients' work.

Gigging Or Touring

Gigging locally to a regular crowd in a few clubs, or touring around where you draw a crowd. You might make money from door sales, tickets or a flat rate per gig.

Teaching Music

You might be able to cover your cost of living with teaching music one or a few days a week. The rest of the week is yours to create and do your thing. In fact...you could teach private lessons, a group of people, teach in a local business or music school, run seminars, teach a course online, teach as a full time career, or start a school. You could teach music, songwriting, or how to use music recording software. This is a flexible one.

Promoting Events

This is a business based on numbers. You sell x number of tickets and make a profit when your sales income exceeds your expenses.

Sell Your Music

Again this is based on numbers. You should expect to multiply your efforts through a variety of promotion streams. Some run independent labels or record stores online, selling other artists music too. A very famous and successful one is CDBaby.com. If you sell music you might want to also sell merch, such as Tshirts and anything you think people

will buy.

Odd Jobs

I know a drummer that does extra work for film and TV on the side. Technically being an extra would fall under acting not music. The two together offer full time work, but separately each is part time work. Usually odd jobs are found through networking or classified ads or word of mouth.

Expanding Your Career

In the same way that famous athletes get sponsorships from sports clothing companies, you might find profitable sidelines. If you're a musician, you might find speaking in schools to young people, publishing books, or anything related might increase your career. Even working with children locally might be incredibly fulfilling.

Contract Based

This offers some creative freedom. Scoring music for film soundtracks and producing records for other artists are some examples. This can be challenging if you work with clients that do not pay on time or at all. However it can be lucrative if you work for top clients. Remixing might fall into this category too, along with any project-based work such as designing websites, graphic design and printing, making music videos, short films, etc.

Multiple Streams Of Income

A combination of income streams. Teaching music lessons, gigging, a few contracts/odd jobs, and selling records and merch on the side is a popular one. All pro artists have multiple streams of income. If you perform live and sell records and Tshirts that's three sources of income. If you DJ, promote events, sell your music, and remix other artists, that's four sources of income. Be creative. If you have a part time job or business, or a few real estate investments, you might have a solid, winning combination. Just make sure all or most are profitable and sustainable.

Find A Niche

If you see an opportunity, something people need, or a hole that needs to be filled in the industry, you might be able to make a profit from it. This can be as basic as offering to do pro photography for other local artists, to designing a specific type of social network or online community, to offering a platform for artists to sell or showcase their work on a stage or on the net. Beatport, YouTube, MySpace, all distributors, CD/DVD duplication, merch companies, and most labels and agents fit in here somewhere. If you can be the link that brings together artists and audience, or makes things easier for artists, labels, club owners or managers, or simply supplies a needed item, it might be profitable if you do it the right way.

Create A Brand

If you're extremely creative and original, talented in business, and driven, you might do well to create and promote your own brand. All the rules of business apply. If you view business as a game that you play to win, you might be an entrepreneur.

Entrepreneurship

If the words buy low sell high, fast cash, cash flow, long term growth, and profit are words you throw around like a football, you might succeed as a high level entrepreneur. This is an enigma to most people. But some people can jump from one venture to another and on to another in succession and make a good living at it. All business is based

on numbers and sound financial practice. Some people have a natural gift and businesses are really a game to them.

Investments

This is where your money makes a profit for you regardless of what you invest in. Most people assume I mean the stock market, but you can invest directly in businesses, including your own. You can also invest in other artist's careers. Investing always carries a certain amount of risk. Only consider this if you have money to spare. I only included this because wealthy, successful people always invest in something if not many things.

Buy And Sell

I will leave this one up to you. In this economy you could buy and sell real estate and set yourself up for life. If you buy and sell anything right, you can make a profit.

Something To Fall Back On

If you have skills that have nothing to do with your main interest in music you might be able to work in many different career fields. It doesn't hurt to have skills that make you employable in other fields. However, don't let others talk you out of your dreams by saying you should be a doctor or lawyer and give up music altogether, unless you really believe it's what is best for you. For me that has always been an excuse, knowing that for me God's calling on my life came first. But I am employable to some extent in other career fields. A lot of people work in the music industry when they are young, and then later settle into an easier, more dependable career when they wish to get married and have a family. In times of recession you can get a job if needed to sustain you until the economy turns around, or if you don't get paid for a project, to pay your rent until next month when you do. Good planning always has at least one decent backup plan. Consider if you are multi-talented all your skills for which you could be paid. Most people could fit into a variety of different fields. Make a list of your skills and things you enjoy and you will soon realize what you are capable of achieving.

Non-Profit

This one may seem a mystery, but some people operate ministries where their income is literally based on donations. Only do this if you know it is God's calling on your life. Some non-profit organizations do hire and pay salaries.

I am sure there are hundreds of business models and combinations as unique as the people who create and use them. These are the most common ones I can think of that do actually work for some people who work them. Business ventures are not guaranteed. It really is up to you. I highly recommend educating yourself as much as you can about business, and your specific area of interest, and only take advice from people who are successful. Business is based on numbers and your success basically depends on earning more money than you spend. That is sound financial advice in any industry. Be realistic about your skills and ability to keep up in an industry that is always changing and full of colourful characters. If you don't think you can play to win full time, part time might just work out for you. I always think God gives people dreams for a reason. It may not turn out exactly the way we originally imagine, but God alone knows your future and what is best for you, and where your roads will lead, and His vision for your life. Commit your plans to the Lord and they will succeed. (Prov. 16:3) Consider that some of your ventures might succeed if others do not. (Eccl. 11:6) I personally approach my music career the same way I played soccer growing up... play as you like and be happy.

CIQ Ahead Of Her Time « DJ CIQ 7 (2012-07-10 18:43:06)

[...] She studied the stock market and real estate and creative business models. She also wrote an article on music business models based on her own personal experience. "Then I realized that my time is my life, and my life [...]"

8.3 March

Ultimate Alliance: Shiloh (2010-03-05 21:40) - carey

X

It is my honor to interview Colin and Justin Moreh, better known as the Progressive House icons Shiloh. They have been a part of the Tastyfresh community since it's inception, and over the years they have become my favorite artists. Not only are they professional DJs and Producers, but they are some of the nicest guys you could ever meet.

CJ: How did you pick the name Shiloh, and what does it mean to you?

Colin: We had a dog named Shiloh when we were kids and it got hit by a car and died. We were all devastated and it just seemed fitting to name our band after him.

Justin: [Laughs] Nah man. That is actually a total fabrication. We're actually all cat people in our family. Although our Mom hates cats and so we couldn't have them growing up. Both Colin and I have awesome cats.

CJ: In a short period of time you've remixed Luke Chable's "Melburn", and DjKira & James Warren's "Don't Ask Me", as well as released your own original tunes: Run Away, All That, Landmine Hopscotch, and Chords. How do you guys crank out quality music so fast, and when do you have time to eat, sleep, and spend time with your family?

Colin: Yeah, I guess we have done quite a few tracks over these past months I guess. Never really occurred to me because we've been so busy with other projects.

Justin: We often go through musical spurts and we just happened to hit a good one there that did pretty well for us.



CJ: What does Shiloh do in their "off time" for fun?

Colin: Every Thursday night we have Marvel's Ultimate Alliance 2 night-where Justin, our brother Tyler, our buddy Greg and I get together and play a group campaign on Xbox 360. We're also really into hanging with our families obviously. Next week, during spring break we're going to spending some time at an ocean-front cottage we rented. Other than that Justin and I play our guitars a lot and just like to hang out. Normal kinda stuff.

CJ: How does it feel to have people like Sasha, Digweed, Hernan Cattaneo, Nick Warren, Marcus Schulz, Paul van Dyk, Paul Oakenfold and Tiesto dropping your tunes regularly?

Justin: A few years ago... like 5 years ago... it was amazing. Kinda like a dream come true.

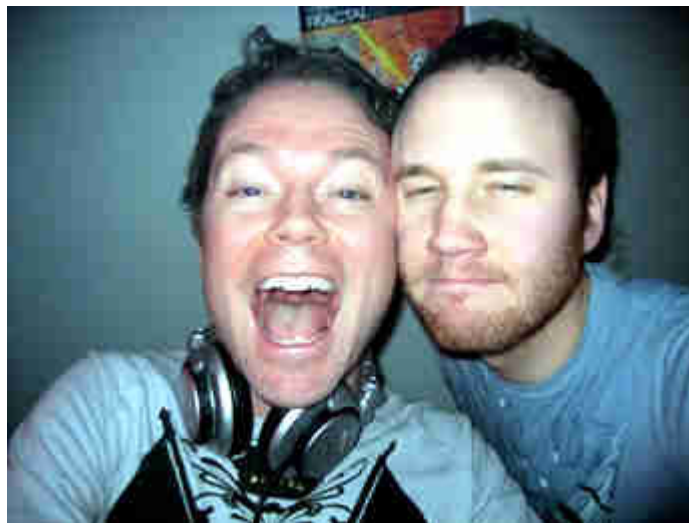
Colin: ... it's kinda like when you get into a really hot bath and it feels like your skin is melting off but once you're in there for a while it just seems normal I guess. Don't get me wrong we always appreciate that support and are truly thankful. But we've been in the scene for long time now and it's really a small world if you will.

Justin: Yeah, we're the old men of the scene now. Crazy to think about but producers and DJs come and go in and out of fashion at such a blinding rate—the turnover is ridiculously huge.

CJ: You guys have produced everything from Progressive House, to Tech House, to Breaks and I've heard super melodic tunes from you, and super banging ones. Is there one main style you like to stick to, or do you just flow with inspiration?

Justin: The short of it is that we make the music that we want to make. Sometimes we really feel something, are proud of it, but it's not a big seller. Other times we bang out a remix, don't really think much of it or feel it that much at all and it blows up. So, it's a bit of a strange one like that.

Colin: At the end of the day it's your own mug that you have to look at in the mirror so everyone has to follow their own artistic path. That said, we don't set out to make crap that will just rocket over everyone's head. I mean, if your message isn't relevant or relatable then you're really not communicating squat. And art is just another way of connecting with people.



CJ: What new musical projects and live events do you have brewing?

Colin: For live events not really anything. Just been sticking close to home. This summer will see us taking some trans oceanic excursions I'm sure but until then we're pretty much spending all our time on our EMPIRE project with Luke Chable.

Justin: Yeah, this summer when Luke was here for a month working on our Tracker stuff we just kinda got sidetracked. Colin had been bugging me about starting a proper rock band for a few years and all of sudden we found ourselves recording guitars and moving into an almost Oasis style rock song. EMPIRE was born. Luke is lead vocals and sounds amazing. Colin and I play guitars, etc... we currently have about 8 songs recorded and we play everything between us and Luke brilliantly engineers everything. We've met with 2 major labels and they've shown great interest. Anyway, we're just still recording and writing, polishing our demo, and seeing if there's that we can properly break into the "big" pond.

Colin: We've talked to Chris "Frenchie" Smith who produced and engineered the latest Jet album and he's keen to produce us. So anyway, no idea what the future holds but we're going to try out best to make this happen, God willing.

CJ: So are EMPIRE and Tracker the same thing?

Justin: Well, Tracker started out as an electronic project and then as it transitioned into a rock band we all felt that the band needed a name change. It took us a long time to find a name that really fit and worked for all of us and we found that in EMPIRE. I'd say that, for the most part, Tracker is pretty much a dead project, as you've come to know

it. It's all about the rock band now.

CJ: You guys have always been very open about your beliefs, so I feel pretty comfortable asking: Who is Jesus to you?

Colin: You hear people talk about being born again and being "saved" etc... I have to tell you I'm the poster boy for that. Without Jesus I'm a formula one car being driven by a drunk 2 year old. With Jesus I have purpose, hope and best of all peace in my life that I could never do justice in trying to explain. What does he mean to me?.. I mean, how much do you owe to somebody who takes a bullet for you so that you can live?.. pretty much everything I guess.

Justin: That question could be answered a million ways. In short—he's my *raison d'être*. He's given me everything and I'm just spending my life gladly trying to return the favour—if you can call that.

CJ: How does your faith impact your DJ and Producer careers?

Justin: Honestly, the same way it impacts the rest of our lives. It's intrinsically part of all we do.

Colin: Yeah, music is just part of what we do everyday—there's not really a specific compartment for it.



CJ: Have you had to make any tough decisions where it seemed that the two were at odds with each other?

Colin: Tough decisions?.. no not really. I think a lot of the time people find themselves in a tough spot because maybe there's a part of them that was kinda open to it in the first place. For instance, we're both married and we just only give off a vibe to girls like their our sisters so, guess what?.. no girls ever come up to us with any advances. And also, I think God won't put you on a path that you can't handle.

CJ: You guys have been very successful in your career so far, so what kind of advice could you offer aspiring DJs and Producers?

Colin: Here's my best advice... if you really like DJing, do it and have fun. Don't give up your proper life path and make sure that you're still moving forward whether it's with school or career or whatever—don't give that up. Treat it as a passionate hobby. If for some reason it turns into something someday then bonus, but don't count on anything. As far as making music is concerned: work on your music and make complete songs—not clips. It's important to experience the exercise of completing songs over and over and improving. If you get to a level where you're starting to get competent then send some of your stuff off to some bigger labels. But, and this is a big "but"... be willing to hear the feedback. If they say there's nothing there then realize that there isn't. It's still cool to make music for fun but be realistic about it. I've seen way too many people put their lives in a holding pattern and lose momentum because they have a pipe dream about DJing or producing. Honestly, most of the people who are successful it just kinda happens organically. They make tunes because it's fun and all of a sudden one day their stuff is just getting way too good to ignore. They get their stuff signed and it's off to the races. I don't think it's anything that should be forced

or railroaded through. So, to nutshell... live your life properly, have fun, if life throws you an opportunity to be heard on a bigger scale then awesome. And my last advice, become a chiropractor. They get paid good money and can take holidays like no other profession.

Justin: Word

Carey would like to thank Shiloh for taking time out of their busy schedule to do the interview, and encourage you to check out their official website at [1]<http://www.shilohmusic.ca>

1. <http://www.shilohmusic.ca/>

Artist Spotlight: G-Powered (2010-03-12 21:29) - redsavior



Meet G-Powered, a Christian vocal trance group out of Finland! Don't forget to learn more about this group and their music by visiting their website. Through their website you can learn how to hook up with them on facebook, myspace, twitter & all of those fun sites. Enjoy!

Real Names: Kimmo Korpela & Miia Rautkoski

Band/DJ/Artist Name: G-Powered

Genre of Music: Eurodance and Vocal Trance

How/Why You Became a Musician?

Miia: It has been my dream to become a real musician since very early childhood. I have sang pretty much through my whole life.

Kimmo: When I was young, I tried to find gospel eurodance everywhere, but I didn't find it very much. So I decided to begin to do it myself. I went to a piano school just for learning to make music.

Is There a Purpose/Vision to your music? Explain: Our vision is to do energetic and inspiring music with touching lyrics. We enjoy music of this genre and we share the same vision to do our best with our skills.

Best/Favorite Music-related Experience (doesn't have to be related to your music):

Miia: Rollerskate towards sunset at downhill and listen to dance music. It is something that really makes me feel good!

Kimmo: In the end of year 2007 I got a mail from international Machine Dance Game company and they wanted our song to their game. They have found us from MySpace. One of my favourite experiences is also our first concert in Maata Näkyvissä -festival main stage year 2008 for thousands of people.

What did you grow up listening to?

Miia: Well at early in my life I listened music my big sister used to listen, like Take that and Boyzone. I also sang with my mother who used to sing more religious songs with guitar. Afterwards I started to listen more dance music and music related that genre.

Kimmo: I grow up listening a lot of finnish gospel pop and rock music my dad used to listen. I liked melodies of many gospel songs, but the music style of the songs didn't inspire me. I also listened many dance artists, but I didn't like their lyrics. First time I heard some dance music I wanted very much to move and dance and I realized that is my style. It affected straight to my heart – literally.

Your music sounds like (ie: other bands/DJs people might like): E-Type, Cascada, Armin Van Buuren etc.

Links to your music/Contact you: [1]www.gpowered.com

Anything else you want my readers to know: If you are interested in making trance remixes for G-Powered, that would be great!

Editor's Note: This interview appears with permission from Jessica Reiche at [2][Proverb31girl.com](http://www.proverb31girl.com). Check her site out for more insights into life, God, dreams, girl stuff and music.

1. <http://www.gpowered.com/>

2. <http://www.proverb31girl.com/>

8.4 May



Way too often I see people who are totally clueless about the process of submitting music to labels for a potential deal. Outside the random Myspace links, links to slow as Christmas 3rd party download sites, and tracks previously distributed for free or by the artist themselves, very few tracks actually come through random submission worth signing. I guess the first key to getting signed is having a very good track, but you already knew that. With that knowledge in hand, here are 10 tips to help get your tracks signed.

1. Thou shalt know the label thine art submitting to.

Many artists seem to have this bad habit of submitting their track to every possible label in hopes of getting signed. In doing so, they end up submitting their music to labels that either aren't within the scope of the release, or would have no interest in the release. Take the time to check out the label's other releases and determine if your track is a good fit.

2. Thou shalt not overuse SoundCloud.

I got some demo submissions not too long ago via SoundCloud that were shared to something like 521 people. Am I supposed to think you really put much thought into getting a track on MY label when I see you've sent it to 500 other people as well? Even if I'm the only label you've submitted to, you just took away 500 potential customers. If each one of those people bought the track at Beatport's \$2.50 exclusive price, that's \$1,245 in potential sales down the crapper.

3. Thou shalt get a second opinion.

Before you start sending out those demos, take a minute and let some friends or fellow producers drag it over the coals. I have a few friends I can call on for some brutal, honest opinion on my tracks. Sometimes that little touch can be the difference between signing or not. Most digital labels aren't in the business of artist development, so your submission needs to be release ready when sent. I don't mean perfectly mastered, but at least have the structure and overall content of the track done.

4. Thou shalt get over thineself.

Welcome to the music industry, kiddos. This is a brutal business where "No" is heard far more often than "yes." Don't let your feelings get easily hurt. If you're ultra sensitive, this business isn't for you at all. People aren't going to go

out of their way to be mean, but expect frank and honest answers from people with no time to waste. This is where commandment #3 comes in handy; it gets you used to handling criticism.

5. Thou shalt not take thineself too seriously, but make sure others take YOU seriously.

Never forget that you got into music to have fun in the first place. When you lose that love for making music and you find yourself simply going through the motions, it's time to take a break. Keep having fun and have a level head. When dealing with others though, make sure they know you're a person of your word, and you have a deep commitment to doing things the right way. The music industry is large, but things do come back around.

6. Thou shalt build an adequate home for thine music.

Hi. It's 2010. Domain names are \$10 per year. Website hosting is \$5 per month from GoDaddy. Wordpress is free to install, and there are plenty of really easy to use free wordpress templates available. Create a hidden page for your music and send that to A &R reps so they can hear your music.

7. If thine must use a 3rd party download host, please select a pleasing one.

I'd much rather see your own URL in a demo pack. If you must use a 3rd party download site, please be VERY careful on which one you use. Mediafire is the best in my opinion. Quick download speeds and excellent security. I hate the ones that restrict simultaneous downloads. Better yet, if the label you're submitting to has a Soundcloud dropbox, use it!

8. Thou shalt not bug the A &R guy.

It's okay to follow up with a label if you've heard nothing in return for a few weeks, but don't start emailing the A &R guy after two or three days though. Chances are he has a day job as well, and simply hasn't had time to listen to your demo. Remember that patience is a virtue, and this is a really good time to show patience. Besides, if you bug the A &R guy, they'll probably start ignoring your emails, further damaging your chances at getting signed.

9. Thou shalt make thineself relevant.

Electronic music is a bit freer than most other types of music. With all the technology we have available, the capabilities of a single person making music exceeds anything ever presented before us. That's also a problem. Too many people think they've reinvented the wheel. Unless you've done something truly groundbreaking, there's no need to claim a new genre. Just call a spade, a spade, and be done with it. If you come at an A &R rep calling your music something like "Philosophical Dance," chances are they're going to think you're some kind of nut job and forward your stuff to the recycle bin. Make your music relevant to current concepts.

10. Thou shalt make good music.

It really IS worth including in these tips. If your track is no good and you know it, don't submit. If you think it's questionable, get some people to rip it apart, rework, and then submit. There's people I get submissions from all the time that can't seem to make a good track. If they keep submitting bad stuff, I'll start to tune them out over time. Really, just make sure your act is together and your tracks are tight before you submit.

There you have it. Ten solid tips for helping your track get signed. Most of it is really common sense kinda stuff, but maybe it's something you haven't thought about. Getting that first track signed can seem a bit daunting, but if you just put your mind to it and follow general due diligence, it'll eventually happen.

8.5 August



It's that time of the year again. [1]DJmag has launched its annual poll to see who is the most popular, sought after, and well best known DJ. Voting is open from now until September 2010. Last year the top djs were selected by over 350,000 votes and who knows how many viral campaigns by the DJs themselves and any record labels they are associated with. Love it or hate it, you know that this poll is the biggest out there and it does effect the industry for the next year.

For many hard working DJs, simply being mentioned is enough to start changing the direction of their career. [2]Adam Beyer made the top 100 in 2008 and was interviewed by DJmag in 2008. One of the things he was asked was who, in his opinion, was the breakout DJ/producer of the year. His response: Kyle Geiger. Kyle, as some of you know, is also a Christian. After Adam's endorsement, Kyle's life got really busy... partially due to just a mention of his name.

I can't promise you that the top 5 or even 25 will drastically change this year. You know that the usual suspects will be up there, but throughout the lower rankings, change does and will happen. In fact, I know the most important part of the poll is not who wins the top slots, but who is new and fresh. Being the best and most popular doesn't and shouldn't matter, but being the one is the new gem is the real winner. And we have the chance to identify those gems again this year.

For years now, we've been promoting up and coming DJ talent here. It's time that we unite and see if we can push it just a little further. Here are just a few suggestions for voting:

Kyle Geiger - [3]<http://www.myspace.com/kylegeiger>

As mentioned, Adam Beyer considered him the breakout DJ/Producer of 2009. He's got a strong body of work behind him and views DJing and producing as a symbiotic relationship.

Kenneth Thomas - [4]<http://www.myspace.com/djkenneththomas>

Kenneth has been around for some time now. He may be best known in the States as Paul Oakenfold's opener, but since then he has broken out on his own. He's got both the production end down as well as DJing which is his true

passion. He has also started his own label: Myth Records.

Topher Jones - [5]<http://www.myspace.com/djtopherjones1>

Topher in 2008 was called up by Tiesto to be his opener on the "In Search of Sunrise" tour. What is interesting about him, outside of his great personality is that until his DJ career started to take off, he worked full time with Young Life.

Greg "Stryke" Chin - [6]<http://www.myspace.com/djstryke>

Stryke is truly a veteran in the scene. He's got more endorsements from hardware and software manufacturers than you can shake a stick at and is even on most of their development teams as well. When he's not out promoting the gear he helped design, he's in the studio perfecting his craft, but it's not until he's on stage that he really shines. Stryke is a master of blending new technology with old and tweaking it to the extreme.

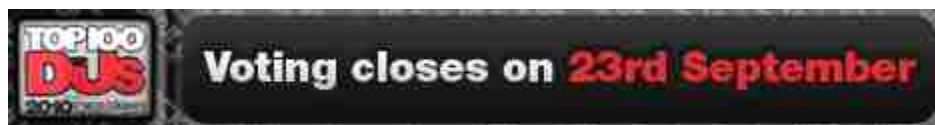
Shiloh - [7]<http://www.myspace.com/shilohbrothers>

As many of you know Shiloh is pretty much home grown. Justin Moreh has been connected with the Christian music scene since the late nineties, however it wasn't until he teamed up with his brother Colin that his career took off. They have toured the world numerous times now and had more than a hundred tracks and remixes released. The boyz know their music and know how to bring it. As far as I know, they've never made DJmag's Top 100, but they should have.

I could go on. There are so many people who have been connected to this site in some way, shape or form over the years who deserve the recognition. And... of course recognition isn't the most important thing in the world, but it is nice to be recognized. So even if you are a bit jaded against the poll, please consider voting this year, but vote for someone you can believe in and someone who truly deserves it.

Here, let me make it easy for you. The link you need is [8]<http://www.top100djs.net/>. Remember... vote early, vote often.

[9]



1. <http://djmag.com/>
2. <http://www.djmag.com/top100/detail/99>
3. <http://www.myspace.com/kylegeiger>
4. <http://www.myspace.com/djkenneththomas>
5. <http://www.myspace.com/djtopherjones1>
6. <http://www.myspace.com/djstryke>
7. <http://www.myspace.com/shilohbrothers>
8. <http://www.top100djs.net/>
9. <http://www.top100djs.net/>

9. 2011

9.1 January

[1]



It has been a long time since we at TastyFresh were able to sit down with Andy Hunter and have a bit of a chat about what he has been up to. Last time we found him, he had just finished up his latest album *Colour* and scored the soundtrack for *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed* with Robbie Bronnimann. This time around he has just released his new EP entitled *Collide* after spending several months touring in South America. Andy was kind enough to take some time away from his busy schedule to give us an update and answer some questions. So take a read!

TF: So it has been a while since the last time we talked, 2008 I believe. I know you have been pretty busy, what have you been up to since then?

AH: That's quite along time ago so I will write down what pops into my head. I have been scoring some films with Robbie Bronnimann, working some music for Disney and Microsoft. Touring, mainly in Europe and Latin America. Places Like Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, Brazil, Argentina, Guatemala. Last year I started work on *Collide* and released that back in December. Also I am trying to get another music project of the ground which I am hoping 2011 will see that come about.

TF: I have heard you had a fairly serious touring schedule the last few months. Where have you been and what has it been like?

AH: The USA, as well as Colombia, Argentina. I really have been enjoying my trips certainly experiencing new cultures and countries.

TF: What does the next year or so look like for your tour schedule?

AH: I'm getting excited about this coming year. I am coming back to the States a bit more after not playing there too much. I'm getting a lot of interest from the festivals which is great. Also I am going back into Europe playing festivals

there, things start to kick in from March onwards so for now I'm focused in the studio.

TF: Djing these days is being influenced greatly by recent developments in technology. How has the new djing technology influenced how you perform live?

AH: I switched over to Ableton Live after Colour so I have been running my show from that using Novation controllers and synths.

TF: Are the lines between live PA and DJ set starting to blur for you?

AH: I guess after changing my set up I am not seeing myself as djing, more performing my own material. I still like to throw in killer tracks though that I wish that I had written.



[2] TF: Let's talk about the new EP. I love it, but it is really different than the rest of your work so far. Tell us a little bit about it.

AH: Collide came about because I was aware that I hadn't released anything for a couple of years and that people wanted new music from me. I wasn't working on a full album as I had other commitments that were taking my time so I thought it would be great to release some of the tracks I had specifically written for my live shows and get them out to my fan base. I guess I would see the tracks a little more raw than my previous albums, not so polished and also I didn't work with any singers either.

TF: What was your inspiration for it?

AH: As usual most of my inspiration comes through my relationship with God and what I feel he is saying to me at particular times in my life. On Automatic for instance is a realization of my life being like a robot and doing the same thing over and over and how you lose creativity caught in that cycle. Annihilate is a prayer to destroy that cycle. You can also hear me talk about it here: [3]YouTube

TF: Can we expect some more EPs coming out in the near future?

AH: I released Collide myself, not through a record label. So far it's gone really well and I really appreciate (like never before) my fans for spreading the word and supporting it. It was almost like a test to see what would happen and I am really pleased with the outcome. I will certainly start work on a new EP for release, this maybe the way to go as I can get music out there quicker.



[4] TF: Where do you see the dance music industry going? What will it look like in 2 years, 5 years?

AH: That's such a hard question to answer, as usual I guess it will diversify and new genres will come (and go). We will see some influence come from early 90's music/sounds but with modern day twist. Be really interesting to see where technology goes and how that will effect the sounds that we produce.

We opened up the Tastyfresh forums for some questions for you. So here are some of the ones asked.

Xen Ochren: How does being publicly known as a Christian affect the way punters respond to you in a crowd?

AH: Most of the time you get respect, certainly if you play a good show. Sometimes people don't understand why a christian is into EDM. My experience has been a positive one.

Brighton Dave: How would you support young people who have a passion for EDM when the clubbing culture has many pitfalls and is looked down upon in there Christian circle?

AH: We need to be free to explore our creativity and our passions in the boundaries of our relationship with God. For me we need to be salt and light, bringing out the God flavors and colours in the world, we can't do that if we are never allowed outside the church walls. I would support young people but would say that accountability with friends and Church leaders is essential.

Kneesha: What is it like to be in an industry that many Christians think is playing "devil music" and how do you respond to that?

AH: Sometimes when people have that opinion it is hard to respond because they have made their mind up and are unwilling to hear a different view. I tend to smile sweetly and move on.

The Nomaly: From getting an idea to mastering, can you give an overview of your production process?

AH: Once I have an idea, I start with beats and getting a groove. Add a bass line then work the hook or vocal idea. Once I have this in place I start mapping out the arrangement, then I start to add transitions, break down, fills, FX. All the time I'm working the mix, I then tend to leave it for a few days, a week and go back with fresh ears. Sometimes I either then delete parts and work new ones or just tweak until I feel it's finished. Also I will check mixes/arrangements by playing them out and then I can see response from the crowd.

The Nomaly: What advice would you give to Christians who aspire to be electronic music producers?

AH: Get inspiration, and produce from there. Be the best you possibly can be and also be realistic with what your ears are hearing. I always ask myself, do I love that sound? If i don't it gets deleted or I work it until I do love it.

Jeremy Lynch: What do you want your listeners and fans to take away from your music? From your performances?

AH: Depth. That's there is something deep about my music/performances and that depth coming from an experience with God. If people can engage by praying or worshipping through my music/performance then I have reached my goal.

2. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2011/01/11/andy-hunter-collide/andyhunter-collide/>
 3. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9P0d5TEWuQ>
 4. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2011/01/11/andy-hunter-collide/andyhunter2/>
-

9.2 May

[1]



I personally was pleasantly surprised a few months back when our long time member Dmitri Vaganov announced his engagement to our community. His wife's name is Irina Berzin and I'm sure she's a great woman because it would take one to take the mighty Vaganov! Actually, she's truly blessed to have Dmitri by her side. He has been a pillar in our community. He's challenged us when he felt that we were cutting corners and inspired us to strive harder in our relationship with God. Often times, he reminds me of just how far I still have to go. In many ways, he's the very definition of a man after God's own heart.

[2]



[3]



[4]



[5]



The wedding took March 26th in Feasterville, PA, but we're just now getting to see the photos. They were taken at Bryn Athen's Castles. And after the photo shoot and some food, the newlyweds ran away to Cancun for the honeymoon.

I hope you all enjoy the photos and please remember to congratulate him in the forums. Also, don't forget to check out his music on Deeplife Records, MK837, Next Dimension Music and more.

[6] 

1. http://www.tastyfresh.com/2011/05/28/dima-gets-hitched/dima_wedding_0/
 2. http://www.tastyfresh.com/2011/05/28/dima-gets-hitched/dima_wedding_4/
 3. http://www.tastyfresh.com/2011/05/28/dima-gets-hitched/dima_wedding_3/
 4. http://www.tastyfresh.com/2011/05/28/dima-gets-hitched/dima_wedding_2/
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9.3 July

[1]



One question that always comes up is “How do you start a label?” Well, it’s really not just one question. That question is really the opener for a series of questions on the subject of labels. Joel Armstrong of Dot Dot Records and Pete Le Freq of Llama Farm Recordings have graciously sat down to give us their take on this timeless subject.

Why start your own label?

Pete:

Llama Farm came about because I’d made a few tunes that were of a level that I was told was good enough to release. At that point, I had no idea what I was doing and had no contacts with any other artists really. It came as a way for getting my music out there, and making a few quid in the process. It started out on just one shop, then expanded to 3, and is now (4 years later) on around 30-40 outlets. In hindsight, starting a label is not something to do lightly. I had no idea how much time it would take up, no idea about contracts, branding, marketing, or anything else that I was doing. Common sense gets you a fair way, but having some degree of business acumen will really help you.

It’s now much easier to get in touch with bigger artists, send them tracks, and generally make a nuisance of yourself. This also means it’s easier to get in touch with labels and find out if they like your stuff. I would say, if you’re just starting out and are currently not professionally released, it would be better to get an EP or two on other people’s labels before starting your own, simply so you get a better idea of the processes involved.

Joel:

I started Dot Dot because I was frustrated with the process of getting my music heard by the labels that I wanted to be on. Several times, I had a track “picked up”, then several months later, they’d decide not to release it. I had this ever-growing catalogue of my own tunes with no place for them, so I started a label. I agree with Pete’s sentiments above regarding it being something not to take lightly. In hindsight, I’d probably not start the label knowing what I know now. My music was still properly undeveloped, and I was blinded by my own sense of pride and entitlement (operating under the assumption that I should get something out of the work I put in, which is extremely unrealistic in this industry, just because I created something didn’t automatically make it “good”). Rather, I should have been focusing on refining my production skills, networking with the DJs that I wanted playing my tunes, and narrowing my target audience and style. I started the label as an amateur (with no business acumen, as Pete so rightly put it), thinking that I knew what I was doing when I really didn’t, even though I already had some musical success under my belt.

How do you find new tracks for your label?

Pete:

The majority of releases on Llama Farm have come from a few outlets. Firstly, the early releases were mainly my own productions. These were great because I ploughed all my early royalties into the label, and it meant I could then sign some established artists and remixers. These are great because it maintains the link between your label and you.

The second group are established artists, who bring a reputation and marketing gravitas to what you are doing. They can cost you a bit more money but are worth it because you are more likely to make that money back. They can also have certain requirements (such as professionally mastered releases, but I'll come back to that later.) which also helps you find out what the guys higher up expect from a label. I generally email/contact them directly and ask for EPs/remixes or whatever.

The third and final group are the hardest to find but also the most rewarding. These are the debut producers, the guys who are ready for that first release. I've had quite a few debut EPs, and those artists have since gone from strength to strength. (For example, Jackin Box are a production duo who I gave a debut release to and who have since featured on some of the biggest labels in the genre and have toured pretty much everywhere!) I see handing guys their break as a bit of a privilege. It's kind of paying back the guys who gave me a leg up. They generally contact me through Facebook or SoundCloud. The majority who contact me are absolute crap, but occasionally you can find a diamond.

Joel:

Dot Dot's first forays were my own productions. I made little money, however, because I was working with a management company that hid all the books from me essentially so that I had no measuring stick for success in the first 4-5 releases that we had. All of Dot Dot's expenses came out of my own pocket for the first couple years.

Within the last two years, Dot Dot started getting a barrage of demos from artists wanting to be on the label. It was nice to have a pool of work to sort through. Unfortunately, 99 % of it was not up to the standards that I wanted to set going forward. It wasn't until I started working with Tim Richards on a production level that I started to meet people that he'd introduced who had very good production taste. Then, I brought Noah DeSmit on board to help with some of the mundane label duties, and he actively searched for people that we wanted to bring on board (our initial target was unknown producers with great potential). The result of these collaborations led to DJs actually playing our stuff consistently in the last year and opened the doors to get bigger names for remixes and promos etc..

What do I call my label, and will anything do?

Pete:

Naming a label is quite a personal thing to do. Because you need to think this as a long haul venture, picking something that's catchy and memorable is a bit of a must. It also is going to be associated with you, so it needs to reflect your personality.

Llama Farm as a name came about due to a random conversation that a good friend of mine overheard whilst in a train queue. The name stuck, and it appealed to our sense of humour (yes, its a bit surreal, but it was very "us").

Doing some research before you go about naming your new baby is a very good idea. You want to make sure that no one can confuse your label with anything else in the genre and that people can see a clear "brand" in the name. This ties in with coming up with a logo that is memorable and has some scope to play around with for artwork for your releases.

Joel:

Yeah, it is quite personal naming a label. I tried to balance something that reflected the direction my music was going and had universal marketing potential: something memorable to everyone and yet personal to me and with endless possibilities for design. I get bored easily, so my tastes constantly fluctuate, and Dot Dot was perfect for my temperamental personality.

Is there anything else I need to set up before I try and get my tracks in the shops?

Pete:

Once you've got the name, the logo, and a few tracks ready for release, now is a good time to start a web presence in the name of the label. Setting up SoundCloud accounts, Facebook pages, and maybe a blog are all good ways of getting yourself known about. The best way to get yourself known quickly though is to get yourself a radio show. I do a weekly 1-hour slot (Tuesdays @ 8:00pm GMT/BST, shameless plug!), and it's that that will give you a bigger profile. Your own website is equally important. The best advice is to start small and build slowly and at a sensible pace....

Joel:

Yeah, web presence is key. Radio shows or podcasts are great ways to get your tastes out to people. Places like podomatic.com or podcastmachine.com are free for basic accounts. Submitting your RSS feed to iTunes is really simple as well if you want inclusion on their list. I try to submit my mixes/casts to as many sources as possible as you can get a different following for each site. One tip with running your own site or blog is to talk about music that you like that's not associated with your label. It humanizes your identity and makes you more interesting as well. It's also a decent way to make connections with artists you might want on your label down the road by doing an interview or a review of their latest release (it's worked for me).

Our next series for TF articles will tackle some of the questions below, we might split some of it up if the content gets too wordy:

- What's a distributor, and do I need one?
- How often should I release songs on the label?
- How many tracks should I have on each release?
- What's the process involved in signing someone else's track to my label?
- What happens if I pick up a track, then decide not to release it?
- How do I ethically build a promo list?
- Should I use a promo service?
- Why should I pay for mastering?
- What's an advance?
- Should I pay advances for remixers?
- What kind of deal can I expect from a label, and will I get an advance?

1. http://www.tastyfresh.com/2011/07/21/how-not-to-run-a-record-label-a-guide-to-making-it-up-as-you-go-along/how_not_01/

9.4 October

Four Questions with Dave Richards (2011-10-31 01:13) - redsavior

[1]



Dave Richards is the current director of Tastyfresh.com. He and Kevin Oneel also run a small electronic label known simply as [2]MK837. David produces tech house, progressive house and tribal house. He lives in Atlanta, Ga with his wife and son.

How long have you been a member of Tastyfresh?

I first discovered Tastyfresh in 1996. It's been an anchor in my life ever since, spurring me forward in my craft.

What first intrigued you about it?

Back in 1996, there was basically one place on the web for Christians who loved house and techno. That was N*Soul Records' site. Tastyfresh came along pretty much out of no where as a news and information site for Christian DJs. Back then, the site was run by Jamey Wright and Andy Payne. As with the rest of the web, it was pretty barebones, but everything we needed back then was there... news AND information. It wasn't until about four years later that the site even had forums.

What have you learned from the site?

A lot to be honest. When I first came to the site, I was really excited about dance music. I didn't know how to make it, I wasn't a dj or a producer back then. I had the opportunity to come in contact with a lot of the emerging Christian scene's founders like Jamey, Scott Blackwell, Brian Scroggins and more. Over the years I learned the importance of having a mentor as Jamey Wright pretty much walked me from being totally production ignorant to my first release on N*Soul Records. Now instead of receiving from the Tastyfresh community, I'm doing my best to give back. I'm not always good at it, but it is something I'm actively working on.

Where do you see the site going in the next few years?

Tastyfresh has been around almost since the very beginning of what most of us view as the web. I can't really imagine the web without it. We're also a very niche site. What's odd about it is that consistently since at least 2000, we've had between 5,000 - 7,000 people viewing the site a month. Sure we have more than that at times, but not often. I don't see Tastyfresh growing into a huge site with hundreds of thousands of visitors. I don't think that's God's plan for it.

God's plan, I feel, is to target those he wants to use for his purpose and to help them learn how to accomplish it.

If God's purpose is for them to be a globetrotting DJ, great. If it's for them to be a bedroom producer, great! If it's to start a revival, awesome. Tastyfresh will continue to be what it always has been, a resource for those who love club music and a refuge for those who need someone who understands them. We're about educating, encouraging and restoring here. We're also a family. We butt heads at times, but we're still family and honestly... that's what families do.



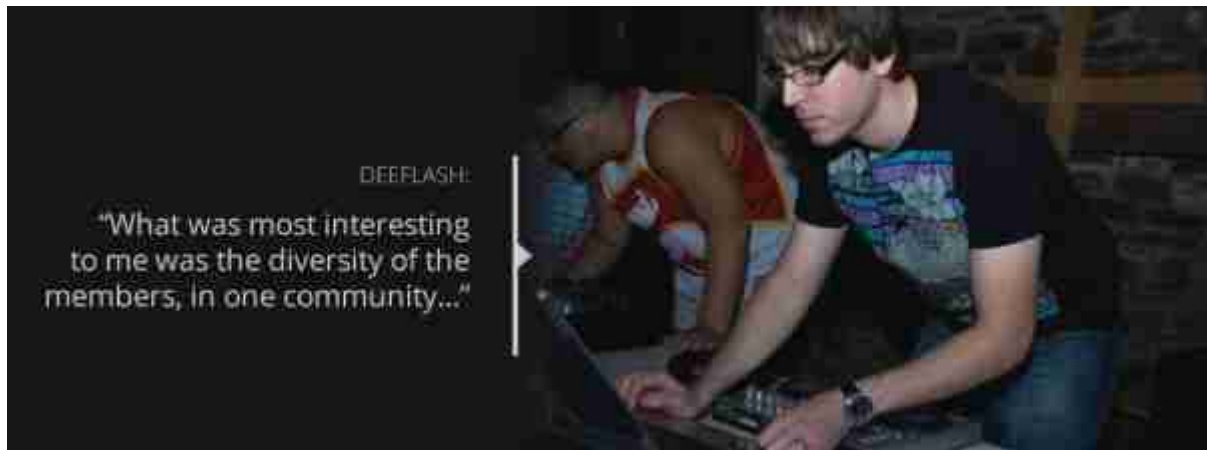
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1. http://www.tastyfresh.com/wordpress/?attachment_id=621
2. <http://www.mk837.com/>
3. http://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fapi.soundcloud.com%2Fusers%2F33429&show_artwork=true

9.5 November

Four Questions with Deeflash (2011-11-05 01:49) - redsavior

[1]



Deeflash is a music producer/DJ from Poughkeepsie, NY. In 2004, he took his top passions and fused them together - knowing the results would be something New York had never heard before. He is regionally known for DJing at youth groups, concerts, cafes and clubs, and DJing alongside internationally-known artists (Greg "Stryke" Chin, Tim Richards, Joel Armstrong) at Cornerstone Festival in Illinois. In the studio, he produces tech and progressive house.

How long have you been a member of Tastyfresh?

I have been a member of Tastyfresh since 2004.

What first intrigued you about it?

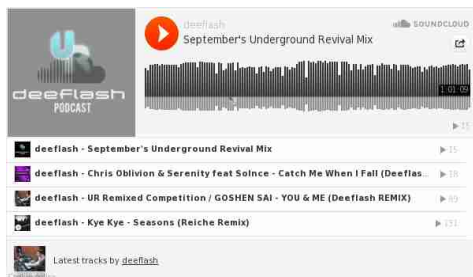
I was searching for Christian Dance music, and was surprised to find that there was a whole community dedicated to finding, producing, and supporting dance music and the stuff coming out from the members was very good quality. What was most interesting to me was the diversity of the members, in one community there were ravers, DJs, producers, promoters, pastors, worship leaders, and people who just liked dance music.

What have you learned from the site?

When I first found Tastyfresh, my only involvement with music was playing keyboards at my church. With the support of the members of Tastyfresh, I learned to DJ, produce my own music, release on multiple labels, and then start a label with Dave Richards and Kevin Oneel.

Where do you see the site going in the next few years?

I see it staying the best site for those looking to learn how to get involved in the electronic music culture and a key place to network and learn from people who have been involved in the industry for many years. Tastyfresh is a community full of people who are at all different levels of expertise and experience and looking to help each other.



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1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2011/11/05/four-questions-with-deeflash/slide-deeflash/>
 2. http://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fapi.soundcloud.com%2Fusers%2F274973&show_artwork=true
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Four Questions with StumbleBum (2011-11-06 18:31) - redsavior

[1]



I produce dubstep, drum & bass, and electro house under the name StumbleBum. I have been producing for about 12 years. Recently, I have spent more time working under the moniker nomold and producing hip hop. There are currently several projects that I am deeply involved in that should be releasing in 2012.

How long have you been a member of Tastyfresh?

Not 100 % sure. At least 11 years. Probably closer to 13.

What first intrigued you about it?

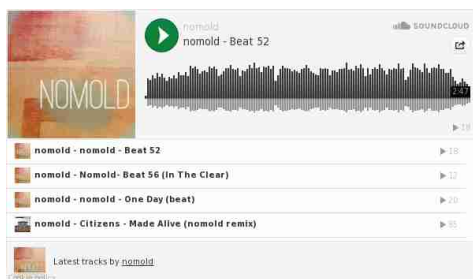
I was really into EDM in high school. I was also a follower of Jesus. Just seemed to fit naturally.

What have you learned from the site?

Tastyfresh and my interest in production coincided. The feedback and responses from people on this site were what drove me to improve in my production skill and technique. Without this site, I really would not be where I am today...as I learned a lot from other board members here.

Where do you see the site going in the next few years?

A site like this is driven by the community. It will go only as far as the current members allow it to. With increasing interest in EDM from pop culture, more and more people will stumble across Tastyfresh. Because of that, it should increase this community's ability to have influence as long as the members of this community continue to follow in a healthy direction.



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1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2011/11/06/four-questions-with-stumblebum/slide-stumblebum/>

2. [http://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fapi.soundcloud.com%2Fusers%2F5328922&auto_play=false&show _artwork=true&color=0d8346](http://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fapi.soundcloud.com%2Fusers%2F5328922&auto_play=false&show_artwork=true&color=0d8346)

9.6 December

Four Questions with Silverfilter (2011-12-19 12:56) - redsavior

[1]



Silverfilter is a live PA, Producer/Remixer, DJ, and studio owner who has built himself up thru his live electronic performances and productions released thru various labels across the globe. Dabbling in the extremes, you can find releases from chillout tracks onto more housey tunes and into breaks and tech territory.

How long have you been a member of Tastyfresh?

I believe I joined around 2004 or 2005. I posted a few times and then wasn't as active for a few years. I just recently picked up on participation again having finally put it in my bookmarks tab so I can frequent it

What first intrigued you about it?

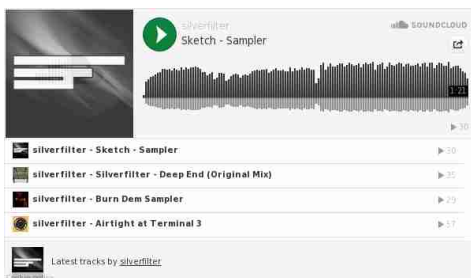
That it was a community of Christians enthusiastic about club music! I really loved that fact. I felt like it was home somehow.

What have you learned from the site?

I've learned a lot in the exchange of ideas in terms of production, marketing, promotion and I'm looking forward to more. Seeing that as Christians, there's an alternative way to do all these things was great and it's good getting insights from fellow brothers in Christ. I'm very picky or at least not as active in other forums. I really take time to choose which ones I join and visit often and Tasty is in my top 5 because of the positive vibe shared in the posts.

Where do you see the site going in the next few years?

With the recent changes, I'm hoping that the community builds up with more active members to add to the pot of ideas. I'm hoping the site will not to explode out of proportion but to have a steady growth with quality than just numbers.



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1. http://www.tastyfresh.com/?attachment_id=1907

2. http://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fapi.soundcloud.com%2Fusers%2F170386&auto_play=false&show_artwork=true&color=0d8346

Josiah-Fingaz (2012-01-10 10:26:03)

This is really great! Awesome songs to listen to as well.

Four Questions with Xen Ochren (2011-12-19 13:11) - redsavior

[1]



Xen Ochren Is Evan Morgan, producer, composer, sound designer, DJ. With charting releases for V.I.M. Records and Beatport feature attention, Xen is attempting to hone an emerging sound of deep, proggy, bush doof breaks; drawing heavily on prog breaks, prog psy and melodic techno as his main influences. The result is an energetic, head down dance floor experience, with diverse and ever flowing tangents and directions... Xen acknowledges his dependance on Spirit, land, and technology.

How long have you been a member of Tastyfresh?

I've been around maybe 2 years now.

What first intrigued you about it?

Well I was suprised that when I had first searched for something like this site 7 years ago nothing came up. I searched again 2 years ago and bam here it all was... a thriving community of people who gave a crap about each other, and were unified by same basic faith, and an interest in dance music. usually an alienating combination!

What have you learned from the site?

I have learned some information on the industry from Tastyfresh, but its really about the different perspectives and opinions here. Its unusual to get people of all different dance music genre's hanging out in the one place.

Where do you see the site going in the next few years?

I would like to see much stronger connectivity with soundcloud. I would like to be able to show works in progress here and get feedback on tracks. I would also love a system which encourages me to do the same for others! maybe a points system?



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1. http://www.tastyfresh.com/?attachment_id=1914

2. http://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fapi.soundcloud.com%2Fusers%2F420782&auto_play=false&show_a
rtwork=true&color=0d8346

Four Questions with Joel Armstrong (2011-12-22 13:36) - redsavior

[1]



Joel Armstrong is the owner of Dot Dot Records and is a resident of Vancouver, Canada. He has also released music on Circle Music Germany, ALiVE, Oosh, Flow Vinyl, Baroque, Iboga and more.

How long have you been a member of Tastyfresh?

Member since 2001

What first intrigued you about it?

Was curious how Christians could be in the club scene.

What have you learned from the site?

Learned more about getting along with other Christians than I did about how to survive in the club scene.

Where do you see the site going in the next few years?

Don't know where its going but, I'm hoping we grow closer as a community to support each other, both the people behind the scenes and the people buried in the club scene.



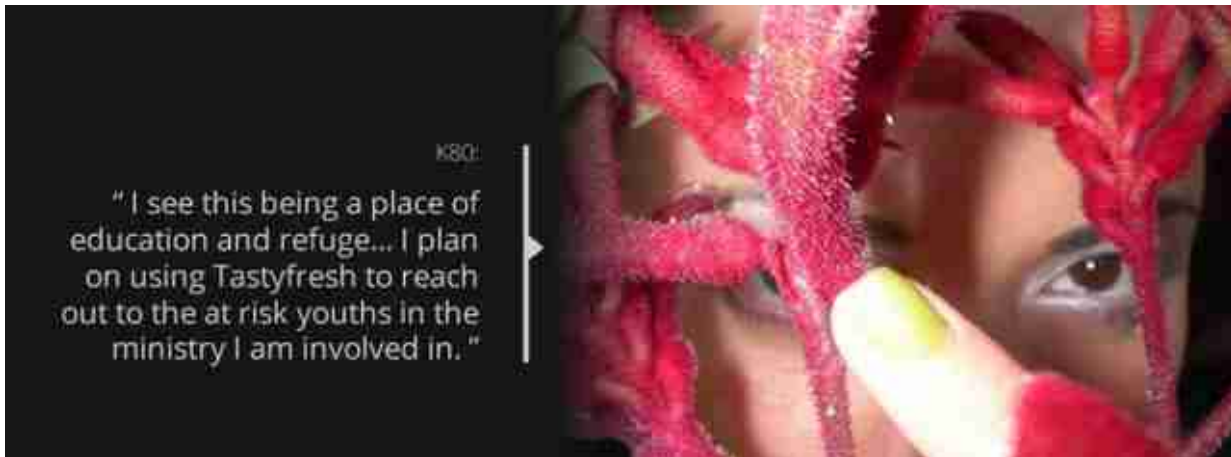
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1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2011/12/22/four-questions-with-joel-armstrong/slide-joelarmstrong2/>

2. http://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fapi.soundcloud.com%2Fusers%2F10439&auto_play=false&show_artwork=true&color=0d8346

Four Questions with K80 (2011-12-22 13:50) - redsavior

[1]



K80 is an avid listener of many D &B/House genres. Serious consumer.

How long have you been a member of Tastyfresh?

Only for a few months now

What first intrigued you about it?

I was curious to see what or who would pop up when I googled Christian DJ's. And there I found Tasty Fresh. I had no idea such a platform existed! There's nothing worse than indulging in some stonkin tunes only to hear hard cussing or some over sexualized samples being threaded through an otherwise intelligently composed track. Total bummer. But there is hope!

What have you learned from the site?

That Christians get down with no delay.

Where do you see the site going in the next few years?

I see this being a place of education and refuge. Shows like Jersey shore distort the perception of so many kids, Electronic music is seen as an opportunity to do hard drugs/liquor and "fist pump" till your hands fall off. It is a negative representation of the dance scene. I plan on using tasty fresh to reach out to the at risk youths in the ministry I am involved in. How? Simply by dropping its name. I know the Lord has blessed you guys to do great things.

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2011/12/22/four-questions-with-k80/slide-k80/>

Josiah-Fingaz (2012-01-10 12:00:11)

Thanks for sharing Katie! Glad to have you aboard.

10. 2012

10.1 January

Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it. (2012-01-07 05:11) - D-D-Praz

[1]



Recently a friend described these disturbing actions and statements made by many of the people he has in his life. He detailed abhorrent emotional abuses in the manner of “power and control” manipulation, deception, chronic belittlement, and verbal degradation. The severity of these seemed so disturbing to me that I prayed and meditated over how to respond; and searched the Scriptures for any and all truths and encouragement I could find. Here is one verse from among many that I shared:

“For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things” –Matthew 12:34-35

But after sharing these, my friend responded: “Come on, you don’t really believe all that. Like just because someone says evil and wicked things, that their heart is wicked?” This very challenge to my beliefs overwhelmed me, and prompted an intense research of the Scripture to discover what God has to say about the heart. What I discovered was amazing.

“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.” –Proverbs 4:23

“As water reflects the face, so one’s life reflects the heart” –Proverbs 27:19

Is the heart just a physical organ that transfers clean and unclean blood throughout the human body, and when it stops the person dies? Is the heart that organ; and a little more, something symbolic about our feelings of love and hate? NO ... Everything that defines us physically, mentally, and spiritually – the very essence of our being – is a condition of the heart. How we behave or act in any situation – who we “think” we are – is controlled first by our heart. Our thoughts and attitude come from the heart, and not our intellect.

“For it is from within, out of a person’s heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly.” –Mark 7:21-22

“A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.” –Luke 6:45

“He who plots evil with deceit in his heart— he always stirs up conflict.” -Proverbs 6:14

Sometimes we act out in ways that are not healthy for us or our relationships. Perhaps we unintentionally scream out hateful rhetoric or behave violently when we are provoked, and want this to change. Maybe we want to do more to help others, but remain selfish, indifferent, or feel uncharitable. Many struggle with addictions, resentments, and unforgiveness. What about us musicians that are somehow lacking inspiration; or other artists that cannot find motivation to start or finish a project. The question seems to be, then, have you considered the condition of your heart? It is critical we responsibly protect our hearts. We must “guard” our hearts holistically – meaning each physically, mentally, and spiritually. Other Biblical references state to do this “with all diligence,” and describe our hearts as the “well-spring of life.”

“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” –Hebrews 4:12

There are over 700 references to the heart in the Bible. For both believers and non-believers – regardless what application the Scriptures have in your life – there are numerous parallels to what the Bible teaches about the heart, and what contemporary psychologists allude to in treatment. We know that our feelings – or something about our mental condition – have its source in our hearts. Many heartfelt feelings described in the Bible include: hate, love, lusts, fear, pain, pride, despair, terror, joy, hope, longings, desire, yearnings, sadness, thankfulness, sorrow, cravings, malice, trust, anguish, rebellion, enmity, greed, gentleness, forgiveness, compassion, worrying, sincerity, lying, encouragement, anxiety ... and more. The Bible plainly describes how our character and personalities are also a condition of the heart. Our stubbornness, knowledge (personal experience), morality, Faith, loyalty, commitment, integrity, wisdom, devotion, hard-work, understanding, beliefs, madness, evil, ... all this is first determined in the heart, before the intellect. Our thoughts originate from what is within our hearts. Even our motivation, obedience, memories, discernment between right and wrong, the ability to seek GOD, our meditations, grievances, perversity, being drawn to evil, the rejection of truth, singing and making music — all this comes from the heart, first, and not intelligence!

While ludicrous amounts of money are spent on mental health professionals each year, so much of our own maladies could be healed or corrected if we only took the time to discover something about our hearts, and preventatively “guard” them. We do not imply that mental health professionals are a wasted effort, yet firmly believe the trained guidance of a professional is a necessary means for personal accountability and safety. Medications are useful in controlling errant behaviors; however like most, they only treat the symptoms and not the illness. Similarly what people spend on self-help literature and other remedies can be considered frivolous. The “power of positive thinking” and “envisioning our goals” just doesn’t work if one’s “heart is not in it” – and many people for many reasons are incapable of changing that about themselves. Even more tragic, we as humans cannot fully understand our own hearts — much less can any counselor or mentor genuinely understand yours.

“Each heart knows its own bitterness, and no one else can share its joy.” – Proverbs 14:10

“People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart” – 1 Samuel 16:17

Being Christian, means we have absolute confidence that what we do not understand, God does. What we cannot control or change, God could. The Scriptures are not just some words of wisdom, or “Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth” (B-I-B-L-E); but that they are God-breathed (alive), inspired, and taught to us spiritually by an indwelling Holy Spirit. They are a reliable source for what God is saying to us about our situations and who we are, when we earnestly seek Him for understanding, control, or change. Per the complexities of our heart, Psalms 33:15 tells us God “formed the hearts of all” and “considers everything we do.” There are countless more Scriptures detailing that only God can probe the hearts of men, and understand them – after all, He intelligently designed us with them. Ecclesiastes 3:11 states that God “set eternity in the human heart,” creating us with a predisposition to knowing there is some “eternal” afterlife (with or without Him). Something shocking to learn is that God can – if He chooses – control our own heart.

How God “controls” the hearts of men is described in Scripture in various ways. When Moses was urging the Egypt-

tian Pharaoh to let the Hebrews leave, God told Moses repeatedly that He would harden the hearts of the Egyptians, the Pharaoh, and his advisors! When dealing with the obstinate idolatries of the Israelis, the Bible describes God's judgment and how He makes the "heart of this people calloused; their ears dull and closes their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed."-Isaiah 6:10. Other references describe God placing a "veil over their hearts." God also moves men's hearts to action, including Cyrus the king of Persia, who allowed the exiled Israelis to return to Jerusalem and rebuild their temple. Several times God "moved the hearts" of men in battle. For us as individuals, we discover our Creator controlling (or recapturing) us to seek Him, to understand Him, to gain strength or wisdom or joy, to believe, and to experience LOVE – all specifically because of His care over our hearts and its design. Whew ... totally awesome.

It is humanly impossible to judge the heart, though in many ways we make reasonable assessments from outward behavior – whether the "not so empirical" science of psychology is accurate (or not). Our life's experiences greatly define how our heart is conditioned. We learn to filter some of what influences our heart. We can "accept" love and give human definitions to how we feel it. Likewise we experience hatred or anger, and choose whether or not to "take them to heart." Heartaches, grief, fear, anxiety, worrying, and many other such indications can be treated by counseling and/or medication. However, treatment does not "cure the heart," and has minimal impact on changing the individual.

That being said, the Bible clearly describes how "every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood." God even expresses regret from having created man because of "how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time" (Genesis 6-8). Jeremiah further states "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" SAY WHAT? This is what Christians commonly refer to as a spiritual condition, or depravity, called the "sinful nature" that is inherent in all of humanity. We are a creation physically separated from God and created to act out our own "free will" - yet incapable of healing our own heart.

So is the metaphysical heart really beyond cure? None can truly understand everything about it. Sure, we completely understand the physical function of the heart. Through imperfect human psychology, we can generalize much about the emotional and mental health of our "heart condition." Yet what do we understand about the heart, spiritually; without some guidance of He who made it? Scriptures show us that while the human heart is incurable, it can spiritually be made "new." Without connection to some spiritual entity, then, we remain "on our own" with our struggles. So we MUST take caution "who we choose" when seeking spiritual healing for issues with the heart. It has become worldly cliché to trust that Love is the answer. 1 Peter 4:8 says "... love covers over a multitude of sins." Yet I (Micheal) will boldly state, from personal experience, that Love in a humanly existence – to love and be loved – is only superficial unless one has experienced a new heart with the Love of God, the God who IS love.

What's in your heart ... and how far will that get you?

[2]



Hopefully you've gained insight into your own condition and have discovered some simple truths about an urgency to "guard our hearts." They are the most significant controller of who we are and what our life is like. We list several other passages that we pray you will glean more insight - dig deeper - and find the help you could need for your heart.

"And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."
-Philippians 4:7

"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me ... a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise." -Psalm 41

"Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself ... and wept in my presence, I also have heard you, declares the LORD" -2 Kings 22

"But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such 'wisdom' does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic." -James 3:14

"Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, ..." -Luke 21:34

"But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." -Matthew 6:20

"... for he purified their hearts by faith." -Acts 15:9

"I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the LORD." -Jeremiah 24:7

"I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh." -Ezekiel 11:19

"... God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, ..." -Galatians 4:6

"For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him."
-2 Chronicles 16:9

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2012/01/07/above-all-else-guard-your-heart-for-everything-you-do-flows-from-it/guardyourheart/>
2. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2012/01/07/above-all-else-guard-your-heart-for-everything-you-do-flows-from-it/im000242-jpg/>

deidra 'SonshineSoul' (2012-01-09 19:07:21)

dude!!!i havnt been on this site forever and i come back and this is the message ive been needing to hear! God is so faithful! I have been struggling with depression and anxiety for a long time now and have really been praying and askng the Lord to show me what steps to take this article was like medicine! Gods truth! i know exactly where i need to start my icky heart its been corroded from neglect in so many areas. super excited to apply these truths in which i have so foolishly ignored. Thanks for speakin out what the Lord put on your HEART!!!

Josiah-Fingaz (2012-01-10 10:23:44)

Wow! Totally knocked it out of the park with this one! I'm going to have to read it a couple more times. Thanks for being faithful with the gift God has given you.

Joel Armstrong (2012-01-10 19:58:34)

thanks for the article. needed to hear this.

insanitiystudios (2012-01-11 23:32:36)

so, so, so good. needed to hear this too. Definitely inspired.

MzYehudit (2012-06-02 07:01:57)

is there a song to this..im a lil confused on this site??? new here

Dave Richards (2012-06-04 12:25:58)

Nope. This is just an article. Music is under podcasts.

[1]



Matt Bryant started working on electronic music in college writing and composing while majoring in music. With a background in woodwind and reed instruments Matt realized that electronic music was more creative and gave him more freedom so in 2003 DJ Salty Flavor was born. He now uses his MacBook Pro with Reason and Live with an M-Audio Oxygen 8 to create all of his music.

How long have you been a member of Tastyfresh?

I have been a member here for about 5 years.

What first intrigued you about it?

I really was first interested in that it was a forum and website for Christians who liked electronic dance music because it seemed to be the only one I could find. I slowly started looking at the forums and then posting on the forums and got some good information. I posted my songs and got good feedback. I listened to various podcasts and was interested in what other christian dance music was out there because at the time all I really knew about was Nitro Praise. I like the articles and I thought it was fun to listen to the podcasts and different music and try and get to know other Christian EDM lovers and producers.

What have you learned from the site?

I have learned that there are a lot of different kinds of Christians that have a wide variety of views on music and other issues.

Where do you see the site going in the next few years?

I hope it just continues to be a great community and there are quality interactions that happen on the site. That people can come and get plugged in with this community. I like to see it grow bigger and have more publicity.



IFRAME: [2][http://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=http %3A %2F %2Fapi.soundcloud.com %2Fusers %2F309037 &auto_play=false &show_artwork=true &color=0d8346](http://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fapi.soundcloud.com%2Fusers%2F309037&auto_play=false&show_artwork=true&color=0d8346)

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2012/01/30/four-questions-with-matt-bryant/slide-mattbryant/>
2. http://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fapi.soundcloud.com%2Fusers%2F309037&auto_play=false&show_artwork=true&color=0d8346

10.2 February

[1]



The Past

In 2000, I attended the [2]Cornerstone Music Festival for the first time. After hearing about it for years from a small number of friends who had attended in previous years, I was more than excited to finally be there. More than that, I was going to finally attend the now world famous rave stage run then by N*Soul Records. Never in my wildest dreams did I think that I would one day be that I would be in charge of that stage. That day however came five years ago after Chris Human of [3]86 Ministries recommended to John Herrin that I take it over.

During this time, we took the most out of the way stage with what had been a dwindling crowd and turned it into an alternative experience to the rather alternative experience offered by the festival at large. We brought in some of the top Christian talent from around the world with two purposes in mind. First, we wanted to expose those who came to Afterhours a world class clubbing experience in the most unlikely of places. Second, we wanted to give our djs a chance to at least spend one night playing in an environment free of drugs and sex along with a chance to hang out with fellow believers with a shared interest in electronic music.

Each year, thanks to the talents of Harmony Productions and Jeremy Kadinger, we raised the bar on our stage will keeping costs relatively the same. Each year brought unique challenges in stage production. Our first night on the first year required us to have one dj the floor within reach of the crowd. The next year we tore down the stage, every dj played on the floor and we added a twenty foot wide video wall. By our last year in the barn, we were literally swinging from the rafters during setup to hang intelligent lighting. And for the past two years, we shared a tent with Raging Storm Records. This is right where the dance tent started so many years ago with Scott Blackwell. And perhaps in the spirit of bringing things full circle, this is also where the experience has ended, at least temporarily.

Yeah...

The Present

You may have seen our post a few months ago regarding Cornerstone's fundraising drive. They were trying to raise \$200,000 for the 2012 festival. This became necessary for a variety of reasons, but chief among them was the economy. Attendance at the festival has been dropping year after year since the economy fell into the proverbial toilet.

Kevin and I had a serious talk while at the 2010 festival about how we didn't think we would make it to the next one. In 2010, our stage managed to keep up with our usual standard of at least 800 visitors a night. In 2011, we had some nights where 20 people was a large crowd, due to a combination of oppressive heat, another DJ who didn't understand that the generator stages couldn't run after a certain time and an overall festival lineup that didn't have the expected draw.

After the festival, I gave my assessment to John Herrin about the need for major changes to the festival. I'm sure that I wasn't the only one. John Herrin has stepped down from the daily duties of running Cornerstone, but he is still very much involved. I did recommend that our stage be cut if it came down to budget issues. It is more important that the festival over all goes forward than it is for our stage to continue. Times change and when money is in short supply, you can't go with diversity... you have to go with what sells. I never heard back from John and so I checked in with him back around November to see what was going on. That is when I found that we had not made the cut for 2012.

The festival is now being planned by Genesis Winter and Scott Stanke. I've known Genesis for a while now. She knows the ins and outs of running the festival very well. She is already doing a great job in planning 2012. I don't know Scott, but I do know that John would not have left the festival in the hands of someone who couldn't handle it. They both have my full support in the direction they are taking the festival. Once the festival is back on its feet fully again, I hope we can review the Afterhours stage. The important thing to know though is that this isn't the end.

The Future

Kevin and I are not giving up on Afterhours, although I'm more than certain that for this year we're taking a break. It takes a lot of time and effort to run a stage for a week. The actual trip to Cornerstone takes about 10 days. It also doesn't help that it is over the Fourth of July. Both Kevin and I need to spend this 4th with our friends and family at home. They haven't seen us now for the past 5 Fourths. Both of us however are going to miss our annual guy trip. It was something we always looked forward to.

The most important thing regarding this year is that the Afterhours compilation will still happen. We're just changing the medium. Rather than being a physical CD, we will for the first time make it a digital only release. It will also remain free. Right now we're investigating [4]Noisetrade.com for the distribution. That builds in a solid social media aspect for the release. It will do the one thing that the CD never seemed to do which was to get people connected with Tastyfresh. This will also eliminate the need for fund raising. Besides removing another stress point from the process for Kevin and me, this means we won't be harassing you. If this works out well, all future Afterhours compilations will be done this way.

Kevin and I are also not through with Afterhours as an event brand either. We have already contacted a few music festivals locally to see if they want to "adopt us". So far we don't have any takers, but that door isn't fully yet. We're also looking into the possibility of doing some more localized events, specifically in the Southeast. We don't have any solid plans yet, but we are discussing them internally. Lastly, as stated earlier, should the opportunity arise, we will return to the Cornerstone Festival.

So, here's what you can do to help us: pray. Pray that opportunities will present themselves to Kevin and me. Pray that roadblocks will be removed. Pray guidance in planning a new series of events. Pray for wisdom. Pray for Tastyfresh.com and especially the Cornerstone Music Festival. 2012 is a bright, shiny new year. We've got so long to go in it still. There are so many challenges and so many opportunities, but there is also hope and there is God's will for Afterhours, Tastyfresh and Cornerstone. Let that be done.

1. http://www.tastyfresh.com/2012/02/13/afterhours-past-present-and-future/afterhours_past_present_future/

2. <http://cornerstonefestival.com/>
3. <http://www.86ministries.com/>
4. <http://noisetrade.com/>

xen-ochren (2012-02-14 01:33:48)
Renegade stage!!

Dave Richards (2012-02-14 02:11:14)
That's actually part of another post coming later. It's more about the costs involved in being a generator band though.

Josiah-Fingaz (2012-02-14 15:18:48)
Let the sub bass swallow the screamo noise!

[1]



One of the most influential mandates for the follower of Christ is found in the very words spoken by Jesus Christ in Matthew 28:19-20.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.”

It is an observation of mine that, today, we are nearing a spiritual landscape more similar to the early Church than compared to the last millennium.

Throughout a large part of the world, the Church held influence in nearly every aspect of culture that affects the lives of people. The arts, science, government, education, finance, and spirituality were all understood, at least in principle, by the view of the Church. Then, as society had increasingly become nominally Christian the mandate of “Go” became more of a “Come”. If one needed answers it was a given to go to the Church. Now, there were all types of missions to other cultures throughout the world so in a sense the Church never really turned loose of the great commission from Christ. But the culture in monasteries and on the mission field was quite different to the established territory of Christendom.

With that being said, I would like to posit that in today's world we are more connected than we have ever been. The Church was the dominant source of culture for centuries and now the Internet, known as the information super highway, is the connective factor in culture. Now the world has become a little bit smaller but ideas have become more numerous than ever. For the Church to succeed it must go back to its roots in “Going and making disciples of all nations”. To have an attitude of “Come” here is to lose ground in a world where many different answers are at the click of a mouse button.

The problem is that the Church at large has a mindset of going door to door to share the gospel with complete strangers. Forty or fifty years ago that was normal because most people in the western world had heard the gospel and probably had a family bible displayed on the mantle. Now if a couple of strangers come to my door I figure they are going to:

1. Try to sell me an overpriced vacuum cleaner that I could get on Ebay for a 1/5 of the cost.
2. Try to sell me some product out of a white van with the story of "It's your lucky day because such and such happened so we have to sell this stuff right now for dirt cheap."
3. Try to get me to be a part of some cult religion.

Number three is the most likely way you will be perceived if you are intending to preach the gospel in this modern society of ours. Now I'm not saying that street evangelism should go out the window. I'm just saying that first you better know the culture, the people you are approaching, and how you are going to do it.

With the advent of Myspace, Facebook, and Twitter it is possible to connect with people in your same culture of thought, music, government, religion, etc. Just look at Tastyfresh. I was thrilled beyond belief that such a thing existed because living in a rural area DJ's who were Christians that played Electronic Dance Music were few and far between. I really didn't even know if there was anyone within a hundred miles who was a Christian DJ. Through Tastyfresh I found out that DJ Lovejoy was actually one hundred and three miles away in Anderson, Indiana. At any rate, the cultural landscape has shifted at breakneck speed but in a way, we have become more tribal, more connected. It is easier for us now to experience a variety of culture and to be an influence in it. Really, everyone has a voice. We are empowered to make a difference to soooo many more nations than those defined by territorial land lines.

So what does this mean for those of us who reside in the nation of Electronic Dance Music? Just as the about page on Tastyfresh so succinctly states ([2]<http://www.tastyfresh.com/about-tastyfresh/>), we have a two-fold mission. I encourage you to read the about section if you haven't already. What I would like to posit in this article is that we take the example of St. Paul in Acts 17. Here is a man well versed in the scriptures and a Jew by heritage. Yet he is called to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all nations. The Roman Empire wasn't influenced much at all by the Church at that moment and in this particular instance he finds himself in Athens, Greece, a hotbed of cultural influence throughout the world. Paul does something very interesting. He starts out in the Church (Synagogue), ventures to the Gentile Christians (who wouldn't be in the synagogue), and ends up in the marketplace where the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers hear him speaking. If you notice here, Paul has a two part mission as he speaks to the Church and the marketplace. Remember, this is the guy who coined this phrase under inspiration of the Holy Spirit,

"For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law; to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. 1 Corinthians 9:19-22

Like a good DJ, Paul quickly recognized the change in crowd and smoothly transitioned to the next record that connected them with the idea he wanted to get across to them. In speaking to the Athenian people he tells them he noticed that they had an altar of worship to "THE UNKNOWN GOD". He takes that part of their culture and uses it to point to the truth in the gospel. Now to most of the people in that city would have recognized the god intended to be worshiped through that altar to be just another god in the plethora of pagan gods. He then proceeded to use a part of their own poems in Acts 17:28 "For we are also His offspring" to show them the truth about the Living God we all know and serve. Can anyone say "Remix"! Paul just totally took a popular piece of pop culture referring to Zeus and remixed it to point to Christ. Not only that, they are now considered to be part of Holy Scripture by way of inspiration of the Holy Spirit. So what does this mean for us as Christian DJ's who use a song made by a person who isn't a Christian but the words in the song point to Christ or is something that Christ would say? Ahem, I'll save that question for another article.

My point is this. If we are a part of the culture of Electronic Dance Music let us glorify God in the Church, through

record labels (Christian & Not), events (Christian & Not), radio (Christian & Not)...you get the idea. First and foremost, know your crowd. Second, speak their language. Third, continue to "Go ye to the nations" in the will of God trusting in Him to lead and guide you into all truth by the Holy Spirit! Our Faith in Jesus Christ is not a one-time experience that we check off of our bucket list but a living and vibrant relationship meant to be lived out into all eternity. Now go be who the Father has created you to be!

1. http://www.tastyfresh.com/2012/02/27/saint-paul-the-dj/dj_saint_paul/
2. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/about-tastyfresh/>

Katie Garcia (2012-02-27 19:30:49)
Choice!

xen-ochren (2012-02-27 23:24:07)
swoit

m-o-i (2012-02-29 17:02:28)
:)

Subtlefusion (2012-03-09 01:17:29)
excellent job.

10.3 March

[1]



Some of you might know that I'm a DJ. I'm also a follower of Jesus. I like to mix those things. DJs tend to be good at mixing things (see what I did there?). Mixing those two things means that I have a vested interest in the Christian Dance Music community. I love the fact that in the last few years the quality of the DJs and music being produced has gone through the roof. So many good record labels putting out a lot of good tunes. Above All, Deeplife, Deepsink, MK837, Fuzion Four, God's DJs, Heaven Sound, and Royalty to name a few, are all putting out really quality tunes. I love the fact that it's a truly international movement. Not only do we cover the USA; coming out of Detroit, Chicago, Minnesota, Denver, Washington, Florida, Cali, and Virginia but our community represents the world including Brasil, Canada, Portugal, Czech Republic, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, and more. God is truly raising a global generation to make a new noise to lift His name high. We are putting God in every genre of electronic dance music. House, electro, trance, progressive, breaks, d & b, tech, deep house and even dubstep is feeling the love! There is no EDM fan that we don't have the capability of reaching.

But despite all of these beautiful things I LOVE about Christian Dance Music, there is one thing that I see that's really disturbing to me. Our community is fractured. We have separated ourselves and formed factions. You have to pick a team to play on and you will play their events and release on their label and that's it. In a sense, it is quickly becoming everything I dislike about the Church: divided for no reason other than just disagreements between people. This [2]

includes everyone. No one is excluded from this. I'm not playing favorites; God just laid this on my heart and I'm sharing it.

I see these little spats and tiffs come up about this-and-that and then people never talk to each other again. We are supposed to be a united front. We are supposed to be recognized as THE Christian Dance Music community, not a bunch of completely separate, ambiguous units. It's become brother against brother. The body of Christ at odds against the body of Christ. In Mark 3:25, Jesus said that a house divided against itself cannot stand (and I know

a little something about House Divided). The body of Christ can't be against itself and expect to still be effective, that's crazy.

I see myself as neutral. I am just an outsider looking in. But, I can tell you, as someone who loves this music, this community, and the people that make it what it is: if we keep going at this rate, our mission of reaching the lost and showing the Church that EDM is viable worship will fall completely flat.

We've got to get it together.

I know that we're still fledgling and we have a long way to go before we reach our goals, but that should be all the more reason to band together, isn't it? If we really are one body of believers, the whole body benefits at the success of an individual part. I'm just going to say it: If God's DJs is successful, we all win. If Tastyfresh.com is successful, we all win. If Deeplife Records is successful, we all win. If FSOW, or Cornerstone, or Lifelight, or any event is successful, we all win... and do you know why we all win? BECAUSE JESUS WINS!

So why are we trying to keep each other from being successful?

I want to remind everyone of WHY we do WHAT we do - exactly what it is that makes us different.

Imagine taking the trip down to Miami for UMF. Hundreds of thousands of people are jumping to the music, hands in the air, enjoying great music in unity. WE, being Christian DJs, have the unique opportunity to have those people jumping, hands in the air, worshipping Jesus, in unity; praising Him with something totally new. Without Jesus, we are just a few more added to the thousands of random DJs on the internet begging for attention to feel relevant. What makes us different from all those guys is that they say, "Look at me!" We say, "Look at Him!". Why in the world would we ever try to separate ourselves from the chance to stand side-by-side and take that stand with our brothers?

Look, I'm not saying all this expecting that everyone merge their websites, facebook pages, record labels, and events and sing Kumbaya while holding hands, but if we're ever going to get anywhere as effective for the Kingdom of God that we hope to be, we need to come across the table, squash our beef and really get into koinonia: a real spiritual community. THAT is how we reach the lost, THAT is how we spread EDM as worship.

I said all that to say this: I love Christian Dance Music too much to see it go through all this drama. I KNOW that God has a big plan for every single DJ and producer reading this and for this community as a whole. Together, we can literally change the way that people worship God and help lead people down the path our Father has laid out for them. Enough with the trash talk and drama, we've got work to do.

I love all of you guys and I seriously want God to bless you.

-J.Hill

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2012/03/12/its-time-to-unite-a-call-to-arms/unite/>
2. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2012/03/12/its-time-to-unite-a-call-to-arms/unite/>

Josiah-Fingaz (2012-03-12 08:43:02)
Good stuff Jon! Really enjoyed this. Keep it coming!

Pete Le Freq (2012-03-12 10:14:21)

Some interesting thoughts here Jon.

There have been some disagreements in the past, covering both spiritual issues and ministry issues; that's before you get to splits via musical genre.

I still believe we are Christians who happen to like EDM, and that covers so much music now it's so ridiculously general. For example, people who like deep house aren't going to necessarily like tunes from a drum and bass label. Then there is the actual proximity of the people who like the same music to each other. This is less of an issue than before due to social networking.

First step is for us all to admit that we all made mistakes somewhere along the line and then move on. Unfortunately we are all people, and that means we aren't perfect.

We are all called to different ministries and as soon as people can understand that because we aren't called to do something they are, doesn't mean it's wrong.

Im all for moving forward. We all need to eat a little humble pie and then we can get going.

Dave Richards (2012-03-12 12:58:24)

And just to add a bit of background on this post...

I asked Jon to post this here. Originally it was part of a post he made on Facebook that started a bit of a firestorm over there last week.

I find myself agreeing both with Pete and Jon here. We are a very diverse group. Not everyone is into the DJ-Led Worship movement. I'm one of them. My concern is more to get people where they need to be in the scene at large. Yes, that does include DJ-Led Worship as well, but I don't want to limit the focus to just that.

In the past, as in 5 years or more ago, we had a rift in this scene that split Tastyfresh.com into two major sites: Tastyfresh.com and GodsDJs. There are some great people on both sites. Everyone however is human and still makes mistakes. I have handled some things wrong in the past and I apologize for any wrong doing that I have done.

I honestly wish we all could come together and discuss what it means to be united in Christ as DJs and producers. What does that really require us to do? What is the real problem? Is it real or is it perceived?

In most cases, I think it's a matter of pride. We tend to want to lead something. We want to be in charge. It can't be about that. It has to be about God first and us... last. We will fail if we set ourselves up as untouchable leaders or rather... idols in this scene. I often cringe when people refer to me as one of the main leaders in CEDM. I've just been around longer and run this site.

This site would be nothing without YOU participating on it. The only reason why we have new articles is because people are stepping up and posting them. We've got room for many others to do that. I'm all about using TF to raise the NEXT generation, but that generation has to stand up and start taking on that role at some point.

If you would like to discuss this thing called Unity more, Shelby Callaway has set up a lovely group on Facebook called Unity CEDM. Please come and join us there. We would love to hear your thoughts. It doesn't matter how new you are or what baggage you've had in the past. We need thoughts and ideas on how to unite, stay united and to increase the effectiveness of our efforts. So... come and join us: [1]<https://www.facebook.com/groups/334220283280265/>

1. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/334220283280265/>

Josiah-Fingaz (2012-03-12 14:20:52)

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xen-ochren (2012-03-14 06:02:27)

cool. agreed.

Katie Garcia (2012-03-16 01:38:56)

K don't get me wrong here, But I am super confused as to why there is another CEDM room? To put it bluntly I think it dilutes this awesome place. It's worse enough that I have to rely on going to F.B to get the daily T.F juice, but now I have to go to two pages? Now the activity has slowed to both pages and the site. I realize people are busy but at what point do all souls converge to unite in one place.....Don't say Heaven, I know that hahahaha.

DEFINE UNITY : A whole or totality as combining all its parts into one.

To me I see unity of this culture condensing all components to create a juggernaut movement. Now I ain't h8'n I just don't get it.

Where is the focus? I realize this is not your sole responsibility Dave, It belongs to each individual. And by no means am I pointing fingers at anyone. It is mere observation.

Facebook is creating laziness in this culture, Not unity. Sure it is a great medium to get exposure, But as the sole platform for information and updates? Dude, There isn't even a picture of T.F Man!!!!

Sure T.F is not "1 click away" like your notifications are- Infact, It is probably 3-5 lol. So what gives?? :D Nobody can really answer that lol. Both pages are redundant as it keeps CEDM on the periphery. I imagine people would have a different opinion, and that is great! Opinions help to shape and mold this vibrant culture.

I am pleased the issues that appeared on F.B have been laid to rest. ((((((Awkwaaard)))))) This was a great article, And convicted many. That was the Holy Spirit For sure. And that made it beautiful-

Much respect to all :)

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God help us all!

bill-sikes (2012-03-16 17:15:43)

Although I haven't been posting on Tastyfresh much lately, I still keep up with you guys, and I've been around about as long as anybody(since before the boards). Like a lot of you, I've grown up a lot since I started posting here, and thankfully I'm not the same guy I used to be when I first became a Christian. I remember well the days of ministry that incorporated EDM and my intense longing for people to step up and unite for the common cause. I used to pray and pray that people would come along side our team, put aside their petty spiritual differences, and work toward what you guys are talking about. But I have to tell you, I think the biggest hindrance to our ministry over the years, and the biggest danger to this community was(and is) the muddy, ecumenical attitude we take toward the efforts. Everybody here says they are here for "the gospel", but no one has taken a stand to establish exactly what that is, and isn't. In the name of not driving off people, we have long counted posters with heretical, non-christian core beliefs as our brothers in ministry. I haven't spoken about this to anyone, but over the last 5 years, I have chatted with several old tastyfresh members (some who were prominent posters and producers of Godly music) who wouldn't affirm even the most foundational of biblical doctrines (i.e. that people must put faith in Christ to be saved). I know there are some here who are vocal proponents of the blasphemous word-faith doctrine, which is built on the belief that man is a sexual procreation of the trinity, and that God has been expelled from his creation unless almighty man speaks a word to allow him to once again act in it. And one of my oldest friends, who is as prominent a tastyfresh figure as there is, has adopted the roman-catholic beliefs that 1) grace is imputed to man through the sacraments of the church, and that 2) people can be saved apart from Christ. Friends, beliefs such as these are not biblical Christianity, and they have no place in the ministry of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ. The line must be drawn, and J. Hill's statement that the community is "becoming everything I dislike about the church: divided for no other reason than disagreements between people" must be rejected. Churches are divided because of much more than that, and some of the reasons are very biblical (2 Corinthians 6:14).

Right now, Tastyfresh is very much a house divided against itself because it's members are different gospels, when there is only one. If you guys are truly committed to this place being more than a message board, there is only one biblically valid option: establish exactly what the Gospel is, and proclaim it in unison through your common interest. Post a statement of faith. Identify falsehood like Paul did (Galatians 1:8). And contend with the deceived as we are also instructed to do, in love (Ephesians 4:15, Titus 1:10-16). These things are essential to a healthy Christian fellowship of any sort.

This starts with the top. Dave, I urge you my friend, stand for truth, and work with what God provides, even if people leave.

bill-sikes (2012-03-16 17:17:52)

I meant to say the "members are proclaiming different gospels"

Dave Richards (2012-03-16 17:52:00)

I totally get what you're saying Bill. I've seen all of what you're talking about too. Then again, I've been around for a long time.

Now regarding...

"becoming everything I dislike about the church: divided for no other reason than disagreements between people"

To a point, I think you are dead on. Our denominations exist for much deeper reasons than disagreements. To say that they're just disagreements over simplifies what really started each denomination.

I'll take your call for a statement of faith serious though Bill. We used to have one of the creeds posted, but that doesn't really give anything but lip service to the issue.

The whole question of **WHICH** Gospel I guess has been on my mind lately. Going back to what you were pointing out earlier, I've run into many old friends and former church/TF members who have left the Gospel I firmly believe in for a false one. Most recently, I've discovered one who is no longer identifying as a Christian at all and is mocking them for the most part from a very liberal political position. I've also discovered that another one is now a Mormon - probably because he couldn't find true acceptance in any SBC church around here.

Ultimately though, it comes down to all of us either not growing in our faith, mixing our faith with our politics and in general not really understanding what we believe and why we believe it.

Josiah-Fingaz (2012-03-19 17:12:14)

I like this one. It is not the Filioque which was a point of contention that added fuel to the fire which eventually led to the first division of the church.

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father [the only-begotten; that is, of the essence of the Father, God of God], Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds (æons), Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; By whom all things were made [both in heaven and on earth]; by whom all things were made; Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down and was incarnate and was made man; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; He suffered, and the third day he rose again, ascended into heaven; he was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried, and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. from thence he shall come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end. And in the Holy Ghost. And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spake by the prophets. In one holy catholic and apostolic Church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

bill-sikes (2012-03-20 00:27:13)

Josiah,

Some good stuff in there, but as Dave mentioned, I'm not sure that any historic creeds are sufficient for today. They were great for combating the heresies of the day, but aren't specific enough on some issues plaguing us today. Pentecostal oneness-heresy (aka modalism) could find a vague-enough space in that creed to affirm it. Likewise, many word-faith adherents wouldn't have the blasphemous foundations of their faith questioned by that creed either. Because the early heresies were primarily attacking the deity and nature of Christ and his resurrection, the creeds in turn addressed those attacks. While those attacks haven't ceased, a whole group of new ones has arisen, and foundational doctrines such as justification by grace alone through faith alone simply aren't addressed. Catholics could affirm those creeds while putting faith in an entirely different religion from biblical Christianity.

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last sentence should say "while putting faith in an entirely different religion from that found in the bible, as they don't believe the biblical Gospel".

J.Hill (2012-04-16 05:20:12)

haha I'm late to my own party, but thanks for all the feedback on this article... it just kinda started as a facebook rant and ended up starting a bigger discussion. Originally, when I first started getting involved in the Christ-following DJ community, one of the biggest things I loved is that on a person-to-person basis, it largely didn't matter what denomination church that you're involved with because there's really too few of us to make that a dispute. That aspect hasn't gotten bad, but there is some beef in our little fledgling community. Really, that's what I was taking a shot at. I don't know if what was said really CHANGED anything, as much as it just cleared the air a little bit... of course, I didn't really know what I was getting myself into with it, but nevertheless, it happened and I believe God led me to write it and I believe He took it where it needed to go.

We're never going to be perfect, and I always chalk up personal disagreements between Christians to the 'humans trying to understand a God that operates above our thought process' situation. So, knowing this, we pick up and press forward... carrying our cross into the clubs and bars and raves to a people that want nothing to do with God and show them His unfailing love. Thanks for taking your time in reading this. Dave, thanks for putting this up. And thank God for seeing past the fact that we're all crazy and loving us more than we can possibly fathom.

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I guess above everything else, the main thing I want people to take away from this article is summed up in this line:

"There is no EDM fan that we don't have the capability of reaching."

Katie Garcia (2012-04-19 18:13:48)

J.Hill, That closing statement most deff realigns the lens cap back to focus on what really matters at the end of the day.

[1]



Some of you might know that I'm a DJ. I'm also a follower of Jesus. I like to mix those things. DJs tend to be good at mixing things (see what I did there?). Mixing those two things means that I have a vested interest in the Christian Dance Music community. I love the fact that in the last few years the quality of the DJs and music being produced has gone through the roof. So many good record labels putting out a lot of good tunes. Above All, Deeplife, Deepsink, MK837, Fuzion Four, God's DJs, Heaven Sound, and Royalty to name a few, are all putting out really quality tunes. I love the fact that it's a truly international movement. Not only do we cover the USA; coming out of Detroit, Chicago, Minnesota, Denver, Washington, Florida, Cali, and Virginia but our community represents the world including Brasil, Canada, Portugal, Czech Republic, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, and more. God is truly raising a global generation to make a new noise to lift His name high. We are putting God in every genre of electronic dance music. House, electro, trance, progressive, breaks, d & b, tech, deep house and even dubstep is feeling the love! There is no EDM fan that we don't have the capability of reaching.

But despite all of these beautiful things I LOVE about Christian Dance Music, there is one thing that I see that's really disturbing to me. Our community is fractured. We have separated ourselves and formed factions. You have to pick a team to play on and you will play their events and release on their label and that's it. In a sense, it is quickly becoming everything I dislike about the Church: divided for no reason other than just disagreements between people. This [2]

includes everyone. No one is excluded from this. I'm not playing favorites; God just laid this on my heart and I'm sharing it.

I see these little spats and tiffs come up about this-and-that and then people never talk to each other again. We are supposed to be a united front. We are supposed to be recognized as THE Christian Dance Music community, not a bunch of completely separate, ambiguous units. It's become brother against brother. The body of Christ at odds against the body of Christ. In Mark 3:25, Jesus said that a house divided against itself cannot stand (and I know

a little something about House Divided). The body of Christ can't be against itself and expect to still be effective, that's crazy.

I see myself as neutral. I am just an outsider looking in. But, I can tell you, as someone who loves this music, this community, and the people that make it what it is: if we keep going at this rate, our mission of reaching the lost and showing the Church that EDM is viable worship will fall completely flat.

We've got to get it together.

I know that we're still fledgling and we have a long way to go before we reach our goals, but that should be all the more reason to band together, isn't it? If we really are one body of believers, the whole body benefits at the success of an individual part. I'm just going to say it: If God's DJs is successful, we all win. If Tastyfresh.com is successful, we all win. If Deeplife Records is successful, we all win. If FSOW, or Cornerstone, or Lifelight, or any event is successful, we all win... and do you know why we all win? BECAUSE JESUS WINS!

So why are we trying to keep each other from being successful?

I want to remind everyone of WHY we do WHAT we do - exactly what it is that makes us different.

Imagine taking the trip down to Miami for UMF. Hundreds of thousands of people are jumping to the music, hands in the air, enjoying great music in unity. WE, being Christian DJs, have the unique opportunity to have those people jumping, hands in the air, worshipping Jesus, in unity; praising Him with something totally new. Without Jesus, we are just a few more added to the thousands of random DJs on the internet begging for attention to feel relevant. What makes us different from all those guys is that they say, "Look at me!" We say, "Look at Him!". Why in the world would we ever try to separate ourselves from the chance to stand side-by-side and take that stand with our brothers?

Look, I'm not saying all this expecting that everyone merge their websites, facebook pages, record labels, and events and sing Kumbaya while holding hands, but if we're ever going to get anywhere as effective for the Kingdom of God that we hope to be, we need to come across the table, squash our beef and really get into koinonia: a real spiritual community. THAT is how we reach the lost, THAT is how we spread EDM as worship.

I said all that to say this: I love Christian Dance Music too much to see it go through all this drama. I KNOW that God has a big plan for every single DJ and producer reading this and for this community as a whole. Together, we can literally change the way that people worship God and help lead people down the path our Father has laid out for them. Enough with the trash talk and drama, we've got work to do.

I love all of you guys and I seriously want God to bless you.

-J.Hill

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2012/03/12/its-time-to-unite-a-call-to-arms/unite/>
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Josiah-Fingaz (2012-03-12 08:43:02)
Good stuff Jon! Really enjoyed this. Keep it coming!

Pete Le Freq (2012-03-12 10:14:21)

Some interesting thoughts here Jon.

There have been some disagreements in the past, covering both spiritual issues and ministry issues; that's before you get to splits via musical genre.

I still believe we are Christians who happen to like EDM, and that covers so much music now it's so ridiculously general. For example, people who like deep house aren't going to necessarily like tunes from a drum and bass label. Then there is the actual proximity of the people who like the same music to each other. This is less of an issue than before due to social networking.

First step is for us all to admit that we all made mistakes somewhere along the line and then move on. Unfortunately we are all people, and that means we aren't perfect.

We are all called to different ministries and as soon as people can understand that because we aren't called to do something they are, doesn't mean it's wrong.

It's all for moving forward. We all need to eat a little humble pie and then we can get going.

Dave Richards (2012-03-12 12:58:24)

And just to add a bit of background on this post...

I asked Jon to post this here. Originally it was part of a post he made on Facebook that started a bit of a firestorm over there last week.

I find myself agreeing both with Pete and Jon here. We are a very diverse group. Not everyone is into the DJ-Led Worship movement. I'm one of them. My concern is more to get people where they need to be in the scene at large. Yes, that does include DJ-Led Worship as well, but I don't want to limit the focus to just that.

In the past, as in 5 years or more ago, we had a rift in this scene that split Tastyfresh.com into two major sites: Tastyfresh.com and GodsDJs. There are some great people on both sites. Everyone however is human and still makes mistakes. I have handled some things wrong in the past and I apologize for any wrong doing that I have done.

I honestly wish we all could come together and discuss what it means to be united in Christ as DJs and producers. What does that really require us to do? What is the real problem? Is it real or is it perceived?

In most cases, I think it's a matter of pride. We tend to want to lead something. We want to be in charge. It can't be about that. It has to be about God first and us... last. We will fail if we set ourselves up as untouchable leaders or rather... idols in this scene. I often cringe when people refer to me as one of the main leaders in CEDM. I've just been around longer and run this site.

This site would be nothing without YOU participating on it. The only reason why we have new articles is because people are stepping up and posting them. We've got room for many others to do that. I'm all about using TF to raise the NEXT generation, but that generation has to stand up and start taking on that role at some point.

If you would like to discuss this thing called Unity more, Shelby Callaway has set up a lovely group on Facebook called Unity CEDM. Please come and join us there. We would love to hear your thoughts. It doesn't matter how new you are or what baggage you've had in the past. We need thoughts and ideas on how to unite, stay united and to increase the effectiveness of our efforts. So... come and join us: [1]<https://www.facebook.com/groups/334220283280265/>

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"There is no EDM fan that we don't have the capability of reaching."

Katie Garcia (2012-04-19 18:13:48)

J.Hill, That closing statement most deff realigns the lens cap back to focus on what really matters at the end of the day.



Spotify has been in the spotlight for months now. They've been making people happy worldwide with their low cost subscription plans for music. Who couldn't blame their subscribers for being happy with the service? I find it hard to blame them simply because I'm a Netflix subscriber. I enjoy having unlimited content at hand. It's not just a feeling of "power" but it saves me a trip to Blockbuster – which in case you haven't noticed has been absorbed by Dish Network and is turning into a mostly streaming movie service. With the advent of the MP3 and high-speed Internet, the whole entertainment industry has been turned upside down. In many ways, it's been a good thing. In other ways, it opened a Pandora's Box that cannot be shut, but has not offered a clear solution after more than 10 years offered a clear solution.

So what has really changed? Well, the majors labels are struggling to find a way to remain big, while at the same time downsizing their staff like mad. Back in February, Warner Music Group announced its [1]8th straight quarterly loss. That kind of loss is impossible to sustain. Then again, they deserve it right? [2]After all, a major label artists only makes on average 8 cents on per iTunes download. This is where I think we get caught up in the streaming debate. If the big labels are so evil in the eye of public opinion, where does that leave the small indie labels like Dot Dot, MK837, Deeplife, Llama Farm and others?

Ultimately, beyond the DJ world (and even within it at times) all labels are lumped together and treated as evil entities. This builds up resentment among the buyers of music, and with sites like Megaupload and Piratebay, well... they turn to piracy. After all, the artist is going to get screwed anyway and the music should be free. Because of the way major labels HAVE treated artists in the past, and how they continue to fail adapt to the new mediums, the market reacts negatively and together the idea that a label should exist at all or even that an artist should be paid for a recording has been lost.

Today, it seems that the market believes that an audio recording has zero value. It does not matter if it's a CD or MP3. Vinyl has some nostalgia, but the allure of physical media is becoming lost on younger generations. The youngest among us barely know what a CD is these days. The future could be bleak for those of us still in love with pristine audio and music packaging.

All of this combined with the use of mobile devices, wireless networking and various other "pod" like devices has culminated in streaming services. The market is quickly going from an ownership mindset to a renter's mindset. Whereas 10 years ago someone might have spent \$10-40 on music a month, now they can cut that expense down to \$9.99 or

LESS per month. That cuts personal music budgets down from roughly \$120-480 per year to less than \$120 annually. Did I mention that you can listen to not just your collection of music, but THOUSANDS of releases for that? To quote a myriad of people:

“I can’t compete with that!”

To survive as an artist or even a label, you have to compete with new business models. This is the new music reality: ownership among the masses is now nonexistent or soon will be.

What is the real impact of this? Time to look at some numbers. Most of you have probably read about how low the payouts are from streaming. On average, a single stream of a track nets about \$0.007. That’s before the distributor takes a cut. That’s before the label has their cut. That’s before the artist sees a single... wait... what exactly is \$0.007 anyway?

The point is, that in order to make total of \$7.00, that track has to have 1,000 streams. Now, I can brag a bit here about my label. We believe that the artist puts the most effort into creating the product we sell. Because of that, they deserve the biggest cut. So they get over 50 % of the royalty. That said, in order for them to make \$7 from streaming, they have to have close to 2,000 streams. Figure in mastering costs of no less than \$20 for a CHEAP job on one track and you’re still looking at a loss for the artist of \$13 after 2,000 streams.

It doesn’t matter how good your contract is, streaming is not enough to keep the artist in the black.

And there’s the rub. Streaming has the potential to give artists a ton of exposure. However, like the Internet in general, unless someone recommends an artist to you, you have to make a real effort to find something new. With thousands of artists available through streaming services, the chances of receiving 2,000 streams in a given quarter is quite slim. MK837, from October through November had a grand total of 293 streams with the most any one track received being 20.

Now, I’m not complaining about MK837’s streams, but I am using them to show that relatively unknown artists and labels do not break through this whole “People will discover you” argument. Sure, it’s possible. Yes, it does happen. It’s also a bit of false hope. People have to have a reason to seek you out and communicating that reason can often times be difficult when your audience doesn’t have a face.

Despite the [3]3 million paying subscribers that Spotify has, [4]indie labels are leaving Spotify due to financial reason. I’m not talking major labels, but rather Indie labels. In fact, [5]the major labels own a good bit of Spotify. This environment favors the known artists rather than the unknown. Streaming is basically the new radio. Those who are popular will be played. Those who are not will be tried and forgotten rather quickly. The advantage here is rather than having to purchase the music later so you can listen to exactly what you want, you just click on it.

[6]



The counter argument that wasn't

One of the most common counter arguments as to why streaming services are good is that artists are forced to go on tour and earn money that way. The music is free (as they believe it should be), but the experience of a performance has value. It's also exclusive. Not only that, but it's not a new concept. It's always been that way.

Yup, from day one, live was it. It's just in the past 135 years that recorded audio was possible. The buying and selling of anything other than sheet music is really a relatively new concept. Concerts were the staple income for composers and musicians for hundreds of years. What was old never really went out of style. These days, what is new quickly falls out of fashion. It's a loss of a revenue stream, not an opportunity to start touring.

Again, I'm not saying that you cannot be successful in the realm of streaming music, but that the odds are stacked highly against you.

The simple fact is that even if most acts wanted to do more touring, the opportunities may not be there.

Think about it. Since the late 90's there has been a music production revolution. It doesn't matter what genre you produce, a studio can cheaply be made in your house. This is true even if you are recording vocals. Andy Hunter proved this clearly back in 2007 in his [7]video blog. Distribution became simple thanks to outlets like CD Baby, Bandcamp and so on. To this new environment's credit, thousands of people who might not normally have been able to get something recorded and on the market has managed to do it on their own. Sans label. Sans studio. You can argue about the quality of the material, but you can't argue the effectiveness of the new production model.

Now we have increased number of people who are making music. The problem is that we don't really have an increased number of music venues for live performances. In fact, we probably have a fewer number today thanks to

the current economy. As an event promoter, you live and die on your bottom line. If you don't think an act can cut it, you're not going to book that act. More people seeking a 1-2 hour set at a local club just means the competition is that much fiercer. It may not have been easy to get booked before, but it certainly isn't any easier now. Let's not even go into how much you will get paid for your live show. It'll probably be more than for streaming though.

An actual tour is another level of complexity. As an unknown act, you're making the big bucks. Even some well established DJs traveling struggle to make \$1,300 a night. With hotel costs eating up \$100-200 a night, flights of \$250 or more and food, that gets whittled down pretty quick. Remember those are just the travel expenses. Add in the cost of either manager or the time it takes for you to book the gigs yourself as well as any other business expenses you might have.

Making money while on tour is possible, but more than likely you will be losing it for a long time. You'll have to keep a day job and if you have a family, traveling may not be exactly high on your priorities. These factors make it very hard in today's world to step out on a tour. Yes, you can do it, but there are consequences that involve missing out on loved ones and incurring a greater financial loss than if you had stuck to only selling music.

HOLY BLOOD BAND

2012 WORLD TOUR!

Cornerstone Generator Band Expenses and Revenue

Expenses

Cornerstone Tickets:	
4 band members	\$452.00
1 "Roadie"	\$113.00
1 Merch Person	\$113.00
Generator Timeslot Fees:	
Stage 1 - Slot 1	\$300.00
Stage 1 - Headliner	\$300.00
Stage 2	\$150.00
U-Haul Trailer Rental:	
5 day rental	\$75.00
Gas:	
Assuming 6.14 gallon tanks are required at \$3.50/gal	\$294.00
Hotel:	
2 nights while traveling	\$300.00
Camping:	
Camp site at Festival	\$0.00
Crap you forgot to bring and had to buy at Wal-Mart	\$200.00
Food:	
One meal out per person per day	\$240.00
Camp food	\$150.00

Total Expenses: \$2387.00

Revenue

CD Sales:	
Full 10 track CD assuming \$10 sale price and 100 sold	\$1000.00
T-Shirt Sales:	
Assuming \$10 per shirt and 75 sell	\$750.00
Subtotal:	\$1750.00
Less Costone 25% cut	\$1312.50
Less Generator Stage Cut of 10%	\$1137.00

Total Revenue: \$1137.00

\$1137.00 - \$2387.00 = -\$1250.00

WE LOST MONEY!!!!

The above graphic is a break down of the typical expenses and revenues an unknown band will have trying to attend Cornerstone as a generator bands. They aren't official bands. They have to pay their way 100 %. In the end, a good showing for them will be 20-100 people per set that they play. Yes, there are success stories from these bands, but financially most of them just fall further and further behind. Keep in mind to, I left some expenses out like the costs of making those CDs and shirts.

So what's the solution?

This is the questions just about everyone is asking. If traditional ownership of music no longer works and if streaming doesn't lead to revenue then what is the solution in this post-ownership world? Well, despite my doom and gloom, I don't fully believe ownership is dead. [9]A recent study from Europe in a way confirms this in regards to CDs.

People still want their music after their subscription is over, but they only want what really matters to them. They

want the music that they are truly fans of. In the EDM world where DJs need higher quality audio, they will still buy their music (or pirate it). From an EDM label's standpoint, it makes more sense to focus on growing support among DJs than the masses. It's a solid/identifiable target audience so to speak. It's something you can work with. This group also tends to follow labels, artists, genres and of course the exclusivity of early release. The person who can deliver all of this to a specific group of DJs on a regular basis is going to be the winner.

In other words, labels struggling for survival need to re-envision themselves as "channels". They provide a specific line-up. They have a specific group of followers. These people will tune in for every release and never want to miss a show. This is what every label needs to survive. Spotify will never provide this because that isn't its purpose.

The idea that has been hitting hard these past few months with me is that all any label needs is 100 fans who will buy anything they put out. In reality it's probably closer to 1000 fans, but 100 would be a great start. What if you expanded that idea a bit though? What if you could get each one of those fans to commit to spending \$10-15 a month on your label? They would of course get your newest releases and possibly some extras (videos, remix packs, mix sets). They'd also have the benefit of ownership as well. How would 100 fans change your label's bottom line? \$1,000- \$1,500 a month in revenue is how.

Such a service could take your label from earning an average of \$100 per release (if you're the average label) to somewhere between 5 and 10 times that. You maintain a solidly loyal fan base. Move the release dates up so your subscribers get all of your releases a month in advance and you gain the loyalty of DJs as well. So, what's the catch? The tools that artists and labels need to pull this have not been fully pulled together by anyone to do just this.

Wait... that's not entirely true...



[10] I wasn't alone in coming up with this concept. Other people have been working on it for longer than I have. I'm always a bit slow to this stuff. The truth is [11]Ghostly International has been working on this concept for some time. Recently, they have unveiled their new project [12]drip.fm. It's still in the beta stages, but Drip.fm is poised to make this revolutionary jump. The solution won't be for everyone, but those who truly follow labels will benefit from it. In fact, it will help labels to focus more on putting out quality music. When they know that they could possibly loose subscribers over a bad release that puts a different kind of spin marketing and pressure on A &R.

Currently, Drip.fm seems to be sporting only three labels. MK837 has applied for beta access and I suspect that many other labels have as well. [13]Even MTV has caught on already to Drip.fm's potential. I don't think this is something labels will be able to afford to ignore. We're in a new world order as an industry now. The majors are struggling, but probably have found a home in streaming. The indie labels, the boutique labels; we don't have a spot in the mass

market. We know this. We understand that. Spotify is cool and all, but it won't lead us to increased revenue. It won't lead us to more exposure. It exists for when we, as a boutique label, become main stream. That's a big if.



[14] "Underground will live forever. We're just like roaches. Always livin'. Never dyin'." – Roaches by Trancesetters

That's what we have to do. We have to get "back to the program" and do what we've always done best: innovate music. Those of us who can produce a quality product and get it not only to market, but in the hands of paying DJs, will win. It doesn't matter what the tool is that we use to do that. While current streaming subscriptions target the wrong audience, I think it's a safe bet that a targeted subscription services like Drip.fm stands the best chance at helping boutique labels like MK837, Dot Dot, Deeplife, Llama Farm and others to survive.

1. <http://digitalmusicnews.com/stories/020711wmg>
2. <http://www.digitalmusicnews.com/permalink/2011/111103labelpays>
3. <http://digitalmusicnews.com/permalink/2012/120126spotify>
4. <http://www.wired.com/epicenter/2011/11/200-labels-withdraw-their-music-from-spotify-are-its-fortunes-unravelling/all/1>
5. <http://techcrunch.com/2009/08/07/this-is-quite-possibly-the-spotify-cap-table/>
6. http://www.tastyfresh.com/2012/03/26/streaming-and-the-new-world-order/copylike-org_postcard_musicisfree/
7. <http://youtu.be/FnKca3uEeGw>
8. http://www.tastyfresh.com/2012/03/26/streaming-and-the-new-world-order/cstonegeneratorexpenses_updated/
9. <http://digitalmusicnews.com/permalink/2012/120206trashing#Gmzj8Y3dtCW0Voh2Di-gFQ>
10. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2012/03/26/streaming-and-the-new-world-order/ghostlyinternational/>
11. <http://ghostly.com/>
12. <https://drip.fm/>
13. <http://read.mtvhive.com/2012/01/26/stones-throw-and-drip-fm-spearhead-new-music/>
14. http://www.tastyfresh.com/2012/03/26/streaming-and-the-new-world-order/roaches_cover/

Josiah-Fingaz (2012-03-27 08:30:04)
BAM!!! That's some knowledge to ponder. Great read.

Katie Garcia (2012-03-29 14:03:55)
Tidy article man.

Dave Richards (2012-03-29 16:41:47)

See... the real irony here is that since writing this article, I've subscribed to Spotify. I was curious about the social aspect leading to me "discovering" new music. Yeah... that failed. I'm listening to albums that either I never had or do have from bands that broke up 10 or more years ago.

So... I'm ripping off people who are past their prime now. Oddly enough though, I'm listening to more Christian music now than I have in a VERY long time. That evens things out doesn't it?

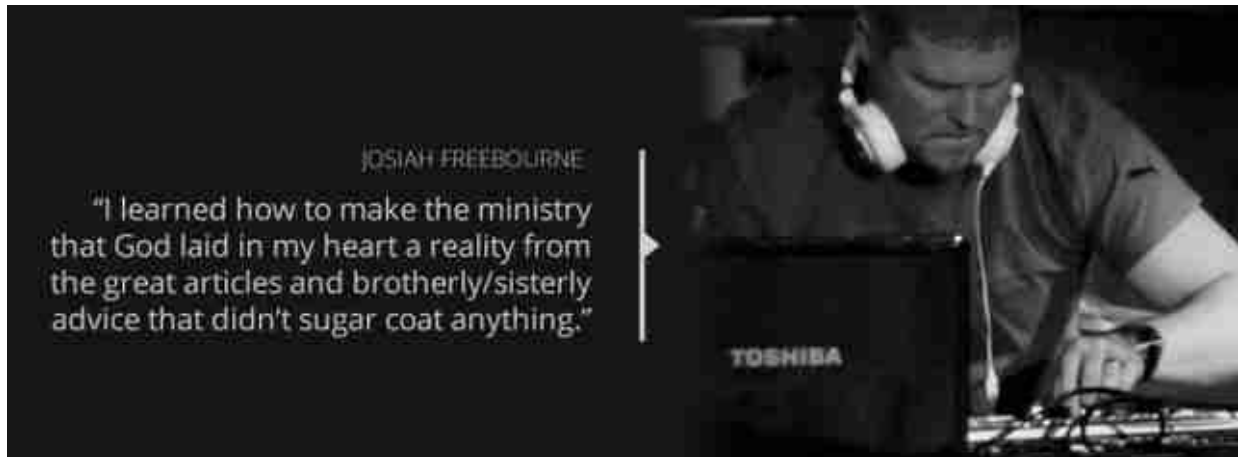
Tim Bunch (2012-04-05 04:18:55)

Good read. I still buy, but mostly MP3's now. I like ownership. I like supporting artists. Streaming is the new radio. Well put. Tactfully placed shows can position you for better sales.

10.4 April

Four Questions with Josiah Freebourne (2012-04-10 00:01) - redsavior

[1]



Josiah Freebourne has had the honor of playing many concerts and music festivals across the United States. Some events of note include the Ichthus Music Festival, Heavenfest, Cornerstone Music Festival, and Lighthouse. He has been a resident DJ for Project Purpose on Power WLOU in Louisville, KY and now hosts a show called Holy Vibes on God Radio in Greece at the top of every month. Josiah plays various types of House with an emphasis on Electrohouse.

How long have you been a member of Tastyfresh?

I first found the site in 2001 but have been a more active member in the past 6 years.

What first intrigued you about it?

What first intrigued me about Tastyfresh was the fact that there was a community of Christians who gathered together through the common bond of Electronic Dance Music. It made me feel like I could be a part of this culture in a God ordained way.

What have you learned from the site?

I learned how to make the ministry that God laid in my heart a reality from the great articles and brotherly/sisterly advice that didn't sugar coat anything. I have also learned that to truly enjoy community you must be willing to build it with others. That takes self discipline and self sacrifice.

Where do you see the site going in the next few years?

I for see another generation of Christian DJs/Producers/Fans growing in their faith in Christ, impacting EDM culture in a big way, and making a difference in their communities through the mutual love, respect, and exchange of ideas that has always been at the heart of Tastyfresh.

[EMBED]

[2]DJ Josiah Freebourne's Cloudcasts on [3]Mixcloud

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2012/04/10/four-questions-with-josiah-freebourne/slide-josiah/>
 2. http://www.mixcloud.com/DJjosiah/?utm_source=widget&utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=base_links&utm_term=resource_link
 3. http://www.mixcloud.com/?utm_source=widget&utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=base_links&utm_term=homepage_link
-

[1]



Remixing music is an art that has been around for quite a few years. From Daft Punk sampling obscure 70's songs to remaking a new song from the top 40 countdown this week, it all has one thing in common: individual samples that are morphed into an entirely new song. A lot of new remix artists make the mistake of grabbing a remix pack from a contest download, a label, or just from a friend who wants a remix, and only use all of the stems in the package. I've had a few remixes done for me personally where people have done this, and it seems that they simply rearranged the music I made and called it a remix. Every single remix I've been given that was like this was seriously disappointing. People who are looking for remixes are wanting to hear a different sound altogether, not just a rearrangement of a song.

I have been Producing music for about 15 years off and on, but only seriously for the last 5 or 6 years. I honestly wasn't any good at it until the last few years. I have learned alot from different sources, but mostly from the mistakes and triumphs I've had on previous works I have made. I love doing remixes, and honestly, it is the best way to stretch yourself as a producer. It takes you out of your normal way of producing, and forces you to think of another way of making a song. All of that being said, a good rule of thumb is... DO NOT USE ALL OF THE STEMS!

When I make a remix, I always take the vocals and possibly one or two other small stems from the pack, and then build a new track around it as a whole new vision. People tend to listen to the original song and try to emulate that sound. That is not necessarily a good thing. When I remix a song, a lot of the time I will not even listen to the original so I can get my own artistic interpretation on what it should sound like. Here is a metaphor that might help out. Lets say you read a really good book, and love it to death. You are excited about a movie rendition of said book. The movie comes out, and you are vastly disappointed in the movie as it is nothing like what you pictured in your head. You created your own world from what the artist painted with their words for the book, and when you saw the movie, it was nothing like what you had imagined in your head as you were reading, and most of the time the movie is nowhere near as extraordinary as the world the book created in your mind.

Now, let us look at the oppsite side of this. You go see a movie that was based off of a book, you watch the movie, and liked the movie a lot. You like the movie so much that you go out and buy the book. When you read through

this book, no matter how hard you try, you will always picture the scenes in the movie and the actors that were in it as the characters in it. The movie painted the picture for you, and removed all aspects of your imagination. This principal applies to remixing music as well. If you are going to do a remix of a song, it will always always always be more beneficial to you to have your own outlook, your own style, and your own artistic representation of that song.

The next step is to take what you like from the remix pack and use a few small parts. Try not to use them as they are. Break them up, rub some funk on it, and chop up the samples to make them unique. If the lead is your favorite part of the song, by all means use it. Don't use the same lead from the remix pack, make your own! Tweak it, add some more funk to it... heck even change the pattern and melody a bit! Shake things up! After all that is what remixing is all about. Personally I do not like to use leads from any pack I get. I will listen to the lead, chew on it for a bit, then make a new lead from a synth and midi notes that I can adjust at will. This brings me to another point. When you are getting a remix pack, it is always helpful to ask for midi tracks that you can use, as this will add more tools to your raw recreation of a song. If you can get this, you will be able to adjust the lead, bassline, or anything for that matter to ANYTHING you want. Midi tracks are literally limitless and will always be your best choice for artistic freedom.

The next part is the meat and potatoes of any remix; the vocals. This is when bootleg remixes come into play. Most of the time it is VERY hard to get permission to use vocals, or any part of a signed song for that matter. Vocals will usually be the driving factor of your remix if it has vocals. If you can get vocals easily, that is great, but if you are making a bootleg, that is a different matter. There are hundreds of online websites that you can access that provide acapellas, sometimes really good quality ones, and sometimes... not at all. www.acapellas4u.co.uk is a good one that I go to. Just search google for acapellas, and you will find a treasure trove of decent vocals, most of the time they are creative commons.

When you do add your vocals to the mix, again, add some funk, chop them up, do fun things to them, the sky is the limit! Take parts out, add parts in, make several tracks that have effects you have built from the vocals etc etc. I use Ableton live for my production, and will not ever change to anything else. The reason: warping. Ableton has a feature that makes it ridiculously easy to fit any vocal into any bpm range (reasonably of course) and makes it as tight as you want. You can warp the vocals in any way, and use the tool to make them fit in your mix without ever going out of time. Warping is something that took my mind a few months to wrap around, but after I understood how to use it effectively it became my favorite tool in Ableton. I could go on for hours about all the benefits of warping in Ableton, but that will have to be a different article altogether.

When downloading vocals from an obviously bootlegged song, I must strongly STRONGLY caution you, as you CAN get into a lot of legal trouble for remixing a song from songs that you do not have permission to use. The best way to not get in trouble for this is simple: keep them for your own sets. Having a song that literally NOBODY ELSE has is a beautiful thing in a dj set, especially live. This also can help you with promoting yourself as people will ask you about the song afterwards, and you can tell them that it's your remix. They will go nuts over that fact. If you are cautious, ambitious, and are willing to be risky, you can provide a bootleg publically, on soundcloud, or any other resource, but DO NOT TRY TO SELL IT! If you do make money off of a bootlegged remix, you WILL get caught, and the legal fees and fines for such a thing... well... lets just say... you can't afford it.

Remixing is very fun, and can be very eye opening as far as what you really can do if you broaden your horizons and just go do it. Let your creativity loose. Let it fly. Experiment. You will get better. You will learn from your mistakes. The best part is, you will make a killer track that everyone will like, you will get famous, and live in a big house in Miami. Well, maybe not. But it will be fun! If you have any questions about this article, I'm always available, and always willing to help others out with what I have learned from long hours of wrenching my brain and smashing my face into the keyboard from frustration. I would love to write more articles like this one. If you have any requests, shoot me a pm. Now go! Make something sick! And may the force b... ahh whatever...

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2012/04/23/remixingbootlegs-101/bootleg/>

ecliptik (2012-04-24 04:09:04)

I heard from someone that using songclearance.com will allow you to be able to make remixes/bootlegs legit, and sell them. Is this true? I really would like another's take on this. Thanks!

Dave Richards (2012-04-24 11:46:04)

Yes. If you jump through the hoops of legally obtaining permission, it's legit. Most of the time though, there will be fees associated with this. There is also a good chance that they will say no. If they do, you can't sell them. And... even if they do approve it, they may insist that you don't sell it yourself, but that it gets released on their label. If that's the case, don't expect to earn much from it even if it goes big. Try to have them buy it out right from you.

Josiah-Fingaz (2012-04-24 11:50:18)

Great article Shelby! Keep em coming.

Pete Le Freq (2012-04-24 19:21:47)

As someone who samples extensively (and probably the most blatant out of anyone on tastyfresh) - some interesting points here.

On the sample and selling thing, in order for someone to get you to stop selling it, they would need to send you a cease and desist letter. That costs a heap of money (£250 from a solicitor in the uk). Therefore, it has to be worth it for the original copywrite holder to ask you to stop selling.

Given most edm don't make £250 for a release, you can be fairly blatant without worrying about it.....

DBNickel (2012-04-24 19:45:36)

you can be fairly blatant without worrying... without worrying... wiwiwiwiwiwiwiwithout worryingniyrrow tuohtiw That costs a heap of money That costs a heap of money That That That That costs a heap of money money mmm-mooooonnnneeeeeeyyyyyyy you can be fairly blatant without worrying about it...

Pete Le Freq post [DBNickel remix]

Josiah-Fingaz (2012-04-30 10:31:30)

Lol!

insanitiystudios (2012-05-11 23:45:58)

thanks, really great article

10.5 May

[1]



In 1992, on the way back from a youth skiing trip, a friend of mine slid a tape called Jyradelix into the church bus's tape deck. From that tape, I heard techno for the very first time. I was also hooked on it. It was also Christian. After that, I couldn't find enough electronica. Fortunately, that was start of Christian electronica. Well... maybe not the start, but that is when it started to rise and take shape into something that the Christian Booksellers Association took note of and stocked on regular basis thanks to the efforts of Michael Sean Black, Scott Blackwell and Diamanté Distribution.

Twenty Years Later...

Fast forward to 2012, it's been 20 years since that first album from mYx Records. Today, you couldn't find a Christian EDM release at a US Christian retailer if you tried. Ok, that's not 100 % true. You might find one of Andy Hunter's CDs in the bargain bin. The truth is though that the Christian market for EDM has drastically shifted in much the same way that Christian rock has. Bands today do not have to be distributed in only Christian stores. The Christian market has been separated from the music in many cases. Top that with a willingness of the secular industry openly accepting Christian acts today and the secular market embracing much of it as quality music.

This traditional Christian ideal of having a section dedicated to your favorite genre of music in your favorite Christian store is still nice, but no longer valid. This has become doubled true with the advent of iTunes, Beatport and even Amazon. The major retailers tend to classify music as either Christian or EDM, but not both. This sub genre of a sub genre classification model isn't financially worth the information architecture nightmare that accounting for it would create. And so the model overall has shifted so Christians EDM producers must compete in the secular industry if they want to make anything of themselves and I'm not just talking turning a profit here.

The fact of the matter here is that the Christian only market totally collapsed between 1998 and 2002. What was once found even in small towns like Wilmar, MN is no longer there. What is interesting today is that there are people in the Christian EDM community who missed out on the success of the 1990's. They don't know that EDM used to be in all the hip and even not-hip Christian retailers. And that is what this article is about in a way. How can we build on our accomplishments, not just try to recreate what we have forgotten has already happened and then... Build it

in such a way that in 20 years, we aren't looking back and having this same conversation. In other words, we need sustainability!

The Sustainability Plan

I think most of us know what sustainability means, but let me be specific. The type of sustainability I'm talking about here is one in which as one generation moves onto other phases in their lives, the next generation is already trained up and moving into leadership roles within the community. Much like how 2012 marks this transition with the Cornerstone Music Festival where John Herrin, the director for so many years, has stepped down from that position and Genesis Winter has taken over.

In order for this to happen, we need those of us with experience to share that knowledge here. We need those new to this community to find those old members and ask how things should be done. We all need to become mentors of one another and not be focused just on ourselves and our personal careers. Labels, communities and events require teamwork or they don't happen. They also take a bit of wisdom too.

So, I would like to make this our goal over the next few months. Let's start a series of articles about starting labels, communities and events that are sustainable. We will start out by tackling events as that almost always a hot button topic and one of the hardest to pull off in such a way that you even get a chance at having a second event.

If you would like to contribute either a article to this or an example, please contact me and let me know. The more people with experienced input, the better.

Until next time... I'm out.

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2012/05/07/sustainability-in-christian-edm/sustainability/>

deeflash (2012-05-07 13:03:14)

good start! I'm excited to see where this leads...

xen-ochren (2012-05-07 14:19:16)

I love this!!!

Pete Le Freq (2012-05-07 15:32:17)

Once work sorts itself out, Ill get chatting to Joel about How not to run a label Pt2.....

Josiah-Fingaz (2012-05-07 16:19:03)

Looking forward to the sequel!

Josiah-Fingaz (2012-05-08 12:21:07)

God says that He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. We need to have a multi-generational mindset. God does. I'm in full agreement of building with the next generations in mind. I think it will make us ask the right questions about what we are doing therefore causing us to build with a purpose that extends past us. Sounds like something Jesus would have us do.

[1]



We've all experienced some great events in our lifetime. For most of those events, you as an attendee have had expectations of what the event would be like from the moment you first heard about it. These expectations slowly build as you get closer to the date or start taking actions like purchasing tickets, making dinner reservations, planning how to get there and so on. In fact, just about everyone who has ever attended an event has in some way planned their part of the event experience.

Being the promoter of an event (the person in charge of the event) is not really all that much different. The main difference is that you are not only planning your experience, but the experience of everyone who attends the event from those who purchase the tickets to the djs, vjs, and sound techs. You also have the "unfortunate" task of handling the money and all of the responsibility as well. It can be both a fun and stressful job. There also doesn't seem to be a simple guide on how to fulfill this role on the Internet. And that is one reason why we're focusing on events here at Tastyfresh.com right now.

Before we get into the nitty gritty how-to's of throwing events in the next few articles, let me quickly share with you some things about expectations.

The myth of the huge party

Nobody wants to have an unsuccessful event. The obvious way to gauge an events success is by how many people actually showed up. The problem is that we often set our expectations too high. For the past 20 years, the average reoccurring Christian event has only drawn in 100-150 people. Only at festivals do you see more than that.

What this means is that if your first event attracted anywhere between 75-100, you did really well. If you pulled in 60-74, you still did pretty good. Don't get focused on the numbers though, focus instead on the finances. You will know if your event is a success of those who came had fun, the bills got paid, nothing went horribly wrong and you have enough cash left over to start work on the next event.

Don't panic. Things will go wrong.

You read that right. Don't panic. Things will go wrong. Another way to put it is "No battle plan survives its first engagement with the enemy". I believe that was said by General Norman Schwarzkopf during the first gulf war. That statement is paramount of your event's success though. Always keep a couple hundred bucks in your back pocket for unexpected, last minute issues that will need to be resolved. Always make sure that you have people on your event team who can be trusted to not only improvise on very little time and money, but also who you can turn loose on a problem so that you can focus on other issues. Things that can and will go wrong include security issues, stage/lighting issues and seemingly minor issues such as wristbands or merch sales.

It is probably more important to make sure that your team (djs, vjs, sound techs, security and hospitality people) enjoy the show than those paying.

If you have a good team working for you, you will want to keep that team working for you. Freaking out and making their lives miserable when something is going wrong will not make them happy. They are there to do a job just like you. They are also supposed to be professionals. If they truly are professionals, then yelling at them will only slow them down when it comes to fixing a problem. Your event attendees are important, but when the staff is having a good time, the attendees will to. The staff goes a long way in setting the vibe for the night.

There's always next time.

That's really a half truth, but it's one you should live by. You will never throw an event where you feel it was 100 % the way you envisioned it. You can get close though. The key thing to remember is that people will come back if they had a good time and they will want not just more of the same, but they'll want it with a twist. It's a constant game of one-up-manship. Not only that, but if you are not challenged and excited in some way by each event you throw, then you will quickly burn yourself out.

God may have told you to throw the event, but don't stop listening.

It's exciting to hear that God has a plan for you. You see this time and time again in the Bible. I have zero doubt that God maybe calling some of you to throw an event. Let me caution you though. It is very easy to get lost in the "God told me to do this" argument and forget about other things God may be telling you like "when" and "where" and of course "how". He may want you to throw a huge event with 2,000 attendees, but when you have never done one before, did God really mean for it to be your first event? There are plenty of examples in the Bible where a strong follower of God was told he would do something or was given a vision about something and then waited years before God allowed it to come true in their lives. All I am saying is be aware of these things. It's ok to be skeptical. Gideon was. Thomas was. That didn't make either of them smaller in God's eye.

Well, that's it for now. I hope that you are finding this series useful. We'll cover more issues related to throwing events in the coming weeks including fund raising, budgeting, locating a venue, picking out a sound and lights team and more. Until then... Peace.

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/2012/05/21/event-expectations/eventexpectations/>

Aleksandr Emelianov (2012-05-28 12:02:39)

Really waiting to read it! Great idea, we need venues level raised. In my city there is no christian edm scene - a thing I'm not

happy with. So this material will help me to fire up the locals! Be blessed!

Event Expectations: A Real World Example (2012-05-29 00:02:14)

[...] to give me a summary on the things that he learned through this event. Give my last article on event expectations; I thought this would be a good follow up for it. So... without further delay, here's Anthony [...]

Event Expectations: A Real World Example (2012-05-29 00:00) - redsavior

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IFRAME: [1]http://www.youtube.com/embed/quVh6sRU_gA

Recently, Anthony Lee hosted an event called “Awakenings” in Florida. He had been struggling with various issues including funding and ticket sales. The event came and went without a major hitch though and was a solid success for the first event in a new series. I gotta hand it to Anthony, he kept his head down and struggled through it all while keeping focused on God.

I asked Anthony to give me a summary on the things that he learned through this event. Give my last article on [2]event expectations; I thought this would be a good follow up for it. So... without further delay, here's Anthony Lee's take-a-ways from Awakenings.

Anthony's Awakenings Take-A-Ways

Spiritually speaking, I had a vision and I knew that the only way it was going to happen was by submitting to God and not make excuses as to why I shouldn't be thinking about a project as this one. This event would have been a lot better if I had key elements in proper order before the start. The whole time I was recovering, or making up for ground and time lost. I was functioning out of a crisis management mindset which put an edge of urgency on the event that shouldn't have been.

From an objective approach here are the things that needed to be secured. This list is in no particular order as there is no wrong order to have these things in place. But again, these are things that must be in place before the start of the event project.

1. Develop a solid logistic team that is willing to work with you the whole way.
2. Have the money you need for all down payments covered.
3. Have all promotional needs out of the way before advertisements need to start.
4. Know the type of DJs you want to have at the event and do not alter.
5. Secure DJs, lighting, sound, date, and venue before taking any other steps in developing the event.
6. Discuss the demographic you want to reach and focus on that demographic (i.e. age / area etc.).
7. Don't accept more support than you need. Know what you need and get that done first, adding too much too soon can be troublesome.
8. Set dates goals and timelines and stick with it. If you miss a date immediately access if you should pull the plug on the event and know how much time is needed to get out of the recovery mode.
9. Have confidence in yourself and do not rely on others more than you need to – If it is your vision it is just that. You can't push it off on another person to make it succeed.
10. Don't allow people onto your logistic team that are not willing to invest their energy limitlessly. If you have to worry about giving out tasks and whether the help you have will actually do what is needed that is troublesome.
11. Know the people you are working with. The team you form does not work for you they work with you. Both you and they have to understand that otherwise it is a mismatch and will be more difficult than successful.

12. Have a solid foundation to work from. Make sure you have the proper approvals and backing before trying to start a project like this.
13. Do not be double minded. Know why you are doing this and don't add to that agenda. If you are doing it for money then do it for money. If you are doing it to minister then do it to minister. Mixing those agenda's will make the event fail (there is a right way to attain both agendas).
14. Stay honest and truthful. People will support or reject a cause by the person acting as the visionary despite how noble sound or Godly it may be.
15. Ask for help early, but be specific in your needs.
16. Be patient with yourself with your team and with the event development. There is a level of poise that needs to be maintained so that even if a crisis happens your team can handle it.
17. Don't be afraid to take a hit or lose a little for the greater good. Perfection is a great goal ideally but realistically it's the response to the lack of perfection that determines just how successful things are.
18. Make sure you have time to devote to the project. If you have to make time then the project might not be something you should undertake right away. If you are listening and waiting on Jesus you can never be too late, but you can be too early. He will confirm when a vision needs to be brought to life.

The End Result Was This:

1. People got saved.
2. The area wants more.
3. And I am able to do it right and proper now that I know it can be done.

I have already gotten a vision for the next one and I know that it is of Christ. I am excited to continue developing this style of ministry.

— Anthony Lee

Thanks Anthony. That's a great list of things to take-a-way from running any event. Those are probably some of the more crucial lessons anyone in a leadership position needs to learn, understand and live by.

1. http://www.youtube.com/embed/quVh6sRU_gA

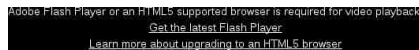
2. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/articles/industry/2012/05/21/event-expectations/>

10.6 June

Taking Sides On Events (2012-06-11 02:35) - redsavior

The debate on what a Christian EDM event should be like is one with a pretty long history and in many ways, not a very clear answer. Christian rock concerts would seem like a nice model to follow, but outside of the lyrics of the songs, what the band's frontman says between songs and the absence of drug and alcohol abuse, they tend to look very much like their secular counterparts. With EDM events though, the typical song doesn't have lyrics and the DJ doesn't take time out between songs to share bits of his life's story. The two biggest things that make a Christian rock concert Christian are actually things that run counter to a club culture that goes back to the 1970s when disco was king. What we're left with is the age old question of "what makes it Christian?"

This is where I could easily dive off a philosophical deep end. It would be a fun ride, but that discussion isn't the focus of this article. What I would like to do instead is to present you with the two main models of events you could model your event after and then offer you the chance to go deeper beyond this. Ready? Let's go!



IFRAME: [1]<http://www.youtube.com/embed/uvigatW-rBQ>

DJ-Led Worship Events

DJ-led worship events are nothing new. If you ever saw the Prodigal Sons back in the 90's you would know this. As Greg and Chris would Dj and perform the music, JR would preach a rather hellfire and brimstone message. JR wasn't afraid to call out non-Christ-like behavior in the middle of a set if he saw or even suspected it was going in the crowd.

Club Worship was founded later to create an environment of worship for Christian clubbers and lovers of hip-hop. The interesting thing there was that it was started by a desire expressed by a church's youth group to create this type of worship experience.

Probably the best known leader of Dj-led worship is Andy Hunter. I'll go as far as to say that he set the standard. I'll also say that not every event he plays is intentionally a DJ-led worship session.

As you can see from the above examples, Dj-led worship typically involves a DJ playing music and occasionally speaking into a microphone. The focus of what is said is to help focus the attention of the clubbers on God and hopefully it will not only Honor God, but will help the clubber to draw closer to Him. Sometimes there might also be a live vocalist as well or a visual artist to supplement the DJ's performance.

DJ-led Worship Pros

[list type="square"]

[li]It provides Christians with a safe environment to Go clubbing[/li]

[li]It may help those who have a hard time connecting with God through the traditional hymns or praise music on Sunday morning to find that connection and learn how to let go and worship more freely.[/li]

[li]If done selflessly, God will be honored.[/li]

[li]It should be easier to make a transition from being just another club event to a evangelistic opportunity.[/li]

[/list]

DJ-led Worship Cons

[list type="square"]

- If it's done wrong, it's just cheesy and annoying.

- Not everyone who attends the event will share the same desire to worship and you cannot force worship. It can be faked however.
- It forces a structure into the event that runs counter in many ways to what EDM is about and may scare or turn off non-Christians.
- Like with all Christian bands and worship leaders, it's easy for the audience to get lost in the performance and skill of the leader rather than the act of worship.
- Preaching over "techno" won't instantly mean that you'll gain support from your church or community in hosting an event of this type.

[/list]

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[Learn more about upgrading to an HTML5 browser](#)

IFRAME: [2]http://www.youtube.com/embed/3tWRMjvgMkE

Club Nights

Honestly, I don't really know what to call a Christian event that isn't DJ-led worship. I do know that they exist. I've been responsible now for one for a while. What I do know is this: Jesus loved being around people and fellowshiping with them. If nothing else, a non-DJ-led worship event is an opportunity for Christians to come together and hang out. The more this happens, the closer they become and the stronger their bonds of friendship become. This in turn leads to a more open willingness to share each others burdens and take their relationships beyond the dance floor and into the real world. This type of event also opens the doors to lifestyle evangelism.

Club Night Pros

[list type="square"]

- You create an environment that is open to Christians and non-Christians alike.
- The flow of the night and the general vibe is free to evolve much like a normal club night. Nothing is forced to happen or occurs awkwardly during the event.
- The main goal of the night is simplified to "having fun" rather than "worship God while having fun".
- There may be more venues open to working with you than would be for a worship event.

[/list]

Club Night Cons

[list type="square"]

- You still have to deal with the question of what makes your event any different than a secular one. This honestly though may not be an issue for you.
- Despite all efforts to do a clean, wholesome event, you could fail. The attitudes of those in attendance will really determine this.

- It will be much harder to introduce an evangelistic moment into this type of event. You will have to rely on lifestyle evangelism to reach the lost.

[/list]

So those are some of the pros and cons for DJ-led worship and positive club nights. I personally don't have a problem with either type of event. I've seen non-Christians gain new respect for Christianity and Christians in general because of a positive dance night and I've led someone to Christ at an event that sat somewhere between DJ-led worship and a Christian rock concert in structure. There is room for both types of events.

One thing I would encourage you to consider is finding a cause that you can champion with your event. As Christians we are to change the world by acting with the mind of Christ. You probably will not solve world hunger or anything that grand, but you could pick out charities and causes to aid. One idea for this includes raising money to send children to school in Haiti. For just \$6, you can send one child to school for a year. You could always find a homeless shelter that could use some renovations in your area as well.

Another cause to champion is that of human (sex) trafficking. If you haven't heard about this, it's basically a modern form of slavery. Do a bit of research on it. Just as an example, Atlanta, GA is the largest human trafficking hub in the United States. This isn't a problem that you can solve, but if you could raise awareness, you may find a way to prevent girls from getting stuck in the sex trade or actually lower demand in your area for it.

In the end, I don't know that it really matters which direction you go in as far as your event is concerned. What does matter is that you seek God during the planning phase and create the event that He wants you to create. Only that will be blessed by Him. Let me leave you with one more vision of DJ-led worship. It's a communion ceremony from Cornerstone several years ago called Re:Fresh. I personally wasn't there, but I do wish that I had been.



IFRAME: [3]<http://www.youtube.com/embed/VvIbve7i5oE>

1. <http://www.youtube.com/embed/uvigatW-rBQ>
2. <http://www.youtube.com/embed/3tWRMjvgMkE>
3. <http://www.youtube.com/embed/VvIbve7i5oE>

J.Hill (2012-06-11 22:19:33)

Good read. Both events are important... almost the same difference and importance as a church having worship services and fellowship events.

Dave Richards (2012-06-11 22:31:11)

I think that you're dead on with that comment. Too many times we're worried that unless we present the Gospel at an event that God won't be honored in some way or that God won't speak to someone's heart. I don't believe that's true. It's an over simplification of how God works and puts Him back in the position of being a cosmic vending machine with of course isn't true and is a very un-Biblical view of God.

J.Hill (2012-06-11 22:54:59)

I don't mean to sound all Rob Bell-ish, but I think he was on to something when he said that having Christ inside me makes what I do 'Christian'. If I DJ some random rave, as long as I still represent Him, it's now a Christian event. He gives us that authority

over the world that if we claim our lives for His cause, that we can make Jesus the dominant force in any situation. So for me, if I'm DJing worship music or DJing a rave, it's for all for Christ.

Dave Richards (2012-06-12 01:16:25)

I'm not a huge Rob Bell fan (big shock?), but yeah... you can't separate yourself from Christ. Where you go, He goes. We represent Him in either a positive or negative light.

Tim Bunch (2012-06-12 13:59:11)

In the 90's I ran a club (outreach) in my community. We had all sorts of things happen, including some real roadblocks and challenges. It was a meeting ground for a few Christian events, but mostly they were hybrid events. We also held Bible studies there. As an outreach we saw young people come to Christ. That's all that mattered. We paired up Christian groups with secular, sometimes had only secular groups, sometimes only Christian groups. Those were crazy times for me, but mostly I remember the kids whose lives were changed.

pushead (2012-06-12 14:33:56)

Oi Vey - the treatise I could launch into on this one...

Let me give you a little background - I was heavily involved in the Christian Metal scene of the mid-late 80's, from doing concerts in clubs, to a radio show on a local college station, and being really involved in the Sanctuary church movement. I remember the days of struggling with this question, and wondering if what we were doing was making any difference. So here's a couple of thoughts:

After I had done a 'Christian' metal show on the air for a while, I realized that what I was doing was entertaining Christians. Nothing wrong with that *if* that's your goal. Christians (especially n00b Christians) need to learn to replace the negative things in their life with the positive things of Christ. But, I decided that was not my goal. So, I killed that show, and started just doing a metal show, where I would play Christian metal alongside Metallica and Megadeth, showing the world some really great music. I did a live DJ metal show once out in the middle of Camp Pendleton to a bunch of metal crazed jarheads. We were miles and miles away from civilization, and I was whipping these guys into a frenzy, playing Deliverance and Believer right alongside Iron Maiden and the like, and giving away tons of cassettes of Christian artists. It was a two night gig, and on the second night, I had some guys that got some of the tapes say "Hey - what is this?" And, a conversation was started. I was able to encourage some Christian jarheads in their faith, and opened up a new world to some jarheads that weren't. Where are they now? I'll never know.

So, when you are throwing an EDM show, decide beforehand what your goals are. Don't be 'jack of all trades, master of none' - choose what you want to do. If you want to entertain Christians, more power to you. Play skillfully. Entertain and encourage before, during, and after the gig. Start conversations with people you don't know.

If your goal is outreach, EDM is at a distinct disadvantage, because there is so little opportunity for the artist to speak. But, you guys have stuff we never had in the 80's - cheap laptops, and cheap LCD projectors. So much of live EDM is visual anyway - be creative and present your positive message with images and quotes that go along with the music. Decide beforehand how that's going to look and execute. Play skillfully. And, start conversations with people you don't know.

Dave Richards (2012-06-12 14:51:09)

And honestly, you know that's all that matters. You do the event because God put it in your heart and opened the doors. He does that to change lives. It's not necessarily our place to tell God who to reach, how to reach them or to tell the person how their life should change. We're not God.

And... as far as crazy times go, ministry work is some of the best craziness you could have. It's a shame with the church body trips over its own feet when trying to do ministry work though. Pride, egos, unclear visions, poor planning and more can keep us from really meeting God's goals.

Dave Richards (2012-06-12 14:56:43)

I think that you're dead on. The hardest part for me personally is starting that conversation. It's the part that anyone who has doubts about lifestyle evangelism is 100 % correct in their criticism. We say we're witnessing to people, but we never really get around to starting that conversation that we have set as our goal. It can be a real struggle.

This past weekend, my family and I were in Wal*Mart having lunch. A 90 year-old man came up to us and talked to us for a while and very naturally brought up that he was in a church choir and that he was involved in his church (one I used to be a member of) and then asked us where we went to church. Had we not be involved in a church, I'm sure he would have gone through a typical salvation plan with us. It was kinda cool.

shagz (2012-06-12 16:04:04)

Thanks for the insight into the 80's metal scene, I found that really interesting. The point about having a place or scene to support new Christians is really important too, and not to be overlooked.

And great article! DJ-led worship, or the examples of it that I was exposed to, always kind of turned me off. It didn't really feel like something you could bring a non-Christian to; it felt a little "bait and switch" to me. ("Come to this cool club party we're having! And once you're here we're going to preach at you!") I had to work hard to not let that get in the way of appreciating and supporting what someone was trying to do for God. Making your intentions, and target audience, clear is probably the best approach.

digital-aura (2012-06-12 17:25:22)

Good article! thx

pushead (2012-06-12 19:58:22)

[1]@Dave - I know what you mean about starting the conversation - it's hard. But we have to do it, and we can be creative with it. I look for common ground - perhaps a band shirt that someone is wearing 'Dude! You like Crystal Method?? Man, their last album SMOKED...' and away you go. Sometimes those conversations go somewhere, and sometimes they don't, but the results are up to God. Do NOT get caught up in the numbers game - if you actually get into a conversation with one person, you've done good. I'm convinced today that one-on-one evangelism is what gets results, not the huge altar call. If you make the effort to really connect, God will see to the results.

[2]@shagz - I recently ran into a metal band who did some 'preaching' from the stage, mostly just identifying themselves as Christians, but the real ministry happened after they left the stage and interacted with their fans (it was a secular show at a club, too.) They made real connections with their fans (they tell me that they respond to every fb post sent their way) and they then rely on God for the results. In the metal scene, that's pretty much all that's needed as far as 'preaching' - so it doesn't seem like bait and switch, especially if the artists really play a smoking set... But, even if you took a non-believer to a worship set, just make sure they know what's happening, and couch it in terms like "Hey - this is a Christian Worship set, and the DJ totally KILLS!" And who knows what will happen? A non-believer might just say what I said all those years ago, when 'The Yellow and Black Attack' crossed my path - "You mean I can be a Christian, and still rock?"

Having never been to an EDM show of any sort (they don't roll through Southern Utah very much) I don't know what the atmosphere is like, but you guys have golden opportunities to be creative with your music, and your presentation, to totally blow minds, and get really cool conversations started... wish I could be there...

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/members/dave/>

2. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/members/shagz/>

mj12 (2012-06-13 00:24:20)

Like with all Christian bands and worship leaders, it's easy for the audience to get lost in the performance and skill of the leader rather than the act of worship.

I couldn't agree more. I was watching a YouTube video a few weeks ago of a well known Christian group. When the camera would pan out towards the crowd, it struck me that some, not all, of the audience seemed to be more in tune with what was going on on the stage, rather than the message. I found that somewhat disturbing and haven't been back.

Josiah-Fingaz (2012-06-13 17:55:04)

I've found that what works in the EDM scene at large doesn't necessarily work in the Christian music scene.

1. People in the Christian music scene need lyrics so choose tracks with words.
2. People in the Christian music scene are used to having a back and forth interaction. In the club a DJ can just spin and people love it because that is a part of that culture. Doesn't work quite as well at Christian shows.

I totally agree with being up front about what you are doing and who you are. If you are at a Christian music festival/concert why would you not share the gospel in some way? My favorite part about the shows is listening/praying/sharing afterwards.

I play Christian events so that is what I know. I had to learn a long time ago that the EDM model doesn't fit into the Christian youth model.

Josiah-Fingaz (2012-06-13 18:21:14)

Def not a fan of the bait and switch method. I think either way Club/DJ Led Worship could be good and effective. I tend to be somewhere in between personally with the events I have produced lately. It's just a matter of seeking the Lord and learning

from each event. What is even better than learning from each event is learning from each other and making the next event even better! Great article Dave.

Katie Garcia (2012-06-19 00:13:47)

Nice!



Next week will be a week of great significance for Christian music in general. The Cornerstone Music Festival will begin on Monday, July 2nd and then on Saturday July 7th, the festival will close its gates for the last and final time. After 28 years, Cornerstone will be no more. The main and obvious reason for this is finances, but the more significant part of the story is the loss of Tastyfresh.com's Afterhours stage and where do we go from here. The truth is that we, the entire CEDM scene is in transition now. Cornerstone was the standard for CEDM. Even before Tastyfresh was involved, the dance club existed. It changed hands no fewer than 3 times and then there were a few awkward years of joint control between Scott Blackwell and Phillip Kim after Scott's departure from N*Soul. In the end though, everyone involved with the dance club (or Afterhours as it was branded for the past few years) consistently came together, put aside their differences and did their best to put on a world class show in the middle of a cornfield. It was a grand experiment in so many different ways. And as all grand experiments go, they are in reality training grounds. Now, it's time for us to stand up and start something new. This is why I started focusing on this idea of sustainability. It's also why we will be on it for some time. It's time that we all start banning together and putting the things that we have all learned to good use. We're already making progress. I'm not talking about just the Tastyfresh community here, but whole CEDM scene world-wide. We're small locally, but we have so much potential globally. So what's next for Tastyfresh? We'll let you know as soon as we do. We haven't given up hope on doing events, in fact... we may be more inspired than ever if only to keep the spirit of Cornerstone alive. Anyway, I thought now might be a good time to feature some videos of CEDM events that have happened in the past few years. No, this isn't all of the events, but they are a decent sampling. Please use them for some personal inspiration.

Transform DJs at Icthus 2012 (June 2012)

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10.7 July

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[4]



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TF: Are you happy with it's success so far?

DD: Yes. Very much so. I am thankful for all the support we have received from people all over the world.

TF: What are some of the changes we can expect in the future?

DD: Right now we are really trying to deliver a quality product and to support those who seek to add positive influence to our culture. Most people do not know this, but we have made big changes and here are some. We now give 100 % of the profits made back to the labels and artists. We have lowered our price and have added where available WAV files for no extra charge (at the time of this writing about 85 % of our music has WAV files). We offer about 500 clean dance tracks and expect that to double very soon. We have raised money to help fund orphanages in Africa and to fight human trafficking. Expect more of these kinda things in the future.

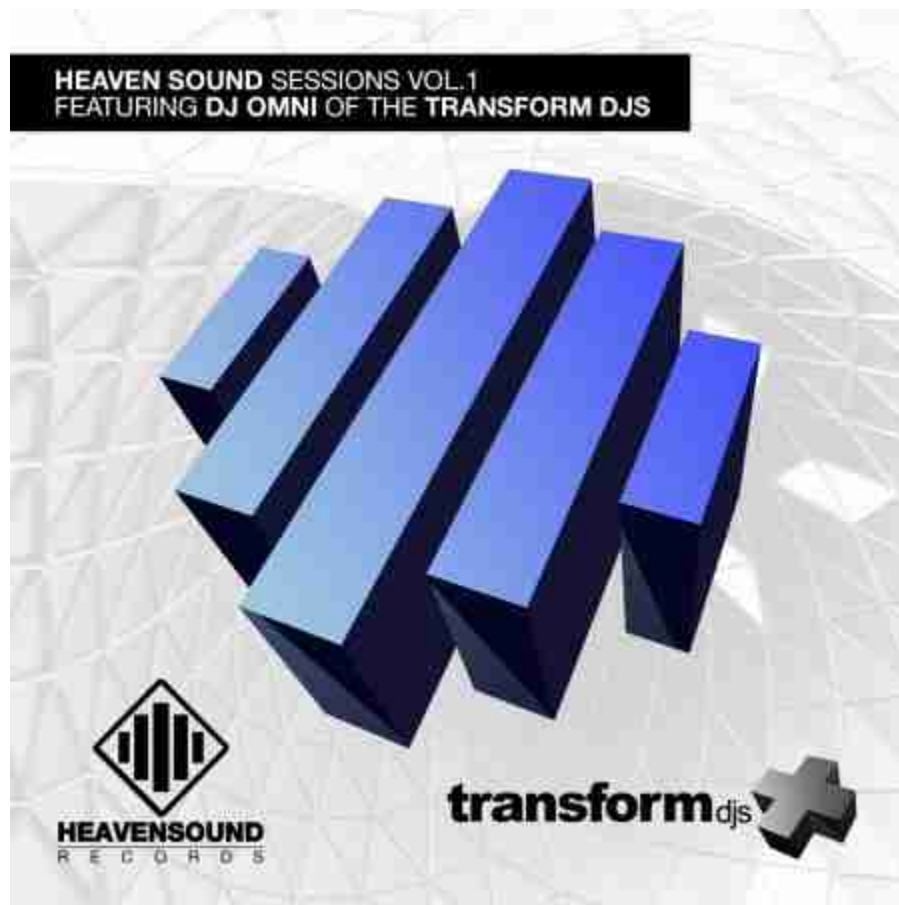
TF: How can other labels get involved?

DD: Right now we are working closely with our labels. They have supported us, and we value them greatly. For the future we will be selectively adding labels that support the vision of PDC (Positive Dance Culture). If you think you are one of them or know someone that would be interested, please drop us a line by going to <http://www.heavensoundmusic.com/contact-us>. One thing we do get quite often is individuals that would like to sell their music on the store. Right now we only connect to labels, so the best thing you could do is get your music signed by a label that we have an agreement with.

TF: So, in addition to the store, you have started a label as well. Why run both?

The store is something I felt like I was called to do. Then once we started selling music, it seemed like the next logical step as a music entity was to start a label. There is a bigger picture with starting a label that we are looking to develop more in the future.

[5]



TF: You recently released a benefit compilation entitled Heaven Sound Sessions Volume 1. What lead up to this compilation?

DD: One of the label owners suggested we make a compilation with profits going to Heaven Sound to help us to be able to do what we are doing. We liked the idea of a compilation, but felt led to use the profit to support others.

TF: What is human trafficking? We're not talking about the old club movie from the late 90's are we?

DD: Um, no. Never seen that movie, but just watched the trailer. Wow. In all seriousness, human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery. It includes the buying and selling of women and children, mainly for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

TF: How serious of a problem is human trafficking in the United States?

DD: Human trafficking is a very serious problem in the United States and abroad. The amount of slaves in this day is continually growing. A quote from the Exodus Cry website: "Tens of billions of dollars are generated each year by the illegal transport and sale of human beings, making it the fastest-growing criminal industry in the world." Something must be done to stop the injustice. And we want to partner with organizations such as Exodus Cry to do our part.

TF: The compilation will be benefiting Exodus Cry. Can you tell us a bit about them and why you teamed up with them for the compilation?

DD: Exodus Cry is a local (Kansas City) organization that helps fight human trafficking through prayer and out-

reach. You can check out all that they do at exoduscry.com. We met Benji (founder of Exodus Cry) at one of our events last year. Upon talking with him, we found out he has a love for electronic music also. So that got us thinking of how we could partner with him and Exodus Cry...

TF: How did you get all of the labels involved?

DD: We just asked them, and they were all more than willing. They loved the cause and wanted to go for it with full support.

TF: Why did you select Transform DJs to mix and compile it?

DD: Technically, it was only DJ Omni (Tim Heil) of Transform DJs. I have been friends with the guys from Transform for many years. I used to DJ with them way back when (as mentioned before). I knew they had a like heart and mind concerning the issue of human trafficking, so I approached them about it. Tim agreed to mix the compilation for us.

TF: Since this is volume 1, what's the next compilation going to hold for fans?

DD: We already have the next compilation in the works. More details to come soon.

TF: Thanks taking time out of your schedule to talk with us Daniel.

Well, that's it for now. Please check out Daniel's [6]Heaven Sound Music store and support his efforts to [7]help end human trafficking. He's got a great site and a solid selection of tracks. If you're a label, feel free to contact selling in his store.

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/articles/faith-ministry/2012/07/09/daniel-dodd-heaven-sound-music-human-trafficking/attachment/danieldodd-slide/>
2. <http://christiandancemusic.net/>
3. <http://www.heavensoundmusic.com/>
4. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/articles/faith-ministry/2012/07/09/daniel-dodd-heaven-sound-music-human-trafficking/attachment/hslogo/>
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TF: What got you into EDM?

DD: This is not an easy one to answer (20 minutes goes by). Okay, when I was younger I would sporadically hear the music. It would catch my attention, but I never really understood anything about it. That is until 1998 when a co-worker from California started telling me stories of electronic music and the dance scene out there. He told me about this new music that was really getting big "Happy Hardcore" and the big parties. I was intrigued so he passed me a few CDs that I would listen to when driving around with friends. All the energy and sound made my heart come alive. Really quite amazing time. Thinking back to that time kinda makes me chuckle, because just as dubstep has been as of recent, so was happy hardcore back then.

TF: When did you move from just a fan to actually being involved in the scene? How were you involved in it?

DD: So let's fast forward about a year. It was Christmas eve 1999. My family was in Indiana visiting relatives for the holidays. My brother and I went to hang out with a close cousin of ours to get away from all the holiday commotion. Turns out that recently he had been going to raves and would spend all night dancing, connecting with friends, and having fun. We hung out with his friends and started to learn all the candy kid 101s. Dressing before the show, candy, glow sticks, liquid dancing, PLUR, etc. Now up until this point I had never really done drugs; I just smoked weed (that is how I would have put it back then). But something was different that night because we went for it, threw caution to the wind and headed for a smaller sized rave in Indianapolis, popped a pill and let loose. By the end of the night we didn't have rave friends anymore; it was more like a rave family. To this day it amazes me how powerful something like community is – something that we were purposed for from the beginning. But as some of you may already know, that community never had a foundation in the first place. It could never be able to withstand the storm of time.

TF: What was that process like?

DD: Well it all moved pretty fast from there. It's kind of a blur, and a lot happened over the next few years. So to cut to the chase, I would describe the whole process as a skydive without a parachute. There is that moment of no return, the exhilaration of the free fall, and in the end a crushing defeat as the inevitable has to happen.

TF: How did your faith play a role in that?

DD: At the time of this rave experience, I really did not have any faith to speak of. In fact I thought of myself as an atheist and was not interested in any of that religious nonsense. I had really good Christian friends, one of which is Luke Bodley (the guy who started Heaven Fest) but was just not interested. Looking back I am so thankful for that friendship, as it played a bigger part in who I have become today.

TF: So then what changed?

DD: So here's how it happened for me. At a certain point I was done with the party scene; really I just got burnt out. There was nothing left. I was a person utterly spent on feeding my flesh what it wanted. Sounds depressing, right? Right! So as it turns out, our friend Mr. Luke, as mentioned before, started doing this once every other month show and invited me to spin at them, kinda like a residency. He called it "Tranceform Productions". Sounds almost familiar, but it has a "ce" instead of an "s" like today's Transform DJs.

So now I was on a mission; I had a purpose again. Everyday I would scour the net and record shops, finding the latest and greatest hard, progressive and tech trance I could find. As I started amassing enough music, I would work out the best ways to mix them. I was always trying to figure out what I was trying to convey with the music, and I would never play a track twice, so it needed to be done the right way the first time. But really there was something in me that was driving me to do this. It was like a small glimmer of hope or a spark that needed a bit of coaxing. I would do this for hours on end. Those hours would become days, and days weeks, and then months. Before I knew it, people were really connecting to the sets and looking forward to the next event to see what I would play next. Crazy! I realized that my experience working on the music all day, that the time by myself was not spent alone. I was in constant communication. An experience that I knew and felt but could never prove to anyone. So how does someone who does not have a context for this kinda thing put words to it? Well that's what I needed to understand, and that is the question that put me in pursuit.

So, let me take a second to demystify this process. It was not some magic moment that happened, and all of a sudden like I heard God talking to me. It did not involve a kid from youth group using the shotgun approach to lead me to Christ through fear or guilt or even some smart conversation about theological truths. It was a long, slow experience led gently by a guide taking me to the next step. I never had to get it right first. Jesus met me where I was at. Simple.

[4]



TF: What was your drive to start Heaven Sound?

DD: My heart in starting Heaven Sound was mainly for music production. We wanted a place to enjoy the music without all the dirty stuff from the rave scene.

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Unless you are sitting on a pile of cash that is just waiting to be liquidated for an event such as this you are going to have to come up with different ways to have money for your budget. I actually average putting anywhere from one hundred to two hundred dollars into an event that I produce. This amount may vary for you depending on your situation. Personally, I think if you really believe in your event then you should be willing to invest some monetary amount into it. Just make sure you include it in your expenses to get an accurate account of your profit/loss margin for your records. Let us start out with several ways I do not recommend for funding your event.

1. Do not put the event on credit
2. Do not acquire loans from family, friends, or colleagues
3. Do not rely on paying for your event through cover charges from the door

With these three things let me clarify what I mean. Certainly you will want to pay for things through a credit card or check to help have a paper trail on what you are purchasing. You will want to keep all of your receipts but it is good to have another back up plan in case those receipts get misplaced (though they shouldn't get misplaced-get a folder or binder for this event). However, you do not want to be on the string for the entirety of this event. If you have to put the entire event on credit then it isn't time to do this event yet. Also, don't ask someone for a loan to fund your event. If you have people close to you that want to support you it would be better to ask for a gift that they can afford. Loans put undue stress on relationships so don't even go there! It is possible to pay artists or sound/lighting technicians through the door but what about those unforeseen costs that inevitably pop up right before the event? If you want to maintain a good reputation as a promoter you must be able to put your money where your mouth is. If not, no one will want to work with you. Period. What I propose is to eliminate the stress of depending upon the largest crowd possible showing up on game day in order to get everyone paid. What I propose is to fund your event through sponsors, vendors, and fund raisers.

The goal for every event I produce is to have the event fully covered or funded before opening day. The beauty of this is obvious. If the artists and other employees know the event is fully funded, it puts their minds at ease to fully invest their gifts in talents into this great cause. Also, it helps put your mind at ease so you can fully invest in promoting, preparing staff, and putting out fires as they arise. So the question for gaining sponsors is: "How do I get people to invest in this event?"

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2. Set up the event through a non for profit entity so that all donations/sponsorship is tax deductible
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If you don't fully believe in your event and cannot articulate it clearly to people you are asking to fund it, then they will not be willing to invest their hard earned money in it either. Rehearse it over and over. "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." -Habakkuk 2:2 I always type out a sponsorship letter that clearly states the vision of the event, who is involved (i.e. ministry/church/charity), the sponsorship package, and the benefits of being a part of this event. Make sure to keep it only one page and highlight the key elements that a business wants to see: the package and the cost. Something you might consider is to have a portion or all of the proceeds go to a charity or cause that will resonate with the people of your community. This gives your event a focus and purpose that goes beyond having fun or coming together for worship. Even people who aren't Christians might be willing to give to an event that will raise funds to help get healing for girls victimized by the sex trafficking industry. Also, I make sure to point out that because the donation for the event is going through a non for profit entity that their donation will be tax deductible. This means that they will be associated with a great cause locally and get promotion that is tax deductible. It should be a win/win for everyone! When I put together a package in the community where I live It includes something like this list below. Understand that this is just an example. I have a connection with a local radio station therefore that is a big selling point. If you don't have that don't let that stop you. Get creative and put together something that would be attractive to a local business in your area.

1. Business tagged at the end of the event commercial on local radio / Estimated number of plays / live DJ mentions

2. Business logo on event flyer and number of fliers distributed
3. Social Media promotion: Facebook / Twitter / Website Banners / Email Newsletters
4. Business mentioned in local newspaper story the week of the event
5. Booth for business and/or banner location during event, shout outs throughout event thanking sponsors
6. V.I.P. area for sponsors and two V.I.P. tickets for sponsor to use or give away at their discretion
7. A letter of thanks from the beneficiary of the funds raised from the event to the business

[soundcloud url="http://api.soundcloud.com/tracks/9413229" width="100 %" height="166" params="show _art-work=true" iframe="true" /]

There are a few things I want to stress about approaching these businesses for sponsorship. Whoever you decide should head up the sponsorship team should be well spoken, dressed well, and professional. You don't want someone who cannot ask a stranger for money or dresses like one of the local skateboarders who constantly grinds their sidewalk away. This person should have a thorough understanding of the event's purpose, the promotion package, and the charity that the event will raise funds for. I say this because you do not want to just send out sponsorship letters to random businesses. They will get filed away in "file 13". The trash! It is very important to get an audience with the person who has the power to say "yes". A firm hand shake and being able to have a person look you in the eye will be what lands you the sponsorship you need. I always ask God to give me favor and to direct me to those who will support this cause. And don't get down in the mouth about people who can't give this time. In this economy businesses have to be more frugal than ever. Be considerate of where they are at financially but always ask them if they can't give now would they be interested in supporting future events. I usually seek out 5 major sponsors. I always push the whole package but if I feel that they want to give something but aren't able to afford the whole shabang then I offer a reduced package with a reduced price. I have also had businesses donate merchandise to cover part of the package cost. I use the merchandise for give-a-ways at the event for the patrons. Get creative! If your home church wants to support, get them on board. I was able to get the company I work for to take a sponsorship spot and they said they weren't even interested in the sponsorship package. They just believed in the cause and wanted to make a difference in the community! What a blessing! Gaining sponsorship should be the core of your budget but you don't have to stop there. One word of caution though. Don't over do it. Don't gain an excess of funds if you do not need them. You don't want to exhaust possible sponsors for future events.

The next phase is vendors. Offering a spot for vendors to sell merchandise or share their cause with like minded people is a great way to generate some extra funds for your event and get more people involved. One thing I would recommend is to be fair and realistic when charging for a booth spot at the event. From the first article in this series we have come to an understanding that the average CEDM event brings in anywhere from 75-300 people. And like I stated before, get creative! You might be able to trade a spot at your event for a particular service that you will need. Work it man! Also, you will want to have to have some sort of refreshments at your event. You could certainly provide this but do you have the manpower and license to do so? You might go in with someone with the credentials and split the profit or offer the venue to be the sole provider for a discount on the venue. Every situation will be different so think out of the box and try to exhaust all possibilities.

The final phase for this article, but certainly not the last for great creative individuals like yourself, is fund raising events for your fundraiser event. The list here could go on forever! You could set up a fund raiser through your local coffee shop, Apple Bee's, Church youth group car washes, etc. These are great for two reasons. They help get funds for your event and they also help promote your event in the community. So brainstorm with your team until you work up a tsunami of ideas and rally the troupes to pound the pavement in order to get this awesome event for a great cause fully funded before the day of the show. It can be done because I have done it as well as many others out there!

Let us go to the scriptures for some further encouragement.

Ecclesiastes 10:19 A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things.

A party is going to be fun but ultimately what is going to make it happen is having the funds.

Deuteronomy 8:18 But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

If you seek to honor God by doing His will, then I guarantee that He will provide! I've seen this happen so many times. If you get out of his will then get ready for a stressful time with a big bill at the end. But even if you get stuck with a huge bill don't get down in the mouth. A good friend told me this, "You are going to pay for an education whether you go to college or not. It's what you do with that experience afterwards that proves if you got your money's worth." If you have any questions about raising funds for a future event don't hesitate to message me or give me a call. I'll help out where I am able. If God has been tugging on your heart about planning a CEDM event for your area start gathering your team and putting the information from these articles to good use! Be blessed!

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If you don't fully believe in your event and cannot articulate it clearly to people you are asking to fund it, then they will not be willing to invest their hard earned money in it either. Rehearse it over and over. "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." -Habakkuk 2:2 I always type out a sponsorship letter that clearly states the vision of the event, who is involved (i.e. ministry/church/charity), the sponsorship package, and the benefits of being a part of this event. Make sure to keep it only one page and highlight the key elements that a business wants to see: the package and the cost. Something you might consider is to have a portion or all of the proceeds go to a charity or cause that will resonate with the people of your community. This gives your event a focus and purpose that goes beyond having fun or coming together for worship. Even people who aren't Christians might be willing to give to an event that will raise funds to help get healing for girls victimized by the sex trafficking industry. Also, I make sure to point out that because the donation for the event is going through a non for profit entity that their donation will be tax deductible. This means that they will be associated with a great cause locally and get promotion that is tax deductible. It should be a win/win for everyone! When I put together a package in the community where I live It includes something like this list below. Understand that this is just an example. I have a connection with a local radio station therefore that is a big selling point. If you don't have that don't let that stop you. Get creative and put together something that would be attractive to a local business in your area.

1. Business tagged at the end of the event commercial on local radio / Estimated number of plays / live DJ mentions

2. Business logo on event flyer and number of fliers distributed
3. Social Media promotion: Facebook / Twitter / Website Banners / Email Newsletters
4. Business mentioned in local newspaper story the week of the event
5. Booth for business and/or banner location during event, shout outs throughout event thanking sponsors
6. V.I.P. area for sponsors and two V.I.P. tickets for sponsor to use or give away at their discretion
7. A letter of thanks from the beneficiary of the funds raised from the event to the business

[soundcloud url="http://api.soundcloud.com/tracks/9413229" width="100 %" height="166" params="show _art-work=true" iframe="true" /]

There are a few things I want to stress about approaching these businesses for sponsorship. Whoever you decide should head up the sponsorship team should be well spoken, dressed well, and professional. You don't want someone who cannot ask a stranger for money or dresses like one of the local skateboarders who constantly grinds their sidewalk away. This person should have a thorough understanding of the event's purpose, the promotion package, and the charity that the event will raise funds for. I say this because you do not want to just send out sponsorship letters to random businesses. They will get filed away in "file 13". The trash! It is very important to get an audience with the person who has the power to say "yes". A firm hand shake and being able to have a person look you in the eye will be what lands you the sponsorship you need. I always ask God to give me favor and to direct me to those who will support this cause. And don't get down in the mouth about people who can't give this time. In this economy businesses have to be more frugal than ever. Be considerate of where they are at financially but always ask them if they can't give now would they be interested in supporting future events. I usually seek out 5 major sponsors. I always push the whole package but if I feel that they want to give something but aren't able to afford the whole shabang then I offer a reduced package with a reduced price. I have also had businesses donate merchandise to cover part of the package cost. I use the merchandise for give-a-ways at the event for the patrons. Get creative! If your home church wants to support, get them on board. I was able to get the company I work for to take a sponsorship spot and they said they weren't even interested in the sponsorship package. They just believed in the cause and wanted to make a difference in the community! What a blessing! Gaining sponsorship should be the core of your budget but you don't have to stop there. One word of caution though. Don't over do it. Don't gain an excess of funds if you do not need them. You don't want to exhaust possible sponsors for future events.

The next phase is vendors. Offering a spot for vendors to sell merchandise or share their cause with like minded people is a great way to generate some extra funds for your event and get more people involved. One thing I would recommend is to be fair and realistic when charging for a booth spot at the event. From the first article in this series we have come to an understanding that the average CEDM event brings in anywhere from 75-300 people. And like I stated before, get creative! You might be able to trade a spot at your event for a particular service that you will need. Work it man! Also, you will want to have to have some sort of refreshments at your event. You could certainly provide this but do you have the manpower and license to do so? You might go in with someone with the credentials and split the profit or offer the venue to be the sole provider for a discount on the venue. Every situation will be different so think out of the box and try to exhaust all possibilities.

The final phase for this article, but certainly not the last for great creative individuals like yourself, is fund raising events for your fundraiser event. The list here could go on forever! You could set up a fund raiser through your local coffee shop, Apple Bee's, Church youth group car washes, etc. These are great for two reasons. They help get funds for your event and they also help promote your event in the community. So brainstorm with your team until you work up a tsunami of ideas and rally the troupes to pound the pavement in order to get this awesome event for a great cause fully funded before the day of the show. It can be done because I have done it as well as many others out there!

Let us go to the scriptures for some further encouragement.

Ecclesiastes 10:19 A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things.

A party is going to be fun but ultimately what is going to make it happen is having the funds.

Deuteronomy 8:18 But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

If you seek to honor God by doing His will, then I guarantee that He will provide! I've seen this happen so many times. If you get out of his will then get ready for a stressful time with a big bill at the end. But even if you get stuck with a huge bill don't get down in the mouth. A good friend told me this, "You are going to pay for an education whether you go to college or not. It's what you do with that experience afterwards that proves if you got your money's worth." If you have any questions about raising funds for a future event don't hesitate to message me or give me a call. I'll help out where I am able. If God has been tugging on your heart about planning a CEDM event for your area start gathering your team and putting the information from these articles to good use! Be blessed!

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/articles/2012/07/23/event-funding-making-the-vision-a-reality/attachment/funding/>
 2. http://media.photobucket.com/image/moneystacks/beachmols/thcountin_money_new.gif?o=62
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10.8 August

[1]



[2]

Making music is easy. All you really need is a DAW, a semi-good computer, and a bit of patience. There are all sorts of plugins and VSTs designed to make even the crappiest Peach synth sound as if Paul Van Dyk himself were manning the controls. In fact, anyone can become a musician these days. Just spend the time doing research and learning programs. It's that simple.

The hard part? It's selling music. Be you the label or the artist, the environment currently isn't conducive to sales. Go ask a label owner honestly how many copies of a release they're pushing these days, and I think you might be a bit shocked. Nobody's making massive amounts of cash off releases anymore. All the money's in touring and peripherals now. This has not only forced artists to get creative in their business side efforts, but it's forced labels to rethink their strategies as well.

In this new business environment, it's important for us to remember that, as Christians, we are to hold ourselves to a different standard. We are to be more ethical and fair in our dealings. If you're an artist, this means upholding your commitment to working as a partner with your label. As a label, it means sharing profits fairly with the artists, and not asking unreasonable things from the artists.

Proverbs 1:11 says...

A false balance is an abomination to the Lord; but a just weight is His delight.

This means we are to be fair in our business dealings. God mandates that we treat others fairly and justly in our business dealings. That includes not only the artists getting a fair cut of the profit (Industry standard is 50/50. If you're getting less than 50 % on an original work, you're getting the shaft.) but also expecting the label to put in a proper amount of promotional effort. Does that mean an artist should kick back and let the label do it all? Absolutely not! Remember, "A just weight is His delight." The artist should have enough pride in their work to promote it. Not sure where to start? As your label. They'll help.

Deuteronomy 15:1-23 says...

At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release. And this is the manner of the release: every creditor shall release what he has lent to his neighbor. He shall not exact it of his neighbor, his brother, because the Lord's release has been proclaimed. Of a foreigner you may exact it, but whatever of yours is with your brother your hand shall release. But there will be no poor among you; for the Lord will bless you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance to possess— if only you will strictly obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all this commandment that I command you today.

I like to call this the Jubilee Clause in an artist contract. Expect to sign your Master rights away when signing a contract. It's really one of the few ways a label can ensure long-term viability on a business model since it helps with licensing, which ultimately makes the artist more money. What you should NEVER do (and a label should never ask you to) is permanently sign away Master rights. If you sign away your Master rights, you'll never be in control of re-releasing your music again. After talking with some people within the industry, seven years seems to be an acceptable amount of time for a label to hold master rights. Just as the Hebrews were instructed in Deuteronomy to release their brothers of credit every seven years, we should release our artists of their Master rights after seven years.

Proverbs 22:1 says...

A good name is to be chosen rather than riches, and favor is better than silver or gold.

Before signing with a label, it's a good idea to talk to some artists already working with the label. Ask them about their experiences. get a feel for the culture of the company before working with them. Is the label good about communication? Do they actually pay the artists? How well do they promote? Be aware that a label will judge you on your efforts as well. If you decide to not promote and you don't communicate back, the label will probably decide to not work with you again. As I've said before, working with a label is not a thing you do, but a partnership entered into. In this case, the favour is building a relationship with the label, and your good name helps propel that relationship.

Always keep in mind that your actions as an artist influence the label you're working with. Make sure you're getting a fair shake from the label though. Remember to follow Biblical principles of fair play and creating a positive working environment to get the most out of your label partnership. Put in your proper effort as an artist, but expect the label to do likewise. Make sure the label is a good fit for you and develop a good name. That's how you sell music without selling your soul.

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/articles/2012/08/13/how-to-sell-music-but-not-your-soul/attachment/howtosellmusic/>
2. http://www.tastyfresh.com/?attachment_id=

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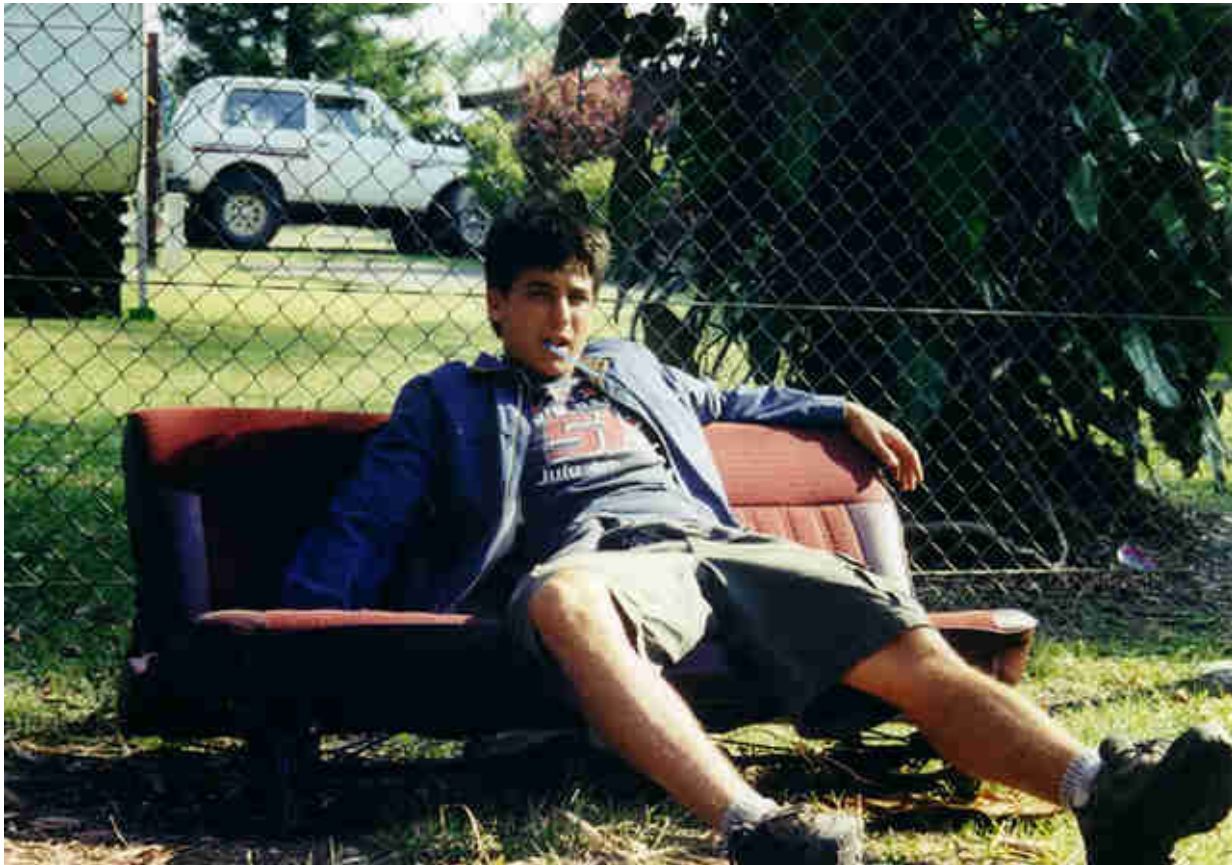
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This week I'm getting personal. I've been stressed lately. It hasn't been because of some huge, impossible deadline. No, for me the stress came as it always does in the form of a thousand paper cuts. That's what always gets me in the end. I suspect often times that I'm not the only one dealing with this kind of thing. In my case, last week I was out six out of seven nights. I dealt with cub scouts, church, church socials and school. That was on top of trying to make progress on the label and the day job. You can forget about podcasts and music. Chaos. All is chaos in my life when this happens and it stresses me out. It's not even a matter of over commitment. I was already going to be at most of those events. It was simply the timing, a lack of breathing room and well... no real say in the matter.

Given that stress is a natural part of life, how do we deal with it? What are some of the Biblical sides of it? As DJs, promoters, producers, label heads and so on we are expected to wear multiple hats and often be in multiple places at one time. It's all a miracle waiting to happen and rather than expecting God to work it out, we often find that others (if not ourselves) expect us to figure out how all the pieces fit together. This is probably the first place where it falls apart. It's unreasonable to expect anyone to do everything, especially at once. It's also unreasonable for us to assume that everybody else understands just how busy we already are and to adjust their schedule to ours. 24 hours is all we have in a day. Something isn't going to get done. What doesn't get done is what we have to determine daily and that tends to change by the moment some days.

In coming to terms with my stressed condition on Sunday, I decided to take the afternoon off. After going to church and after a rather good, but lengthy lunch at my parents with my family, I drove off alone. I bought a cup of coffee. I went to the nearest park with the fewest people. I found a bench by the pond. I laid down on it and stared at the sky through the trees for a long while and enjoyed being alone and the silence. I prayed a bit and then after about 10-15 minutes I started walking around again. 15 minutes later I was heading back to the car and the movies. After

laughing hard for two hours, I grabbed supper at Moe's and headed home a changed man.

There wasn't anything magical about the afternoon other than I decided to put everything down and walk away for about five hours. I had to get alone. I had to talk to God about some things. I had to get my head clear. That's all.

So many times when we talk about stress we talk about worry. When we talk about worry we always talk about how God watches over the birds and the flowers and if He is going to watch over them, we have nothing to worry about. Stress isn't always related to worry though. This past week, I knew I could be everywhere I had to be and handle it all. God was right there beside me helping me not to explode. The worst thing that happened was I started getting short with some people as my nerves got more frayed.

That shortness with people though was the result of stress. It was the result of becoming overwhelmed and battered by the world's demands for more and more time. As I went through the week, all I wanted to do was to get alone and to have quiet surrounding me and my mind. Looking back on this, it was a very natural desire. Luke 5:15-16 gives us a glimpse into Jesus' ministry that may be often overlooked.

Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed. – Luke 5:15-16

See, Jesus had the same problem. People constantly wanted to be taught by him, seen with him, healed by him and sometimes just simply near him. It tired him. Even though he longed to be with everyone and to help them, it drained him to do so. He couldn't keep going because the human side of him needed rest and he needed time with God the Father.

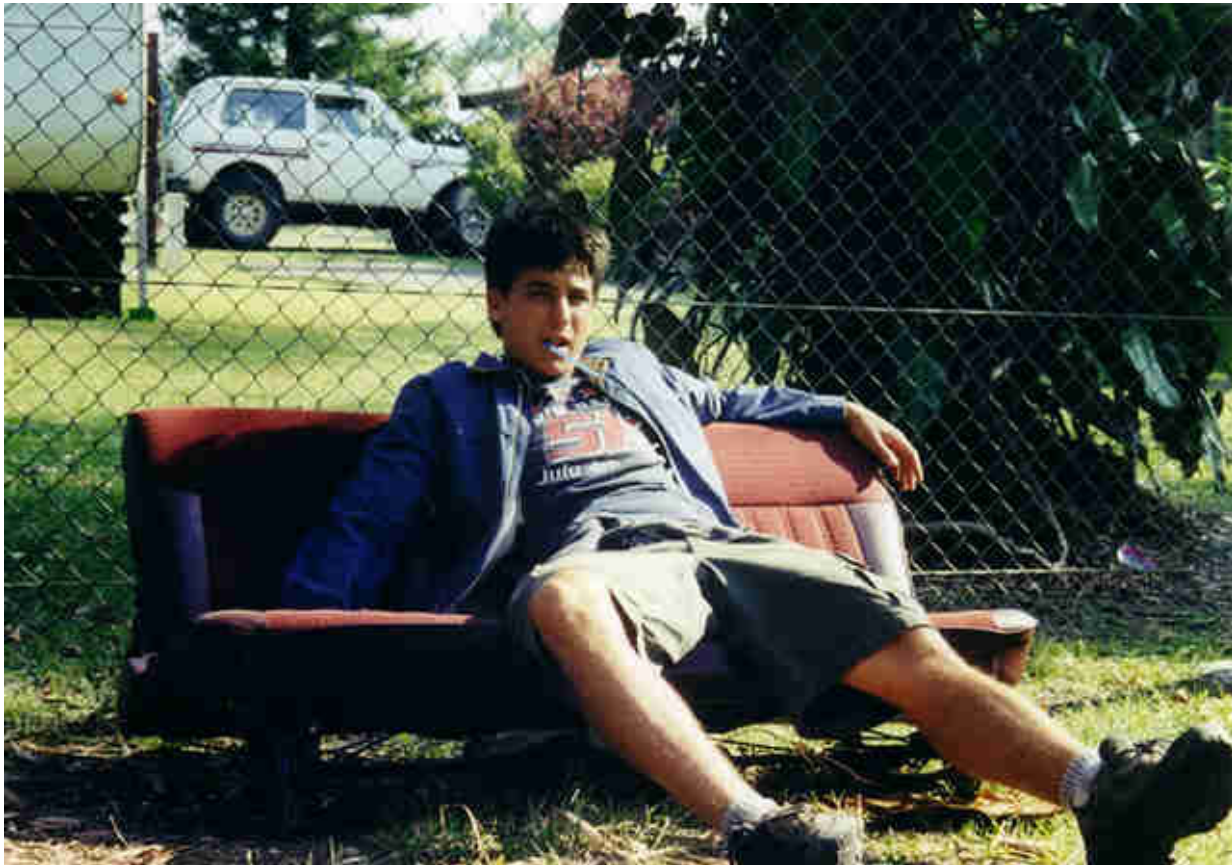
If anything, this is what I'd like for you to understand today. It's ok to take a break. Your body and mind needs it from time to time. You can't keep pushing yourself and expect the quality of your service to remain the same. You need rest. This is also why we are to work six days and rest on the seventh. God designed us this way. Part of that rest is communing with Him. It's not about going to church, it's about spending some time just seeking His voice and connecting again with Him in His ways.

So, take some time this week. You really can't afford not to. Head outside to a park. Leave your cell phone behind, not just off, but behind. Take nothing with you other than yourself and your weary heart. Find a park bench. Lay down. Look up at the sky through the trees and just... enjoy the quiet. Pray to God and don't forget to smile. He created this world for not only His delight, but yours as well. Too often we let technology, the things man has created, replace what God created. I'm sorry, but my iPad 2 does not hold a candle to the beauty I saw on Sunday in the clouds, in the trees and in the lily pads. It won't take you long to reconnect and just a quick rest will help you make it through the minefield of tasks that stand in your way.

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/articles/culture/2012/08/28/stressed/attachment/stressed-6502/>

Stress effects us all. It's also not always tied to worry. Jesus wasn't immune to stress and I just discovered that he had a great way of dealing with it.

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10.9 October



One of the most traveled DJs within the CEDM scene today is Alejandro Cesar. This Latin American DJ is now based out of Dallas, Texas and is on the forefront of a growing Latin American Christian EDM scene. He's dj'd in front of thousands both in churches and clubs and the founder of [1]NewHeart Records. We've been wanting to catch up with him for some time now and well... now's the time.



[2] Before we get into the interview though, we need to tell you about Alejandro's new project with Heaven Sound Music. The two have teamed up to bring you Heaven Sound Sessions Vol. 2. This is another benefit mix. This time around, the mix benefits the [3]Kanzius Cancer Research Foundation. I shouldn't have to tell anyone how devastating a disease cancer is and in the past few years, the Tastyfresh community has lost two of our members to it. If you can, please support this release. You can find more information about the release on [4]heavensoundmusic.com.

That said... onto the interview.

How did you get started in EDM?

It was back in the early 2000s, when raves were underground and illegal parties. As most of us started Djing with a group of friends, I was working in a Radio Station, from there it was night clubs and gigs with friends.

How long did it take before you went from a fan to a dj and then a producer?

Not too long. Maybe a year my job was as radio dj. I was also in charge of the production studio at the station making, jingles, promos, commercial spots etc. From there it was sort of easy to start looking into EDM productions and show performances.

What was that process like for you?

The process is still going on! But it has been so good and filled with many experiences ranging from a DJ and producer, from radio to live shows and many raves during that time. I played lots of psytrance back then. Now my style is different. My early years inside the EDM world was also full of wrong decisions.



When did faith in Jesus become part of your life?

Six years ago, was a complete change in my life. I can tell you, after Christ in my life I am a new person. After years of addictions to drugs and alcohol, the Lord has healed me completely. It was a big change for good. When I accepted Jesus in my heart, I stopped everything, the music, the parties and the DJ life.

How did that affect things?

The changes were often not easy but I know was for the best. I recovered a sense of life. I started living again, and I mean it. I was capable to enjoy life again after been trapped in my own mistakes and the consequences of walking on a dark path.

What are some of your goals as a DJ/producer?

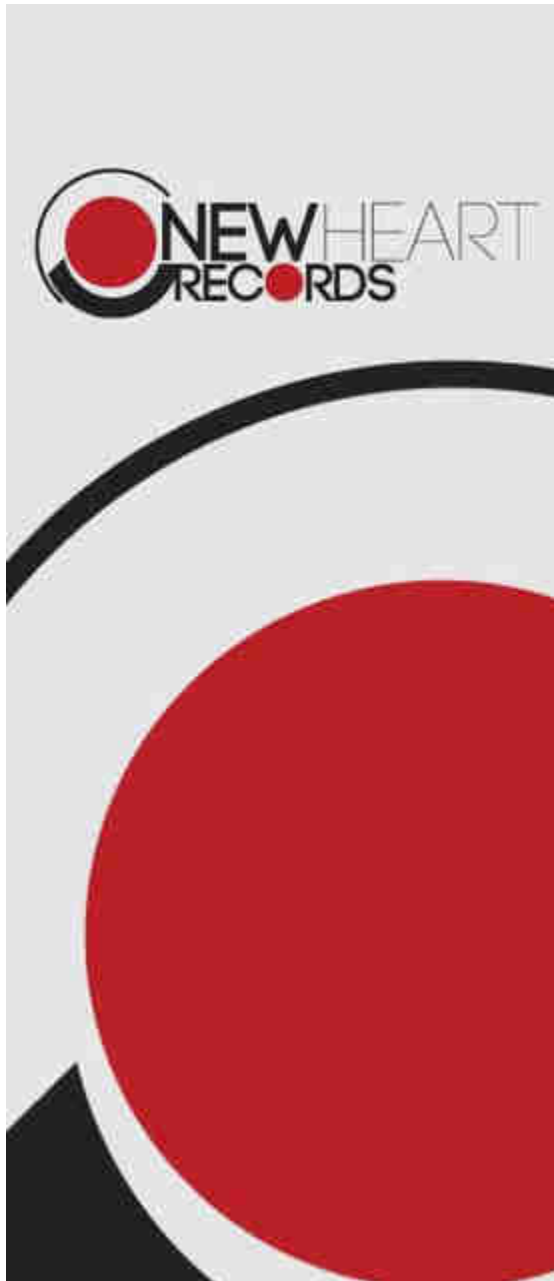
I have many, but the simple ones would be to continue Djing and producing but with a meaningful message. I also want to throw events in different countries to support new talent and open spaces of influence, productions workshops will another one. There are many things I could mention here.

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IFRAME: [5][http://www.youtube.com/embed/tFPaxZkFR1A?list=UU_egGb86QNZ5Jc7hvN7oiog &hl=en_US](http://www.youtube.com/embed/tFPaxZkFR1A?list=UU_egGb86QNZ5Jc7hvN7oiog&hl=en_US)

Tell us about NewHeart Records?

It's my record label. Not only to release my own stuff but to create a platform for many talented young people.



How did NewHeart come about?

It's all about good music in as many EDM genres possible, but positive with a good spirit, or even worship music. It's also about quality. The original idea was to support many of the producers in Latin America that don't have the right contacts or who struggle with the language barriers that sometimes keep them from releasing good music.

What type of music are you looking for?

For the record label, everything with good quality, originality. And speaking about originality, you know music that has something that is good, not only a good sounding track, but something that leaves a good touch in your mind and soul.

How is the label doing so far?

I think good. I'm not to worry about things like having the support of big name Djs or been in the top 10 on Beatport, but if that happens one day, well, will be nice.

How has running a label affected your life as a DJ/producer?

Ohh!!! It's a lot of work and requires time and dedication, but is nice because I can promote easier my own productions, and promote the label in shows when I am performing live. People always ask for you music after playing a show, so I can quickly guide them to NewHeart Records.

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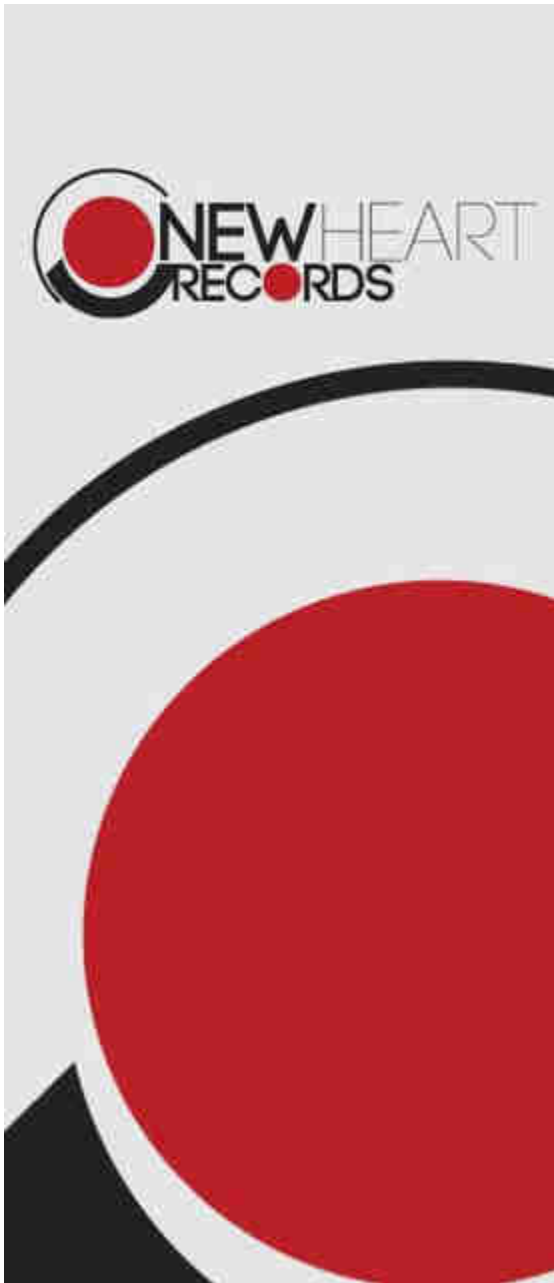
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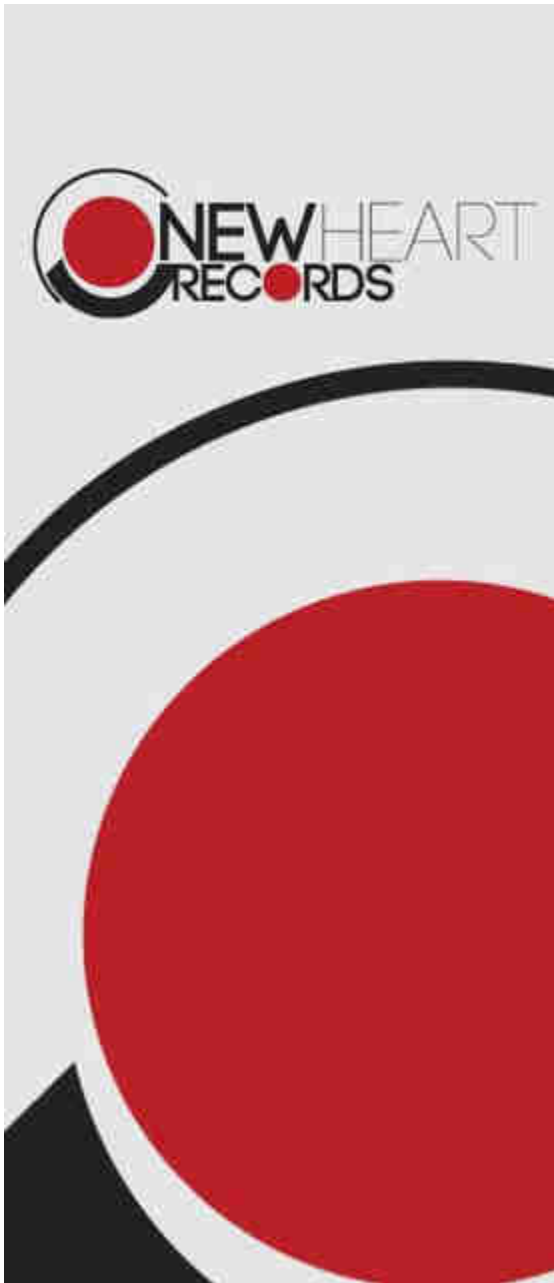
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[2] Before we get into the interview though, we need to tell you about Alejandro's new project with Heaven Sound Music. The two have teamed up to bring you Heaven Sound Sessions Vol. 2. This is another benefit mix. This time around, the mix benefits the [3]Kanzius Cancer Research Foundation. I shouldn't have to tell anyone how devastating a disease cancer is and in the past few years, the Tastyfresh community has lost two of our members to it. If you can, please support this release. You can find more information about the release on [4]heavensoundmusic.com.

That said... onto the interview.

How did you get started in EDM?

It was back in the early 2000s, when raves were underground and illegal parties. As most of us started Djing with a group of friends, I was working in a Radio Station, from there it was night clubs and gigs with friends.

How long did it take before you went from a fan to a dj and then a producer?

Not too long. Maybe a year my job was as radio dj. I was also in charge of the production studio at the station making, jingles, promos, commercial spots etc. From there it was sort of easy to start looking into EDM productions and show performances.

What was that process like for you?

The process is still going on! But it has been so good and filled with many experiences ranging from a DJ and producer, from radio to live shows and many raves during that time. I played lots of psytrance back then. Now my style is different. My early years inside the EDM world was also full of wrong decisions.



When did faith in Jesus become part of your life?

Six years ago, was a complete change in my life. I can tell you, after Christ in my life I am a new person. After years of addictions to drugs and alcohol, the Lord has healed me completely. It was a big change for good. When I accepted Jesus in my heart, I stopped everything, the music, the parties and the DJ life.

How did that affect things?

The changes were often not easy but I know was for the best. I recovered a sense of life. I started living again, and I mean it. I was capable to enjoy life again after been trapped in my own mistakes and the consequences of walking on a dark path.

What are some of your goals as a DJ/producer?

I have many, but the simple ones would be to continue Djing and producing but with a meaningful message. I also want to throw events in different countries to support new talent and open spaces of influence, productions workshops will be another one. There are many things I could mention here.

X

IFRAME: [5][http://www.youtube.com/embed/tFPaxZkFR1A?list=UU_egGb86QNZ5Jc7hvN7oiog &hl=en_US](http://www.youtube.com/embed/tFPaxZkFR1A?list=UU_egGb86QNZ5Jc7hvN7oiog&hl=en_US)

Tell us about NewHeart Records?

It's my record label. Not only to release my own stuff but to create a platform for many talented young people.



How did NewHeart come about?

It's all about good music in as many EDM genres possible, but positive with a good spirit, or even worship music. It's also about quality. The original idea was to support many of the producers in Latin America that don't have the right contacts or who struggle with the language barriers that sometimes keep them from releasing good music.

What type of music are you looking for?

For the record label, everything with good quality, originality. And speaking about originality, you know music that has something that is good, not only a good sounding track, but something that leaves a good touch in your mind and soul.

How is the label doing so far?

I think good. I'm not to worry about things like having the support of big name Djs or been in the top 10 on Beatport, but if that happens one day, well, will be nice.

How has running a label affected your life as a DJ/producer?

Ohh!!! It's a lot of work and requires time and dedication, but is nice because I can promote easier my own productions, and promote the label in shows when I am performing live. People always ask for you music after playing a show, so I can quickly guide them to NewHeart Records.



IFRAME: [6]http://www.youtube.com/embed/_fvTqkX_vAw

Not long ago you performed at an event in Texas called Eternal. What was that about?

Yes, it was The Sound Of Creation. It was a great experience., I can tell you real ravers were there that night, but most of them worshipping God in their dance. I played a 3 hour set. It was an awesome setup and thrown by some great people. I was invited by this organization called Eternal Rave. They are doing a great job putting this events for outreach on the EDM community.

Who all performed?

It was Party Priest, James Bussmann, and myself

How many people attended?

Not sure about the number but I think close to 200.

How was the show received?

It generated a little controversy with the city officials and some people in the community because they used the words rave and ecstasy. So we had more police officers than usual, but everything went fine once people realized was a group of Christians doing this event.



In October, you're booked for another show in Texas called Striking Life. What's this event going to be like?

This one will be a little different. It will be in an auditorium that belongs to a church. Most of the people attending the event are groups involved in the church, but will be a great opportunity to bring kids that are not in the church. We are having a nice sound setup, LED walls, smoke machines and lasers. It will be in Fort Worth Texas and we will be playing everything from Dubstep to Tech-trance.

Who's booked for the event?

The line-up will be Resa (Kansas) playing Dubstep, Fher Vizzuet (Mexico City) playing Trance, DJ Louis (Juarez Mexico) playing Electro and House and I will play some Progressive and Tech-Trance.

So, what's going on in Texas?

Well, a lot is going on here. The next show will be December the 15th in a nightclub, and we already making the plans for the first event of 2013. I just believe is the time for us to act and do something. We all have a deep desired to perform our Djs sets and i'm sure there are fans just waiting for this the events to take place. We also have another event on Dec 1st in Mexico City and some other shows I'm performing at like one in Orlando FL the end of October.



Why are Christian events starting to pop-up there with frequency?

I am not sure why. I just feel is the time. I think it only takes a moment of decision to start a movement, but this won't go anywhere if we don't to do what we need to do and that is part of our fight against evil forces.

What is the key to making more events like this happen?

God has been talking to me this last days and I'm convinced that we are stepping and reclaiming territories that have been dominated by demons but when we understand that our war is not against flesh but spiritual then we will do whatever it takes moved by the compassion for others.

You've DJ'd a fair amount of Christian events in South America, what is different about the culture there that makes doing a Christian event easier? Or is that just a perception?

I think is because of a revival in Central and South America. I've notice than people there are more open to new and flesh movements that help to attract the young. Many churches know the importance of young people and the force that gives to a church when it has a solid and growing young groups. And also I realize that the influence of European cultures are stronger in Latin America than the USA. In countries like Mexico, Guatemala, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, European styles are stronger not only in music but in many areas.

How many people attend these South American events?

Well, I been playing in events with 3,000 people and events with 500 people. One of the gigs hosted in a church with only me playing a 3 hour set had an attendance of around 1,200 people. The event started at 11 p.m. and ended at 2 am. It was a very unique experience.



What are some of the differences between these events and the American ones?

Well, I don't see much of a difference. It's just that people there are so open to new movements. Something I notice is when an event like this happens there, they use words like worship and praise. They are not afraid to say clearly that is a worship and praise EDM night. They don't try to hide their Christianity to be cool or to avoid other people to judge them. I'm not saying that happens here in the USA, but sometimes we are so busy doing everything else and we forget about the heart of what we do. We want to appear so cool to everyone and not offend anyone with our beliefs and I think that stops us many times.

What can we learn from these South American Christian events that would help us in the United States?

The only thing we need here is the courage to do this. We need to invest, be united, and do quality events and productions. Probably in the USA, it's more difficult since we are surrounded by large, high budget productions events and in a way that can be intimidating to do our own events. I've discovered though that great things can happen in small places, so we just need to work on the ideas and really make it happen.



IFRAME: [7]http://www.youtube.com/embed/VEY0tfmZ_hg

What is the biggest obstacle that Christians in the US need to overcome to make more events like these happen?

Great question! I believe we need to get back to the basics and with this I mean spiritually. Again, remember our fight is in the second heaven. In the spiritual world. We need hardcore prayer. We need to incorporate the Word Of God in our events. We have to remember that the Gospel does not need music, so if we add music to the gospel then we can't forget about the Gospel. The problem in my opinion is that we just want to play a DJ set and have fun, but we don't want to bother doing more like praying for one another, or lead the audience to worship God. Think about it, why our movement is not growing? Why there are movements that get huge in no time? So simple. Prayer. Spiritual

War. Pure Gospel. At the end of the day that is the only thing that matters, Jesus and his gospel right?

How do we overcome that?

Learning and studying the territories we are stepping on. We need to understanding the history of the whole EDM movement in the world so we know what are we dealing with and what kind of principality we are defeating. Knowing that we have the power and understanding that we are bigger than any obstacle or evil force against us. We should be getting back to the basics of the Gospel. Then we will be like David. We will take the giant's sword and cut his head with the very same weapon he was using to kill our people

Where would you like to be able to DJ that you haven't yet?

Definitely Europe. We know EDM is big there and also the need of the truth is so big, but I think there is exactly where a huge revival can start using Electronica Dance Music.

1. <http://www.beatport.com/label/newheart-records/25229>
2. <http://www.heavensoundmusic.com/heaven-sound-sessions-volume-2>
3. <http://www.kanziuscancerresearch.org/>
4. <http://www.heavensoundmusic.com/heaven-sound-sessions-volume-2>
5. http://www.youtube.com/embed/tFPaxZkFR1A?list=UU_egGb86QNZ5Jc7hvN7oiog&hl=en_US
6. http://www.youtube.com/embed/_fvTqkX_vAw
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For those of you new to the site, in 2007 Tastyfresh.com took over the management of the Dance Club at the Cornerstone Music Festival. In 2008, we took up funds to create an annual compilation to hand out for free at the fest. Each year after that, we raised about \$1,000 and rummaged through a stack of 100 plus track submissions to make a compilation that best represented the sounds of the Dance Club (now renamed Afterhours). We then pressed actual CD's and distributed them for free at the festival. This was to help bring in more people to the stage and to give everyone something to remember the show. Only a handful of these CD's were left after each year out of the 1000 we'd press.

Year after year, we found people around the festival playing these CD's throughout the day, dancing at the club each night and coming back the next year in search of the next CD in the series. With the death of Cornerstone last year, we were not in the budget for one final show. Afterhours Volume 5 never happened as a result and that's bugged me and others since then.

It's been about two years since the last time we thought about an Afterhours compilation. Afterhours Volume 4 was a huge success and a personal failure for me. In the end, I have a nice reminder of that failure in my office and zero time to dedicate to correcting it until at least the Christmas break. So what happened? Easy, a physical product and life happened.

The main problem with the Afterhours CD's was just that, they're CD's and I have never had a solid plan in place to mail them out to the financial backers and artists who made them possible. It was all up to me to move the product and I let people down. The "good news" is that only the artists were left out this time. Those who gave financially should have all received their copies. That's one of the reasons I've been hesitant to do a volume 5, but I've missed it.

Josiah emailed me early on last week and brought up the idea of doing Afterhours Volume 5 now. I shot that idea down pretty quickly. I think I did that mostly out of logistical fears. I can't be counted on to run the physical mailing side of things. I feel like we may have lost some of the trust we've garnered in the past because of the mailing issue. It's also been our intention from the start to always make the CD both free and limited to just 1,000 copies. It was a nice exclusive souvenir for those who really cared.

So the question becomes how can we replicate free, limited edition and build it around the idea of a festival now? We can distribute it for free digitally, but then the limited edition is gone. It would be about as special as another podcast episode. We could press CDs again, but we'd have to expand it to multiple festivals. This means

we'd either have to press more or the CD becomes even more exclusive.

This leaves us at the edge of a digital divide. Do we start charging to create exclusivity? What's important here? Should we be raising funds or awareness? How do we make it more useful to Tastyfresh.com than a physical CD?

So this is where we are at right now. I'm looking into solutions like Bandcamp.com and Noisetrade.com. I honestly like them both, but there are trade-offs. Bandcamp expects to be paid after 200 free downloads each month. Noisetrade has an undocumented track length limit so we'd have to track out the mix. That's not a huge deal, but I'm still not a fan of that.

The good news is that when we're ready to do an Afterhours Volume 5, we'll do it for free. Well, mostly free. I would like to advertise it on Facebook and if we use Noisetrade, there. The cost involved there will be nominal. We won't be raising \$1,000 ever again. We've got better things to do with our time and your money than to make physical CD's.

So, that's where we stand today. I'd love to bring back the Afterhours CDs and stage. Some of my fondest memories involve running down emo kids and hipsters at Cornerstone to convince them that they need a little bit of house in their lives. I'd like to get started on that again.

Let us know what your thoughts are on this in the comments below.

Until next time,

Dave

In 2008, we took up funds to create an annual compilation to hand out for free at the fest. Year after year, we found people around the festival playing these CD's throughout the day, dancing at the club each night and coming back the next year in search of the next CD in the series.



Things have been changing at a rapid pace. I've been amazed over the summer by all of the Christian EDM events that have happened throughout the United States and as far away as the United Kingdom and South America. Even with the demise of the Cornerstone Music Festival, you still had support from JoshuaFest, Ichthus and others. Alejandro's work with [1]Striking Life is really starting to pay off as well. All of this leads me to four conclusions.

1. I don't think that we're done yet.
2. I think we're just getting started.
3. I think the community as a whole is rising up at the same time in a very organic fashion.
4. I think there are more events out there now than any of us realize.

One of the biggest questions I have is where are these other events? We almost always hear about them after the fact. We can't keep operating like that.

Well, today [2]I'm offering a solution. As members of Tastyfresh.com, you have the opportunity now to [3]post your events directly to a calendar. We're specifically looking for club events, festival events, podcasts and any online events that you might have. Online events include live streaming and internet radio. I'll review each event before it goes live, but you can submit them. All I ask is that you don't abuse the system.

If you haven't seen our calendar yet, don't worry. We just brought it online last week. Anthony Lee and I have been talking about bringing something up like this now for a while. Now seems to be the perfect time.

By posting your event, you are not only promoting it, but you are encouraging others to step out in faith and to start something in their community. Together we can use this calendar as a way to encourage one another in their efforts.

So, do you have an event? Would you like to promote it on Tastyfresh? Then let's get to it. I'll see you there.

And if you haven't done so yet... please [4]check out the calendar.

In Christ,

Dave R

1. <http://strikinglife.com/>
2. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/calendar/>
3. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/calendar/>
4. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/calendar/>

Tastyfresh.com has added a community driven events calendar. All members are welcome to promote their events.

11. 2013

11.1 January



In the Beginning...

In the summer of 2009, Kevin and I were standing outside of the Barn at the Cornerstone Music Festival trying to figure out how to solve growing problem that we had. We wanted to start a label to release not just our material but other Christians who we thought weren't getting enough recognition at the time. We didn't want to start a label that was pigeonholed into just one genre, but we didn't want to release everything that was dropped in our laps. We just had a few problems to overcome first. After a short but informative talk with Joel Armstrong that same day, we pretty much killed off the label before it had even gotten started.



IFRAME: [1]<http://www.indiegogo.com/project/306584/widget/2030021>

Fast forward to September of that year and Chris Reiche entered the equation. The three of us decided to explore the idea some more. By December, we were ready to go. We were committed to the idea of running a label. We knew roughly what we wanted to release. We also had a name, a mascot (that needed a name and a personality) and some rules set in place that would make the label run differently from most others in the industry today.

It's been three years since then and it's been a ride. Chris is no longer part owner in the label, but he's one of our most valuable artists and friends. We've had tracks featured on podcasts, made the top downloaded position on Satellite Records and almost made it there on iTunes' dance charts, had several tracks selected by Beatport as must hear tracks and even helped to break a couple of artists into a larger market.

The Rules...

I mentioned that MK837 had a few rules set in place to make the label run differently from most others. Well MK837 isn't a Christian label. At least not in the same sense that Word or Tooth & Nail is. We're Christian run. We support as many Christian artists as we can. We also support non-Christians as well. It helps to build a bridge between our two worlds and quite frankly, good music happens on both sides of Christ. This is where we strongly feel God wants us to be as a label.

So what are the MK837 rules? First, we operate as ethically as possible. We do our best to ensure that our artists are treated fairly and with respect. We try to ensure that they actually get paid, even if it's a small amount. We try to connect them whenever possible with new opportunities as well. In many cases, we are the proving ground for not just new music, but new artists. We don't want their first experience in this industry to be a negative one. In other words, we try to run the label as we would expect a Christian business to be run.

The second rule is that we run the label without debt. Debt is something that Kevin and I know from personal experience that can hold us back. Chris has and always will be smarter than us. We also knew that such things could come between us as friends when we run a business. So we collectively decided that it wasn't the way to go with the label. In stead, we all pitched in \$250 and started MK837 on a budget of \$750. Every year since, we've managed to break even. That however is not enough for the label to continue to grow.

Gone Too Far to Stop Now...

We've reached a point this past year where no matter how much time and effort we apply to the label, we can't grow it any further. There are two critical things that we need to invest in if we want to continue as a label.

The first is that we must provide professional mastering for each release. We've been doing things in house since day one. That's led to inconsistency in our product quality. We could have the best tracks in the world, but if they are improperly mastered they will sound like garbage. We need to prevent this from happening.

The second is that we need more publicity. That means we need to hire/retain the services of a publicist who knows the EDM industry and is well connected to all of the media outlets. We think we have that person now, we just need to fund his work. A publicist will help us to present ourselves to outlets like Mixmag, DJ Mag, Resident Advisor and many others. It will help us to develop a better promo list for our releases and hopefully lead to more sales and greater things for our artists.

Beyond that, we've identified some smaller changes that need to take place as well. I won't go into those here however.

In the end, MK837 needs to find \$14,500 to fully fund these needs. This will allow us to move into the realm of professional mastering and to retain a publicist's services for 12 months. We'll also be kicking off a series of events in the next couple of weeks/months. Kevin is working hard on the details now while I'm focusing on these other issues.

This Is Where You Fit In...

To pull this off, we need your help. Remember one of our rules is that we cannot go into debt as a business. That's a non-starter there. The only way we'll be able to do this is with your help. Over the past few months, Kevin and I have become believers of crowdfunding. We've watched many projects go viral and take off. Things that we never thought would be funded have been and yes, many have failed. There is some risk involved. The way these things work is someone has an idea, they pitch it and promise something in return. People then can decide if they like the idea and trust the person and then based on that make a pledge of support at some buy in point.

This is exactly what we're going to do. We've teamed up with Indiegogo.com to bring you the "Capital Gains for

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Thanks for your time. Now back to your regular programming.

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[3]



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11.2 February



What does Electronic Dance Music, Abolition International and DJ Josiah Freebourne have in common? The answer is Heaven Sound Sessions Volume 3. The compilation mixed by Josiah Freebourne is a blend of genres including Electro, Progressive, Tech & House. He artfully creates a spiritual journey that doesn't stop when the music ends. All of the profits are going straight to sex trafficking freedom fighters, Abolition International. Abolition International is a non-profit organization dedicated to the eradication of sex trafficking and the exploitation of women and children. Their mission is to combat domestic and international sex trafficking through accreditation, advocacy, education, and restoration. In a world where Christians and Electronic Dance Music(EDM) cultures are not often seen in the same positive light, Heaven Sound Sessions stands up to fight back. Sex trafficking is a serious problem affecting 27 million people from countries all over the world. The artists featured on this compilation have joined together to make a difference in the lives of strangers who are victims in need our help. Josiah Freebourne helps us learn more about this fundraiser and the story behind the mix.



For those not familiar with who you are and what you do, can you give us a brief introduction?

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I have been a part of several worship bands so it is second nature for me to worship when I play music. DJing is no different. Now I understand that some may listen to EDM and not be able to worship. I'm not sure I could worship to Southern Gospel Music. It's a matter of preference. With the Heaven Sound Sessions 3 mix I sought to show how the Lord finds us all in a dark place but through His grace we are freed when we latch onto Him. We are left in awe-standing still- realizing we need to leave some things behind. Then we experience the glory of God and He fills us up. When we realize the sky is the limit we want to leave the old life completely and burn it down. That can still be painful but we just need to hold onto Him. Often as we grow stronger we can also grow complacent-don't walk away! We realize in the desert we need Jesus more than the air we breathe. We then begin to see the Lord moving all around us and others. If we keep pursuing this like our lives depend on it our minds will be changed to the mind of Christ. We are able to do this by hanging on to Christ in the good and the bad. It's a progression of the life of a believer, if you will.



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about human trafficking at some point during my sets when I play at festivals, conferences, and concerts. This project is a great way for people to get involved in the fight against human trafficking.

The album released mid-January, how has the project been perceived so far?

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Of all of the non-profits that exist, why did you pick Abolition International?

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You draw a connection between Electronic Dance Music and sex trafficking - why do you think the EDM scene is still associated with such a dark world? In your opinion, are other genres of music perceived just as negatively?

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11.3 March

Homegrown 3.0: Episode 1 - Matthew J Bentley (2013-03-13 21:58) - shelbycallaway



Homegrown 3.0 take off a bit late this month with its new host Shelby Callaway. Shelby is a producer/DJ with releases on MK837 and Deeplife Records. He has also just completed a remix for Andy Hunter which hit stores this week.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psKvjXChc3Y>

Shelby's first guest on Homegrown 3.0 is none other than GodsDJs Records' and Deepsink Digital's own Matthew J. Bentley.

[powerpress]

Matthew's Bio:

Simultaneously being filled with the Holy Spirit of God almighty and falling in love with a genre of music was a divine combination for Matthew J. Bentley. Influenced by both his new found flame for the gospel and his also recent love of Electronic Dance Music, Matthew wanted to combine his passions in life. Initially, searching the internet for Christian Trance proved to be a no go. Since he couldn't find any music, he decided to make his own, and has been ever since.

Matthew eventually started DJing, and he kept on producing. The two were combined in July of 2010, when Matthew mixed his 2nd CD, "The Cross is Still Beatin'" at the 2010 Jesusfestival in Älmhult Sweden. DJing was the next step in the game, and has become a new passion, allowing him to do things like host his radio show and infiltrate nightclubs with his music. 2012 was a huge year for Matthew and the Christian EDM scene in general.

Matthew played all over the country, including the Future Sound of Worship 4 event in Detroit, MI and the Electric Planet event in Dallas, TX. Early 2013 marks two important milestones for Matthew. First, his radio show, "More Justified Beauty" debuted, and is an effort to unite the CEDM scene into something more powerful than it already is. Second, his 3rd CD, "More Justified Beauty" will be released in March. It is the culmination of two years of effort. Through his continued partnership with Deepsink Digital, GodsDJs.com and now Set Ablaze International, Matthew

will not stop co-laboring with the Lord and His Followers to advance the CEDM movement, and bring others to the saving knowledge and love of Jesus Christ through Electronic Dance Music.

For Matthew, the music is about the passion, the worship and the connections with fellow believers. If God gets glory, that's all that matters in the long run. So in all things that Matthew does in the scene, his motto has stayed the same and will not change; "May God get the Glory

[button link="http://www.matthewjbentley.com" color="blue" size="small" target=""]Visit MJB's Website[/button]
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11.4 April



For the past few years, there have been two staples of the Christian dance scene: the Cornerstone Music Festival's Afterhours Dance Club managed by Tastyfresh.com and Future Sound of Worship managed by GodsDJs. Other festivals have started to take notice and have added an EDM stage or night to their events and smaller parties are starting to show up again around the US.

What's lacking now is a way to train up a new generation so they can take what others have learned and apply it to their endeavors. Part of the problem is that nobody has developed any official formal training for this sort of thing yet, nor has it existed before on the scale that it needs to happen here in the US. DJing clinics can teach you the basics of DJing in a night, but they won't teach you how to set up and run a monthly event or even what to look for in sound and lights. Let's not even get into how do you turn a club event into a worship opportunity.

It's a daunting task and well... People have finally decided to challenge it on head on. Those people are Anthony and Michael Johnson.

We first met Anthony last year. He came out of seemingly nowhere with nothing more than a vision from God and unrelenting perseverance to do something in Pensacola, FL that would honor God through the use of electronic music. With Michael and their friends Shad Padgett and Jamie Jacobs, he was able to host a CEDM event in Pensacola that combined believers, churches and supporters. The event was called Awakening.



IFRAME: [1]http://www.youtube.com/embed/quVh6sRU_gA

Now, Anthony and Michael have had a few events under their belts and are ready to take things to the next level with a national conference.

InnerFlame will be happening in Pensacola, FL this year. The dates are June 28-30, 2013. The conference will be at the Hilton Pensacola Beach Gulf Front hotel.

When you're talking about education, you want experienced teachers. Anthony and Michael have put together a top notch team for this. The speakers for this year's conference will include (among others): JR Barbee of the Prodigal Sons, AJ Mora, Chris Human founder of Club 86, Ruben Resa Silva of G+D Records and myself. There will also be a Sunday services lead by Pensacola's respected minister Pastor Ervin Byrd. Topics for this year will include: a review of

where CEDM has been and where it could go, how to set up a lasting club ministry, an in depth look at what it takes to manage a club event including artist hospitality and project management, meeting humanitarians needs through the EDM community and the ministry side of the music business. There will also be a series of open discussion sessions with the speakers focusing on various topics.

If that's not enough, Anthony and Michael have also set up two nights of electronic music and worship featuring AJ Mora, the Prodigal Sons, Alejandro Cesar, Bridj, Karle Forde, Matthew J Bentley, Re5a, myself and I believe a few others.

This is an open invitation to anyone who has been thinking about building a CEDM ministry in their hometowns, looking for a network of believers to connect with to do outreach, or has had questions about worshipping with this style of music. The event is real. It is going to happen. It is going to be flat out awesome.

If you would like more information, please check out [2]www.innerflameconference.com. You can purchase tickets there. The cost will be \$80 for the conference and club events. If you just want to come to the club events, that's fine too. The cost will be \$30. A hotel rate will also be offered on the site shortly.

Now, there are two other things that I need to mention quickly.



IFRAME: [3]<http://www.indiegogo.com/project/383703/widget/2030021>

First despite the fact that the event is going to happen, there is still a need for some financial support and sponsorships. If you, your church or your company would like to be a part of this new outreach, please check out [4]<http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/innerflame-conference/x/2030021>. Anthony and Michael lay out exactly what's needed and why there.

And second, this is just the beginning. I'll be making an announcement later about another major event for those of you in the Mid-West, but for now I have to remain silent and much of what is coming hasn't been told to me either. I'm telling you this to give you all hope that God is starting to do something now and that a new generation is being raised up that will pick up where the last left off. My thoughts and prayers are with you all. These are exciting times and I am personally excited about everything that is going on.

I hope to see you all this summer at InnerFlame. And... if you have a moment, please send Anthony and Michael some words of encouragement.

Sincerely,

David Richardson
Director
Tastyfresh.com

Adobe Flash Player or an HTML5 supported browser is required for video playback.
[Get the latest Flash Player](#)
[Learn more about upgrading to an HTML5 browser](#)

IFRAME: [5]<http://www.youtube.com/embed/rzRkzzDyZDI>

1. http://www.youtube.com/embed/quVh6sRU_gA
2. <http://innerflameconference.com/>
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4. <http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/innerflame-conference/x/2030021>
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It started last year in Pensacola, FL with Awakenings. This summer, Anthony Lee is putting Awakenings on steroids.



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For the past few years, there have been two staples of the Christian dance scene: the Cornerstone Music Festival's Afterhours Dance Club managed by Tastyfresh.com and Future Sound of Worship managed by GodsDJs. Other festivals have started to take notice and have added an EDM stage or night to their events and smaller parties are starting to show up again around the US.

What's lacking now is a way to train up a new generation so they can take what others have learned and apply it to their endeavors. Part of the problem is that nobody has developed any official formal training for this sort of thing yet, nor has it existed before on the scale that it needs to happen here in the US. DJing clinics can teach you the basics of DJing in a night, but they won't teach you how to set up and run a monthly event or even what to look for in sound and lights. Let's not even get into how do you turn a club event into a worship opportunity.

It's a daunting task and well... People have finally decided to challenge it on head on. Those people are Anthony and Michael Johnson.

We first met Anthony last year. He came out of seemingly nowhere with nothing more than a vision from God and unrelenting perseverance to do something in Pensacola, FL that would honor God through the use of electronic music. With Michael and their friends Shad Padgett and Jamie Jacobs, he was able to host a CEDM event in Pensacola that combined believers, churches and supporters. The event was called Awakening.



IFRAME: [1]http://www.youtube.com/embed/quVh6sRU_gA

Now, Anthony and Michael have had a few events under their belts and are ready to take things to the next level with a national conference.

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11.5 May

InnerFlame Conference: The Second Sales Pitch (2013-05-14 22:10) - redsavior

http://youtu.be/mj3r_mvla_k

Last month, I introduced you to the [1]InnerFlame Conference. We're just a matter of weeks away from the event now and I just want to encourage you all to consider attending. It may be a long distance for you, but conferences like these are important for idea sharing and networking.

I personally cannot wait to share with you all how Kevin Neely and I pulled off Afterhours for so many years. AJ Mora will be there to talk about how we can incorporate humanitarian efforts into EDM events. JR Barbee of the Prodigal Sons will help take us through some of the history of EDM and how we can avoid some of the mistakes that have been made in the past. Ruben Silva will help us make the connection between the business side of things and ministry opportunities and Ervin Byrd will help us to develop our leadership skills so that we can make these events a reality.

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The Unity Christian Music Festival in Muskegon, Michigan is one of the most loved Christian Music festivals in the Midwest. It has hosted names in the past such as Chris Tomlin, Toby Mac, and Skillet, and is proudly going to feature performances this year from Hillsong, Plumb, Casting Crowns and more. The festival had its most successful year in 2010, and according to mlive.com, Unity is on track to break its attendance record, based on a recent Kutless concert that had over 15,000 people attend.[1][1]

If one is interested in buying tickets for the festival, they should be encouraged to do so. Unity probably has the cheapest festival tickets I have ever seen (besides the free "Lighthouse Festival" of course), with tickets starting at \$20 for a one-day pass, \$40 for a two-day, and \$50 for a three-day, with prices only going up 5 bucks if purchased the week of the festival. That's seriously a lot of bang for your buck.

Thanks to the efforts of Justin Ratliff, Aka DJ Josiah Freebourne, there will be a number of Christian EDM artists at the festival at an event that we are calling "Beat Culture." The vision of Beat Culture is simple: It sees the growing trend of EDM in the United States and around the world and seeks to bring some of the best producers and DJs in the scene to educate Christians about the ministry opportunities that exist within this "Beat Culture." The gospel is going to go into an arena where it has seldom been in the past, but where it will be very cogently recognized in the future. Josiah puts it this way. Beat Culture is, "'engaging the culture, [and] inspiring a generation.' The heart and focus of Beat Culture is about the great commission and raising up the next generation of DJs, Producers, and Label Owners to fulfill their destiny in Christ." [2][2]

Who are these artists and DJs? Aside from Josiah, talent from across the country is coming to lift up Jesus at Unity. Taylor Franklyn, eExecutive Decision, Re5a, myself, and Skerrit Bwoy will all be playing on the A-Stage, and the conference portion (happening beforehand) will entail, Re5a, Skerrit, and Justin all speaking about ministry related topics having to do with CEDM.[3][3] As the ex-front man for the international group Major Lazer, I highly encourage sticking around to hear Skerrit's testimony during these speaking sessions.

Unity is restoring my faith in Christian Music, as they are allowing CEDM at the festival. I have played at Christian Music Festivals before this one, but I am especially excited for Unity. The schedule for the A-Stage actually lists the individual artists with set slot times and links to our websites instead of saying, "This is the EDM thingy that's happening" and listing Beat Culture.[4][4] The event is definitely about Jesus of course, not us, but it is still nice to see that CEDM is being treated as a legitimate form of Christian music in the world today. We have existed as a scene for a long time, but as far as our we are concerned, this event, and others like it that have recently happened, are yet another

way for the Lord to be glorified in this medium. However, I believe they also signify what I feel is the beginning of an explosion for the growth of our scene in general and the magnification of Jesus thereof.

To find out more about Unity, visit the website at [5]www.unitymusicfestival.com.

A direct link to tickets is here: [6]<http://www.unitymusicfestival.com/get-tickets/>.

A Link to our radio ad: [7]<https://soundcloud.com/dj-josiah-freebourne/beat-culture-radio-ad>

Lastly, the FB Page: [8]<https://www.facebook.com/BeatCulture>

See you there!

[9][1] http://www.mlive.com/entertainment/muskegon/index.ssf/2011/08/unity_on_track_to_break_attend.html

[10][2] Ratliff, Justin. "Re: Info for Beat Culture Conference write up." 22 Jul. 2013. E-mail.

[11][3] <http://www.unitymusicfestival.com/schedule/a-stage-schedule/>

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The vision of Beat Culture is simple: It sees the growing trend of EDM in the United States and around the world and seeks to bring some of the best producers and DJs in the scene to educate Christians about the ministry opportunities that exist within this "Beat Culture."



The Unity Christian Music Festival in Muskegon, Michigan is one of the most loved Christian Music festivals in the Midwest. It has hosted names in the past such as Chris Tomlin, Toby Mac, and Skillet, and is proudly going to feature performances this year from Hillsong, Plumb, Casting Crowns and more. The festival had its most successful year in 2010, and according to mlive.com, Unity is on track to break its attendance record, based on a recent Kutless concert that had over 15,000 people attend.[1][1]

If one is interested in buying tickets for the festival, they should be encouraged to do so. Unity probably has the cheapest festival tickets I have ever seen (besides the free "Lifelight Festival" of course), with tickets starting at \$20 for a one-day pass, \$40 for a two-day, and \$50 for a three-day, with prices only going up 5 bucks if purchased the week of the festival. That's seriously a lot of bang for your buck.

Thanks to the efforts of Justin Ratliff, Aka DJ Josiah Freebourne, there will be a number of Christian EDM artists at the festival at an event that we are calling "Beat Culture." The vision of Beat Culture is simple: It sees the growing trend of EDM in the United States and around the world and seeks to bring some of the best producers and DJs in the scene to educate Christians about the ministry opportunities that exist within this "Beat Culture." The gospel is going to go into an arena where it has seldom been in the past, but where it will be very cogently recognized in the future. Josiah puts it this way. Beat Culture is, "'engaging the culture, [and] inspiring a generation.' The heart and focus of Beat Culture is about the great commission and raising up the next generation of DJs, Producers, and Label Owners to fulfill their destiny in Christ."[2][2]

Who are these artists and DJs? Aside from Josiah, talent from across the country is coming to lift up Jesus at Unity. Taylor Franklyn, eXecutive Decision, Re5a, myself, and Skerrit Bwoy will all be playing on the A-Stage, and the conference portion (happening beforehand) will entail, Re5a, Skerrit, and Justin all speaking about ministry related topics having to do with CEDM.[3][3] As the ex-front man for the international group Major Lazer, I highly encourage sticking around to hear Skerrit's testimony during these speaking sessions.

Unity is restoring my faith in Christian Music, as they are allowing CEDM at the festival. I have played at Christian Music Festivals before this one, but I am especially excited for Unity. The schedule for the A-Stage actually lists the individual artists with set slot times and links to our websites instead of saying, "This is the EDM thingy that's happening" and listing Beat Culture.[4][4] The event is definitely about Jesus of course, not us, but it is still nice to see that CEDM is being treated as a legitimate form of Christian music in the world today. We have existed as a scene for a long time, but as far as our we are concerned, this event, and others like it that have recently happened, are yet another

way for the Lord to be glorified in this medium. However, I believe they also signify what I feel is the beginning of an explosion for the growth of our scene in general and the magnification of Jesus thereof.

To find out more about Unity, visit the website at [5]www.unitymusicfestival.com.

A direct link to tickets is here: [6]<http://www.unitymusicfestival.com/get-tickets/>.

A Link to our radio ad: [7]<https://soundcloud.com/dj-josiah-freebourne/beat-culture-radio-ad>

Lastly, the FB Page: [8]<https://www.facebook.com/BeatCulture>

See you there!

[9][1] http://www.mlive.com/entertainment/muskegon/index.ssf/2011/08/unity_on_track_to_break_attend.html

[10][2] Ratliff, Justin. "Re: Info for Beat Culture Conference write up." 22 Jul. 2013. E-mail.

[11][3] <http://www.unitymusicfestival.com/schedule/a-stage-schedule/>

[12][4] <http://www.unitymusicfestival.com/schedule/a-stage-schedule/>

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5. <http://www.unitymusicfestival.com/>
6. <http://www.unitymusicfestival.com/get-tickets/>
7. <https://soundcloud.com/dj-josiah-freebourne/beat-culture-radio-ad>
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The vision of Beat Culture is simple: It sees the growing trend of EDM in the United States and around the world and seeks to bring some of the best producers and DJs in the scene to educate Christians about the ministry opportunities that exist within this "Beat Culture."



Tastyfresh is coming up on its 17th anniversary this year. When it first started in December of 1996, it was a site dedicated primarily news and information related to Christians involved in EDM. Today, it has morphed into a vibrant community that spans both the original site and Facebook. All that said, I need your feedback. From time to time, I try to refocus the site to better meet the needs of the current community. It's been a while since I have done that and with summer coming to a close, now seems to be a good time. Our survey is only ten questions this year and is mostly open-ended. You could help identify some of our problems and provide solutions. I'm also looking for more volunteers to help take the site/community to the next level. So if you have a few minutes, please take the Tastyfresh.com 2013 Community Survey. [button link="http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/39ST T3L" color="green" size="medium" target=""]Take the Survey[/button]

Our survey is only ten questions this year and is mostly open-ended. You could help identify some of our problems and provide solutions. I'm also looking for more volunteers to help take the site/community to the next level.

11.7 August



Something has been bothering me all summer long and this may just be me being old skool. I think we have a branding problem when it comes to Christian EDM. Quite frankly, I think we may be trying too hard to get other Christians to accept our style of music. I fully understand why we'd want their acceptance. The more they accept it, the more gigs and shows, more music to buy and more Christian EDM on radio there will be. I'm sure there are other benefits, but those are the main ones. In trying to strive for a broader audience, we have given Christian EDM a subtitle "The Future of Worship". My gut tells me that this is the wrong move.

Three Quick Points

First, it's historically inaccurate. It portrays Christian EDM as something new. It's not. It's over 20 years old now with the first true techno and house releases coming out around 1991 and 1992. I know that it's still new to millions of people. I also know that the very idea of Christian EDM still seems to be a joke in many secular publications. The fact is that from 1992 until 2001, you could actually walk into most chain Christian bookstores and find a section in the CDs clearly labeled "Dance Music" and it was stocked with albums from Paradigm Shift, Scott Blackwell, AJ Mora, the Prodigal Sons, Virus and more. And you know what? It actually sold in enough numbers to justify its existence.

If you take the time to talk to the first generation of Christian EDM producers and DJs, you'll actually find out that the scene back then was ripe. It was actually active and it is a shell today of what it was back then. And no, it wasn't everywhere even then either. It was larger and more active though even without the advent social media for marketing and promotion. How we got from there to here is a longer story and not something I'll tackle today.

Second, I think it's presumes too much about its purpose. I don't think we can definitively say that God wants this to become the dominate sound of worship. While I think it can be used for worship, the fact of the matter is that what we are doing will not replace traditional hymns, coffee house worship, praise choruses and so on. The very fact that we have been doing remixes of popular Christian praise songs shows that at best, Christian EDM is a supplement rather than a replacement and there is a world of difference between the two.

I'd also like to point back in history to the Nitro Praise series from N*Soul Records. Nitro Praise offered EDM remixes of traditional and more modern praise songs. Each CD contained 8-10 tracks plus the instrumental tracks so you could have your congregation sing provide the vocals. It pretty much kept N*Soul Records alive for several years. N*Soul also wasn't the only label releasing EDM praise and worship either, although they were the best at it.

Third, it puts Christian EDM in a box that I think might limit it. Christian EDM's greatest strength isn't in leading people to worship God. It really isn't. Those of us who want to worship God will do so regardless of Christian EDM. We may like it. We may love it. We might prefer it, but we ALL find ways to worship God. The fact is though that Christian EDM's most effective usage is bridging the gap between those who are lost and God. It has the ability to penetrate markets better than just about any other genre of Christian music. It opens doors for interviews. It allows interaction with other label heads and promoters. It gives us an opportunity to talk directly to fans. It is an evangelism tool plain and simple.

Don't believe me?

Let me give you a couple of examples.

The Prodigal Sons: Back in the early 90's Greg Hobgood, JR Barbee and Chris White traveled from town to town playing not just Christian shows, but secular ones. For those who do not know, JR would preach during each show. Greg would work the synths, samplers and sequencers. Chris would DJ. They had the opportunity to do their show as an opening act for 808 State which was one of the biggest acts at the time. They were also once accidentally promoted as The Prodigy once. Throughout all of this, God gave them opportunity after opportunity to share their faith and people were saved.

AJ Mora: AJ Mora came out of the secular scene. He was a part of a group called The Movement. Richard Vission was another member of the group and their mega hit in the early 90's was "Jump". AJ toured with Scott Blackwell and many of the other N*Soul artists of the day. At the end of shows where they banged out a combination of secular and Christian music, they would explain why they were there and share their faith. People came to know the Lord. Today, he's become the unofficial pastor to the LA DJ scene and people will seek him out for prayer and advice on a regular basis.

In the end, while worship happened at all of these shows on some level, these guys knew that their end goal wasn't to worship God, but to bring others to Him.

Here's a question for you:

Where is worship mentioned in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)?

I'm not trying to downplay the importance of worship here, but I do want to point out that we as Christians cannot help but to worship God. Our bodies naturally cry out praises to Him the closer we grow to Him. Remember, even the rocks cry out (Luke 19:40). When we simply serve God and do His will, we're praising Him. The act of worship is something that comes naturally (or should) for those who love God. There isn't anything magical about the music or the atmosphere and God promises to show up wherever two or three are gathered (Matthew 18:20).

Now, if we focus on making top notch music that is either instrumental or has a Christian message, that can open doors. It puts the artist/DJ in front of audiences. It gives him (or her - we need more hers btw) a real platform from which ministry can be done. We don't have to make it in secular clubs, but everything we do as Christians should be done at a minimum with that level of quality. After all, we are supposed to bring God our best in everything right? There is no excuse for subpar music or events.

Well, that's it. Those are my personal reasons why I have a problem with referring to Christian EDM as "the future or worship." It's historically inaccurate. It's presumes too much. It can limit its effectiveness as an evangelism tool. I'm sure there are those of you who disagree. That's fine. We can always talk about it. I don't think there is an absolute right or wrong on this. I can see it being used for worship. I've seen it done so. My beef is more with the marketing angle we seem to be taking here, so please understand that's my concern with it.

In the end, this debate probably shouldn't matter. We all have our calling in this scene. We all serve a different role in the body and we need to be focused more on that than what our counterparts are doing. Let those called to led worship, led worship. And let those called to evangelize, evangelize.

Is Christian EDM really the future of worship or is our currently marketing angle misleading?

Jon (2013-10-19 00:31:00)

I have been immersed in the EDM scene for quite a while now, but I jumped on it when the scene was leaving its early stages and entering its commercial age. I was not practicing Christianity at the time, but I never completely rejected God; I did all the drugs and listened to everything from House to Gabber. What I was looking for was some sort of futuristically evolved culture that practiced mysticism with mentally stimulating music, hallucinogens, and designer drugs. I actually found that, but there was still something wrong with the idea of creating an exuberant society without God, with the help of artificial happiness from drugs, music, and narcissism. I realized that witchcraft and sorcery didn't require any devotion to it in order for it to be practiced. What seemed like futuristic indigenous dance rituals 10 years ago, has now transformed into what looks like large scale satanic rituals (we see it with the "massive" craze that's causing problems with teenagers, adults, and families). Its definitely not what it used to be and the scene is getting more dangerous in both practical and spiritual senses. I feel like EDM in some ways can lead to a form of intemperance, but there is no real way of judging its cleanliness compared to other indulgences that we accept into our daily lives. I feel like the Lord letting Christians do anything besides praying, is a true expression of His unconditional love for us; and we are allowed to praise that and be joyful about it. We should still practice temperance, and pray that God makes these wonderful things in life corrupted by satan, clean. In some ways I feel like God's sound is silence; but I don't want to get into an argument. I still love EDM, and still wish to make and spin it; but with the intention of praising the Lord Jesus Christ and not making a ton of cash.

Christian Gould (2013-11-12 11:58:00)

really interesting, thanks, methods don't work, God does.

11.8 October

OOH: Deeflash (2013-10-07 23:43) - szeilenga

On One Hand : a bi-weekly series of five-fingered inquires with a select member of our TastyFresh community – mini interviews on everything from production philosophy to gigs and industry to faith and ministry.

One : Who are you and what kind of music do you produce?

My name is Chris Reiche and I produce and DJ under the name Deeflash. I produce mostly tech and deep house.

Two : How does being a DJ influence your music production and vice versa? Do you lean more heavily towards one or the other?

I lean much into the production side of things. I find that it influences my DJing in that I am always looking for ways to express what I feel in my sets. That can mean looping different tracks over each other to create a specific sound or adding more gear like a drum machine or synth to my setup so I can create new rhythms or riffs over the music I am playing.

Three : So, what does the creative process look like in your world? What goes into making music?

Usually I will start out working in Maschine, just creating a groove and a beat that reflects the mood I'm in... it might be driving techno or it might be moody and deep. Once I've got that going I will start layering some instruments and synths on to it and seeing what works. The process varies depending on where the song might take me from there, but once I've got a basic idea down I will start arranging it out in Ableton and seeing what sounds good where in the arrangement view. Then comes the fun of playing with effects and creating builds and drops to give the track movement. I will usually arrange a full song out the first time I work on it, then I will save that and go back to it a few days after I've given some thought to it and listened to it a few times. By the time I come back to it, I usually have a good idea of what needs to be done to finish it. Once I've got what I think is a finished track, I will play it out or in a mix and see how the arrangement works in a set or for a crowd and based on that I may go back and tweak it.

Four : How long have you been writing music and what are a few of the musical successes you are most proud of?

I have been writing music for almost 10 years now. I think some of the successes I'm most proud of would be: I had the opportunity to DJ at Cornerstone Music Festival 3 years in a row. I helped start MK837, a house and breaks label, with Dave Richards and Kevin Oneel. Last year, I completed my first artist album and got to play it live at HEAT Worship House's "White As Snow 3" rave event. And this year, with the help of my friend Preacherman, we started a local monthly event called Tapestry where we invite a few local DJs and play out on a patio at a local venue on Sunday afternoons, we also stream the events live via Ustream and GrooveBox Radio. This has given me the opportunity to connect with some of the other local DJs and help some of them to start producing music which I hope will push our little local scene further.

Five : For you, where does faith and music meet?

I do feel that faith is a personal thing, but I also believe when the Bible says, "Out of the treasures of the heart, the mouth speaks." And I feel that music is a form of communication. So I feel that no matter what I create, it's a reflection of what I am either going through at that moment. I think true creation does come from the heart and that is what separates creation from manufacturing. I can manufacture a song that sounds like another song but it probably won't have my heart in it. Instead, I decide to create music that really reflects a part of me or what I am feeling and in that it might sometimes reflect my faith, other times it might reflect the love I feel for my wife or family, and other times it might just reflect a difficult period of my life. All that to say, I would say that if you are truly creating music and digging deep within yourself to pull something out that is true art, your faith, love, and heart will be shown.

Great! Thanks for connecting with us, Deeflash. It's been great talking to you.

If you'd like to connect with Deeflash, you can touch base with him right here on Tastyfresh. You can also find his music on [1]MK837.com and [2]deeflash.com.



[EMBED]

1. <http://mk837.com/>
2. <http://www.deeflash.com/>

On One Hand : a bi-weekly series of five-fingered inquires with a select member of our TastyFresh community – mini interviews on everything from production philosophy to gigs and industry to faith and ministry.

Interview with Tastyfresh.com | deeflash (2013-10-09 12:31:00)

[...] Zeilenga over at Tastyfresh.com asked me to do a short interview with him for a new series called “On One Hand”, a [...]

Tastyfresh.com | OOH : Recap Edition 1 – Creativity - Tastyfresh.com (2014-04-01 12:15:24)

[...] Read Deeflash's Full Interview [...]



On One Hand : a bi-weekly series of five-fingered inquiries with a select member of our TastyFresh community – mini interviews on everything from production philosophy to gigs and industry to faith and ministry.

One : Who are you and what kind of music do you produce?

My name is Jorge Goyco. Between 1997 and 2002ish, I produced EDM under the name "Antidote" for Nsoul Records. We made 3 albums for Nsoul (4 if you count the "PreRelease"). I have produced a lot more since then, most of which can be found at my bandcamp page.

I started making EDM because my brother was in the scene in Washington D.C. I didn't listen to that music until he turned me on to it. At that point, I made music that was an "impression" of the EDM that I had heard. I used Sound Edit on a mac with samples from BigFish Audio. It was mostly "Audio Sculptures" for me. I would loop something and add something, loop it and add something else. Not much song structure. And ultimately, not much commercial viability. That stuff could be classified mostly as funky breaks. Mostly it was experimental.

The music evolved to a more traditional sound and format – mostly because I got a copy of Propellorheads Reason, but also because I started going to raves. My favorite time of the night was around 3am to 4am. Seems like at that time, the music was louder, and the sounds were stranger and more trancy. I really liked Hard, Dark Trance.

My tastes moved on to Drum and Bass...mostly because of the "Rave" experience. Drum and bass was fun to make, and fun to play loud, but no one knew what to do with it on the dance floor. Well, not in the Christian Dance Community at least. I still was making the Hard Trance stuff, but I secretly only listened to Drum and Bass – Dylan, TeeBee, Dieselboy, etc.

Our contract with Nsoul ended and I started making DJ and Rave friendlier hard trance and DNB. The stuff that had long intros and outros. The stuff that should be on vinyl...not on a CD.

I gave it all away.

I would often challenge myself with different music projects. I produced an album called Seratonic that was basically trip hop the likes of Portishead and Massive Attack. I would make a loop, put on my earphones and fall asleep, then wake up suddenly with a strange idea for a sound, add it in and fall asleep again.

I also made some Electroclash the likes of Fischerspooner and Shiny Toy Guns called "Deathbed Antics". That

was an interesting project. I liked some Electroclash, but didn't like a lot of it. I challenged myself to make music that I didn't like, and then surprisingly, I started liking it. Not sure if anyone else liked it, though.

I also made a couple of albums with my daughter when she was 2 or 3. We called it BoomBoomButterfly. One was Electro/I don't know, and the other was progressive TripHop. Real trippy stuff.

I also produced a project akin to Explosions in the Sky, Mogwai and Kinski. I guess I was into that stuff for a while. That project is called "He Is Staying Right There". I came up with the track names by taking my earphones off for a second while my kids were talking and I used the statement I heard.

A few years ago I got into Dubstep and started making some of that. Dubstep is difficult to make with Garageband. But something I like about Dubstep is that it's an artform like no other. There are similarities in format, but there are so many different styles and "Style" in Dubstep. I really like that. Again, with my "experimental" slant, yeah. I liked it.

Last year, I did a project with my kids called "Unicorn on a Unicycle Holding Corn". It's folksy and trendy and hipster...or attempting to be hipster. I mean, there's a banjo and a French Horn in it. It was super fun, and honestly, one of the most "approachable" projects I've ever done. I guess because it sounds like stuff that's out there right now. Suffjan, Wild Child, Gungor, etc. The kids played most of the instruments. I would have them play a measure or so (sample) and then I'd loop it. It was fun.

My latest project (currently mixing levels and writing lyrics) is another "Family" project, but this time, my influence is music from "Moderat" and "Apparat". It's Electronic, mesmerising, TripHopish, depressing Radioheadish and slow. Well, not all the songs are slow. Right now it's going to be a 5 album project. My kids are helping me build these songs too. I put the earphones on them and let them listen and point out things they like, don't like, or suggest.

Who knows what's next.

Two : A lot of your recent music uses real instruments. What inspired that decision and what are your favorite instruments to use?

My first instrument was a guitar. My mom taught me chords on a Classical, and they made a deal with me that if I took lessons, they'd buy me an electric guitar and amp. I still have that guitar. That was in 1985. I was in a Thrash Band in High School called "Harsh Reality" and we tried to play Slayer and sound like Anthrax.

So, as far as favorite instrument goes, it's guitar.

The next thing you need to know about me is that I can pick up almost any instrument and play it. Not well, but I can make it sound, and I can make a song right away. French horn not so much, but piano, flute, recorder, glockenspiel, didgeridoo, bass, accordion, ukulele, djembe, etc. My parents travel a whole bunch and I ask them to bring me back an instrument from that county. I have a tin flute, a Shofar, Chinese laughing horn, pan flute, etc. I have a whole bunch of odd instruments at my house, and the family often "jams".

So the use of "Real" instruments was not a difficult jump for my recent projects. I just sample them and loop them. I also like using non-traditional things too. I used my daughters jewelry/music box as a sample. I used my record player, a straw in a smoothie, and even a receipt from a store.

Probably what I want to do most is open up the "box" for my kids. I want them to be able to grab an instrument and make some music (or noise). And they do.

Really, the try at a genre that I had never attempted was the difficult thing. But I like challenging myself...even if the end product isn't "perfect" and more "mediocre" than not. It's all about producing something. I can't just sit still. I have to be doing something creative.

Three: What does the music industry look like from where you're sitting and what is your place in it?

I think the music industry is not necessarily struggling, but it's in the throes of needing to redefine itself. I mean, I see it as two industries (maybe more). One is the Radio Play industry, and the other is the "Indy" (for lack of a better word). I am more interested in the "Indy" side. This is where people are coming up with their own genres. I love that. Sure, there will always be a need for specific genres, but for when you are painting a kitchen or designing a website, interesting, "different" music is the best. My opinion.

I think that this type of music ultimately is defined by exploration and hunting...which is fun and seems to be a need for us as humans. For example, I found the band called Moderat because there was a Redbull commercial that was playing a really cool song. I pulled out my phone and used SoundHound and found out it was a band called Apparat. I looked them up and loved it, then dug deeper and found another one of their projects. Again, maybe this is just me, but I get bored easily and need "different". You can't find that on the radio. In fact, I was installing an amp in my car and accidentally cut the antenna wire...I don't miss it. I always loved going to raves and hearing obscure songs dropped by DJs who, you know, poured through hours of vinyl at their local record store.

I welcome stuff like Trap and Complextro and BroStep. It's going to push us to push envelope...to shake the box. One thing I end up looking for is "Emotion" in music. Listen to Suffjan Stevens song "John Wayne Gacy". Listen to Apparat's song "Black Water". Listen to Mogwai's song "You are Lionel Ritchie". Those are emotional and really affect me.

What is my place in the industry? Mostly just making music that I like, putting it out there, and then having super low expectations about if anyone will find it, like it and share it. I expect 11 people will like my next project, and that includes me and my four kids (my wife supports my passions but rarely likes my music). Oh, and my two brothers, who I'm not sure I could do wrong by. Everyone's gonna have opinions.

I know this has little to do with the music industry...indirectly anyway, but I'd like to see movie soundtracks and scores remixed by "regular Joes" like me. Look at Tron Legacy and Daft Punk. That was cool. How cool would it be if the movie companies released a version of the movie without a soundtrack and score, and allowed anyone to build and remix. That would be interesting.

Four : How and where do your faith and your music connect?

It depends on the type of music I am creating. If it's writing worship music on my guitar or piano, then yeah, it connects, but if I am making EDM, for the most part, there isn't a connection. Early on, my music had samples from a couple of pastors I knew. We also wrote lyrics for Antidote that were "faith based". Like the one about taking my Bible everywhere I go, and the one "I need to decrease, so you can increase." I had my wife speak bible verses for the "Seratonic" project. And for the latest project, there is a song about "Praying" - but there's also a song about giving my kids permission to use my guns against a zombie invasion so...

Here's the thing, Faith Based lyrics turn people off. I mean people who are not believers. Take a look at Switchfoot. They are believers, but they don't push it. You have to dig. What you hear is a "World View" that is different than what the world is offering. I think that's legit.

I know it's not what you are asking, and maybe I am justifying what I do. But, in any case, my personal connection with God is in the fact that I have a talent, and He made me creative. I believe He gives us freedom. My music

in and of itself didn't minister to anyone. Well, maybe it did. I am pretty sure my music never influenced anyone to turn from their sin. But, I'm not sure that is what I am making it for.

With Antidote, I knew I was making music for believers. At the time, there was a handful of Christian EDM artists out there. Scott Blackwell, Prophecy of Panic, Prodigal Sons, Paradigm Shift, Cloud2Ground, Faith Massive, etc. and I wanted to add to that pool. So at first, my audience was believers who needed Christian alternatives in EDM. I feel like my audience evolved into kids that came out of the rave scene, but that was only after a buddy of mine and I formed a ministry group and went to raves and clubs and talked to a bunch of people. Mostly they were on drugs, and mostly they hadn't heard what we were offering...in the way we were offering it.

That was also around the time that the music I was producing turned away from "commercially viable" in the Christian Family Bookstores. But that was on purpose. I wanted to make music that was attractive to kids in the scene, then when they came and asked me what I had just played, I had a foot in the door.

The fact is, (sorry JR) I didn't really like Prodigal Sons. I loved their beats and the music, but I didn't at all like the MC over the tracks. I could NEVER share that with kids in the scene. They would laugh at it. I did. "Walk like an Epheeeeeesian". I'm still not sure what that means.

I don't think I can give credit to God for the music I make. I mean, if God was helping me make my music, wouldn't I be in Ibiza or headlining Electric Daisy Carnival?

I give him credit for life, and the ability to enjoy creating and listening and sharing.

Five: What's is some good advice about music production you'd give to someone just starting out?

Honestly?

Number 1: Lower your expectations.

The market is saturated. Is your production quality really as good Skrillex? Are your remixing skills on par with what's going on out there right now? You might be a prodigy – then disregard this – but most of us aren't. It's hard work. Don't expect to make a track in Fruity Loops or Reason, throw it up on Tastyfresh's Facebook page and expect to be featured in the next Transformers movie. It's hard work to make a good track. It's hard work to promote yourself. It takes a lot of money to get the right equipment and press vinyl and get it out there. You are NOT going to be the next big thing.

If your expectations are at that level, then it's all "Up" from there. Right?

Number 2: Be OK throwing away at least 80 % of the music you produce.

Every track you produce is not gold. The truth of the industry is that you can't pump out hit after hit. If you do, it's probably because you are paying a whole bunch of money to a producer and a promotions agent who know what they are doing.

It's also good for you to not hold on to things so tightly. I make tracks all the time and hit "Don't Save", even if it's something I think is really good. The more you do something, the better you will get.

Number 3: Learn how to master your tracks.

I think that was (and is) the hardest part about making music. You have something that sounds good in your earphones, but when you play it on your crappy factory car stereo, it sounds like crap.

Learn what a Peak Limiter is. Learn what Stereo Enhancement is. Compression, Brick Wall, perceived loud-

ness, etc. Figure out how to mix. It's hard. Should the drums be louder? Why is my sub-bass causing harmonic distortion. Why does my high hat sound so piercing? Where did my mid sweep go? Compare it to a track that has been professionally produced and try to match it.

It's not just about creating cool beats...that's the fun part. If you want to have a great track, you gotta get it mastered.

I always remember hearing the Antidote CDs when I got the first printing sent to me. They always sounded so much better than they had when I sent them off.

I still wish I was better at it.

Number 4: Listen to your music on different speakers and adjust.

Think about when you listen to music. In your car, at your desk, on a run. That's when others do too. How does your track sound on \$10 ear buds? What about on your neighbors high end boxed 12s?

My earphones lie to me. They tell me my music sounds amazing. Full bass, great mids, tight highs. Just the right amount of sparkle and sub. Then I go to my car and all I hear is bass, or the vocals are ducking. I have my old DJing headphones. Pioneer SE-DJ5000. I love them, but I have to remember to take my stuff off my computer and play them on other devices.

Number 5: Use Propellerheads Reason.

Reason is pretty amazing. I don't have it anymore. I couldn't afford it after my OS didn't support it. I am currently using Apple GarageBand. It works pretty well. But I'm not going for "Everyone thinks this is amazing". I'm going for "I like that!"

Great! Thanks for connecting with us, Jorge. It's been great talking to you.

If you'd like to connect with Jorge, you can touch base with him right here on Tastyfresh. You can also find his music on [1]bandcamp.

1. <http://jorgegoyco.bandcamp.com/target=>

I started making EDM because my brother was in the scene in Washington D.C. I didn't listen to that music until he turned me on to it. At that point, I made music that was an "impression" of the EDM that I had heard.

Jorge Goyco (2013-10-22 11:56:00)

Thanks Scott. And thanks Tastyfresh. This is a cool project. I am honored to be featured, Looking forward to more in the series.

redsavior (2013-10-23 11:41:00)

I'm glad you were open to it. I'm sorry we haven't done as good a job with keeping up with you as we should have.

Jorge Goyco (2013-10-24 10:14:00)

No worries. I'm slippery and elusive.



Left to Right: David Richardson, Kevin Neely, Andy Hunter, Patrick Mauldin & Alex Bedwell. Taken at Cornerstone Music Festival 2011.

I hate to sound dramatic. Unfortunately, that's all I have right now. Yesterday, Kevin Neely, co-founder of MK837 and one of my best friends suddenly passed away. The full explanation of what happened isn't out yet, but it was a medical related issue.

Kevin and I first met at the Cornerstone Music Festival in 2006. It was his first time there and it was my third – fourth if you count the spin-off festival they had in North Carolina in 2003. He came to the festival with our mutual friend, producer, DJ and now author, Fitzpatrick. I came with an old high school buddy of mine who was there for the rock music while I clearly was there for the club music. Kevin and I hit it off from the start, but by the end of the week I was suffering in the heat with the worst case of strep throat I had ever had in my life. Over the next several months we kept in touch. Sadly, we've always had a three hour drive between us.

I guess it was about November of 2006 when Chris Human contacted me and asked me to take over the club stage at Cornerstone. I may have had years of experience producing music and running an EDM blog, but I never had put on a show before. I instantly called Kevin and told him that I wouldn't do it without his help and the help of the rest of the Birmingham crew. From then until 2011, we put on the best shows at Cornerstone. Almost every night was larger than the first. We booked some of the hottest rising talent from around the world and a bunch of unheard of talent who today are starting to make their mark.

Kevin and I started seeing the end of the festival as early as 2009. Each year we treated it as the last year we would be able to attend. We literally learned how to blend into the festival and simply make it our own. We always were able to deliver more than what was required on less and less of a budget each year. Kevin was the glue that got the work done. He was the soul of every party we threw. He always found a way to lighten the mood even when EVERYTHING was going wrong. All I had to do was run politics for him. Not a problem. That was the part I sadly loved anyway.

In 2009, part our Cornerstone experience was the realization that we wanted to do more than just a show each year. We realized that we knew a ton of talent that wasn't getting the exposure that it deserved. We talked about how great it would be to run a label and then we talked to Joel Armstrong about it in passing and killed the

idea off until September.

In September, the bug hit us again. Chris Reiche had been helping us out for a while with Cornerstone and is just one of the hardest working guys that I know. We brought Chris into the discussion and by January, MK837 was born and had \$750 to blow. We're finishing up our fourth year now and well, it's going to be a hollow ending waiting for a bright future in 2014.

Our last year with Cornerstone was 2011. We pretty much knew it then. The festival's attendance that year simply sucked and our "Afterhours Nightclub" took a huge hit as a result. On top of that, it was simply a hot year. The fest goers manly wandered the festival grounds each night and skipped the shows. Kevin and I couldn't figure out what was really up with it, but it was clear that 2011 was the last year we would get to run the stage.

In 2013 Kevin and I launched Antrim Digital. We initially intended the site to be a new sub label rather than a blog. In a way, I'm very glad that we changed it to a blog. So far, Kevin's pieces have been the best ones on the site hands down. He also managed to bring a serious message and presented it with sarcasm, wit and perhaps a bit of unpretentious attitude that most bloggers would never be able to dream of achieving.

Beyond all of this, he was a regular Indy car blogger for Openpaddock.net. I can't even begin to describe his passion for Indy car racing and how his dream job was to one day make a living as an Indy car reporter. He and his buddy Brooks worked on many tracks for the nerdcore scene and especially MC Lars. He was a fairly well known regional hard house DJ from back in the day as well. If there was something cool or lovable, Kevin was probably in it or aware of it.

While those are some of the milestones Kevin laid with me, that can't even begin to cover his other accomplishments. His reach across this Earth was so much deeper. Throughout both the Indy car and EDM scene, Kevin has friends. He was a wise counselor, a sympathetic ear, someone who respected people no matter how much they screwed their lives up. His compassion might have been his greatest strength if it were not for his uncanny ability to defuse the tension out of just about any scene. He was also trustworthy and loyal. Once he knew a secret, he kept it. He knew better than to squander or abuse trust. That character in him was precious and lacks in so many of the rest of us.

In the end, much of my relationship with him could be described as any one of The Hangover movies, just without the drugs, sex and booze. That includes losing people, not being able to figure out how we got somewhere, odd bills, found objects and lost objects. Despite the ups and downs, these are the days my soul lovingly longs for and that I'll never be able to fully recreate. Kevin was unique.

The Bible teaches us that we don't know how long we have on this Earth. Kevin died much younger than any of us should and he didn't die in a way that makes sense for his age. At 33, we're supposed to die from a horrible car accident or some traumatic battle with cancer or some other horrific disease. We don't know fully what killed Kevin yet, but he had been sick for over a week. The sad truth is that none of us know the day or the hour when we will be called, but like taxes... death cannot be avoided.

Kevin's ability to see the good in people was amazing. It wasn't that he thought that everyone at their core was good, but because he knew what Jesus had done in his life and how He had help turn Kevin's life around. Kevin saw people as Jesus saw them. He treated them as Jesus did. He took that seriously and just about everyone around him knew it. He was bold with his faith when he needed to be and gentle with it when it was necessary. Right now, there is no doubt in my mine where Kevin is or how I know he is there. He's in Heaven. He's reunited with his Earthly father and seeing his heavenly one for the first time with his own eyes and I couldn't be more proud of him or happy for him. My heart ACHES today for my loss, but it's all his gain today.

I don't know where MK837 is going next year. I don't even know where Antrim will go next week. Shutting it all down is an option, but to be honest Kevin would probably kill me if I did. Just about every month Kevin would ask me if it was time to shut the label down. And every time, I'd respond: "No, not yet." Somehow I know it would be wrong to do simply because Kevin wasn't standing beside me. The water is murky right now, but it will clear over time.

Just a few of the lessons Kevin provided us with his life include:

- Always put others before yourself.
- Love those who need love and love those who are hard to love even more.
- The show must go on and there is a solution to any present problem.
- No matter how much you can screw up a situation, you can make it better, even if you make it worse at first.
- Chase your dreams. You may not have enough hands to chase them all at once, but if you're sitting on them, you won't chase any at all.
- ALWAYS open the door for others and be the best Southern Gentleman that you can be.
- Political correctness is optional.
- You can be a legend without being famous or being a jerk.

Kevin buddy, I'm going to miss you. You're a class "A" jerk for checking out of this world so early and like you did, but I'm not mad at you. I love and respect you more than you will ever know and I'm so glad that we will spend eternity together. Keep a slot on the decks open for me and I'll see you when I get there.



Tim Bunch (2013-10-23 12:03:00)

Great write up, I learned some things about Kevin that I never knew. I never had the opportunity to meet him, but I wish I had.

Stephen (2013-10-23 13:53:00)

Great write up Dave, thank you for sharing this. I'm still in shock to hear this, but I'm really thankful for the impact he's had on my life and on the cEDM scene in general. Kevin, we're gonna miss you buddy.

Coco Street (2013-10-23 14:09:00)

Thank you, Dave for this dear retrospective of a beautiful friendship and Brother in the Lord. Another one of us is gone too soon, but is now embracing the One in utter joy!

Joshua Iles (2013-10-23 15:49:00)

here's another persons thoughts I found in my twitter feed. sucks we were the same age. thank u for sharing Dave. @open-paddock: Missing Our Friend Kevin Neely - <http://tinyurl.com/n27zm7l>

redsavior (2013-10-23 16:47:00)

Yeah, I've been reading some of the posts over on Trackforum.com aka the OTHER TF. Anyway, three pages and growing. <http://www.trackforum.com/forums/showthread.php?181164-Poster-writer-Kevin-Neely-has-passed>

ElectricGospel (2013-10-28 16:45:00)

Man, that was a deep read. I could smell the friendship! Much blessings to you, Justin Ratliff, & all who Kevin left behind
#InJesusNameAmen

redsavior (2013-10-30 08:16:00)

Thanks man. Sorry for the late reply. I've been a bit busy. You would have liked Kevin. He was a huge fan of Diplo's production work and would hang out and produce for some of the guys in the Nerdcore scene including MC Lars.

Tastyfresh.com | OOH: Kevin Neely - Tastyfresh.com (2013-11-04 21:07:41)

[...] Interviewer's note: Kevin passed away unexpectedly on October 22nd, 2013 [...]

djkairos (2013-12-31 12:09:00)

Un Gran dj y productor Dios sea bendiciendo su vida ahora y mas Thanks Kevin Onnel

Dear Tastyfresh (2013-10-28 09:44) - szeilenga

Dear Tastyfresh,

For me it's been a week full of unexpected events – things that I would never have foreseen, but nonetheless were just around the corner. I was often reminded this week that God did not gift our finite minds with the ability to see even a moment into the future – no matter how convenient that would be. From the sudden, and sad passing of our friend Kevin Neely (who made a big impact on everyone who knew him), to seemingly sure plans being postponed at the last minute, to the surprising announcement from my pastor that he was taking a position elsewhere and would be gone in only a few weeks... it just felt like one thing after another. Sheesh, what next? Before I knew it, I began to feel that fear of the unknown creep in, coupled with a strong sense of loss.

Whenever I start to feel that struggle, and I bring it to God, He reminds me of a few things to help. As I too am trying to process this week's events, I started to write sort of an encouragement note to you all. I pray the next time you have a week of uncertainty, or, like me, a surprising event that leaves you asking many "why" questions of God, maybe these will help you too :

Remember God is on His throne

He is and always has been sovereign over the events of our lives. As the Creator of time, knowing the beginning from the end, there is nothing that catches Him by surprise. As the old saying goes, "I don't know what the future holds, but I know Who holds the future." That odd event or unforeseen circumstance that pops up in our lives are not unknown to God, in fact He has full control of the situation. He says, "I know the plans I have for you..." And not only that, but as Romans 8:28 reminds us, God works all these things together – the unexpected and the expected – for our ultimate good. We may not understand why He works in the ways He works – for instance, in the sudden death of a close friend – but God asks us to trust Him despite our limited understanding.

Be good to each other

"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves." Serve one another. Give hugs. Tell dumb jokes. Leave encouragement notes. Compliment someone on their track selection. Break routine to love someone better. Go out of your way to help someone (like the good Samaritan). Smile. If you haven't noticed, that old quote, "Be kind, for everyone you know is fighting a hard battle," is mighty applicable most days. Learn what it looks like to comfort someone even though you, yourself, are going through hell and high water?

Stay connected to your community

I don't know why, but it seems like when something unexpected hits I have a tendency to want to seclude myself, or if nothing else, to meander off and check on the greener grass, so to speak. (Actually it's probably more a matter of trying to find someone who doesn't know the story, and won't ask me a thousand lame questions about what happened.) But, as Hebrews says, "Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another..." I don't know why that couldn't apply to an online community too. People are one of our greatest sources of earthly strength. Lean back into your community. There you will find not only a place to catch your breath and recharge, but you can be there for someone who, more than likely, is experiencing the similar things.

Keep calm

Worry and panic and Chicken-Little-type behaviors are never productive, and seldom make you feel any better. You will never see the guy who's hyperventilating into a paper bag one moment step up and take charge the next. Instead, find your calm in Him. One of the fruits of the Spirit is peace. The shepherds, though surprised, were comforted by, "...on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." He is our God of peace. Even though life can get hard understand,

He gives “a peace that passes understanding.”

Carry on

Remember, time marches on. The world may feel like it stopped there for a moment, but it didn't. When you feel like you can't go on, you can. Please, hear my heart here; I am not trying to sound insensitive. I definitely want to you to take time to process, and grieve. I do want you to take time to rest heavily in the perfect arms of God. Yes. But then, when the time is right, ask for wisdom to begin to take steps to move forward again. Where do we go from here? What kind of decisions need to be made to keep momentum? How can I keep the flame burning?

You don't have to hang around this planet for long before you realize that life can get hard and uncertain at times. Even Jesus warned us, “In this world you will have trouble...” But as Kevin and my Pastor Troy would probably advise : “Trust in God, foster relationships, be at peace, and don't stop moving.” And, as I said earlier in the week, “When the whole bottom drops out, make sure you are holding on to something above you.” And, of course, Jesus proclaims, “Take heart! I have overcome the world.”

God bless you. I am praying for you all.

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God bless you. I am praying for you all.

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11.9 November

OOH: Kevin Neely (2013-11-04 21:07) - szeilenga

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One : Who are you and what kind of music do you produce and DJ?

I'm Kevin Neely. I've worked on projects like Kevin Oneel, Aesias Finale, BTU, StAnkfAngA, Wedge Antilles, Kayoh and various production projects with MC Lars, YTCracker, Andrew Former Fat Boys. I produce pretty much anything honestly. I DJ primarily house, prog and breaks.

Two : How does being a DJ influence your music production and vice versa? Do you lean more heavily towards one or the other?

It really doesn't influence me one way or another. I've always been kinda across the board with styles anyway. I was doing the multi-genre thing before it was cool. But usually, I try to incorporate sounds I'm producing into my sets.

Three : What does the EDM scene look like from where you are sitting and what is your place in it?

I'm feeling like an old cranky fart these days. Lol! EDM is mainstream hot right now, but it'll eventually go back underground. It's the cycle all music genres go through. I will say it's interesting though, because tools to make and play music are far more accessible. It's opened so many doors for so many people. I've always been one to embrace technology, so I'm loving it!

Four : If you were to give one piece of advice to someone just starting out as a producer or DJ, what would it be?

Play in crappy bars. Get shanked over by shady promoters who don't pay. Use horrible equipment. Get used to empty rooms. Question why you're even playing. Get frustrated. Threaten to sell your gear. Only then will you be mentally prepared to handle success with a humble attitude. Remaining humble is one of the biggest tenet I try to hold to. Plus, if you deal with all that crap, it'll make you appreciate the good things even more.

Five : How and where do your faith and your music connect?

My faith and my music are permanently connected. I don't make disconnects because my faith is part of who I am, just like my music is part of who I am. I never restrict myself to just Christian things, because that goes against Jesus' teaching and the way He lived his life. I am a horrible, sinning, hypocritical person because I don't 100 % live the life I'm supposed to, but I'm working on it. That's the awesome thing about grace. God creates us and forgives us because He knows we're not perfect. My music isn't perfect either. It's all one in the same.



[EMBED]

Interviewer's note: [1]Kevin passed away unexpectedly on October 22nd, 2013

In the writing world, and probably in others as well, the word "posthumous" carries a sort of weight to it, the heft of significance. In many ways it says, "We value this person's thoughts, and honor this person beyond their lifetime."

Anyone who knew Kevin knows he deserves such regard, even though he, himself probably wouldn't agree. In his love of music, production and DJ skills, and especially in how he treated people Kevin was one of a kind. He will be missed. But we also have confidence that we will one day meet again, next time at a much bigger party than anything here on earth.

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It's very easy to say that we're growing in numbers every day. By we, I mean Christians who love EDM. One thing that is interesting however is that we probably are not. Recently I used Google Trends to get an overview of how we're doing as a genre in Christian music and the results weren't too favorable. For those of you who don't know, Google Trends is a tool to track news articles and general interest over time for a given topic.

As you can see from the chart above, all of the major search terms for Christian dance music have flatlined or declined since 2004. Even if you change the trend search over to specific subgenres, it is in decline.

Several things are clear from this chart. First, global interest in Christian EDM is in some sort of decline. Second, it's possible that most of us, including Christian fans of EDM are not using the label "Christian" anymore. Third, despite the massive growth of EDM festivals, it's possible that EDM in general is in decline as well.

Ultimately, our problem is that we're really good at talking about Christian EDM in our Facebook groups and on Tastyfresh as well as a handful of other websites. Despite all that, we're a pretty closed society and unless someone happens to think "I wonder if Christian techno exists" our numbers rarely grow. If we really want to grow what we love, then we need to stop being self-absorbed, cliquish and learn to help one another expand their fan bases. Let's take a look at a few steps that we could all take to help grow support for Christian EDM.

Buy the Music

We need to stop saying that Christian music isn't good enough. I'm just as guilty of it. I'm not saying we should support poorly produced music. I'm saying that when something is decent and in a genre we like, we should drop some money on it.

Even if one sale equals \$0.30-0.50 for an artist, that one sale is encouragement to continue. It takes a LOT of blood, sweat and treasure to get a track to the stores and the return often times is so very little. Putting your money where your mouth is lets the artist and their labels know that you truly stand behind them.

Preorder Your Tickets

Event promoters always seem to have cash flow problems. In an ideal world, event promoters would have all of the money they need up front and could afford a financial loss. That simply isn't the case with most of the promoters in our genre. I know of several events that have recently happened that struggled greatly with their event finances. The problem wouldn't exist if people would simply buy their tickets in advance as opposed to at the door. If you know you're going to go, pay in advance. It not only makes your life easier, but the promoter's as well AND typically, you will save a few bucks.

Make an Effort to Post Charts Where People Read Them

You may just be a bedroom DJ, but don't let that stop you from posting your monthly charts on sites like Resident Advisor, Beatport, SatelliteEDM and more. For example, a chart on Beatport will tie every track in your chart to your chart. When people see a track by say Dave Richards on Beatport, it will show your chart below that. This lets people know that others liked the music and acts as a recommendation for the music and hopefully will lead to more sales. Beyond that, it gives you a nice professional looking chart that you can post to facebook and share with your friends. Here's where you go to get started with a Beatport DJ profile: [1]<http://dj.beatport.com/>

Drop Names

Most people don't like name droppers and I'm not talking about that. I'm saying that when you're in a conversation with someone about say... dubstep, you could mention a few Christian dubstep producers like Re5a, Bridj and more. If the people you are talking to aren't Christians, you don't have to tell them that these guys are Christians. There's nothing wrong with that. Let them discover that on their own. Whenever you can though, make the effort to recommend deserving Christian artists online and in person. Let them know where they can find them on social media too. Get them connected directly to the artists if you can. They need to develop a fan base.

Share Socially

This really ties everything that I mentioned above together. Share everything, or at least the best of it. If you see a good meme by a Christian artist, comment on it and then share it. This will help promote the artist more. If you are on Spotify, make a playlist of your favorite EDM and share it out so your friends can listen to it. If you are at an event and you take some video or photos, post them and properly tag the artists and event so Google can find them. If you really want to get the gold star on that one, let the artists and promoter know about these so THEY can share them too. If you see a great article about a Christian producer, comment on it and share it as well. I hope that you're seeing a trend here.

So there you have five simple things that you can do to help grow recognition for Christian EDM. It doesn't have to take a lot of time and effort, but it does take you. We are destined to be forgotten if we don't speak out about our existence. It can't be a job only for the label heads, the artists themselves or a handful of Christian EDM and community sites. You are the key to making it all happen.

1. <http://dj.beatport.com/>

It's very easy to say that we're growing in numbers every day. By we, I mean Christians who love EDM. One thing that is interesting however is that we probably are not.

Sonar Zone (2013-11-12 07:27:00)
Great advice. Thanks for sharing it

thedigitalpilgrimz (2013-11-12 09:19:00)

Thanks for this article, a well thought out piece. Appreciate where you are coming from as a DJ / Producer - of Dubstep, Breaks, EDM or whatever you call it and yes I'm born again. I always try to boost other saved EDM artists on my facebook and twitter. Please boost and support us as we too struggle to keep on. Being in the world and not of it, Our soundcloud is <https://soundcloud.com/thedigitalpilgrimz> Google trends probably isn't the best way to measure the cultural trends, its used to track searches on the web. When I search for Dubstep or EDM I go to Soundcloud or Beatport or itunes. Therefore I'm not using Google. Anyway Blessings you guys, and please keep supporting us Artists.

redsavior (2013-11-12 10:13:00)

Trends is valid because the problem isn't the number of DJs out there willing to spin dubstep, its having a fan base that is actively looking for it. Beatport ALSO shows up in Google now that it isn't all in flash, granted they probably aren't using Google as their search engine, but other sites are. A more valid complaint about using Trends would be places where genres mingle with unrelated topics. House and real estate for example. This I tried to account for. And not to gripe, but don't ask for others to support you, support them first. This is exactly why we're in this place. We're all acting selfish and not supporting each other.

redsavior (2013-11-12 10:13:00)
No problem. Hope it helps.

Chris Beekhuizen (2013-11-12 15:48:00)

Thanks for the article. As I'm redesigning my website, I think that I'll put some extra tags in it. That's the least I can do to fill my part of the google results.

Tastyfresh.com | Christian EDM's Number One Need - Tastyfresh.com (2013-11-19 09:32:29)

[...] I did. I'm searching for that answer now and I will be asking people for their thoughts as I do. There are certain things that we all can do now that will help, but I don't hold all the answers, but I have seen a lot of the problems. That in itself is half [...]

Bryson Price (2014-01-02 13:40:00)

Cool thoughts, I think more of us producers and DJs should draw people in by releasing music for free. The main purpose I have with my music is to glorify Christ through music and to point others towards Him

redsavior (2014-01-02 14:59:00)

Free music has no value to it. It doesn't recognize the hard work that goes into making it. The truth is that we need to have solidly produced music in stores and in the hands of both Christian and secular DJs. It's the DJs who will play it out, but if it doesn't have value, they will ignore it. We SHOULD be investing in streaming music as it is the future and will be "free" for most people. It will accomplish exactly what you are looking for and still ensures that the artists themselves get paid and are encouraged to continue producing.

Bryson Price (2014-01-02 15:16:00)

Thats a good thought, i see a lot of artists not making their music available for stream while still charging for it

Bryson Price (2014-01-02 15:18:00)

At the same time though, i dont think that free music has no value to it. Skrillex's 1st EP was free and its some of my favorite music of all time

redsavior (2014-01-02 16:08:00)

A lot of ppl don't have the right distribution just yet or don't realize that if you develop a fanbase that \$0.007 per play turns

into a LOT MORE cash after a while than sales would earn them.

redsavior (2014-01-02 16:09:00)

There's a difference between a freebie and all being free.

Craig Bryant (2014-08-13 16:15:00)

I don't think free music has no value. all form of music start at free level and when the fan base grow large then music is charge for a fee. if genre of music is health than be a lot people make the music just for fun of it

Craig Bryant (2014-08-13 16:24:00)

I think problem is that labeled electric dance music. that limits what kind electric music genre can included. instead if say electric music. then genres like electric rock can included.



As Christians and well... as humans, we can come up with a long list of needs. Among them we'd be sure to find God, salvation, food, shelter, water and clothing. We might also find some other needs such as a car, phone and so on. And then there are things that we want, but don't need like a brand new sports car, the latest iPhone and say an extra slice of cheese cake. The fact is that some of our needs are really just desires and I think we're struggling with this issue as far as Christian EDM is concerned.

Right now, there seem to be at least three if not four groups working separately on how to grow Christian EDM. At least one of these groups has become locally concentrated and is doing ministry on a regular basis in their area. Another is trying to focus locally and get semi-monthly events off the ground, along with a terrestrial radio show and club ministry. Another group is focused on building regional areas in which regular events are happening and training of the next generation of Christian DJs, promoters and producers can take place. The last group is focusing primarily on getting on with the festival circuit and touring across the nation.

All of those groups have merit in what they are doing, but when we talk about growing the scene, we need to ask what we want to grow. In other words, what are our goals? What is it that we want to grow, why do we want to grow it and how do we grow it? So far, in talking with many of these groups, they can't lay out a clear and concise set of goals that will grow the one thing we really do need right now and that everything hinges on.

It's all about creating fans.

That's the goal. It has to be about creating fans, but not just any fans. We need fans that will take up our banner and fight for more fans. What we don't need at the moment are more fans who instantly want to become DJs or producers. We need fans who will show up to every show. We need fans who will help raise funds to make shows happen. We need fans who will tell their friends about us and whose friends tell their friends and all of them become rabid fans. We're 20 years into Christian EDM and consistently every event thrown in any part of the US seems to max out at 150-250 attendees at whatever annual event was managed to be pulled off. If we were growing our fan base, we should be seeing shows at 350-450 at least if not more.

There was a Resident Advisor Exchange podcast earlier this year. They were discussing what it takes numerically to say there is any kind of a local scene in a city. The consensus was that you need to have at least 500 people consistently showing up to events before you could really say you had a scene that was supporting EDM in a city. I think they nailed it. We need to be able to pull 500 people consistently at our events and we're a long ways off from that. 150-250 people once or twice a year is not a scene.

We simply need fans.

I've been asked why getting on the Christian festival circuit won't help. Having worked with Cornerstone for 5 years in managing a stage, attending an additional 3 other Cornerstones, attended and worked for AtlantaFest for maybe up to 8 years, the Edge Fest and who could forget, I can tell you that festivals draw crowds from around the world. Magical things happen at music festivals, but people go home, people forget OR as in the case of Cornerstone, they mistakenly believe that Christian EDM can only happen at a music festival.

In other words, there is no transfer of passion or connecting of people with their local scenes. Festivals are islands unto themselves. They are places of great fun and long-distance friendship building, but they do not make nor support a local scene and it's the local scene that will grow Christian EDM.

As long as EDM is hot, Christian Festivals will support it. When it fades, which it will without a local fan base, it will be dropped.

Cornerstone wanted to drop EDM for years due to their budget, but festival director John Herrin would not because he believed in the diversity it brought and the team he had in place running it. Most festivals will not do this. They want to sell tickets. They are for profit first and will flock to where the money is. I love festivals, but they will drop you like a rock if you're not hot. If you can't sell tickets, you're out. Very few people will believe in what we are doing when it will cost them \$14,000 to do three club nights correctly and that still doesn't cover the DJs' travel expenses.

The hard truth is that the way you can gain long-term festival support on the level that people want is by growing a local scene first.

What I'm saying we need to do is the hardest thing for us to do. Many of us have tried and given up hope because it's too hard or we feel isolated. I can't argue that. We are spread too thinly across this nation and I don't think any one of us has all the resources they need to do an event. You might have sound and lights, but not a venue. You might have a venue, but it's in a bad location or you can't find a DJ – not to mention a proper sound system.

Atlanta was a decent hub for Christian EDM back 15 years ago when a group called Amplified Life was throwing raves in churches with an average attendance between 100-200 people. They literally fell apart as a group and it wasn't until I started what I called a Groove Fellowship that Atlanta started meeting again much like a home church or fellowship. We averaged 10-15 people for our house parties until the lives of those involved too fell apart¹.

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Today, Goshen Sai and his wife Tiffany have started a ministry called Set Ablaze International and are starting to make real headway in Atlanta. Their Horsemen's Ball event earlier in November was the first time I have ever had people at an event come up and literally BEG to get more connected and to become more involved. I was literally taken aback. Ask Matthew J. Bentley about that. They're making fans. They're growing a scene. Atlanta will grow. Oh and they had between 150-250 people at their event, the first one they have done here. God is just starting to move here.

The importance of Atlanta is this: when and if AtlantaFest ever embraces EDM (I have talked with them about this and it's unlikely to happen for a number of reasons) the EDM stage will benefit from a local scene who will have people buying tickets simply for that stage and who will encourage AtlantaFest to keep supporting it. Furthermore, because Goshen and Tiffany are actively going to the secular club scene in Atlanta to witness to people they are able to provide an alternative club experience and support group for new converts through the local Christian EDM scene they are building. So the local scene can become an ever growing support group. And the best part is that as these

local scenes grow, more Christian EDM events can happen which means there will be more opportunities for those who want to tour to do so.

I don't have an easy list of things that people can do to build a local scene from scratch. I wish I did. I'm searching for that answer now and I will be asking people for their thoughts as I do. [1]There are certain things that we all can do now that will help, but I don't hold all the answers, but I have seen a lot of the problems. That in itself is half of the solution.

If you want to help grow a local scene, I want to work with you. If you simply want your name in lights, if getting gigs is more important to you than doing the dirty work of growing fans, I can't waste my time on you. We'll forever be in conflict with each other. If Christian EDM is to grow, it will be on the backs of fans who are passionate and devoted to the cause and not the DJs or producers. DJs and producers are secondary when it comes to this scene. We're in a long term battle here. It's time to dig in and get our hands dirty.

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/articles/community/2013/11/11/5-things-can-grow-christian-edm/>

When we talk about growing the scene, we need to ask what we want to grow. In other words, what are our goals? What is it that we want to grow, why do we want to grow it and how do we grow it?

Goshen Sai (2013-11-19 10:02:00)

This is an extremely important point, and you have the the experience to say it. Thanks for "sounding the alarm" my friend. It's an honor to fight for Atlanta with you. Let's get you on the radio show ASAP ;)

Christian Gould (2013-11-19 12:30:00)

Maybe Christian EDM needs a kind of intercessory prayer group. At the end of the day the gaining Of witground within EDM is mainly about a revelation about God and how none religious he is. No form of worship is inherently right, and no genuine worship is wrong... Yet what is being preached (without a word ever being spoken) is that progressive sounds and expressions that negate tradition 'style and customarily formate' are inherently ' .

Alan Strahsburg (2013-11-19 14:36:00)

I totally agree, that getting more artists doesn't do anything, so I think I get what you are saying, but I'm not entirely sure I can really see the responsibility being laid on the "fans". I think it's still the responsibility of the artists collectively to engage the fans as a collective group. There's not a lot of difference between this and the secular scene. If an artist does not generate a big crowd for a venue, they don't get invited back. I've never heard of anyone even try to start a scene in San Jose bay area, but without the talent, it's just not going to happen. So while you are right in that the quantity of artists is not going to help, the quality is imperative.

Beat Culture (2013-11-19 16:36:00)

I see the value in each one of the 3 or 4 efforts. I think each has their part in the whole. People in key areas do need to establish something local though for the scene to have substance. Yet, that does not negate the value of developing regional events, building people in the form of conferences, and creating awareness in festivals and national events. One thing is sure. We don't have the answer but we do have Jesus. Good article!

redsavior (2013-11-19 20:59:00)

To be 100 % honest, yes it does negate the value of building a larger scene now. I am 100 % dead set against it. It's like trying to build the roof of a house without first building the foundation. It will not stand. It will collapse. It is a matter of rushing into something that is way over your head. The logistical support for long-term growth is not there. Period. It is the wrong call at

this point in time. The local scenes must develop first in the larger cities or nothing will hold together. I'll put it another way. A festival director can choose to pay \$30,000 to have Switchfoot play for one hour and 3,000 \$120 tickets can be sold. For \$14,000 you could run what we did with Afterhours for 4 nights and maybe 50 people will pay that same \$120 specifically for that experience and another 300 will stumble into the tent each night for an hour or so and leave without giving EDM another thought until next year and it will be "Yeah... let's go check out the dance tent for a while tonight."

redsavior (2013-11-19 21:03:00)

I'm not arguing that everything should be laid on the fans. I'm saying that we need fans in order to have a scene. We could have all the DJs in the world and if we don't have fans, who are the DJs playing for? We don't even need a big crowd, but we do need a regular crowd and a few new comers at each event. To throw an event, you do need talent, but the DJ is just the face of that talent. The sound and lighting guys create the environment and to be honest, in most clubs if you have the right environment and a friendly regular crowd, it doesn't matter who the monkey is behind the decks as long as he's in sync and playing good music.

redsavior (2013-11-19 21:05:00)

People have been praying like you're suggesting for 20 years. At some point, we have to step out in faith and do what God has gifted us to do.

Brandon Andersen (2013-11-21 20:01:00)

I agree with the idea of needing support from fans in order to create a scene, but I think CEDM needs to accept that it will always be underground and won't ever be as huge as Ultra, Tomorrowland or other mega shows. And that's ok. If it's about worship, size shouldn't matter as much as quality and message. If we as Christian musicians/dj's/fans focus on supporting the best of CEDM and producing high quality material and experiences, the scene won't disappear. Keep the faith, I believe that the Christian EDM scene is nearing it's blossom.

Brett Chila (2013-12-10 10:29:00)

Being a long time edm fan, and also a Christian now, I understand much of what has been said here. I used to VJ for many local shows, concerts, and festivals like Ultra, etc. around 2002-2006 as VJ Electrolush. I ended up leaving the scene when I got saved, realizing it wasn't a healthy environment to be in for me. I would advise anyone who is hanging out in any secular scene (even if witnessing) to truly make sure your called by God and anointed to do it. Or else you open yourself up to some heavy attack, "take head lest ye fall" & "bad company corrupts good morals". NOT saying don't witness in secular clubs, just make sure your called, walking in obedience, and faith. It can be dangerous walking in the devils backyard. Its not the music that's the issue (though some tracks can be), its the crowd. And the "crowd" can be very persuasive at times. (just a word of caution). anyway, while many valid points here are made in how to grow CEDM, we always need to remember that God is in control. And what might look like failure, or lack of progress, is all in Gods hands... "Trust in the Lord with ALL your heart, and lean NOT on your own understanding, but in ALL your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your path" -proverbs 3:5-6. Remember, Abraham was promised a land of his own, but that promise was not realized till generations later. Remember that the first agenda is NOT to make fans (fans come and go) its to make disciples. If we are about God's business, I think progress will be made. We must see CEDM as only a vehicle, or a tool, that we use to spread His truth, His message, and His salvation. Because above all our music & great intentions, God desires that none would perish, but that all must come to repentance. Don't get me wrong, I hear many great ideas, and im sure they are valid. Just a caring reminder to all my brothers and sisters in Christ who love EDM, make sure its God on the throne, not an agenda. Be led by the Spirit. If God be for us, WHO could possibly be against us! Fear not, for the gates of hell will not prevail against His church! All WE have to do, is make sure we are BEING the church, not just GOING to church. I speak all this to myself as well! For I am no better than you. With love, in Christ, Brett PS- there are many false teachers out there, lets all make sure we are students of the Word, so we can recognize a wolf in sheep's clothing! After seeing so much garbage from pastors & teachers on TV, I just felt led to say this. For we are all held accountable to God for knowing His Word, and cannot blame ignorance on anyone else. thx for hearing me!

redsavior (2013-12-12 11:01:00)

Totally agree. Even the underground needs fans though. I'll be happy when we can get 250-500 people on average to just about any Christian club event in our major cities. If 10 % of those fans move on to helping throw events, get involved in club

ministry, start DJing or filling any other needed role, our underground scene will be better off for it.

redsavior (2013-12-12 11:11:00)

"I would advise anyone who is hanging out in any secular scene (even if witnessing) to truly make sure your called by God and anointed to do it." Totally agree. In fact, I'd extend that to the Christian scene as well. "And what might look like failure, or lack of progress, is all in Gods hands..." Sure, it's in God's hands. We still have to be good stewards though. If we're spending \$5,000 on an event with the intention of reaching the lost and we only reach churchied people, we did something wrong. I'm not arguing that someone always has to get saved, but we need to be good stewards in analyzing what was actually accomplished, what was done well and what could have been done better. Things that are not proving to be effective only wear people out and help to build frustration.



As Christians and well... as humans, we can come up with a long list of needs. Among them we'd be sure to find God, salvation, food, shelter, water and clothing. We might also find some other needs such as a car, phone and so on. And then there are things that we want, but don't need like a brand new sports car, the latest iPhone and say an extra slice of cheese cake. The fact is that some of our needs are really just desires and I think we're struggling with this issue as far as Christian EDM is concerned.

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I totally agree, that getting more artists doesn't do anything, so I think I get what you are saying, but I'm not entirely sure I can really see the responsibility being laid on the "fans". I think it's still the responsibility of the artists collectively to engage the fans as a collective group. There's not a lot of difference between this and the secular scene. If an artist does not generate a big crowd for a venue, they don't get invited back. I've never heard of anyone even try to start a scene in San Jose bay area, but without the talent, it's just not going to happen. So while you are right in that the quantity of artists is not going to help, the quality is imperative.

Beat Culture (2013-11-19 16:36:00)

I see the value in each one of the 3 or 4 efforts. I think each has their part in the whole. People in key areas do need to establish something local though for the scene to have substance. Yet, that does not negate the value of developing regional events, building people in the form of conferences, and creating awareness in festivals and national events. One thing is sure. We don't have the answer but we do have Jesus. Good article!

redsavior (2013-11-19 20:59:00)

To be 100 % honest, yes it does negate the value of building a larger scene now. I am 100 % dead set against it. It's like trying to build the roof of a house without first building the foundation. It will not stand. It will collapse. It is a matter of rushing into something that is way over your head. The logistical support for long-term growth is not there. Period. It is the wrong call at

this point in time. The local scenes must develop first in the larger cities or nothing will hold together. I'll put it another way. A festival director can choose to pay \$30,000 to have Switchfoot play for one hour and 3,000 \$120 tickets can be sold. For \$14,000 you could run what we did with Afterhours for 4 nights and maybe 50 people will pay that same \$120 specifically for that experience and another 300 will stumble into the tent each night for an hour or so and leave without giving EDM another thought until next year and it will be "Yeah... let's go check out the dance tent for a while tonight."

redsavior (2013-11-19 21:03:00)

I'm not arguing that everything should be laid on the fans. I'm saying that we need fans in order to have a scene. We could have all the DJs in the world and if we don't have fans, who are the DJs playing for? We don't even need a big crowd, but we do need a regular crowd and a few new comers at each event. To throw an event, you do need talent, but the DJ is just the face of that talent. The sound and lighting guys create the environment and to be honest, in most clubs if you have the right environment and a friendly regular crowd, it doesn't matter who the monkey is behind the decks as long as he's in sync and playing good music.

redsavior (2013-11-19 21:05:00)

People have been praying like you're suggesting for 20 years. At some point, we have to step out in faith and do what God has gifted us to do.

Brandon Andersen (2013-11-21 20:01:00)

I agree with the idea of needing support from fans in order to create a scene, but I think CEDM needs to accept that it will always be underground and won't ever be as huge as Ultra, Tomorrowland or other mega shows. And that's ok. If it's about worship, size shouldn't matter as much as quality and message. If we as Christian musicians/dj's/fans focus on supporting the best of CEDM and producing high quality material and experiences, the scene won't disappear. Keep the faith, I believe that the Christian EDM scene is nearing it's blossom.

Brett Chila (2013-12-10 10:29:00)

Being a long time edm fan, and also a Christian now, I understand much of what has been said here. I used to VJ for many local shows, concerts, and festivals like Ultra, etc. around 2002-2006 as VJ Electrolush. I ended up leaving the scene when I got saved, realizing it wasn't a healthy environment to be in for me. I would advise anyone who is hanging out in any secular scene (even if witnessing) to truly make sure your called by God and anointed to do it. Or else you open yourself up to some heavy attack, "take head lest ye fall" & "bad company corrupts good morals". NOT saying don't witness in secular clubs, just make sure your called, walking in obedience, and faith. It can be dangerous walking in the devils backyard. Its not the music that's the issue (though some tracks can be), its the crowd. And the "crowd" can be very persuasive at times. (just a word of caution). anyway, while many valid points here are made in how to grow CEDM, we always need to remember that God is in control. And what might look like failure, or lack of progress, is all in Gods hands... "Trust in the Lord with ALL your heart, and lean NOT on your own understanding, but in ALL your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your path" -proverbs 3:5-6. Remember, Abraham was promised a land of his own, but that promise was not realized till generations later. Remember that the first agenda is NOT to make fans (fans come and go) its to make disciples. If we are about God's business, I think progress will be made. We must see CEDM as only a vehicle, or a tool, that we use to spread His truth, His message, and His salvation. Because above all our music & great intentions, God desires that none would perish, but that all must come to repentance. Don't get me wrong, I hear many great ideas, and im sure they are valid. Just a caring reminder to all my brothers and sisters in Christ who love EDM, make sure its God on the throne, not an agenda. Be led by the Spirit. If God be for us, WHO could possibly be against us! Fear not, for the gates of hell will not prevail against His church! All WE have to do, is make sure we are BEING the church, not just GOING to church. I speak all this to myself as well! For I am no better than you. With love, in Christ, Brett PS- there are many false teachers out there, lets all make sure we are students of the Word, so we can recognize a wolf in sheep's clothing! After seeing so much garbage from pastors & teachers on TV, I just felt led to say this. For we are all held accountable to God for knowing His Word, and cannot blame ignorance on anyone else. thx for hearing me!

redsavior (2013-12-12 11:01:00)

Totally agree. Even the underground needs fans though. I'll be happy when we can get 250-500 people on average to just about any Christian club event in our major cities. If 10 % of those fans move on to helping throw events, get involved in club

ministry, start DJing or filling any other needed role, our underground scene will be better off for it.

redsavior (2013-12-12 11:11:00)

"I would advise anyone who is hanging out in any secular scene (even if witnessing) to truly make sure your called by God and anointed to do it." Totally agree. In fact, I'd extend that to the Christian scene as well. "And what might look like failure, or lack of progress, is all in Gods hands..." Sure, it's in God's hands. We still have to be good stewards though. If we're spending \$5,000 on an event with the intention of reaching the lost and we only reach church people, we did something wrong. I'm not arguing that someone always has to get saved, but we need to be good stewards in analyzing what was actually accomplished, what was done well and what could have been done better. Things that are not proving to be effective only wear people out and help to build frustration.



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One : Who are you and what kind of music do you DJ or produce?

Ok, my real name is Pete Crump, been djing and producing the deeper soulful and jackin end of house for about 7 years now. I run Llama Farm Recordings, which has been going for 6 years, and it has featured my own stuff (as Pete Le Freq) and a few other monikers (Ned flanders), as well as some other well known and up and coming producers in the genre (Kinky Movement, Jay West, Joshua Heath, Bang Bang, Jackin Box, Alfa Flite).

Probably the most successful track I've produced was "Room Of Strangers" which has sold about 4500 copies to date, mostly due to being re-released a few years ago and being featured on a compilation with the likes of Joey Negro, LCD Soundsystem and Satin Jackets.

Two : Does running a record label and rubbing shoulders, musically speaking, with other artists on the label influence your music?

Oooh good question. In a word, yes. Quite a few times I've done remixes, that after hearing some of the other producers efforts have been ditched as they weren't up to muster. When I started producing, they were mainly bootlegs, and after listening to others, I've picked up ideas which I've then tried to apply in my own productions. I went through a few periods of trying to replicate other producers styles, and that helped me learn A LOT.

Three : So, what kind of advice would you give to the kid who just bought that first piece of software or turntables?

Practice Practice Practice. Work on one thing at a time. Get it sounding how you like, then move on to something else. But always keep building on what you have learned. And trust your ears.

Four : Where does creativity and faith and music meet for you? What does it look like to be a person of faith in the world of EDM?

I think key is honesty and integrity in what you do. I've made touch with a few other christians in my genre, and we all kind of agree just doing what you say you're going to do goes a long way to build relationships with people. Changing lives happens through the relationships, not the music. In terms of my own stuff - I never use bad language or sexual references in my tracks. I've always looked as myself as a DJ/Producer who is a Christian rather than a Christian DJ.

I've shared my beliefs with a select few. I tend to let the way I am show that I hope.

Five : Look a few years into the future. Where do you see yourself, your music and Llama Farm? Growth, accomplishments?

It sounds strange, but I'm not worried about Llama Farm. As long as I'm improving in my production techniques (original vocals and using more midi are now my focus), and the releases continue to break even, it will keep doing what it's doing. Making music has always been a release, a break from my day to day stuff, and as my sons get older it would be good to introduce them to it. I still enjoy doing my radio show and playing out rarely, so a few more "real" gigs wouldn't hurt. So I guess all in all, it's simply a case of just letting God do his thing, and if it's for it all to keep chugging along, so be it. Not that I wouldn't think the odd successful release would hurt.

Thanks for chatting with us, Pete. We pray the best for you, and your music and all your creative endeavors.

You can connect with him right here on Tastyfresh or find his music at [1]<http://www.llamafarmrecordings.com>

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Tastyfresh.com | OOH : Recap Edition 1 – Creativity - Tastyfresh.com (2014-04-07 22:57:26)
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11.10 December



Last time I wrote about this topic, I stirred up some controversy on our Facebook group. That led me to think of a few things we all probably should be praying for. This isn't a complete list for sure, but these are some of the bigger issues that still need to be resolved.

One issue that I've seen is an oversimplification of our prayers. Just as an example, I see calls to pray for revival using EDM. I'm all for that, but that's a very general prayer. There are examples throughout the Bible where people prayed specifically for things and God answered those prayers. Paul gave a great example of this in Ephesians 6 when he requested prayer specifically that he would be words that will allow him to fearlessly share the Gospel. In John 17, Jesus prays specifically for his disciples asking for their protection against evil. Those are just two examples of specific prayers and prayer requests, but I provide more examples if we had the time. The point is that we often times over simplify our prayers to the point that it's not wholly clear as to what we're requesting. A prayer for revival can sometimes be like that.

Now don't hear me wrong, I'm not saying that we shouldn't pray for revival. What I'm saying is that we should get specific as to what we really mean by revival. Do we mean that people who don't know God would come to know Him or do we really mean that those of us who do know God and are living outside of His will would repent and return to him? The third option is: do we simply want Christians who love EDM to start serving where they can?

In other words, what is the end goal or purpose of revival? Could we take those three end results and form a clear goal? Can we not pray that we need workers now to set an example so that others who already believe will start walking more closely to God so that God can work miracles in the lives of non-believers as they observe the changes that happen in those who believe? Doesn't that sounds like a dynamic and specific prayer request? Could you imagine Paul praying for that? Isn't it one where we could pray to God knowing exactly what we're looking for and one that will encourage us to stand up now and do what we can do? What if we expanded this idea to some other areas that we're struggling with as a community? Here are a few examples:

What is CEDM?

Ask ten people who are Christians and love dance music what CEDM is and you'll probably get ten different answers and the people behind each answer will strongly assert that his answer is the only answer. We as a group haven't really clearly identified what CEDM is. Not only that, but some of us flat out reject it based on our assumptions of what it means. Are we talking about recreating a Christian version of the rave scene that's isolated from the rest of the world or are we talking about taking Christianity into the secular clubs? Are we only interested in CEDM as a form of worship? I would be honestly surprised if many of us have prayed to God about what it really means. We need to

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Another thing thrown around these days is unity. We all say we want to have unity, but because we can't even agree on what CEDM is or should be, we can't seem to find common ground here. When someone asserts an idea counter to what another person asserts and seems to be making progress with, we have an argument. Paul wrote about this in 1 Corinthians:

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Are we following InnerFlame, Beatculture, GodsDJs or Tastyfresh? Every last one of us would of course say that we're following Jesus, but is that really the case? I'm not so sure. We can't identify a common goal right now for CEDM on top of what CEDM is so... we're all choosing sides and digging in. We need to pray that these questions of who we are, what we're doing and how we're going to do it are answered and through that, we'll define what unity is for us and strive for it.

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Another aspect that we're dealing with now is age groups. Some of us seem focused on those who are 18 and under and some of us are focused on the 18+ crowd. The two groups are vastly different when it comes to ministry.

According to various research papers on Christianity about 80-85 % of all churching teens leave their faith behind when they go to college. The big debate is around this question: are we teaching kids how to assimilate into a secular lifestyle and encouraging this 85 % number or are we training them that they can have fun and still maintain their beliefs? This [1]article on EDM Tunes recently gave me a renewed interest in this very question.

Of course on the other side of things, an EDM ministry that brings college kids and singles out of the EDM scene and into a relationship with God doesn't seem to have any downside. That doesn't negate the youth ministry aspect though, but these are clearly two different groups. Praying for who we are to reach with this ministry is something we should be specifically praying for.

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Many of us feel isolated. We don't all live in big metropolitan areas. Although I firmly believe our best efforts can and should be made in the metro areas, there is still room and need for smaller towns to be involved. We should all be praying that God brings more people into our lives who live locally and have similar passions. This is really for multiple reasons. First, we all need encouragement and a helping hand. Second, we can't do it all alone. To do a show, you need at minimum five to ten people to handle the door, lights, sound, setup/tear down, djing and security. The bigger the show, the more help you'll need. Obviously, we need to pray specifically for more people who are willing to work alongside us.

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No matter where we are, we can't grow without access to resources and funding. Too many times people try to throw events with less than they really need to do a quality show. In some cases it works and plays to the show's advantage.

This isn't always true however. Funding can come from a variety of sources including Kickstarter. Resources like having access to a venue or quality talent, you can't always just buy that. We need to pray that when needed the funds and resources will be available and ready for us to tap into.

I could go on and on with things that we should be specifically praying for. This is just a partial list. The reality is that we could never run out of things to pray for and God could never run out of ways to provide. When we pray specifically for something, we watch as God provides specifically for us in that area of need. That in turn strengthens our faith and helps to encourage us as we take steps from the small picture of God's purpose for our lives into the big one. In admitting and facing these issues we invite God to become the center of our solution and the solution falls on Him rather than us. Will you commit with me in praying for these things over the next year?

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lolgus (2013-12-02 12:39:00)

TBH, I think Innerflame needs to work with GodsDJs. Their ideas and beliefs seem to be leaning towards that way anyways. This article is directly on point. These groups have shifted their initial statement so many times.... oh wait, I can't speak for Beatculture. However, I do know that Tastyfresh seems to be on the right track. While it's good to have CEDM, it makes more sense to reach out to the lost where they are, and not create another subgenre of a subgenre. I liked what Innerflame was doing at the beginning, however, I noticed something very important that was not noticed by the higher ups.... They were not reaching out to the lost. It was more of bringing their own christian friends to show off an event, and not advertising it properly to bring in the lost. Oh sure, some would say I'm over-analyzing things... However, Dave is right, there has to be "Unity" if we are going to move forward.

redsavior (2013-12-02 13:45:00)

Part of the reason why Innerflame seemed to be more directed to Christians is that their focus was training people to work rather than throwing a solid event.

AJ Mora (2013-12-02 20:15:00)

Organized "anything" is never easy... however, the "non Christian world" seems to be doing a pretty good job in organizing major EDM festivals world wide. What is their method? If the only thing missing is JESUS? Here's my 2 cents on it: It's about gathering as many people as you can, of all ages to enjoy a love filled unity experience, with electronic dance music and a visual aid of release-full bliss. We, on the other hand are trying to cram the C in front of EDM, in order to protect and defend our unique personal vision of Jesus? For the love of God, make great music! Love people and connect personally with your audience... they are already spiritually starving and are being filled with these festivals as they worship Tiesto and whoever else is hot at the moment. Stop trying to re-invent the wheel, EDM doesn't need to become holy, HOLY people need to lovingly invade EDM. I know this rant is filled with missing points of support and probably some great different perspectives. One last point: If we are trying to make an EDM version for the church, that will never work as EDM outreach. Apples and Pineapples... Once again... CLARITY IS BETTER THAN AGREEMENT!

AJ Mora (2013-12-02 20:16:00)

Agreed!

AJ Mora (2013-12-02 21:06:00)

I think we need to start pushing for clarity on whether we are going for EDM as Church (Worship) or Outreach (Evangelism) In

my opinion that distinction is huge! And the approach is very different.

Stephen (2014-02-26 21:14:00)

There isn't just one way to reach the lost. My perspective is that we as DJs could provide a safe & clean environment for people of the world and people of faith to come together and develop relationships through which ministry can happen. But imo tele-stage-vangelism is a niche market that doesn't really overlap with the EDM scene, so preaching from the stage probably isn't going to be too effective unless you have a name as big as Skrillex. Ministry is personal, so the floor is where the magic happens, through friends. TL;DR - agree



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Prayer is an essential part of every Christian's life and it will be a part of our success in EDM ministry work. Here are 5 things we need to be in prayer about in 2014.

lolgus (2013-12-02 12:39:00)

TBH, I think Innerflame needs to work with GodsDJs. Their ideas and beliefs seem to be leaning towards that way anyways. This article is directly on point. These groups have shifted their initial statement so many times.... oh wait, I can't speak for Beatculture. However, I do know that Tastyfresh seems to be on the right track. While it's good to have CEDM, it makes more sense to reach out to the lost where they are, and not create another subgenre of a subgenre. I liked what Innerflame was doing at the beginning, however, I noticed something very important that was not noticed by the higher ups.... They were not reaching out to the lost. It was more of bringing their own christian friends to show off an event, and not advertising it properly to bring in the lost. Oh sure, some would say I'm over-analyzing things... However, Dave is right, there has to be "Unity" if we are going to move forward.

redsavior (2013-12-02 13:45:00)

Part of the reason why Innerflame seemed to be more directed to Christians is that their focus was training people to work rather than throwing a solid event.

AJ Mora (2013-12-02 20:15:00)

Organized "anything" is never easy... however, the "non Christian world" seems to be doing a pretty good job in organizing major EDM festivals world wide. What is their method? If the only thing missing is JESUS? Here's my 2 cents on it: It's about gathering as many people as you can, of all ages to enjoy a love filled unity experience, with electronic dance music and a visual aid of release-full bliss. We, on the other hand are trying to cram the C in front of EDM, in order to protect and defend our unique personal vision of Jesus? For the love of God, make great music! Love people and connect personally with your audience... they are already spiritually starving and are being filled with these festivals as they worship Tiesto and whoever else is hot at the moment. Stop trying to re-invent the wheel, EDM doesn't need to become holy, HOLY people need to lovingly invade EDM. I know this rant is filled with missing points of support and probably some great different perspectives. One last point: If we are trying to make an EDM version for the church, that will never work as EDM outreach. Apples and Pineapples... Once again... CLARITY IS BETTER THAN AGREEMENT!

AJ Mora (2013-12-02 20:16:00)

Agreed!

AJ Mora (2013-12-02 21:06:00)

I think we need to start pushing for clarity on whether we are going for EDM as Church (Worship) or Outreach (Evangelism) In

my opinion that distinction is huge! And the approach is very different.

Stephen (2014-02-26 21:14:00)

There isn't just one way to reach the lost. My perspective is that we as DJs could provide a safe & clean environment for people of the world and people of faith to come together and develop relationships through which ministry can happen. But imo tele-stage-vangelism is a niche market that doesn't really overlap with the EDM scene, so preaching from the stage probably isn't going to be too effective unless you have a name as big as Skrillex. Ministry is personal, so the floor is where the magic happens, through friends. TL;DR - agree

OOH: Justin Moreh of Shiloh (2013-12-09 20:55) - szeilenga

On One Hand : a bi-weekly series of five-fingered inquires with a select member of our TastyFresh community – mini interviews on everything from production philosophy to gigs and industry to faith and ministry.

One : Who are you and what kind of music do you produce and DJ?

I'm Justin Moreh, one of the founding members of Shiloh. I'd have to say that I consider everything I produce as Shiloh to be progressive house at its core. I was moved by early progressive house music and it both was and is the main musical inspiration behind what I do. I've also released a few commercial records on Armada and Vicious with an Aussie producer/DJ under the moniker New York FM.

Two : Do you think of yourself as a DJ who produces or a producer who DJs? And what bearing does either skill have on the other?

First and foremost I see myself as a musician. I started singing and playing music very young, and became fairly proficient at many instruments: piano, trumpet, french horn, bass guitar, guitar, drums... tambourine, hahaha. When my parents bought me my first PC, when I was 12 or 13, I began honing my production skills. I started writing music with apps like Propellerheads Rebirth, FastTracker and Cakewalk. And, It wasn't until about a year after the release of the first Shiloh record that I even began really touring. Colin, the other half of Shiloh, had DJed, and toured the world long before Shiloh was a thing though.

Three : Shiloh has definitely been when some people would call successful. What are a few of the accomplishments and successes that you are most proud of in the 10 plus years you've been at it?

Wow. I haven't thought about this in a while! The standout moments are probably all the "firsts" : First international gig at Heaven in London, which happened to be my second gig ever. Then next night in St. Petersburg headlining my first festival with 14,000 people. My first time making national news and first time in tabloids happened headlining Cacao Beach's 5 year anniversary in Bulgaria. First time playing Zouk in Singapore was massive. First guest mix on BBC Radio 1. The first time hearing Sasha play one of my tracks! First full-length album getting a multi-page writeup and the 5/5 "Album of The Month" review in DJ Mag. Oh, and the first time playing in a castle in Budapest! It had been converted into a mad club! Man, you're giving me a proper trip down memory lane.

I've no shortage of surreal memories that seem as though they belong to someone else. To be quite honest, I often forget these moments until someone gets me talking about them.

And, when I'm not doing all that I feel like I'm just that guy that takes out the recycling, does the washing and cleans the litter box.

Four : Where do faith and music meet for you? What does it look like to follow Christ in the midst of the EDM scene?

The production side is where I see my faith and music meet most. When I nurture my faith I feel like I set a tone that's conducive to creativity. But, I don't think sitting in a studio writing music is what you had in mind with this question. I don't know if I can offer many relatable words from a Christian perspective in the EDM scene, as I'm not really your typical Christian. I don't go to church on Sunday, I don't follow the Christian calendar, and the whole concept of "Christian culture" is a bit foreign to me. So, let me qualify that. I'm a theology major who comes from an observant Jewish family that believes Jesus is the Jewish Messiah. So, call me a Messianic Jew, Christian or whatever. I'll identify with whatever title you think puts me onside with Jesus.

However, my somewhat unique circumstances have started a lot of interesting conversations with promoters, club owners and other artists. The conversations usually start at dinner when someone asks me why I won't to try the lobster or something. I give the short answer, "I'm Jewish." But, when I tell people I believe in Jesus they're usually hit with this major cognitive dissonance. Most people don't understand how it's possible to be Jewish and believe in Jesus. So they just end up asking me how that works and I'm pretty much given carte blanche on the topic until I want

to stop talking. So, I guess that's what it's like for me.

It's really interesting when I'm sitting there talking to people about Torah, the reason the world needed a Messiah, what He came here to do, etc. And, it's really well received when you're given the opportunity to actually talk about your own situation and background rather than pushing regurgitated half-baked sermons on someone.

Five : Look into the future a few years, at the forthcoming state of the EDM world, and give some advice to the kid who just bought their first software or turntables.

Do your thing and not someone else's. Be creative. Don't try to conform to a sound just because you think it will get you more listeners. This was a lesson I learned very early on when Colin and I sent out the first and only Shiloh demo. It consisted of eight tracks, three of which were experimental electronic tunes. We heard back from every label except one, ahem... Bedrock. And, they were all interested in the three experimental tracks. If you remember one piece of advice, remember that. Oh, and be prepared to work harder than you ever imagined you'd have to. By the way, Bedrock's still never gotten back to me. Ever.

Thanks for chatting with us, Justin. We pray the best for you, and your music and all your creative endeavors.

Check out some current Shiloh music here: [1]Man In The Mirror and a brand new Kenneth Thomas remix here: [2]Be With You

1. <http://www.beatport.com/release/man-in-the-mirror/1171894>

2. <http://www.beatport.com/track/be-with-you-feat-michael-ketterer-shiloh-remix/4956466>

Justin Moreh is perhaps best known as one half of the progressive house duo Shiloh. Now as the group's soul member, Justin takes the helm and time out for us.



Electronic dance music is a force that cannot be ignored. Christianity is a kingdom that we are called to be ambassadors of the ministry reconciliation. When you combine our responsibility as reconcilers with this force, you create an opportunity to make a huge impact with the message of Christ's love. I have come to believe that it could be said the thesis of the whole of scripture is summed up in these 2 verses. (John 3:16-17) Over the years that Christians have become passionately involved in one way or another with EDM, either before or after faith, has raised many questions. Including debate about labeling the force as "Christian" (CEDM).

In the early 90s when Scott Blackwell created Nsoul records, pioneers like World Wide Message Tribe, Andy Hunter, Cloud to Ground (Jeremy Dawson of Shiny Toy Guns) and several others made a mark in our history of what is now being called "Christian EDM". I was privileged to be part of that movement. There were two key differences I remember that still play an important role today in addressing the questions that are coming up in our conversation about CEDM: Worship and Evangelism.

Music in general, in the church, has had its fair share of controversy from hymns to the contemporary rock bands and the inclusion of the urban, R &B and hip-hop explosions in church culture. Different groups in our Christian community and in the body of Christ have responded to these new forms of expression differently. And a conversation began long ago about worship. Is there a difference if "How great thou Art" is being sung acappella? Or with an organ? Or a guitar and drums? To a turntable beat? Or a heavy synth and drum machine? I guess because the lyric of this great hymn is clear on its proclamation, few were left to argue it wasn't worship even if its melody was played on a kazoo. Interestingly enough the lyric is from a Christian poem and the melody was from an old Swedish folk song. But it clearly proclaims the greatness of God which at its simplest definition is Worship. In our life, anything that is done to point, direct, acknowledge, proclaim and invite the Greatness of God is worship. And it has been beaten to death that obviously this is not exclusive to music.

So what exactly makes EDM "Christian"? Is it the song, melody, purpose, person, environment, church board approval, personal conviction? On a personal note, I think adding the "C" to EDM is counterproductive, confusing and unnecessary. I started this dialog by calling EDM a force and our call as followers of Christ as ambassadors of reconciliation. Trying to take over this force instead of accepting it for what it is and lovingly gracing it with kingdom values seems pretentious and self-righteous to me.

Clearly the distinction between worship and evangelism has to be made in order for us as members of the body of Christ and reconcilers of God can allow the force to be used properly.

Throughout the mid and late 90s I was invited often to participate in worship teams as a DJ. Clearly the music selection was made to bring the body of Christ that was already in fellowship into a worshipful atmosphere through music. I led worship for the church I pastored for several years and as I played the keyboard I would help lead through words and prayer for the people participating into a closer realization of the presence of God. In these worship DJ settings it was the same thing except it wasn't a keyboard it was the mixer, computer and turntables or CDJs.

EDM amongst believers is very different then Christians using EDM to reach nonbelievers. During the Nsoul days we were invited by youth groups to participate in massive outreaches. I was still heavily involved on Power 106 and it's Powertools mix show. Kids came out to hear DJ AJ Mora play. I would bang them with amazing music and create the energy that a DJ is supposed to create. It varied from event to event but there would be a message during or after I played that clearly allowed the kids that were there to know that Jesus loved them and the Gospel was proclaimed. Often I would do it and it was compelling because they knew me as the DJ on the radio and I had an important message to share with them. Many kids came to Christ through those experiences and they were beautiful EDM outreaches.

Multimedia plays a big part in how we can present the gospel in an EDM style outreach. Visuals, words, symbols and yes even distinction on the music. One key argument in our conversation is whether every song that is played is a Christian song in order for it to be a Christian event. I see the value in this argument but find myself with the conflict that it is not an absolute necessity in order for it to be successful in the goal of outreach. EDM music is filled with songs that have lyrics and songs that do not. A Christian whose heart is connected with God to allow his talents to share his music in an environment of worship or evangelism is in my opinion the key component. As more producers who are believers create great music we will have more opportunities to show a greater musical distinction. Until then I believe EDM can also be used as an instrument for our cause as ambassadors of the ministry of reconciliation.

I've attended many outreach EDM events that drew in a lot of non-believing kids, sometimes the zeal of the organizations putting these events together would be extremely over the top and the believing kids would enter into worship that made some of the other kids feel isolated confused and even turned off. However in some cases that zeal also drew the attention of some nonbelieving kids and there was a move of the Spirit that cannot be explained. I don't think we will ever come up with a right way and only way to do this. I have my own conviction and style. However I do want to contribute the importance of the distinction between worship and evangelism.

Finally I would just like to say that as DJs our responsibility by definition is to make people dance. And EDM as a force without any of our help is already filled with the spirit of love and unity. Including the message of the love of Christ through EDM has in it already a very welcoming spirit. I personally do not want to be known as a Christian EDM Artist. I want to be a great DJ and producer who loves God and loves people. I want to work with creative believers who can allow this force to welcome the conversation and presentation of the mighty kingdom of God. If Tiesto, Armen Van Buren or Swedish House Mafia became passionate believers today, they would make a huge impact through the force in their new faith. But they wouldn't make the force of EDM Christian. So let's be passionate believers and allow this force to be a tool for our representation of the kingdom. For greater is he that is in us then he that is in the world.

Lastly I quote the radio personality Dennis Prager "clarity is better than agreement"

DJ Ecliptik (2013-12-23 16:03:00)
Bravo!

OOH : Matthew J Bentley (2013-12-31 01:33) - szeilenga

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One : Who are you, and what kind of music do you DJ or produce?

My name is Matthew J. Bentley. I come from Minneapolis, MN, and I DJ and Produce Trance, Electro House, Dubstep, Progressive and Moombaton. I used to produce some UK hardcore as well.

Two : As a DJ who also produces music, how does one skill influence the other, and do you find yourself leaning more towards one or the other?

I think both have to be in balance. You learn what sounds good on a dance floor as you experiment with playing different tracks... You learn what production techniques are best in certain parts of songs because of how they sound on big speakers and mixed with other sounds from other tracks. I have to be balanced though. As much time as I invest making music, I have to spend time also delivering my sounds to people, which is the exact vehicle that DJing is. If you don't put the time into perfecting your technique in the studio, it will not be the same out in the club or in that church worship service.

Three : Speaking of clubs and church services, where do faith, music and creativity meet for you? What does it look like to follow Christ in the EDM world and be a DJ in the church world?

Faith, music, and creativity meet in times of prayer, worship, and revelation. A lot of this happens when I'm in the studio just working on tracks or practicing DJing, but a lot of it also happens at my home church in Fridley, MN. It's called Gemstone, and it's a house church. The spirit is completely uninhibited in this environment, and some of the best ideas I've ever had have been after times of intense prayer or praise. The spirit will anoint things we put our hands to if we ask him to do so (Matt. 7:9).

My church supports my work tremendously. My pastor is completely on board, but right now the church at large is stuck in the early 2000's with hip hop as their main form of alternative music to typical praise and worship. So when they discover that there is worship EDM, and that there is a whole community of us who make it, they are often stunned but also excited. I am making it my mission to get the church with the times for this future sound of worship. As a CEDM DJ in the regular EDM world, I am a light. I am blatant and blunt about what I do, and people have randomly recognized me in clubs before as "that Christian Trance Guy." It's funny. But realizations like that make you super careful about everything you do or say in the nightclub environment. I consider myself a missionary to the unreached people group that is the EDM community. They are some of the most loving people you'll ever meet, so I return that love to them. They know who I am, so when they are ready to quit drugs, change their life, or give it over to Jesus, they know I am there for those conversations and help.

Four : What other things are you involved in related to EDM?

I help manage the radio station at GodsDJs.com, I help do demo submissions management for Deepsink Digital. I'm also involved as an Artist for Set Ablaze Intl. Which is an artist promotions and event management ministry run by Nathanael and Tiffany flock. They have been a tremendous accountability blessing for my life, and everyone should check out what they're doing. They really care about pursuing Jesus and the lost. I go to shows a lot in MPLS and I pray in tongues for people As I Dance upon the injustice that's happening inside. Lastly, I have a residency at the North Star Room, which is one of the only Christian venues I know of in the Minneapolis area.

Five : What advice or encouragement would you give to the kid who just bought that first DJ deck or piece of software and wants to make an impact with music?

Never give up. People will tell you that your stuff isn't so great at first... And that's probably because it isn't. Don't let it discourage you. If you stick with it, eventually you'll get noticed. Also, do it for G-d. Don't try to accomplish your own purposes. If you know he has called you to build this scene, then please, help us, but don't do it for your own glory or your own fame. The world has enough of those DJ's...

Thanks for chatting with us, Matthew. We pray the best for you, and your music and all your creative endeavors. May God be glorified.

You can
connect with Matthew right here on Tastyfresh or find him online at <https://www.facebook.com/matthewjbentley>
or http://matthewjbentley.com/Christian_Trance.html

12. 2014

12.1 January

OOH: AJ Mora (2014-01-14 00:21) - szeilenga

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One : Who are you and what kind of music do you DJ and/or produce?

My name is AJ Mora, I have produced Techno and hard house and progressive, but am currently loving and producing Deep Tech.

Two : How long have you been in the EDM scene, and if you look back over your history, what are a few accomplishments and successes you are proud of?

I have been in the EDM scene for over 20 years. In 1992 I had a number one Billboard club hit called Jump Everybody by The Movement. I have had songs placed on hit shows like the Sopranos. I scored music for an HBO comedy special called Loco Slam. I did a remix for Donna Summer "Melody of love" I have worked with some today's greatest Little Louie Vega, Armen Van Helden, Robbie Rivera, Roger Sanchez, Richard Vission and Jeremy Dawson of Shiny Toy Guns just to name a few. In 1996 I met Scott Blackwell and participated in the N-Soul series Nitro Praise and released a compilation called Gospel Housing Authority and 2 artist releases: AJ Mora Transformed and Soul of a DJ. I have had the privilege to travel the world sharing my music. Japan, Australia, most of Europe and Central and South America. My proudest musical accomplishment was the RemixOurWorld compilation released on D-Pulse aiding children I met personally when I went to in Feb of 2009 to Southern Sudan Africa through the RemixOurWorld efforts.

Three : Looking back on your success, on what has worked and what hasn't worked, so to speak. What advice would you give to the kid who just bought that first piece of software or first set of decks?

Define your sound. Create a network of supporters. The industry has been saturated with many so-called DJs. Advancement of technology and easy software has made this so. Anyone can be a DJ but it takes a lot of dedication and hard work to be an artist. Learn to produce. Create a Fan base. Explore, be creative and original. I had my success in the mid to late 90s. After a break and returning in 2008 my name only carried so much weight. Reinventing yourself and running with the new pack and a new generation has not been easy. If you're using the EDM world as a tool for ministry; Define your goals and objectives well. Be excellent, the world does EDM very well. As Christians, we should strive to do even better. It is my opinion that the art of music with lyrics or no lyrics can be made Holy for the reason of why you do it. Keep in mind that worship is not just music but anything that can demonstrate the presence of a holy loving God. Never give up! Learn to love better!

Four : Where do faith, creativity and music meet for you? What does it look like to follow Christ in the EDM world?

Across the board this has been an ongoing discussion for many. I have literally heard the words "it has to be all Christian music to avoid evil spirits from coming through from the speakers" well, let's just say that's not me... faith is faith, if you are a "christian" surgeon, just make sure you take care of me while I'm under the knife... I don't care what church you go too and if you are a Calvinist or Armenian I need you to perform good surgery. As artists, our life can represent Christ in many ways, some are more zealous than others, that's ok, but in my opinion not a requirement. I play many secular venues and honestly most of my music would not be categorized as "Christian" I love people, my life as an artist opens more opportunities to share Christ than my music. I want to be excellent as a DJ, I choose good tracks, positive lyrical content and as a "Christian" I'm also a "DJ" A DJ makes people dance, creates an atmosphere and keeps the party going. If we are going to re-define "Christian DJ" I'm open to the think tank debate. There seems to be great creative leadership stirring for DJ style worship, outreach and other church activities. I know and I can adapt to those scenarios. I do. For me, Christ is my GOD, my life mission is to Love God and Love people. RemixOurWorld is my offering and a platform to encourage the EDM culture that important things matter. If you asked me what kind of DJ Jesus wanted me to be? My answer would be, a good one. I'll rock a club with 1000 party people, the same

way I'd minister to a church of 1000 worshipers. Each has its purpose, design and objective.

Five : Put on your pastoral hat and look at the current state of Christian EDM. Where do we go from here? How can we make the greatest impact for the Kingdom?

Identifying and define clearly those things that have to do with EDM and the artists and producers behind it. Then identify and define clearly the objectives of the impact for the kingdom of God. Infuse those definitions as a way of reaching a diverse EDM generation that is spiritually thirsty. Then create events, workshops, gatherings and as many creative opportunities, to love, encourage, unite and reach people with the greatest love story ever told.

"Clarity is more important than agreement" – Dennis Pregar

Thanks for chatting with us, AJ. We pray the best for you, and your music and all your creative endeavors. May God be glorified and may many lives be transformed.

To check out AJ's music or learn more about his ministry, efforts find him online at <http://djajmora.com>

AJ Mora has been a fixture in the EDM scene since the early 90's. His work with Scott Blackwell in the mid-90's helped to jumpstart the next generation of Christian EDM producers. Recently, Scott Z had the opportunity to talk with him about today's Christian EDM scene.

Tastyfresh.com | OOH : Recap Edition 1 – Creativity - Tastyfresh.com (2014-04-01 12:17:58)

[...] Read AJ's Full Interview [...]

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Tastyfresh.com | OOH : Recap Edition 1 – Creativity - Tastyfresh.com (2014-04-01 12:17:58)

[...] Read AJ's Full Interview [...]



I'd like to issue a challenge to all of you. I'd like for you to listen to Matthew Adell's keynote address from EMC 2013. It will take you about forty minutes to do so, but it is so worth it. It's a very deep talk that touches on what is and isn't a fad in Electronic Dance Music as well as a subject that is central to all that we do here as Christians. I'll go ahead and warn you that there are a few moments of "course" language, but don't let that discourage you from hearing what Matthew has to say.

Who is this Matthew Adell and why should you care? Simple, he's the guy who runs Beatport.com. He's the guy who is providing a method for Christians to sell music as well as to help promote it through other avenues like [1]dj.beatport.com and Beatport's many other sub-sites. Now that we have that out of the way, here's his keynote address.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2a24ny94q8k>

Before I get to what I hope is the obvious point in his address, I want to admit something here. Over the past year, I probably have been too hard on the progress and efforts our scene's leaders. I'm not admitting that the points I made were necessarily wrong, but maybe my approach was. Having spent months reflecting on how we are growing and where our strengths are (and are not), I think it's clear that we have three distinct fronts that we are operating on and despite our personal desires to have one unified front, the fronts God has given us are too distinct to narrow down to just one. An island is completely surrounded by water, but it still has a north beach, a south beach, an east beach and a west beach. They're all are different, even if to some they seem to be the same.

That said, our three fronts include a inward facing worship front focused on building up those who are already saved by ministering to their need to be connected more closely with God. There's a youth or festival front that is at its core evangelistic toward those who are still in their teens or at least still connected the Church in some fashion or another. The final front is the secular front. It's the front that has abandoned the Church all together (although they may feel that the Church has abandoned them). It's this last front that Matthew Adell speaks about in his keynote address.

Because of the length of Adell's address, I'm going to paraphrase probably the most important part of his talk. At the heart of the EDM scene is this group of humans who have become disenfranchised from the rest of society through technology, through mistrust of others, through the failures of man and religion. They have abandoned religion, but they inwardly recognize that something is desperately gnawing at their souls. They long to be connected to others. They long for a bigger than life experience. They long to know that what they do truly matters. There is a

hope and an optimizing within them.

So much of that can still be summed up in the acronym “PLUR”. Peace. Love. Unity. Respect. It’s as cheesy sounding today as it was back then. Back then... yes, in the early rave years. In so many ways, we’ve come full circle. In Matthew Adell’s keynote, we have a man standing around proclaiming that the club experience is a religious one in itself, although one without a focus on God. The focus is on a combination of humanism and eastern thought (to pick just two). In the end, they’re seeking exactly what Christ stands offering them as a free gift: peace... real peace, the undying, unconditional love of God, a reuniting of fallen man with his creator and those who are adopted into God’s family and lastly the respect of God and his children through redemption and understanding of their true purpose.

What’s more significant to me about Matthew Adell’s speech is that I’ve heard it before. Back at Cornerstone 2002, Scott Blackwell pulled a group of us together to watch the rave documentary “Better Living Through Circuitry”. If you haven’t seen that, you really need to [2]track down a copy on Amazon. When you watch it, you’ll notice that this spiritual aspect of raves has always been there. The promoters are fully aware of it and openly play it up. If you looked at what happened at TomorrowWorld in Atlanta, Ga last year, you would have seen that the entire event was built around the concept of a fairy tale. It was all magic and rainbows.

The setup here isn’t too hard to picture or explain. The club scene has become a church of sorts. You hear it often in house music about the house that jack built. It goes back at least as far as Chuck Roberts in 1987.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_NSn5RfxoXs

This is the mission field. It’s clearly defined. The secular clubs are already structured to be a church. They already have a community based on love. They already see that worship is something they were made to do. They just don’t know who they should be worshiping or why and that’s where we come in.

Again, I’m not saying that we abandon the other two fronts for this one, but we can’t ignore it either. One of the reasons why I admire what Goshen Sai and his wife is doing with [3]Set Ablaze International is that they are working in the streets to minister directly to club goers. They’ve also remained steadfast on producing worship and Christ-friendly club events at the Atlanta Dream Center.

As January comes to an end, please remember that we are working on multiple fronts and that our mission fields are clearly defined and we shouldn’t ignore any of them, especially the secular scene. We have the answer and they’re begging for it. All we need to do is reach out, connect with them and share it.

1. <http://dj.beatport.com/>

2. http://www.amazon.com/Better-Living-Through-Circuitry-Moby/dp/B00004WMG0/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1390437437&sr=8-1&keywords=better+living+through+circuitry

3. <http://www.setablazeintl.com/>

There are three clearly defined mission fronts in Christian EDM. There is one front that we can’t afford to ignore and Beatport’s Matthew Adell has clearly defined it.

Scott Zeilenga (2014-01-27 11:29:00)

I couldn’t have said it better. The moment I saw that keynote talk I knew he was laying out what our mission field looked like. I love the island and beaches analogy, and I think it’s a great way to look at the different aspects of our mission options. Thanks

for the article.

12.2 February

OOH: Joel Armstrong (2014-02-04 00:00) - szeilenga

On One Hand : a sort of bi-weekly series of five-fingered inquiries with a select member of our TastyFresh community – mini interviews on everything from production philosophy to gigs and industry to faith and ministry.

One : Who are you and what kind of music do you DJ and/or produce?

I'm Joel Armstrong, and I produce a wide variety of electronic music, some for club, some for listening pleasure, some for commercial advertising/soundtracking. I have some other side projects but my identity is secret.

Two : As a DJ who produces and vice versa, how does the one affect the other? And do you find yourself leaning more in one direction or another?

Really good question. I'm a producer turned DJ, and DJing has definitely influenced how I write because I get to see how the things I create can influence people on the dance floor for the good or bad. Like when you lose energy in a part of a track that might sound good if you're listening while driving your car, but on the dance floor, no energy = people losing interest. My tendency is to lean more towards the album style track vs the dance floor style track. But I'm constantly working to create more dance floor friendly tunes.

Three : So, besides dance floor dynamics, what inspires your music? What does your creative process look like?

My creative process smells like coffee and tastes like bourbon. Lol.

Creative process and inspiration is much more accessible when you're in a proper working environment. Well, inspiration can hit unexpectedly, but because its so unpredictable and wild at times, the creative process needs to be kind of under control. So, writing music in isolation where all my attention is focused on the work/art.

Four : Where do faith, creativity and music meet for you? What does it look like to follow Christ in the EDM world?

That's a difficult question to answer at the moment. I'll give it some thought and get back to you later.

(Later that same day) My faith/personal beliefs, have very little to do with my creativity and music. I feel like the work I put into developing creativity, and refining it, has nothing to do with faith. Like, if you asked a finishing carpenter how his religious beliefs influenced how he miters corners... he'd probably think you were insane.

A person of faith in the world of EDM is... just a person of faith in the world of EDM. It looks however you want it to look from a personal standpoint. Put into it what you want to get out of it, take from it what makes you better.

Put on your fortuneteller's hat and look into the next 5 years of electronic music. What advice would you give to the kid who just bought that first piece of software or turntables?

Next 5 years... I see the music scene becoming more and more fragmented as population grows and there are numbers to support small genre scenes everywhere. I think you will see artists that do small underground parties for their friends (because they don't like what's out there right now or whats available in their city) becoming big and popular because they lock into a sound that's consistent but evolves appropriately as well.

Advice to the new kid: Work your [mmm...tasty] off. Immerse yourself in it because its changing faster than you can get promoted at a regular job, because no one will do it for you. But find similar minded people and don't get too close to people who only want to use you. Don't be a [mmm...tasty], but be friendly and firm when you need to be. Have patience, things take time. Understand that at some point you will have to make sacrifices and this means you might have to miss out on something in order for your dreams to become a reality. Use your time wisely though,

especially in the studio, be focused on where you want your music to go, and what audience will be listening to it. Set goals in everything you do, but be realistic about your expectations. And don't start something you know you can't finish, because finishing what you start is the best and sometimes the most difficult lesson.

Thanks for chatting with us, Joel. We pray the best for you, and your music and all your creative endeavors.

To check out Joel's music find him online at [1]Soundcloud or [2]Beatport.



IFRAME: [3][https://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=https %3A//api.soundcloud.com/users/10439 &color=ff5500 &auto_play=false &hide_related=false &show_artwork=true](https://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=https%3A//api.soundcloud.com/users/10439&color=ff5500&auto_play=false&hide_related=false&show_artwork=true)

1. <http://www.soundcloud.com/joelarmstrong>
2. <http://www.beatport.com/artist/joel-armstrong/2880>
3. [https://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=https%3A//api.soundcloud.com/users/10439&color=ff5500&auto_play=false &hide_related=false&show_artwork=true](https://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=https%3A//api.soundcloud.com/users/10439&color=ff5500&auto_play=false&hide_related=false&show_artwork=true)

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1. <http://www.soundcloud.com/joelarmstrong>

2. <http://www.beatport.com/artist/joel-armstrong/2880>

3. [https://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=https%3A//api.soundcloud.com/users/10439&color=ff5500&auto_play=false &hide_related=false&show_artwork=true](https://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=https%3A//api.soundcloud.com/users/10439&color=ff5500&auto_play=false&hide_related=false&show_artwork=true)



Just over two weeks ago now, a new single of mine hit Beatport. The track samples Pastor Tony Evans and was called God & Chance. The track talks about how with God there are no accidents, that each and everyone of us was born with a purpose. We may not know what that purpose is, but we were born with one and God will reveal that to us as we trust him day by day. The track received some great feedback and I was expecting great things from it. Unknown to me at the time, God was about to show me just what God & Chance was really all about.

Please install the latest version of Flash to use the Beatport player

IFRAME: [1]<http://embed.beatport.com/player/?id=5032192&type=track>

At 2:30 pm on February 4th, I was called into a conference room by my boss and told that I was being laid off. I had been at my employer for seventeen years and had held several different rolls. This was the last thing I expected, but the very thing I apparently needed. You see, years ago I thought I would be fired from my job. My manager at the time had it out for me and was making one bad decision after another. So, I applied at several places and had the opportunity to for a few interviews. One of two jobs I had the best shot at, hired someone else and then laid off the department's entire staff and outsourced the very position I had applied for. The other, well... I did work there for a week to see what it would be like. Oh it sucked. And a few months after I decided not to take the job, they were raided by the county for tax evasion. The business was completely shutdown. Meanwhile, God kept my job safe and secure. I may not have enjoyed it, but it was safe and secure. That was about eight years and I never bothered looking for another job again. I understood that God didn't want me to leave. Then 2:30 pm happened. I'm not exactly sure what's going on, but I know that it is God's will. Scott Z. was quick to draw the connection between the release of my track and the release of me from my job. God clearly is moving. I don't know where He is moving me to, but I trust that He will make it some place awesome. We all have our 2:30 pm moments from time to time. When we do, it's time to decide if we really believe if God or if we believe in chance. As for me and my house...

1. <http://embed.beatport.com/player/?id=5032192&type=track>

Change is something that Christians should always expect and change just entered my life. Nothing simply happens by chance.

jasonbradberry (2014-02-27 11:55:00)

Hope you find something good to move on to, I'm sure you will. Nice track :)

timmy g (2014-02-28 12:55:00)
i found somethin



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OOH: Daniel Cook (2014-02-24 23:56) - szeilenga

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One : Who are you and what kind of music do you DJ and/or produce?

My name is Daniel, also known as Dunamis. I produce Drum & Bass, Trance and Cinematic music. I'm a DJ as well, I mostly spin Drum & Bass and Trance. I'm part of the Sawadee Sound System podcast here on Tastyfresh. I released my first drum & bass EP, "Revelations," back in 2006. I have done drum & bass remixes for Alejandro Cesar, Reborn and Chayal Voded (one of Andy Turner's monikers he produced under back in the day.) I mentioned Cinematic/Soundtrack music above and that is one of the things I do under Dunamis Studio. I write this type of music as much as EDM now.

Two : As a DJ who produces and vice versa, how does the one affect the other? And do you find yourself leaning more in one direction or another?

When I started to learn DJing, I had already been a musician for eight years. So understanding EDM song structure I picked up on easily; which led to writing my own EDM music and refining my skills at it. During the process, I found DJing to start to get easier because I was producing and developed a feel for the music and the timing. So anyone can do either or, but those that pick up one then the other will find an easier transition, least for me it was.

Three : So, what does your creative process look like?

How I start a track depends on the genre and what sparks inspiration. For drum & bass, usually starts with a drum beat or hear a loop and develop one off that. With trance, it's usually the melody. My cinematic stuff usually depends on what mood or video I'm writing for. My cinematic music usually is sparked by a string section I write or an atmosphere I develop.

The gear I use is Ableton Live 9 Suite, Virus TI, Novation Zero MKII, Spectrasonics VSTs, Komplete 9 Ultimate, Maschine, Waves Gold and other miscellaneous effects.

Four : What are your musical goals over the next few years? Where do you want to take it?

Beginning in 2014, I am putting DJing as a hobby but continuing Sawadee and releasing mixes during the year. I plan on putting more focus on producing music to go along with what I'm doing with my video production business. While that puts more emphasis on cinematic music, I still have plenty of EDM ideas on the backburner to finish and release. So I hope to release more music over the course of next two years.

Five : Where do music and faith meet for you?

My faith in Christ and music has always coincided together. Whether playing in worship bands growing up, producing music with no negativity or DJing for youth and college events, music has open doors for me to talk and relate to people more and have discussions on faith in the process. It has led me to meet a bunch of those who like electronic music and love Christ as I do. For the future, I hope for music to open more doors and allow me to talk about what God has done in my life through these gifts He has given me.

Thanks for chatting with us, Daniel. We pray the best for you, and your music and all your creative endeavors.

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1. <https://soundcloud.com/dunamis>

2. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/category/podcasts/sawadee-sound-system/>

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12.3 March

OOH : Coco Street (2014-03-18 10:18) - szeilenga

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One : Who are you and what kind of music do you DJ and/or produce?

It's interesting that you ask this, as I am not a DJ, although I secretly desire to be a DJ LOL. No, I am a singer/songwriter, and lover of all things club. My story is really too long to include here, but let me say that it was a fateful twist that kept me from actually pursuing a career as a DJ. That being said, I love and support all of my sisters and brothers who live for the beat. I'm not an accomplished producer. I know enough to get an idea down, but my strength is in writing lyrics. In the early 90's, I answered an ad in the local a community free classified paper, for a producer that was looking for a vocalist for another lyricist dude. At that time, I was a studio demo singer for people that wanted to have their songs interpreted to sell to record labels. Anyway, I answered the ad, and that is when I first met Roller8. From there, we wrote a lot of stuff together, and worked to put out our own project. Through the process of working together, Roller8, his wife and I became good friends, and we learned that we were all believers. Roller8 and I decided to put out a CD under the name DWD. At that time, we saw the dawning of Jungle and Drum n Bass. We wrote "Cosmic Butterfly," and put it on MP3.com, and I held a remix contest for Cosmic Butterfly. I received many fine remixes, and forged a music relationship with DJ O.R.G. (now Dalminjo) from Norway, PNFR from Germany, DJ Insecticide, Da Holy Factor, and Joe Cisneros. Cosmic Butterfly ended up spending a brief, but very satisfying #1 position overall, and also #1 on the Drum N Bass Chart. After that success, I entered Cosmic Butterfly into one of the first completely Online Contests, which was sponsored by Pringles, Sonic Foundry, and Artist Direct Network called "Born on the Web" online talent contest. Cosmic Butterfly finished in the semifinals. Since then, I have worked with Terrence Parker, Georg Neufeld, and many other Tastyfreshers. I continue to work with Roller8. We are in the writing process, and we have recently released a Jazz/Funk Christmas ReBake of My Favorite Things.

Two : So, what is your typical approach to writing lyrics and how dependent are you upon the music track for their composition?

I have tons of lyrics I have written for songs that have not yet been married to a song. I also have many poems that could become lyrics with a little fine tuning. When I do collaborate with a composer, I would love to say that before each approach to writing lyrics I go before the Lord in prayer. That's not always true. Sometimes He beats me to it and the words just flow to me. That usually happens when I'm driving or doing something totally unrelated to music. Other times, I ask Him what he wants me to say, and I wait for Him to answer. There have been times when I have written a song, got ready to record it, and at the last minute, the Lord gave me brand new lyrics! So, I guess the answer would be when I receive a track, I try to capture what the composer is thinking and at the same time say what the Lord wants said or done, lyrically.

Three : For you, where does faith and music meet? What does it look like for you to be a believer in the music industry?

That is a great question. I once heard Bishop TD Jakes say, "you can't tell it all," (and I won't here), but let me say that I have performed in musical theater, performed and toured with a synthpop band, and had my own solo performances. I have experienced first hand how hard it can be to maintain your witness. Those experiences now serve as my teachers (please Lord, never again...), and the line in the sand for me as I embark on a "musical rebirth." I remember a debate once over, "Are you a Christian DJ (I subbed in the word "singer" for my own understanding) or a DJ who just happens to be Christian." I think, after seriously pondering the matter for a long time, that I am a Believer, who is struggling to serve God with the gifts He gave me, upon stumbling feet.

Four : Above you mentioned a "musical rebirth" of sorts. Having dabbled in drum &bass and being known for quite a bit of gospel house, what does this new direction look like?

Well, Roller8 and I had this discussion today, and we were circumspectly going over the years we have worked together, and the musical journey we have been on. We started out doing lots of different music, because Raul's record collection and knowledge of music is quite vast. We explored music from various genre: hip hop, house, drum n bass, and downtempo. We have since come full circle in locating our "sound." Without showing too much of our hand, and leaving some mystique for the readers when we drop our EP, I can say there are lots of little surprises to come, but you can look forward to some Jazz/Funk and Soul with your House!

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Awesome. Thanks so much for chatting with us, Coco. We pray the best for you, and your music and all your creative endeavors. God bless!

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Tastyfresh.com | OOH : Recap Edition 1 – Creativity - Tastyfresh.com (2014-04-01 12:15:39)
[...] Read Coco's Full Interview [...]

OOH : Coco Street (2014-03-18 10:18) - szeilenga

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One : Who are you and what kind of music do you DJ and/or produce?

It's interesting that you ask this, as I am not a DJ, although I secretly desire to be a DJ LOL. No, I am a singer/songwriter, and lover of all things club. My story is really too long to include here, but let me say that it was a fateful twist that kept me from actually pursuing a career as a DJ. That being said, I love and support all of my sisters and brothers who live for the beat. I'm not an accomplished producer. I know enough to get an idea down, but my strength is in writing lyrics. In the early 90's, I answered an ad in the local a community free classified paper, for a producer that was looking for a vocalist for another lyricist dude. At that time, I was a studio demo singer for people that wanted to have their songs interpreted to sell to record labels. Anyway, I answered the ad, and that is when I first met Roller8. From there, we wrote a lot of stuff together, and worked to put out our own project. Through the process of working together, Roller8, his wife and I became good friends, and we learned that we were all believers. Roller8 and I decided to put out a CD under the name DWD. At that time, we saw the dawning of Jungle and Drum n Bass. We wrote "Cosmic Butterfly," and put it on MP3.com, and I held a remix contest for Cosmic Butterfly. I received many fine remixes, and forged a music relationship with DJ O.R.G. (now Dalminjo) from Norway, PNFR from Germany, DJ Insecticide, Da Holy Factor, and Joe Cisneros. Cosmic Butterfly ended up spending a brief, but very satisfying #1 position overall, and also #1 on the Drum N Bass Chart. After that success, I entered Cosmic Butterfly into one of the first completely Online Contests, which was sponsored by Pringles, Sonic Foundry, and Artist Direct Network called "Born on the Web" online talent contest. Cosmic Butterfly finished in the semifinals. Since then, I have worked with Terrence Parker, Georg Neufeld, and many other Tastyfreshers. I continue to work with Roller8. We are in the writing process, and we have recently released a Jazz/Funk Christmas ReBake of My Favorite Things.

Two : So, what is your typical approach to writing lyrics and how dependent are you upon the music track for their composition?

I have tons of lyrics I have written for songs that have not yet been married to a song. I also have many poems that could become lyrics with a little fine tuning. When I do collaborate with a composer, I would love to say that before each approach to writing lyrics I go before the Lord in prayer. That's not always true. Sometimes He beats me to it and the words just flow to me. That usually happens when I'm driving or doing something totally unrelated to music. Other times, I ask Him what he wants me to say, and I wait for Him to answer. There have been times when I have written a song, got ready to record it, and at the last minute, the Lord gave me brand new lyrics! So, I guess the answer would be when I receive a track, I try to capture what the composer is thinking and at the same time say what the Lord wants said or done, lyrically.

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12.4 April



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Where do faith and music and creativity meet for you?

One: AJ Mora

Across the board this has been an ongoing discussion for many. I have literally heard the words "it has to be all Christian music to avoid evil spirits from coming through from the speakers" well, lets just say that's not me... faith is faith, if you are a "christian" surgeon, just make sure you take care of me while I'm under the knife... I don't care what church you go too and if you are a Calvinist or Armenian I need you to perform good surgery. As artists, our life can represent Christ in many ways, some are more zealous than others, that's ok, but in my opinion not a requirement. I play many secular venues and honestly most of my music would not be categorized as "Christian" I love people, my life as an artist opens more opportunities to share Christ than my music. I want to be excellent as a DJ, I choose good tracks, positive lyrical content and as a "Christian" I'm also a "DJ" A DJ makes people dance, creates an atmosphere and keeps the party going. If we are going to re-define "Christian DJ" I'm open to the think tank debate. There seems to be great creative leadership stirring for DJ style worship, outreach and other church activities. I know and I can adapt to those scenarios. I do. For me, Christ is my GOD, my life mission is to Love God and Love people. RemixOurWorld is my offering and a platform to encourage the EDM culture that important things matter. If you asked me what kind of DJ Jesus wanted me to be? My answer would be, a good one. I'll rock a club with 1000 party people, the same way I'd minister to a church of 1000 worshipers. Each has its purpose, design and objective.

[button link="http://www.tastyfresh.com/articles/2014/01/14/ooh-aj-mora/" color="black" size="small" target=""]Read AJ's Full Interview[/button]

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I think key is honesty and integrity in what you do. I've made touch with a few other christians in my genre, and we all kind of agree just doing what you say you're going to do goes a long way to build relationships with people. Changing lives happens through the relationships, not the music. In terms of my own stuff - I never use bad language or sexual

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I do feel that faith is a personal thing, but I also believe when the Bible says, "Out of the treasures of the heart, the mouth speaks." And I feel that music is a form of communication. So I feel that no matter what I create, it's a reflection of what I am either going through at that moment. I think true creation does come from the heart and that is what separates creation from manufacturing. I can manufacture a song that sounds like another song but it probably won't have my heart in it. Instead, I decide to create music that really reflects a part of me or what I am feeling and in that it might sometimes reflect my faith, other times it might reflect the love I feel for my wife or family, and other times it might just reflect a difficult period of my life. All that to say, I would say that if you truly creating music and digging deep within yourself to pull something out that is true art, your faith, love, and heart will be show.

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As a CEDM DJ in the regular EDM world, I am a light. I am blatant and blunt about what I do, and people have randomly recognized me in clubs before as "that Christian Trance Guy." It's funny. But realizations like that make you super careful about everything you do or say in the nightclub environment. I consider myself a missionary to the unreached people group that is the EDM community. They are some of the most loving people you'll ever meet, so I return that love to them. They know who I am, so when they are ready to quit drugs, change their life, or give it over to Jesus, they know I am there for those conversations and help.

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Invading Ultra 2014 – Part 1: Friday Night (2014-04-07 22:55) - TFlock



[notification type="default"]

Editor's Note:

The following is an account of a Set Ablaze International's mission trip to the 2014 [1]Ultra Music Festival as told by Tiffany Flock. Tiffany, her husband Nathanael (aka Goshen Sai) and several others regularly visit the club scene in Atlanta, Ga to share Jesus and to assist those who may need medical or other help in getting home from the clubs. You can find out more about Set Ablaze on their [2]website and don't forget to follow the Jesus <3 Ravers movement on [3]twitter.

[/notification]

Friday Night

As my team of five approached Ultra Music Festival, we encountered some Christian guys standing outside telling the festival goers to "turn or burn" and not being nice about it. They seemed like the angriest people I've ever met. One "raver" girl was giving them the middle finger and yelling at them. I, Tiffany, went up to these men. I asked them how many people have they "saved" by their approach? One guy said that four guys came up to them and one committed to reading his Bible more. I basically told them that they need to love these people. Although telling them to repent is "love", it's not what these people need. I explained that we were there to go inside to love on the ravers. One guy told me that the "ravers" will be ready for us because they were outside getting the festival goers ready by telling them to repent. The guy and his buddy also told us as we turned to leave "be careful in there." Glad we got all of this on camera.



My team and I began walking toward the gates with thousands of other people. The Ultra security team crammed thousands of people in one little section for like an hour. I was totally shocked that they would force so many people in one section for as long as they did with no access to water. Lots of the people around me were totally drugged up or drunk. The bass from the stages was shaking the ground and my chest it hit so hard.

We entered the gates after standing in line forever. No one ever checked bags or patted us down. The event was supposed to be 21+ but I saw a few people that looked 10 years old with their parents. Bottled water was \$5 each and I didn't notice any free water anywhere. People were smoking weed every 2 feet. You could tell the vast majority of people were jacked up on "molly". Some even were wearing shirts that said "I <3 MOLLY". There were cops and firemen all over the place.

How could I tell people were on molly? See, I used to be a raver in the secular scene for 7 years before giving my life to Jesus. Raves were more underground then. Back then, I was on ecstasy and people could tell by how my mouth moved...almost looked like I was chewing 50 pieces of gum at once. It looks horrible and sad!



When my husband and I pulled out the "Jesus <3 Ravers" flags, people were flocked to us. It was so amazing! People would come up and want to take pictures with the flag. My team learned the "raver handshake" before we arrived at Ultra. We'd give out the "Jesus <3 Ravers" kandi bracelets when someone would want to take a picture with the flags. We prayed for people, talked to them about who Jesus really is, and gave them a card that gave them access free CEDM. People were amazed at the fact that we would be inside the festival.

We asked God to make us so joyful that it would provoke the lost. We didn't go to participate in the festival or hear a DJ because we don't listen to music that isn't inspired by the Holy Spirit, per se; we went to love on the people. We went where we believe Jesus would have gone to draw the people to Himself. Did we dance to the music? Sometimes. When we heard the Holy Spirit says "dance," we danced. We wanted people to know that Jesus is a joyful person. He doesn't delight in everything that happens at Ultra, but He really delights in the ravers knowing who He truly is.

When the team felt we had the green light from the Holy Spirit to leave the festival, my husband and I wore the flags to the car which was about a half mile's walk. As we passed a bar, a man yelled "Jesus is dead". One of our team members yelled back "No, He is not. He's alive". So it was pretty amazing that we only had one hater and he wasn't inside the festival. We had no push back in the festival! God, draw the ravers to You!

Stay tuned for Saturdays adventure...

1. <http://www.ultramusicfestival.com/>
2. <http://www.setablazeintl.com/>
3. <https://twitter.com/jesusluvsravers>

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When my husband and I pulled out the "Jesus <3 Ravers" flags, people were flocked to us. It was so amazing! People would come up and want to take pictures with the flag. My team learned the "raver handshake" before we arrived at Ultra. We'd give out the "Jesus <3 Ravers" kandi bracelets when someone would want to take a picture with the flags. We prayed for people, talked to them about who Jesus really is, and gave them a card that gave them access free CEDM. People were amazed at the fact that we would be inside the festival.

We asked God to make us so joyful that it would provoke the lost. We didn't go to participate in the festival or hear a DJ because we don't listen to music that isn't inspired by the Holy Spirit, per se; we went to love on the people. We went where we believe Jesus would have gone to draw the people to Himself. Did we dance to the music? Sometimes. When we heard the Holy Spirit says "dance," we danced. We wanted people to know that Jesus is a joyful person. He doesn't delight in everything that happens at Ultra, but He really delights in the ravers knowing who He truly is.

When the team felt we had the green light from the Holy Spirit to leave the festival, my husband and I wore the flags to the car which was about a half mile's walk. As we passed a bar, a man yelled "Jesus is dead". One of our team members yelled back "No, He is not. He's alive". So it was pretty amazing that we only had one hater and he wasn't inside the festival. We had no push back in the festival! God, draw the ravers to You!

Stay tuned for Saturdays adventure...

1. <http://www.ultramusicfestival.com/>
2. <http://www.setablazeintl.com/>
3. <https://twitter.com/jesusluvsravers>

In 2014, Set Ablaze International took a team of missionaries to the Ultra Music Festival. This is their story.



[notification type="default"]

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Saturday Night



My team and I got to Ultra around 5 pm. Why did we go later and not a noon when it opened? Because Ultra has a “no reentry” policy. Once you are in, you have to stay in. With this policy we had to listen to the Holy Spirit about what was the best time to go. We figured the nighttime would be better because some of the “most wanted” DJs came on at night. As we walked toward the gate, we were not crammed in a small place with thousands of people, which was awesome. The security was checking bags and patting us down. People were having their small protein bars thrown in the trash. Water from their camelback backpacks was also poured out. The security was not playing this day. I couldn’t wait to get inside and pull out the “Jesus <3 Ravers” flag. I was so filled with joy to represent Jesus in this place!

When we got inside, I felt we were to walk to the back where people would sit on the ground overlooking the water. As we walked up, I felt a draw to chat with these three people. One of them, “D”, was a sweet guy who is in the same sex attraction lifestyle. He and his two friends drove more than twelve hours from Texas to get to the festival. One of our team members and I began to engage their hearts by asking them questions like “what have you been dreaming of? If they had all the money in the world what would they do? Is there anything we can pray for you about?” These three strangers began to share their deepest heart’s desire with us. It was beautiful. My team member and I began to pray for them about their hearts desire. The Holy Spirit gave me a word for “D” and as I released it, he grabbed my hand; it was precious. They were totally rocked and shocked by the love of Jesus.

As it began to get dark, we decided to sit on the ground on a blanket to lift up praises to God. There was a couple sitting in front of us that was on ecstasy. I could just feel the Father’s heart for them. I felt He wanted them to know they seek this “ecstasy” feeling because they were made for eternity where true ecstasy is found. So, I went up to them. I just made small talk at first. I could tell they were feeling so high off this drug that having me talk to them was making them think they needed to act sober. I just tried to smile a lot and let them know that Jesus loves them and desires to give them His best. I prayed a blessing over them and walked away.



The dark clouds began to cover us and sprinkles began to come down from the sky. My team and I were trying to rebuke the rain, only to discover that it may have been the will of the Lord for it to come down. We were discussing do we leave? Do we stay? I had no peace about leaving but there was nowhere to take cover from the rain. As we started walking to find cover, we made a palm tree our home and covered ourselves with the "Jesus <3 Ravers" flags. I called it our "tent of meeting." We began to pray that the flags would draw people and minister as we were under them.

The rain just wouldn't stop, so one of the team members looked at me and said "I'm going to the van." I said "no, you are not" and handed her the flag for cover her. Two guys approached her. One said, "Can we smoke a blunt under your cape?" She said "sure if I can pray for you." One of the two guys tried to walk off and his friend said "dude, just let her pray so we can smoke a blunt." The guy came back. They lit blunt and she began to pray. They smoked an entire blunt while she prayed for them. She was telling them her story before she met Jesus. How she used to be a big drug user and pot smoker.

The rain stopped as they finished the blunt. I walked over to them. The two guys began to tell me how awesome my "sister" was and how her prayer for them was amazing, etc. When they said their goodbyes to my friend, she turned to walk away. The next thing I knew one of the guys was chasing her down to get more prayer. He shared a deep heart issue with her and she began to pray for him. He has contacted her since Ultra. He basically said that she outshined everyone there and was so thankful for her prayers. He said she was an angel sent to him to get him on the correct path. SO AMAZING! All we did was love them!

More amazing testimonies from Saturday to come...

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I heard the Lord say “offer him a piece of gum”. So I walked up to this young guy and said, “Hey buddy, can I offer you a piece of gum?” He responded “oh, yes, please”. He began to explain to me that the night before at Ultra he almost chewed his lips off because he was so jacked up with no gum.

I began to engage him in conversation. He had come all the way to Miami from New York City with a large group of his friends. He kept saying “I feel like at any moment someone will walk by that I know.”



Bam! That was my open door. I said “what if it’s Jesus that walks by?” He said “Ya know, it’s good to believe in things. I used to be an atheist but then I realized that too many things have happened in my life for their not to be a God.” I began to talk about the love of God. I explained that God told me to give him a piece of gum so he didn’t chew his mouth up. God loved him so much he didn’t want him to hurt himself. He was like “wow, thank you”.

Next, we walked a little closer to the main stage because Armin Van Buuren was about to take the stage. As we danced with the “Jesus <3 Ravers” banners held up high, people would still seek us out to take pictures and hear about Jesus. Then all of the sudden, I heard Plumb’s voice. For those who do not know, Plumb is a vocalist who truly loves Jesus. Her voice is incredible!! She has had favor with secular EDM artists and has worked in particular with Paul van Dyk, which is amazing! Our team went crazy.

Finally, we could worship God and dance without a care in mist of a lost “world”. It was a great way to end Saturday’s adventure at Ultra. Sunday’s adventure is coming soon.

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As soon as we entered the park, I felt a sudden boldness – as if I was more aware of heaven’s desire to be made manifest. We immediately pulled out our “Jesus <3 Ravers” banners and began to dance toward the main stage. It didn’t take long before a constant stream of ravers with cameras began to appear, and so we took advantage of having their attention for a few minutes to engage them with love and smiles. One of the first groups we met was from Brazil, and so, because of my affection for Brazilians, I sparked up a conversation. It wasn’t long before I asked them if they needed healing in their body, and one girl with a bedazzled paper bag over her head immediately stepped forward and said she had back pain for a while. We began to rebuke pain and command healing, and had her test it out. She bent backwards an inch and said it was still there. Undaunted, I said, “We are going to keep praying then.” We kept speaking blessing and healing in His name, and soon she was bending backwards, - so drastically that you would think she was a gymnast. She rose up, took the bag off her face and began wiping tears off her face. This daughter, this image-bearer of our Creator, got touched because He cared.

Clearly God was falling on this part of the dancefloor, and her friends pulled me aside. One said, “Her boyfriend is about to propose to her, can you come be a part?” I almost cried – I was so honored. “Of course!” I said. Soon this girl, who had just gotten healed by the Bridegroom of heaven, now had her boyfriend on one knee in front of her. She collapsed on the ground crying again. Talk about a good day! I was about to go congratulate them, when I heard the Lord say, “Give them some money for their first date as an engaged couple.” I quickly complied, and let them know why I was giving. This may mess with some people’s theology, but Christ died while we were still sinners (Romans 5:6). God gave before we even made our first vow. God gives because He loves. Who am I to withhold from the ones He loves?



We moved on, praying, loving, and blessing. Our agenda hasn't changed much at all since we founded Set Ablaze International: love as many people as possible with the power of the love of God. Many hugs and words were shared, but as we neared the end of our time, I felt stirred to ask for one more. I kept praying "God, where is my one?" One more – not just touched with sentiment, but when we walk away we both knew heaven ordained our meeting.

As we neared our exit, I kept petitioning my heavenly Daddy that I wanted that "one more". Then I found her. Well, one of our team-members found her and prayed for her, and then God's heart rushed upon me. I asked her what she needed. Without hesitation she blurted out, "I'm terrified of flying, and I have to fly home tomorrow." As soon as she said that, I heard Jesus say "Her plane will not go down. I have destiny for her and I will see to it that it is accomplished." Before I knew it, those words flew out of my mouth and she immediately began weeping. I kept speaking the heart of our awesome God over her, and she confirmed what I had been saying, telling me that she used to walk with God and minister to youth, but she wasn't doing it anymore. I prayed over her, and she knew that out of the tens of thousands around her, her heavenly Father was calling her back to her destiny, and to never settle for less. As I walked away, I told her "When you get on your plane tomorrow, speak to the fear and say 'Jesus has destiny for me, and He will make sure I fulfill it!'" She smiled and excitedly said back, "I will!"

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OOH : Goshen Sai (2014-05-13 12:00) - szeilenga

On One Hand : a sort of bi-weekly series of five-fingered inquires with a select member of our TastyFresh community – mini interviews on everything from production philosophy to gigs and industry to faith and ministry.

One : Who are you and what do you consider your primary role (dj, producer, event planner, missionary, etc) in the EDM community?

I'm Goshen Sai. That's not my birth name, but it's more than just a nick name. I have been a DJ and producer since I was 17 (I'm 30 now) and I've been singing, dancing, and trying to love people since I was about 2. I live in Atlanta with my wife (who also came out of the rave scene) and two princesses (who are becoming EDM connoisseurs).

My primary role in the EDM community would be ambassador. I hope that doesn't sound cliché. The reason I say that is because I have seen a problematic trend with how temporary titles get us so locked down on temporary callings. When I complete all my days in this life, and when I stand before my Creator, I won't approach Him as DJ/producer Goshen Sai, or vocalist Goshen Sai, or pastor Goshen Sai, etc.

I'm coming as His beloved Son, and that identity carries over into eternity. Being a DJ, producer, and singer is fun and a great way to testify of the One greater than me, but it doesn't carry me through my valleys into the ages to come. The fact that I'm loved perfectly and thoroughly by Christ is my rock. It's not that the titles themselves are bad, it can just become a hindrance to a dynamic and meaningful purpose that could change someone else's life.

I've heard DJ's say that their purpose is to provide a fun and memorable experience. To me that is aiming really low, and horrendously sad. I'm an ambassador of a mind-blowing, life-altering Love Story, and it just happens to be through Electronic Dance Music right now. I am representing the One I love, and I carry heaven with me. Dropping beats and sick synth leads is just the icing on the cake.

Two : Will you give a little of your testimony? How were you led to Christ? Was it another ambassador in the scene or did the Holy Spirit use a different route to tug at your heart?

My personal story is pretty dramatic, which, I suppose, is why I turned out so passionate. I grew up in mundane, boring youth groups and church services. There was no talk about what was available through a deep, intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit, or the beauty and majesty of Christ. It's no wonder, then, why I threw myself in the complete opposite direction. I had a severe hunger for pleasure, as most people do, so I indulged in every passion of my flesh. You name it, I probably did it.

One night I overdosed on drugs, and I had what some people call an "out of body experience". It wasn't part of the drug use though. This was a terrifyingly real, near-death experience. I began to drift backwards into horrible darkness. My spirit screamed "JESUS! Don't let me die!" - and I immediately flew back into my body, and I sat up alert and sober; no trace of a substance high left (which was "impossible" because I had been stacking drugs all night). You would think that was enough to shock someone back into good behavior, but my appetite for pleasure was controlling me. In all my good intentions, I couldn't free myself from the pursuit of hiding my brokenness under the numbing effects of sin.

After numerous other "close calls", I finally hit rock bottom. I had been experiencing God in the midst of my prodigal run, but His lasting deliverance came in just the right moment. As we are talking about this, it is almost 10 years to the day when His presence came on me while I was crying in my bed, and all of my broken vows and attempts to clean up my act were trumped by His love. My drug addiction? Gone in one moment, and not one moment of withdrawal since. Then, with my mind finally clear, a week after that encounter with God, I had a dream that changed my life. When I woke up I was not the same person. I had finally met my Deliverer, and I left South Florida to start again in

Atlanta. Since then I have seen my God's powerful love free not only me, but many others as well. Cancer-eaten ears? Healed right before my eyes. Physical healings, words from God's heart that breaks off years of emotional torment and wounds, and so much more is becoming commonplace for me. Not because I'm better than anyone, I just met the most passionate Lover and I can't go back to the uneventful religious services that drove me away in the first place.

Three : What is your vision or mission for your work (your Ambassadorship) in the EDM scene? Do you have specific goals that you are believing God for?

Ha! Yes, my "Ambassadorship." My wife and I both dream big, and have been given a broad vision, and are walking towards it carefully. We started by forming Set Ablaze International - an event and artist management company. The broad vision is quite extensive, and so I will narrow it down to three main points.

First, we want to introduce the EDM community to the enjoyable God, Jesus Christ. I've met so many people who have left the Christian Church because it was either full of hypocrites, or was too constricting and didn't let them "enjoy life." I totally get it because those are two of the reasons I left! However, leaving a pursuit of God because of other people's hypocrisy is a lazy excuse. If anything, that should call us to step up to show the rest how it's supposed to look. And in regards to Christianity being too constricting: well, if we feel that way, then we don't know what biblical Christianity really is! When I left my former life of promiscuity and unrestrained pursuits of fleshy indulgences, God didn't ask me to lay down pleasure - He actually invited me into deeper pleasure in Him. I want the EDM community to see that their hunger for Utopia and heaven on earth can only truly be met in One - and there's no hangover, dollar price, or withdrawal.

Second, we want to raise up a family of consecrated, set-apart ones who carry heaven with them. Modern artists, dancers, DJs, Singers, etc. - whoever has a gift from God but hasn't been given a way to offer it in a fulfilling way. Purity and holiness in life and integrity of character is a major conviction for me. The most relevant thing any of us can carry is the Holy Spirit, and so my life is inspired by what makes Holy Spirit feel welcome in me. He has the answers that the hurting and broken souls need. He has the power to restore wounded hearts and broken flesh. Our family aims to honor Him in every way possible so He can work in an unhindered manner through us.

And third: Love as many as we possibly can. This is actually the most important, but I mention it last because the above mentioned are just two ways we demonstrate it. I think some people have this idea that reaching this community doesn't require us to live laid down lives. But, love costs us something. Love means I spend more time in prayer and in the Word so I have something more to offer this amazing community; something more than just a good song or a good mix. At the end of the day, the guy who is living in a self-destructive pattern doesn't need me spinning his favorite song, just so I can "connect" with him. He needs the sound of heaven that sets the heart free. Love isn't just what I do when I'm at the festivals, raves, and nightclubs. Love is the manner of the "laid down" life I have to live 24/7 so that I have power and authority from on high - so that these children of the night can experience their heavenly Father who loves them so much.

Four : What kind of advice or encouragement would you give to other Christians in the EDM community who would like to make a greater impact for God's kingdom and see more lives and hearts transformed?

This is a tough one, because there are so many opinions about how this should be done. But, if we are representing the kingdom, the "plumb line" is the Word, and not our personal experiences or imaginations. If we are doing this for something bigger than ourselves, then we have to hold ourselves to the standard in Scripture, and not even our own intellect.

I've heard some compelling arguments on how we can be a people of mixture and still do great things for the kingdom (by mixture I mean doing it the way the world does it). The Scriptures hold us to another standard however, and am willing to have a cordial conversation with any believer regarding this. I'm very serious about this because this is a

personal matter for me. I have suffered loss in this community. The party life-style takes a toll on people, and I've had dear ones die. This is not a game or a career for me. This is not even a hobby. It's a passion. I see these millions of souls, and all I can see is "VALUABLE", "TREASURE", and "POTENTIAL." To show them what they were made for is going to take more than spinning a well-produced secular (or non-secular) song.

We should be relevant, but relevance is not relative. It's not conditional on our upbringing or personal conviction. Only God loves them perfectly, and so it's about how HE wants to do this. It all comes down to this: what we perceive to be permissible is not always best, and sometimes not even helpful. Can you live unconsecrated and still be used by God? Sure. Can you reach souls by spinning music by artists who don't stand for anything honorable, and promote self-destructive habits? Maybe. But what is the most excellent way? Shouldn't we be striving for that? Read history about the Church's biggest world-changers, and they had some common traits; one of the biggest is a passion to be holy and set apart in full surrender for the Holy Spirit. I encourage the aspiring ones to aim higher than what is permissible. Aim for heavenly sounds that shake heaven and earth.

Just because some of us may not have a conviction about certain music or lifestyle choices doesn't detract from the staggering statistic that 100 % of the powerful transformations that took place, post-resurrection, are by the Holy Spirit through set-apart ones, not by ones trying to sound like or imitate the world. Being set apart means being holy. Jesus made it very clear that being influential means sacrifice. So I'd say, if you are an aspiring DJ or producer, do you want to resemble earth, or heaven? Have you counted the cost? How much of His presence do you want in your life? He won't dwell with compromise. We are the temple of God (the Greek word is "Naos", literally meaning "holy place"). Go read what was allowed in the holy place of God and live in that manner, and you will be blessed to make a difference.

Five : I realize that much of what you do is Spirit-led and therefore somewhat spontaneous, but what are your typical methods or practices when ministering at a club or event like Ultra? How would you encourage someone who is in the EDM community and wants to evangelize and minister there?

The methods of evangelism we do stem more from the life we try to lead all the time. The best way to be effective in any kind of evangelism is to not compartmentalize our lives. It all belongs to God. Here's why: ravers can smell fake. We don't go with the mindset that they are "projects" or another notch on a ministry belt. They are real people who are really beautiful, and need more than a man-made utopia. So if we spend our week in front of the TV, or playing on our phones, and not in prayer and not in the Word, then we have nothing to offer them. We would only be part-time lovers of God, and that's fake. When it comes to being a true witness, it's all or nothing.

We also never go alone. We go as groups sent with prayer. We invite believers who can't go with us to partner with us and pray for us and for those we will meet. Love is a power that flows from a place of unity. We need more than just our crew to see the value of these image-bearers. We aren't going to take the lone-ranger approach. We confess our need for the rest of the Church to be a part.

To summarize our methods in 3 ways: To be able to be spontaneous, we have to be surrendered. To be effective, we have to remain in prayer and in His Word. To be powerful, we must be unified.

God forbid Inigo Montoya comes knocking at my door, but as we were finishing up the last question another item of interest came to my attention, so I think I will allow this OOH interview to turn into a six-fingered man. Here is one final bonus question...

Question 6 : What's this about a radio show?

The radio show has been a wild blessing. It's called "Underground Revival" and is every Friday night from 9pm-1am (US Eastern Time) on Victory 91.5. I had a feeling this particular FM station would one day have an EDM show, I just never thought I'd be the host of it! The station manager contacted me last year a few months after a prophetic leader

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We have an opportunity to reach many nations, as well as closeted Christians, with new sounds and artists who don't have record deals. Underground Revival showcases mostly unknown talent for their devotion to the Creator, not because they are signed to a big label. I love how we have the opportunity to give the passionate ones a platform, not just the popular ones. Producers and DJs are a dime a dozen nowadays, but we promote those who are doing it for the right reasons.

Awesome. It's been a great interview. Thanks so much for chatting with us. We pray the best for you, and your ministry as well as your music and all your creative endeavors. God bless!



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If anyone is interested in his music or ministry, you can find him on :

[2]soundcloud.com/goshen-sai

[3][Facebook.com/goshensai](https://facebook.com/goshensai)

Twitter: [4][@goshensai](https://twitter.com/goshensai)

or the radio show:

[5][Facebook.com/UndergroundRevival](https://facebook.com/UndergroundRevival)

Twitter: [6][@U _R _LIVE](https://twitter.com/U_R_LIVE)

1. https://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=https%3A//api.soundcloud.com/users/21626808&auto_play=false&hide_related=false&visual=true

2. <http://soundcloud.com/goshen-sai>

3. <http://facebook.com/goshensai>

4. <http://twitter.com/goshensai>

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DJ, producer, promoter and missionary Goshen Sai took a moment out of his busy schedule to speak with Scott Z. in our latest in the One One Hand interview series.

DJ Hans Solo (2014-05-25 16:15:00)

This is great! I Googled "Christian EDM" and your website came up. Clicked on the top header and my new friend Goshen Sai was interviewed. I'm just now finding out there is a community of believers that love EDM. Great group. Great website. And

great, great article. Thank you and I look forward to reading more.

Dave Richards (2014-05-27 22:02:00)

Glad you found us. We've been around for quite some time. ;)

OOH : Goshen Sai (2014-05-13 12:00) - szeilenga

On One Hand : a sort of bi-weekly series of five-fingered inquires with a select member of our TastyFresh community – mini interviews on everything from production philosophy to gigs and industry to faith and ministry.

One : Who are you and what do you consider your primary role (dj, producer, event planner, missionary, etc) in the EDM community?

I'm Goshen Sai. That's not my birth name, but it's more than just a nick name. I have been a DJ and producer since I was 17 (I'm 30 now) and I've been singing, dancing, and trying to love people since I was about 2. I live in Atlanta with my wife (who also came out of the rave scene) and two princesses (who are becoming EDM connoisseurs).

My primary role in the EDM community would be ambassador. I hope that doesn't sound cliché. The reason I say that is because I have seen a problematic trend with how temporary titles get us so locked down on temporary callings. When I complete all my days in this life, and when I stand before my Creator, I won't approach Him as DJ/producer Goshen Sai, or vocalist Goshen Sai, or pastor Goshen Sai, etc.

I'm coming as His beloved Son, and that identity carries over into eternity. Being a DJ, producer, and singer is fun and a great way to testify of the One greater than me, but it doesn't carry me through my valleys into the ages to come. The fact that I'm loved perfectly and thoroughly by Christ is my rock. It's not that the titles themselves are bad, it can just become a hindrance to a dynamic and meaningful purpose that could change someone else's life.

I've heard DJ's say that their purpose is to provide a fun and memorable experience. To me that is aiming really low, and horrendously sad. I'm an ambassador of a mind-blowing, life-altering Love Story, and it just happens to be through Electronic Dance Music right now. I am representing the One I love, and I carry heaven with me. Dropping beats and sick synth leads is just the icing on the cake.

Two : Will you give a little of your testimony? How were you led to Christ? Was it another ambassador in the scene or did the Holy Spirit use a different route to tug at your heart?

My personal story is pretty dramatic, which, I suppose, is why I turned out so passionate. I grew up in mundane, boring youth groups and church services. There was no talk about what was available through a deep, intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit, or the beauty and majesty of Christ. It's no wonder, then, why I threw myself in the complete opposite direction. I had a severe hunger for pleasure, as most people do, so I indulged in every passion of my flesh. You name it, I probably did it.

One night I overdosed on drugs, and I had what some people call an "out of body experience". It wasn't part of the drug use though. This was a terrifyingly real, near-death experience. I began to drift backwards into horrible darkness. My spirit screamed "JESUS! Don't let me die!" - and I immediately flew back into my body, and I sat up alert and sober; no trace of a substance high left (which was "impossible" because I had been stacking drugs all night). You would think that was enough to shock someone back into good behavior, but my appetite for pleasure was controlling me. In all my good intentions, I couldn't free myself from the pursuit of hiding my brokenness under the numbing effects of sin.

After numerous other "close calls", I finally hit rock bottom. I had been experiencing God in the midst of my prodigal run, but His lasting deliverance came in just the right moment. As we are talking about this, it is almost 10 years to the day when His presence came on me while I was crying in my bed, and all of my broken vows and attempts to clean up my act were trumped by His love. My drug addiction? Gone in one moment, and not one moment of withdrawal since. Then, with my mind finally clear, a week after that encounter with God, I had a dream that changed my life. When I woke up I was not the same person. I had finally met my Deliverer, and I left South Florida to start again in

Atlanta. Since then I have seen my God's powerful love free not only me, but many others as well. Cancer-eaten ears? Healed right before my eyes. Physical healings, words from God's heart that breaks off years of emotional torment and wounds, and so much more is becoming commonplace for me. Not because I'm better than anyone, I just met the most passionate Lover and I can't go back to the uneventful religious services that drove me away in the first place.

Three : What is your vision or mission for your work (your Ambassadorship) in the EDM scene? Do you have specific goals that you are believing God for?

Ha! Yes, my "Ambassadorship." My wife and I both dream big, and have been given a broad vision, and are walking towards it carefully. We started by forming Set Ablaze International - an event and artist management company. The broad vision is quite extensive, and so I will narrow it down to three main points.

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Awesome. It's been a great interview. Thanks so much for chatting with us. We pray the best for you, and your ministry as well as your music and all your creative endeavors. God bless!



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Dave Richards (2014-05-27 22:02:00)

Glad you found us. We've been around for quite some time. ;)

Let's Help DJ Trancelott Get Back On His Feet! (2014-05-27 22:00) - redsavior



Tastyfresh.com Family,

I don't do this very often, but there are times when someone close to our community is in dire need of help. This time around, Noel Sanger raised a person to my attention via Facebook. That person is Lance Hendrix aka DJ Trancelott.

Some of you who have been around for a while will probably recognize his name. If not his name, you'll know of his website: Trancedomain. While the site has been gone for some time now, Lance was instrumental in giving a much needed lift to many of Florida's prominent DJs. What many of you may not know is that Lance is also a Christian.

Lance has been experiencing some pretty severe health problems over the past few months. These have kept him from being able to work and he is currently on the waiting list for disability. Lance suddenly became homeless last week after being given four days' notice to move. He spent three nights "urban camping" with a tent, no food and a shopping cart. Noel and a few other friends realized what happened and got him into an extended stay hotel.

Noel is now leading the charge to help get Lance back on his feet. Since Saturday, over \$4,000 has been raised to help Lance out. The goal has already been raised twice and currently is at \$7,000.

I know for many of you money is tight at the end of the month. I don't expect you to blindly give to Lance, I just want you to pray about it and be open to the idea of giving. I also don't expect you to give a lot, just whatever God asks you to. Personally, I've already contributed a small amount and I know that others from our community have as well.

Please take some time and [1]look over the fundraiser that Noel Sanger has started and consider supporting Lance.

Thanks,

Dave

[button link="http://www.youcaring.com/help-a-neighbor/let-s-help-lance-get-back-on-his-feet-/182690" color="yellow" size="medium" target=""]Support Lance[/button]

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12.6 June



Hello everyone!

I'm Ruben owner of G & D Records. This time I'm writing this blog with a question that has been going around for a while. Plus I have a lot to say, some of it may not even sound nice but I have a lot of feelings that I have to get out for the entire CEDM scene. Read at your own risk. This is not out of hate is mainly out of frustration and because I want to see a better, bigger and healthier scene. First let's start with the question.

Is it CEDM real?

Before we get to the answer let's backtrack a little and talk about how I got into this. Many of you are very young and are perhaps new to this term CEDM (Christian Electronic Dance Music) which it is understandable that you may see this acronym CEDM as a real thing that in essence, describes music that is made by musicians/producers who are Christian. I myself was in the same situation. How can I find clean, positive EDM (Electronic Dance Music)? The only thing I could come up with a few years ago was by typing the words Christian Electronic Dance Music, or Christian Drum and Bass, or Christian Dubstep on the search engine. In 2010 after discovering Dubstep and felt in love with the genre I wanted to find the clean/Christian version. You must know that I'm not new to EDM. In my teen years (mid 90's) I was into Trance, Drum & Bass, and some other sub genres but I was not a Christian. Back to 2010. After immersing myself for the 2nd time in my life into EDM, this time I took it to the next level by learning production and DJ'ing. Three years later I'm now as immersed as possible in what you can call "the CEDM scene" by owning the largest Christian Dubstep Label in the world and by being a producer and DJ under the name RE5A.

In the past 2 years I have met almost every kid, young adult, and older folks who are somehow part of this scene, group, CEDMers, fans, label owners etc., etc. With that being said, it's time to answer the question "is it CEDM real?" I have to say a few things before I explain my answer.

1. CEDM it is not a music genre. Neither is EDM. It is just the acronym used to describe certain type of music. This statement brings us to the understanding that some things are Christian while others are not Christian. However, there is no such thing as Christian food, Christian clothes, shoes, cars, houses etc., etc. The word Christian means to be Christ Like. This word is typically used to refer to someone who is a Jesus believer or someone who practices Christianity as a religion. Our Christian culture tends to give names to things to separate them from the secular world but it does not mean some "thing" is Christian.

2. If I remember correctly when I searched for the very first time the words 'Christian Dubstep' back in 2010. There was nothing on Google that will point me in the direction of anything that looked like Christian EDM. In my

search for Christian EDM in 2010 while looking for Drum & Bass radio stations on iTunes, I founded a few stations titled 'Dubstep'. For a few weeks I kept going back to iTunes in search for EDM or CEDM and one day looking on the religious section of the stations I found the Gods DJs Radio station which lead me to their website and Facebook page as well.

Back then there was hardly any Christian Dubstep at all in Gods Djs. I remember the one or two tracks they had were just a fusion of some kind of worship and dubstep with no real 'dubstep' sounds. So I decided to start making my own dubstep. To make it easy for people who were Christian like me, I decided to call my music Christian Dubstep. That's how all this started. By me calling it Christian Dubstep I realized that it was controversial and the Christians and non-Christians were confused, amused, offended and shocked by those two words together. The Facebook page 'Christian Dubstep' was born and many hate messages from both sides flooded my inbox. Also at that time it was very hard to find any Christians who liked this music or Christians who were producing this type of music. I believe that there is a hand full of guys who went through the same process as me at the same time.

I believe I am the only one who took it to a more public and serious way. Mainly because I knew that Dubstep will be the next big thing in the EDM world. Once I found a few Music labels for Christian EDM, I contacted them and I even sent a few demos – which, by the way they were not very good. I was and I'm still learning production. I know...

Anyways, most of these labels rejected me (Deeplife, Fuzionfour, Digital Trifecta) mainly because my music wasn't very good and some of them said, "We are not interested in Dubstep right now".

The same year I attended Cornerstone Music Festival where I had the chance to meet Justin Josiah Freebourne – who was a very kind and cool guy to meet. I also remember vaguely meeting David Richardson from Tastyfresh and Kevin Neely.

Cornerstone was a cool experience considering it was my first time at a CEDM event. I know that David had put a lot of good work into the Cornerstone events and they had a very good turnout for a few years, but I believe 2010 was the last time they had the Afterhours stage. Everything I experienced about Christian EDM up to this point was not exactly what I was expecting. No Christian Dubstep, no labels who will carry it, no Christian Dubstep DJ's, so as an Ambitious guy that I am, the next thing that God laid on my heart after I came back from Cornerstone was to start my own Dubstep music and label. I'm trying to be as honest and not pride full but I believe I'm responsible for what's known today as Christian Dubstep. Is that a curse or a blessing? I don't know? If you are reading this blog you can figure out by now how everything has evolved since I went to Cornerstone right?

What I know for sure is that I was in the right place at the right time and with Gods inspiration, here I am with the largest CEDM label of the scene and the world. I know we have been in top charts on iTunes, we have sold thousands of copies and we have one of the largest catalogs of the scene.

A big part of our success is not because of me of course. Number one is God blessing us and number two is that we give a lot back and support real ministries financially. Number three are the fans. As the largest Christian Dubstep label we also have the largest audience who is not only in the US. We have fans and artists from all over the world. And that is the story we are living and the history we are making.

3. Is there a CEDM scene? I'm my own personal opinion 'YES' there is a scene. This scene is made up by many producers, some DJs, a very few ministers and many fans. House, Trance, Tech House, Progressive House, Drum & Bass, and of course Dubstep are the type of music you can find in this small scene of Christians who are into this kind of music. Even though this is a small scene, it is there. It exists. And it's hungry for something big, whether it is a big Christian revival within all this EDM music or a big breakthrough in the secular EDM scene. So regardless of what you think a scene is we have a scene here, with more problems than solutions, with more failures than successes and

with more challenges to overcome and many new things to learn.

NOW! Is CEDM real?

The answer is NO. CEDM is not real in the sense of being a music genre. CEDM is not a new genre. There is no such thing as Christian Dubstep as a music genre or Christian Trance etc., etc. But what is real is that there is a NEED to call it Christian EDM or Christian Dubstep. This NEED satisfies the Christian believer, the Christian kid who listens to Skrillex behind doors so that their parents don't find out about his new obsession with dubstep. It satisfies all those who are recently Christ followers that want to listen to EDM. It satisfies the parents who are looking for an alternative to secular EDM to give to their kids to listen to. In the eyes of the secular world Christian EDM may not be real but it makes people uncomfortable, it creates debates among Christian and non-Christians.

Confused yet? Well it is what it is. CEDM is nothing to worry about. CEDM exist within the circle of those who proclaim to be Christians and are EDM fans, producers and djs. But to the world outside our bubble, there is no such thing as CEDM.

So this is my stand, this is my message to all of you who are in the "CEDM scene".

We must stop arguing about calling it CEDM or not. Within the Christian community (Tastyfresh, GodsDJs, Beatculture, G & D Records, etc.) that listens, produces and DJs EDM. We as community must stop the argument of what is the name of our music. The name doesn't matter. Is just music? Is just Dubstep or House or Trance or Trap or any other genre? For those who want to call it CEDM, go ahead call it like that, but don't look down to the Christian who doesn't want to call it like that. If you are so narrow minded that it offends you, you don't belong in the scene. For the ones who don't want to call it CEDM the same goes to you, don't call it CEDM but don't judge or look down to those who call it like that.

My message for all fans, producers, DJ's, label owners: We all must learn to be UNITED.

We must support each other without hidden agendas. We must respect each other and we must not bring unnecessary drama to the table. If you had any major spiritual issue you must resolve it with your spiritual leaders. Social media is not the place to find the cure to your problems and expect everyone to be your doctors. We as a scene must present ourselves to the world, specifically to those who are in the secular EDM scene as equals. We must NOT USE the term CEDM around them. They don't need us to bring a Christian made phrase into the conversation. To them there is only one thing they care about, and it is the music. We must approach the world with a unique and sincere conversation where there is no distinction, where there is no Christian EDM and secular EDM. We must love them and pray for them just as they are. We must not try to indoctrinate them into the little CEDM scene that we have. Let's leave that to Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

Lastly I leave you with a CALL, a call to action.

What is this call to action about? I am calling you all who are reading this blog. All those who had in the past, made any attempt to grow the CEDM scene, a call to all those producers who are only 13, 15 and 18 years old, a call to all the label owners, a call to all the DJs and to the fans. I CALL ALL OF YOU TO UNITE for once and to get rid of the junk that has blocked progress for the last 20 yrs. We are on the edge of the cliff; we are so close to dive into a non-existence. We must UNITE now or perish forever. We need to make a decision to support our scene fully 100 % and make this the thing that everyone is looking for. Make it worth it of pursuing it.

How are we going to do this? I don't have all the answers to this but I know a few things you can do to start making a difference.

Producers:

I know you love to spend hours and hours in front of the computer working on one track that in reality just a hand full of nerds like you are going to listen and the rest of the world will never even know that you even exist. So don't stop producing but you must learn the ins and outs of the secular EDM world.

Get out of your home and find other producers who are not in your little Facebook world, go to your local shows and support those who are making EDM even if it sucks a little. Make friends that are not Christian producers. Create a local scene. Get a job so you can actually buy the songs and not download from torrents. Buy what others are trying to sale. Save money and attend an event made by Christians. You are going to have the best time ever I promise. Make it a commitment to at least try to go once a year to some of these events.

If you think you are a producer but you are never promoting your music, you are never online trying to connect with other people, just disappear for almost all year and you only come to Facebook or other social media site once a year to poorly promote your own music, that is not being a good artist and that is not how it should be. If you consider yourself an artist and you expect people to listen to your music, you have to get your hands dirty, do the work, promote yourself, talk to people on the daily basis, make relationships be an active member of the community. If you cannot do this for whatever reason that is perfectly fine, not everyone has the time or the resources to do it but don't come in here expecting a successful career as a producer or musician. Trust me nobody will be interested in a ghost.

Established Producers and Big Labels:

As of right now there is not a huge support from the main stream **Christian Music Industry** geared towards the underground CEDM scene. If you are a Promoter, Label Manager or anything related to MSCMI, this is for you. Most of the music out there crated by this industry and formatted to the average Christian person has nothing to do with our scene. This industry is just like the secular Music Industry. It is all about the money, the sales, the show, the big tours, etc. They are just as harsh and cold as the secular music industry. POP music and music that sales is what matters to them. We are not part of that industry neither do we want to be part of it. We are not interested in putting out a pretty face or your typical white guy with a guitar singing pretty songs about God. We are nothing like it so make no mistake; CEDM is far from looking like your Air One type of artist or music.

In the past year or so we've seen an increase on sounds and the use of EDM as a way to be more relevant. It is obvious that you are jumping the band wagon of the EDM popularity but as soon as something else comes out or you get tired of it, YOU will change the direction. When this happens, guess what we will still be here doing our thing and keep going as an underground movement or scene. If anybody want to be in the main stream Christian Music go for it, but our scene is not the place for you to become famous. Take your talents to the big dogs of the industry we don't need you here.

To the Poser/Producer:

We all know who they are, there is a few around who act as if they are part of this scene. This people use their talents and money for their own gain. Some even lie about their fame, they pretend to have a massive fan base and act as if they are rock stars. They charge hundreds of dollars to make remixes. They buy thousands of plays and likes for their social media sites. Anyone who has over a 100 thousand fans or plays on their soundcloud but nobody talks about them or only 2 or 3 people knows them and actually talks to them is just using dirty tactics to gain fame and recognition.

These kinds of producers/DJs, we do not recognize as part of the CEDM scene. We do not support them. We do not know them not because we don't want to or we closed the door on them, but because they themselves have closed the door on us by not becoming active member of our community struggling alongside us. They refused to

work in the community and they are all about themselves. The CEDM scene or community is made up of team players, not rockstar wannabes.

If you are this person don't take this personal is just reality. If you want to be a part of the scene you need to change your attitude and heart. Otherwise just go and do your own thing but do not use our scene to help you reach your selfish career.

To the DJ's:

If you are an "ALL christian music" DJ and don't even want to touch one secular song. That's fine, do your thing, but don't judge those who don't do the same as you do. Everyone has a calling and a different way to minister. Not everyone supposed to be like you. Be ready to be separated and not get as many gigs as other DJ have. Remember EDM is not something that the church is used to. Most Churches or ministries don't get it. The reality is that the "ALL Gospel DJ" is limited to the Christian crowd. So if you are one of those DJs, great, we love you for that but don't judge those who do it differently. If you can't even talk or socialize with Christian DJs who are in the secular world you do not belong on anyone's scene, you belong in your own little bubble. The same applies to the DJ who is Christian and plays in the secular world or uses secular music. Don't judge those who are not like you.

To the old timers/old schoolers in the scene:

Ok guys this one is a hard one to swallow. For some of you the time has come. I think by now we all know or have a very good idea of how things went down in the 90's or whenever you guys started it. It was all division, drama fights and so on.

We know you guys are the pioneers, we get it... but you cannot continue on this trend of "oh back in the day... we did this, we played that, we called it this and that". It's over guys. This is 2014, it is time to adapt, start fresh or hang the towel.

I honestly I'm tired of reading your comments about how thing were 20 years ago. That's cool, you guys are the starting point and we get it. Enough with the stories. You are either going to help us or not, and if is not in you to do that I think is time for you to move on. I know that there are some things that happened in the past that may or may not repeat and that is ok.

My guess is that 80 % of the people who are new to today's CEDM scene don't even listen to the same music you guys make or listen to. Things had changed, so now it's the time to learn the new stuff, support it and push for it, but if you don't want to be a part of something bigger than you, GET OUT of the way. No hard feeling to anyone, it is what it is. Let's live in reality and live in the now. The past is gone. Oh and I'm not apologizing if this offends someone.

To the foreigners:

If you are not in the US (America) but you somehow are part of the "CEDM" community. I highly suggest you to think twice about what you say, about what you suggest, about what you advise to others.

The CEDM scene in America is not the same around the world. Your country may have different points of view, different ways of doing things, different doctrines. YOU cannot expect people to follow your advice or just to listen to your opinions if you are in another country outside the U.S. Our cultures are different and even though we may love the same music, our life in America can be very different than your life in another country. Please don't be ethnocentric and pass judgments on those of us who live here in America. Learn our culture and respect it, if you cannot do that, you don't belong in this scene either.

To sum everything up all in a few words: if you want to see our little scene grow to become something bigger than you and me, now is the time. Support. Buy. Share. Attend. Invest time and money in the scene. Make time for it. Get out of your little bubble. Pray about this and if this is not your gig, get out and let others do it. If you are too selfish to do this for the scene, trust me, you won't be here long.

I hope all this made any sense to you. I hope this encourages some to get real about our scene. I have spent many hours working on building what we have here. I take this very seriously and I have had to put many hours of unpaid work to be where we are now as a label. I am very thankful about what God is doing with G &D Records and I know that we are just beginning to see what we capable of with God's help. We have many projects in the works that can change people's lives so please if you want to help us help others support our label and our scene. **Thank you everyone and God Bless you.**

For any comments, questions or anything you like to address about what I wrote, please message me at [1]gnd.record@gmail.com.

I would love to hear you.

Ruben a.k.a. RE5A

1. <mailto:gnd.record@gmail.com>

I'm Ruben owner of G &D Records. This time I'm writing this blog with a question that has been going around for a while. Plus I have a lot to say, some of it may not even sound nice but I have a lot of feelings that I have to get out for the entire CEDM scene. Read at your own risk.

iddison68 (2014-06-24 11:35:00)

All music belongs to God. If you know His voice then you will know this to be true, it is as simple as that.

Dave Richards (2014-06-24 19:25:00)

True. Knowing that though still doesn't get us through all of our issues as a community. There's a LOT of work to be done and far to few hands that are willing to get dirty and do the things that nobody will ever see.

Tastyfresh.com | The Future: Old Timers - Tastyfresh.com (2014-06-29 18:07:58)

[...] In Re5a's recent post, he issued a call to just about everyone involved in this thing known as Christian EDM. In case you didn't realize it, I'm actually part of the old timers he spoke about toward the end of his post. [...]



Hello everyone!

I'm Ruben owner of G & D Records. This time I'm writing this blog with a question that has been going around for a while. Plus I have a lot to say, some of it may not even sound nice but I have a lot of feelings that I have to get out for the entire CEDM scene. Read at your own risk. This is not out of hate is mainly out of frustration and because I want to see a better, bigger and healthier scene. First let's start with the question.

Is it CEDM real?

Before we get to the answer let's backtrack a little and talk about how I got into this. Many of you are very young and are perhaps new to this term CEDM (Christian Electronic Dance Music) which it is understandable that you may see this acronym CEDM as a real thing that in essence, describes music that is made by musicians/producers who are Christian. I myself was in the same situation. How can I find clean, positive EDM (Electronic Dance Music)? The only thing I could come up with a few years ago was by typing the words Christian Electronic Dance Music, or Christian Drum and Bass, or Christian Dubstep on the search engine. In 2010 after discovering Dubstep and felt in love with the genre I wanted to find the clean/Christian version. You must know that I'm not new to EDM. In my teen years (mid 90's) I was into Trance, Drum & Bass, and some other sub genres but I was not a Christian. Back to 2010. After immersing myself for the 2nd time in my life into EDM, this time I took it to the next level by learning production and DJ'ing. Three years later I'm now as immersed as possible in what you can call "the CEDM scene" by owning the largest Christian Dubstep Label in the world and by being a producer and DJ under the name RE5A.

In the past 2 years I have met almost every kid, young adult, and older folks who are somehow part of this scene, group, CEDMers, fans, label owners etc., etc. With that being said, it's time to answer the question "is it CEDM real?" I have to say a few things before I explain my answer.

1. CEDM it is not a music genre. Neither is EDM. It is just the acronym used to describe certain type of music. This statement brings us to the understanding that some things are Christian while others are not Christian. However, there is no such thing as Christian food, Christian clothes, shoes, cars, houses etc., etc. The word Christian means to be Christ Like. This word is typically used to refer to someone who is a Jesus believer or someone who practices Christianity as a religion. Our Christian culture tends to give names to things to separate them from the secular world but it does not mean some "thing" is Christian.

2. If I remember correctly when I searched for the very first time the words 'Christian Dubstep' back in 2010. There was nothing on Google that will point me in the direction of anything that looked like Christian EDM. In my

search for Christian EDM in 2010 while looking for Drum & Bass radio stations on iTunes, I founded a few stations titled 'Dubstep'. For a few weeks I kept going back to iTunes in search for EDM or CEDM and one day looking on the religious section of the stations I found the Gods DJs Radio station which lead me to their website and Facebook page as well.

Back then there was hardly any Christian Dubstep at all in Gods Djs. I remember the one or two tracks they had were just a fusion of some kind of worship and dubstep with no real 'dubstep' sounds. So I decided to start making my own dubstep. To make it easy for people who were Christian like me, I decided to call my music Christian Dubstep. That's how all this started. By me calling it Christian Dubstep I realized that it was controversial and the Christians and non-Christians were confused, amused, offended and shocked by those two words together. The Facebook page 'Christian Dubstep' was born and many hate messages from both sides flooded my inbox. Also at that time it was very hard to find any Christians who liked this music or Christians who were producing this type of music. I believe that there is a hand full of guys who went through the same process as me at the same time.

I believe I am the only one who took it to a more public and serious way. Mainly because I knew that Dubstep will be the next big thing in the EDM world. Once I found a few Music labels for Christian EDM, I contacted them and I even sent a few demos – which, by the way they were not very good. I was and I'm still learning production. I know...

Anyways, most of these labels rejected me (Deeplife, Fuzionfour, Digital Trifecta) mainly because my music wasn't very good and some of them said, "We are not interested in Dubstep right now".

The same year I attended Cornerstone Music Festival where I had the chance to meet Justin Josiah Freebourne – who was a very kind and cool guy to meet. I also remember vaguely meeting David Richardson from Tastyfresh and Kevin Neely.

Cornerstone was a cool experience considering it was my first time at a CEDM event. I know that David had put a lot of good work into the Cornerstone events and they had a very good turnout for a few years, but I believe 2010 was the last time they had the Afterhours stage. Everything I experienced about Christian EDM up to this point was not exactly what I was expecting. No Christian Dubstep, no labels who will carry it, no Christian Dubstep DJ's, so as an Ambitious guy that I am, the next thing that God laid on my heart after I came back from Cornerstone was to start my own Dubstep music and label. I'm trying to be as honest and not pride full but I believe I'm responsible for what's known today as Christian Dubstep. Is that a curse or a blessing? I don't know? If you are reading this blog you can figure out by now how everything has evolved since I went to Cornerstone right?

What I know for sure is that I was in the right place at the right time and with Gods inspiration, here I am with the largest CEDM label of the scene and the world. I know we have been in top charts on iTunes, we have sold thousands of copies and we have one of the largest catalogs of the scene.

A big part of our success is not because of me of course. Number one is God blessing us and number two is that we give a lot back and support real ministries financially. Number three are the fans. As the largest Christian Dubstep label we also have the largest audience who is not only in the US. We have fans and artists from all over the world. And that is the story we are living and the history we are making.

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Lastly I leave you with a CALL, a call to action.

What is this call to action about? I am calling you all who are reading this blog. All those who had in the past, made any attempt to grow the CEDM scene, a call to all those producers who are only 13, 15 and 18 years old, a call to all the label owners, a call to all the DJs and to the fans. I CALL ALL OF YOU TO UNITE for once and to get rid of the junk that has blocked progress for the last 20 yrs. We are on the edge of the cliff; we are so close to dive into a non-existence. We must UNITE now or perish forever. We need to make a decision to support our scene fully 100 % and make this the thing that everyone is looking for. Make it worth it of pursuing it.

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Ok guys this one is a hard one to swallow. For some of you the time has come. I think by now we all know or have a very good idea of how things went down in the 90's or whenever you guys started it. It was all division, drama fights and so on.

We know you guys are the pioneers, we get it... but you cannot continue on this trend of "oh back in the day... we did this, we played that, we called it this and that". It's over guys. This is 2014, it is time to adapt, start fresh or hang the towel.

I honestly I'm tired of reading your comments about how thing were 20 years ago. That's cool, you guys are the starting point and we get it. Enough with the stories. You are either going to help us or not, and if is not in you to do that I think is time for you to move on. I know that there are some things that happened in the past that may or may not repeat and that is ok.

My guess is that 80 % of the people who are new to today's CEDM scene don't even listen to the same music you guys make or listen to. Things had changed, so now it's the time to learn the new stuff, support it and push for it, but if you don't want to be a part of something bigger than you, GET OUT of the way. No hard feeling to anyone, it is what it is. Let's live in reality and live in the now. The past is gone. Oh and I'm not apologizing if this offends someone.

To the foreigners:

If you are not in the US (America) but you somehow are part of the "CEDM" community. I highly suggest you to think twice about what you say, about what you suggest, about what you advise to others.

The CEDM scene in America is not the same around the world. Your country may have different points of view, different ways of doing things, different doctrines. YOU cannot expect people to follow your advice or just to listen to your opinions if you are in another country outside the U.S. Our cultures are different and even though we may love the same music, our life in America can be very different than your life in another country. Please don't be ethnocentric and pass judgments on those of us who live here in America. Learn our culture and respect it, if you cannot do that, you don't belong in this scene either.

To sum everything up all in a few words: if you want to see our little scene grow to become something bigger than you and me, now is the time. Support. Buy. Share. Attend. Invest time and money in the scene. Make time for it. Get out of your little bubble. Pray about this and if this is not your gig, get out and let others do it. If you are too selfish to do this for the scene, trust me, you won't be here long.

I hope all this made any sense to you. I hope this encourages some to get real about our scene. I have spent many hours working on building what we have here. I take this very seriously and I have had to put many hours of unpaid work to be where we are now as a label. I am very thankful about what God is doing with G &D Records and I know that we are just beginning to see what we capable of with God's help. We have many projects in the works that can change people's lives so please if you want to help us help others support our label and our scene. **Thank you everyone and God Bless you.**

For any comments, questions or anything you like to address about what I wrote, please message me at [1]gnd.record@gmail.com.

I would love to hear you.

Ruben a.k.a. RE5A

1. <mailto:gnd.record@gmail.com>

I'm Ruben owner of G &D Records. This time I'm writing this blog with a question that has been going around for a while. Plus I have a lot to say, some of it may not even sound nice but I have a lot of feelings that I have to get out for the entire CEDM scene. Read at your own risk.

iddison68 (2014-06-24 11:35:00)

All music belongs to God. If you know His voice then you will know this to be true, it is as simple as that.

Dave Richards (2014-06-24 19:25:00)

True. Knowing that though still doesn't get us through all of our issues as a community. There's a LOT of work to be done and far to few hands that are willing to get dirty and do the things that nobody will ever see.

Tastyfresh.com | The Future: Old Timers - Tastyfresh.com (2014-06-29 18:07:58)

[...] In Re5a's recent post, he issued a call to just about everyone involved in this thing known as Christian EDM. In case you didn't realize it, I'm actually part of the old timers he spoke about toward the end of his post. [...]



Hello everyone!

I'm Ruben owner of G & D Records. This time I'm writing this blog with a question that has been going around for a while. Plus I have a lot to say, some of it may not even sound nice but I have a lot of feelings that I have to get out for the entire CEDM scene. Read at your own risk. This is not out of hate is mainly out of frustration and because I want to see a better, bigger and healthier scene. First let's start with the question.

Is it CEDM real?

Before we get to the answer let's backtrack a little and talk about how I got into this. Many of you are very young and are perhaps new to this term CEDM (Christian Electronic Dance Music) which it is understandable that you may see this acronym CEDM as a real thing that in essence, describes music that is made by musicians/producers who are Christian. I myself was in the same situation. How can I find clean, positive EDM (Electronic Dance Music)? The only thing I could come up with a few years ago was by typing the words Christian Electronic Dance Music, or Christian Drum and Bass, or Christian Dubstep on the search engine. In 2010 after discovering Dubstep and felt in love with the genre I wanted to find the clean/Christian version. You must know that I'm not new to EDM. In my teen years (mid 90's) I was into Trance, Drum & Bass, and some other sub genres but I was not a Christian. Back to 2010. After immersing myself for the 2nd time in my life into EDM, this time I took it to the next level by learning production and DJ'ing. Three years later I'm now as immersed as possible in what you can call "the CEDM scene" by owning the largest Christian Dubstep Label in the world and by being a producer and DJ under the name RE5A.

In the past 2 years I have met almost every kid, young adult, and older folks who are somehow part of this scene, group, CEDMers, fans, label owners etc., etc. With that being said, it's time to answer the question "is it CEDM real?" I have to say a few things before I explain my answer.

1. CEDM it is not a music genre. Neither is EDM. It is just the acronym used to describe certain type of music. This statement brings us to the understanding that some things are Christian while others are not Christian. However, there is no such thing as Christian food, Christian clothes, shoes, cars, houses etc., etc. The word Christian means to be Christ Like. This word is typically used to refer to someone who is a Jesus believer or someone who practices Christianity as a religion. Our Christian culture tends to give names to things to separate them from the secular world but it does not mean some "thing" is Christian.

2. If I remember correctly when I searched for the very first time the words 'Christian Dubstep' back in 2010. There was nothing on Google that will point me in the direction of anything that looked like Christian EDM. In my

search for Christian EDM in 2010 while looking for Drum & Bass radio stations on iTunes, I founded a few stations titled 'Dubstep'. For a few weeks I kept going back to iTunes in search for EDM or CEDM and one day looking on the religious section of the stations I found the Gods DJs Radio station which lead me to their website and Facebook page as well.

Back then there was hardly any Christian Dubstep at all in Gods Djs. I remember the one or two tracks they had were just a fusion of some kind of worship and dubstep with no real 'dubstep' sounds. So I decided to start making my own dubstep. To make it easy for people who were Christian like me, I decided to call my music Christian Dubstep. That's how all this started. By me calling it Christian Dubstep I realized that it was controversial and the Christians and non-Christians were confused, amused, offended and shocked by those two words together. The Facebook page 'Christian Dubstep' was born and many hate messages from both sides flooded my inbox. Also at that time it was very hard to find any Christians who liked this music or Christians who were producing this type of music. I believe that there is a hand full of guys who went through the same process as me at the same time.

I believe I am the only one who took it to a more public and serious way. Mainly because I knew that Dubstep will be the next big thing in the EDM world. Once I found a few Music labels for Christian EDM, I contacted them and I even sent a few demos – which, by the way they were not very good. I was and I'm still learning production. I know...

Anyways, most of these labels rejected me (Deeplife, Fuzionfour, Digital Trifecta) mainly because my music wasn't very good and some of them said, "We are not interested in Dubstep right now".

The same year I attended Cornerstone Music Festival where I had the chance to meet Justin Josiah Freebourne – who was a very kind and cool guy to meet. I also remember vaguely meeting David Richardson from Tastyfresh and Kevin Neely.

Cornerstone was a cool experience considering it was my first time at a CEDM event. I know that David had put a lot of good work into the Cornerstone events and they had a very good turnout for a few years, but I believe 2010 was the last time they had the Afterhours stage. Everything I experienced about Christian EDM up to this point was not exactly what I was expecting. No Christian Dubstep, no labels who will carry it, no Christian Dubstep DJ's, so as an Ambitious guy that I am, the next thing that God laid on my heart after I came back from Cornerstone was to start my own Dubstep music and label. I'm trying to be as honest and not pride full but I believe I'm responsible for what's known today as Christian Dubstep. Is that a curse or a blessing? I don't know? If you are reading this blog you can figure out by now how everything has evolved since I went to Cornerstone right?

What I know for sure is that I was in the right place at the right time and with Gods inspiration, here I am with the largest CEDM label of the scene and the world. I know we have been in top charts on iTunes, we have sold thousands of copies and we have one of the largest catalogs of the scene.

A big part of our success is not because of me of course. Number one is God blessing us and number two is that we give a lot back and support real ministries financially. Number three are the fans. As the largest Christian Dubstep label we also have the largest audience who is not only in the US. We have fans and artists from all over the world. And that is the story we are living and the history we are making.

3. Is there a CEDM scene? I'm my own personal opinion 'YES' there is a scene. This scene is made up by many producers, some DJs, a very few ministers and many fans. House, Trance, Tech House, Progressive House, Drum & Bass, and of course Dubstep are the type of music you can find in this small scene of Christians who are into this kind of music. Even though this is a small scene, it is there. It exists. And it's hungry for something big, whether it is a big Christian revival within all this EDM music or a big breakthrough in the secular EDM scene. So regardless of what you think a scene is we have a scene here, with more problems than solutions, with more failures than successes and

with more challenges to overcome and many new things to learn.

NOW! Is CEDM real?

The answer is NO. CEDM is not real in the sense of being a music genre. CEDM is not a new genre. There is no such thing as Christian Dubstep as a music genre or Christian Trance etc., etc. But what is real is that there is a NEED to call it Christian EDM or Christian Dubstep. This NEED satisfies the Christian believer, the Christian kid who listens to Skrillex behind doors so that their parents don't find out about his new obsession with dubstep. It satisfies all those who are recently Christ followers that want to listen to EDM. It satisfies the parents who are looking for an alternative to secular EDM to give to their kids to listen to. In the eyes of the secular world Christian EDM may not be real but it makes people uncomfortable, it creates debates among Christian and non-Christians.

Confused yet? Well it is what it is. CEDM is nothing to worry about. CEDM exist within the circle of those who proclaim to be Christians and are EDM fans, producers and djs. But to the world outside our bubble, there is no such thing as CEDM.

So this is my stand, this is my message to all of you who are in the "CEDM scene".

We must stop arguing about calling it CEDM or not. Within the Christian community (Tastyfresh, GodsDJs, Beatculture, G & D Records, etc.) that listens, produces and DJs EDM. We as community must stop the argument of what is the name of our music. The name doesn't matter. Is just music? Is just Dubstep or House or Trance or Trap or any other genre? For those who want to call it CEDM, go ahead call it like that, but don't look down to the Christian who doesn't want to call it like that. If you are so narrow minded that it offends you, you don't belong in the scene. For the ones who don't want to call it CEDM the same goes to you, don't call it CEDM but don't judge or look down to those who call it like that.

My message for all fans, producers, DJ's, label owners: We all must learn to be UNITED.

We must support each other without hidden agendas. We must respect each other and we must not bring unnecessary drama to the table. If you had any major spiritual issue you must resolve it with your spiritual leaders. Social media is not the place to find the cure to your problems and expect everyone to be your doctors. We as a scene must present ourselves to the world, specifically to those who are in the secular EDM scene as equals. We must NOT USE the term CEDM around them. They don't need us to bring a Christian made phrase into the conversation. To them there is only one thing they care about, and it is the music. We must approach the world with a unique and sincere conversation where there is no distinction, where there is no Christian EDM and secular EDM. We must love them and pray for them just as they are. We must not try to indoctrinate them into the little CEDM scene that we have. Let's leave that to Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

Lastly I leave you with a CALL, a call to action.

What is this call to action about? I am calling you all who are reading this blog. All those who had in the past, made any attempt to grow the CEDM scene, a call to all those producers who are only 13, 15 and 18 years old, a call to all the label owners, a call to all the DJs and to the fans. I CALL ALL OF YOU TO UNITE for once and to get rid of the junk that has blocked progress for the last 20 yrs. We are on the edge of the cliff; we are so close to dive into a non-existence. We must UNITE now or perish forever. We need to make a decision to support our scene fully 100 % and make this the thing that everyone is looking for. Make it worth it of pursuing it.

How are we going to do this? I don't have all the answers to this but I know a few things you can do to start making a difference.

Producers:

I know you love to spend hours and hours in front of the computer working on one track that in reality just a hand full of nerds like you are going to listen and the rest of the world will never even know that you even exist. So don't stop producing but you must learn the ins and outs of the secular EDM world.

Get out of your home and find other producers who are not in your little Facebook world, go to your local shows and support those who are making EDM even if it sucks a little. Make friends that are not Christian producers. Create a local scene. Get a job so you can actually buy the songs and not download from torrents. Buy what others are trying to sale. Save money and attend an event made by Christians. You are going to have the best time ever I promise. Make it a commitment to at least try to go once a year to some of these events.

If you think you are a producer but you are never promoting your music, you are never online trying to connect with other people, just disappear for almost all year and you only come to Facebook or other social media site once a year to poorly promote your own music, that is not being a good artist and that is not how it should be. If you consider yourself an artist and you expect people to listen to your music, you have to get your hands dirty, do the work, promote yourself, talk to people on the daily basis, make relationships be an active member of the community. If you cannot do this for whatever reason that is perfectly fine, not everyone has the time or the resources to do it but don't come in here expecting a successful career as a producer or musician. Trust me nobody will be interested in a ghost.

Established Producers and Big Labels:

As of right now there is not a huge support from the main stream **Christian Music Industry** geared towards the underground CEDM scene. If you are a Promoter, Label Manager or anything related to MSCMI, this is for you. Most of the music out there crated by this industry and formatted to the average Christian person has nothing to do with our scene. This industry is just like the secular Music Industry. It is all about the money, the sales, the show, the big tours, etc. They are just as harsh and cold as the secular music industry. POP music and music that sales is what matters to them. We are not part of that industry neither do we want to be part of it. We are not interested in putting out a pretty face or your typical white guy with a guitar singing pretty songs about God. We are nothing like it so make no mistake; CEDM is far from looking like your Air One type of artist or music.

In the past year or so we've seen an increase on sounds and the use of EDM as a way to be more relevant. It is obvious that you are jumping the band wagon of the EDM popularity but as soon as something else comes out or you get tired of it, YOU will change the direction. When this happens, guess what we will still be here doing our thing and keep going as an underground movement or scene. If anybody want to be in the main stream Christian Music go for it, but our scene is not the place for you to become famous. Take your talents to the big dogs of the industry we don't need you here.

To the Poser/Producer:

We all know who they are, there is a few around who act as if they are part of this scene. This people use their talents and money for their own gain. Some even lie about their fame, they pretend to have a massive fan base and act as if they are rock stars. They charge hundreds of dollars to make remixes. They buy thousands of plays and likes for their social media sites. Anyone who has over a 100 thousand fans or plays on their soundcloud but nobody talks about them or only 2 or 3 people knows them and actually talks to them is just using dirty tactics to gain fame and recognition.

These kinds of producers/DJs, we do not recognize as part of the CEDM scene. We do not support them. We do not know them not because we don't want to or we closed the door on them, but because they themselves have closed the door on us by not becoming active member of our community struggling alongside us. They refused to

work in the community and they are all about themselves. The CEDM scene or community is made up of team players, not rockstar wannabes.

If you are this person don't take this personal is just reality. If you want to be a part of the scene you need to change your attitude and heart. Otherwise just go and do your own thing but do not use our scene to help you reach your selfish career.

To the DJ's:

If you are an "ALL christian music" DJ and don't even want to touch one secular song. That's fine, do your thing, but don't judge those who don't do the same as you do. Everyone has a calling and a different way to minister. Not everyone supposed to be like you. Be ready to be separated and not get as many gigs as other DJ have. Remember EDM is not something that the church is used to. Most Churches or ministries don't get it. The reality is that the "ALL Gospel DJ" is limited to the Christian crowd. So if you are one of those DJs, great, we love you for that but don't judge those who do it differently. If you can't even talk or socialize with Christian DJs who are in the secular world you do not belong on anyone's scene, you belong in your own little bubble. The same applies to the DJ who is Christian and plays in the secular world or uses secular music. Don't judge those who are not like you.

To the old timers/old schoolers in the scene:

Ok guys this one is a hard one to swallow. For some of you the time has come. I think by now we all know or have a very good idea of how things went down in the 90's or whenever you guys started it. It was all division, drama fights and so on.

We know you guys are the pioneers, we get it... but you cannot continue on this trend of "oh back in the day... we did this, we played that, we called it this and that". It's over guys. This is 2014, it is time to adapt, start fresh or hang the towel.

I honestly I'm tired of reading your comments about how thing were 20 years ago. That's cool, you guys are the starting point and we get it. Enough with the stories. You are either going to help us or not, and if is not in you to do that I think is time for you to move on. I know that there are some things that happened in the past that may or may not repeat and that is ok.

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To sum everything up all in a few words: if you want to see our little scene grow to become something bigger than you and me, now is the time. Support. Buy. Share. Attend. Invest time and money in the scene. Make time for it. Get out of your little bubble. Pray about this and if this is not your gig, get out and let others do it. If you are too selfish to do this for the scene, trust me, you won't be here long.

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Tastyfresh.com | The Future: Old Timers - Tastyfresh.com (2014-06-29 18:07:58)

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In[1] Re5a's recent post, he issued a call to just about everyone involved in this thing known as Christian EDM. In case you didn't realize it, I'm actually part of the old timers he spoke about toward the end of his post.

I was first introduced to Christian "techno" as it was all called back in the early 90's by another kid in my youth group who had a tape by a band called Jryadelix. The guy driving the bus hated it. He kept referring to it as industrial music. At the time, I had no clue that the guys behind the tape were actually in industrial bands, but regardless I fell in love with techno that day which only preyed on my childhood love of synths even more.

Quickly, I found other bands like the Prodigal Sons, Scott Blackwell, Code of Ethics and the Echoing Green. Like how I treated Christian rock, I quickly learned artist names, labels, producer names and whatever small bits of trivia I could in these pre-Internet days. If there was a new release on N*Soul Records, I'd have it on day one (almost) with very few exceptions. Back then, you could walk into a Christian bookstore and actually find a section called "Dance" and stocked there would be all the house and techno you could ever hope to find.

That was twenty years ago now. Now is not twenty years ago. Now does not have the same needs as twenty years ago. The goals of now, should not be the same goals as twenty years ago. When Re5a called the "old timers" to get with the times or get out of the way, he was right.

I don't feel like us old timers are in the way or holding people back, but we may be holding onto the past a bit too much. Anthony Lee of boldly told me and the other old timers at the Inner Flame conference that we screwed the scene up and it was now time for the next generation to clean it up. His phrasing could have been better, his intentions were noble, but the core truth was correct. We have made missteps. Some of us have failed as husbands. Some of us have drifted off into isolation. Some of us retain bitterness in regards to past events. In other words, life has happened and we did as humans have done for thousands of years. We screwed things up.

Now here's the problem. The younger generation is also poised to make the same mistakes. As they establish successful labels, plan events, hone their skills as DJs and producers and continue on with their day jobs and starting families, life will pull them in multiple directions. Some will stand as glowing examples of Christ's love, others will be sifted like the chaff from wheat. Those who hone their skills, goals and find balance between ministry, work and family will find themselves surviving as hot coals. Those who do not, will be like a roaring flame, their fuel will burn quickly and they will become a thing of the past.

The current, younger generation needs mentors to help guide them through the hard times in life. There's no way around it. However, it does them no good if the old timers are forcing their experience on them. That will only build resistance and bitterness in the younger generation. For those of us who are old timers, we merely become bitter and start to believe that no one is listening or cares about what we have to offer.

There is no doubt in my mind that I am an old timer. There's no doubt in my mind that I also have become somewhat bitter and jaded when it comes to giving advice, warnings and even encouragement. I'm honestly still upset about how GodsDJs was formed.

GodsDJs is a direct result of me offering to share part of Tastyfresh with Nate Carlisle so that he could build a Christian DJ database. He didn't want to share the spotlight with me. We had already clashed on several other issues in regards to the site's forums at the time. I actually had seen a lot of leadership potential within him and wanted help him to develop that. Unfortunately, that didn't happen and slowly things spiraled out of control until GodsDJs and Tastyfresh had a semi-private war going on. Technically speaking, it still is. I still do not approve of the tactics Nate has been using to make GodsDJs appear bigger and more productive than it really is. One thing I can say about GodsDJs' success though is that they are having an impact on their local scene in Detroit. That's more than I can say about Tastyfresh. And that's the thing. What is Tastyfresh's impact today? I'll discuss that next week, but feel free to discuss it now in the comments below.

1. <http://www.tastyfresh.com/articles/culture/2014/06/23/re5a-speaks/>

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Will Barnard (2014-07-02 14:51:00)

I started following Christian EDM since 1999. I stumbled upon tastyfresh first in 2008 while browsing the internet. I listened to and downloaded homegrown ep 17 by dj yosek. I still listen to it a lot and my spirit gets lifted time and time again. I play joyful uplifting dance music at a secular club every Friday night and love to mix in CEDM when ever I can. I also serve on the Pastoral leadership team at the Vineyard Christian Fellowship in Oudtshoorn. Oudtshoorn is a small town in the Western Cape, South Africa. Being able to connect to the internet and browsing a site like tastyfresh is what keeps me connected and up to date with CEDM and its artist. I love being able to learn, listen and see what other Jesus followers are doing in the electronic dance music industry. Thank you Dave Richards for what you and your team are doing. Blessings, will barnard

Dave Richards (2014-07-03 10:24:00)

Thanks for the encouragement. Which club are you spinning at? How many are showing up? Seems like you've got a great base for a ministry there.

Will Barnard (2014-07-03 15:48:00)

The place is called Club Prater. It has 2 bars one vip lounge and one dance floor. On average there is about 70 people that come every Friday night. Some locals and continued new faces. The Klein Karoo National Arts Festival "KKNK" happens once a year in Oudtshoorn where artist from all over the country have different events. It is mostly comprised of Afrikaans Folk and Pop singers. www.absakknk.co.za The festival it self draws about a 100 000 people from all over the country during a period of 8 days. The Club is filled to its max during this time with about 350 people every night. I have been longing and are considering doing an electronic dance music event during the course of the festival as well with some friends and get in some famous guest dj's. At the club it self I haven't had ministry opportunity's yet except through the music, but I have made some lost friends that I disciple for JESUS. I don't try and convince people to follow Jesus, I just share my testimony with them and be a witness.

I am listing to your freashbeats2 episode 9 while typing this. Way cool man some nice fat beats, real housie.

Dave Richards (2014-07-09 13:34:00)

Sounds cool man. Keep truckin' and remember that you're the "scene" where you are. You've got to find the right path for there and lead the way God would have you to lead. Sometimes all people need are a few good friends who will love on them and pray for/with them. Showing that love will go a long way in winning them.



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I don't feel like us old timers are in the way or holding people back, but we may be holding onto the past a bit too much. Anthony Lee of boldly told me and the other old timers at the Inner Flame conference that we screwed the scene up and it was now time for the next generation to clean it up. His phrasing could have been better, his intentions were noble, but the core truth was correct. We have made missteps. Some of us have failed as husbands. Some of us have drifted off into isolation. Some of us retain bitterness in regards to past events. In other words, life has happened and we did as humans have done for thousands of years. We screwed things up.

Now here's the problem. The younger generation is also poised to make the same mistakes. As they establish successful labels, plan events, hone their skills as DJs and producers and continue on with their day jobs and starting families, life will pull them in multiple directions. Some will stand as glowing examples of Christ's love, others will be sifted like the chaff from wheat. Those who hone their skills, goals and find balance between ministry, work and family will find themselves surviving as hot coals. Those who do not, will be like a roaring flame, their fuel will burn quickly and they will become a thing of the past.

The current, younger generation needs mentors to help guide them through the hard times in life. There's no way around it. However, it does them no good if the old timers are forcing their experience on them. That will only build resistance and bitterness in the younger generation. For those of us who are old timers, we merely become bitter and start to believe that no one is listening or cares about what we have to offer.

There is no doubt in my mind that I am an old timer. There's no doubt in my mind that I also have become somewhat bitter and jaded when it comes to giving advice, warnings and even encouragement. I'm honestly still upset about how GodsDJs was formed.

GodsDJs is a direct result of me offering to share part of Tastyfresh with Nate Carlisle so that he could build a Christian DJ database. He didn't want to share the spotlight with me. We had already clashed on several other issues in regards to the site's forums at the time. I actually had seen a lot of leadership potential within him and wanted help him to develop that. Unfortunately, that didn't happen and slowly things spiraled out of control until GodsDJs and Tastyfresh had a semi-private war going on. Technically speaking, it still is. I still do not approve of the tactics Nate has been using to make GodsDJs appear bigger and more productive than it really is. One thing I can say about GodsDJs' success though is that they are having an impact on their local scene in Detroit. That's more than I can say about Tastyfresh. And that's the thing. What is Tastyfresh's impact today? I'll discuss that next week, but feel free to discuss it now in the comments below.

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Thanks for the encouragement. Which club are you spinning at? How many are showing up? Seems like you've got a great base for a ministry there.

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The place is called Club Prater. It has 2 bars one vip lounge and one dance floor. On average there is about 70 people that come every Friday night. Some locals and continued new faces. The Klein Karoo National Arts Festival "KKNK" happens once a year in Oudtshoorn where artist from all over the country have different events. It is mostly comprised of Afrikaans Folk and Pop singers. www.absakknk.co.za The festival it self draws about a 100 000 people from all over the country during a period of 8 days. The Club is filled to its max during this time with about 350 people every night. I have been longing and are considering doing an electronic dance music event during the course of the festival as well with some friends and get in some famous guest dj's. At the club it self I haven't had ministry opportunity's yet except through the music, but I have made some lost friends that I disciple for JESUS. I don't try and convince people to follow Jesus, I just share my testimony with them and be a witness.

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Sounds cool man. Keep truckin' and remember that you're the "scene" where you are. You've got to find the right path for there and lead the way God would have you to lead. Sometimes all people need are a few good friends who will love on them and pray for/with them. Showing that love will go a long way in winning them.



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I was first introduced to Christian "techno" as it was all called back in the early 90's by another kid in my youth group who had a tape by a band called Jryadelix. The guy driving the bus hated it. He kept referring to it as industrial music. At the time, I had no clue that the guys behind the tape were actually in industrial bands, but regardless I fell in love with techno that day which only preyed on my childhood love of synths even more.

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12.7 July



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Despite all of these successes though, we were not growing. In general, traffic to Tastyfresh.com from 2000 until the advent of social media was about 5,000-7,000 visitors per month. Between 2006 and 2010, about 3,000 visitors came to the site each month. Today, we're lucky if we get one article and one podcast posted a month and our discussions are now on Facebook, where the community naturally migrated to. Only about 800 people visit the website a month now and most of the discussion on Facebook comes from people who are merely there to sell their music. Clearly, Tastyfresh has lost it's relevancy.

It pains me to say that. Tastyfresh has been a passion of mine for some time. I knew however that it wouldn't last forever. Well, I knew that I couldn't be the leader of it forever. Give that, I was looking almost from day one for someone to take it over. After years of searching and praying, God's plan clearly does not necessarily include Tastyfresh in the future.

One question that comes up a lot when you talk about self-sacrifice and love is "do you love _ _ _ _ enough to set it free?" I'm there right now. I love running Tastyfresh. I love owning one of the oldest websites on the Internet. I love having a small Internet community to turn to for advice.

The problem is that the site no longer meets the needs of the people it serves and the evidence toward that is the constant downward visitor trends, the lack of people willing to write and submit new content and the fact that discussions are becoming more and more limited to self-promotion rather than selfless love.

I don't think the issue is simply one that is tied to Tastyfresh however. GodsDJs forums are just as dead. They too are having a hard time being consistent in posting new material. I'm not trying to compare the two sites, but I am saying that it is a sign that we as a larger community may love belonging to a group more than we love doing something about it.

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That brings me to my favorite computer game, Deus Ex. I know that's a pretty odd jump, but stick with me. My favorite video game actually provides us with the solution I think we need.

In the original Deus Ex, you are dropped into an international, one world government conspiracy. At the end of the game, you are allowed to make a choice based on all that you have learned. You can decide to join the Illuminati and rule the world from behind the scenes or you can merge your intelligence with an artificial intelligence and control every aspect of life on the planet.

For the sake of the argument, let's say the Illuminati and artificial intelligence represents either Tastyfresh vs. GodsDJs or that the two represent those of us who want to minister directly to the secular scene vs. those of us who want to replicate the secular scene within the church to ministry primarily to the church youth groups or it could be the old timers vs. the young guns. It really doesn't matter. The simple fact is that both choices will lead us right back to where we are at this moment.

Our desire for a larger unified scene is causing us to have more division. Each side has a desire to control the other to a certain degree. Neither side is fully willing to listen and adapt to the other's needs and desires. We are all making selfish choices to various degrees and it's causing us to fail.

Deus Ex does provide a third option however. It's a drastic one and the one I end up taking every single time I replay the game. I can't fathom doing any other solution. That solution is to cut the cable. To destroy the communication hub between all of the nations, cities and homes. It prevents the Illuminati from accomplishing their plans. It prevents the artificial intelligence from controlling anything. It actually forces every community to rethink what it is that they're trying to do and to raise new leadership that hopefully will find a better solution.

<http://youtu.be/YCzitO446ZY>

After years of praying and after years of seeking God's will for Tastyfresh and the community in general, this has been God's answer to me. It's time to shut Tastyfresh down and to invest in what I have known for years to be

the solution. It's time for me to invest in Atlanta and to focus on just Atlanta. It's also time for GodsDJs to focus solely on Detroit and to find a solution for that town. Dallas should be doing the same thing as well as Toronto, LA, New York and so many other location.

God is ready to move in our major cities and so many of us are stuck behind a computer screen wondering when Tastyfresh and GodsDJs are actively going to put forward a plan that will reach everyone... including the rural towns.

That's what we've been trying to do now since 1992. For twenty-two years we have been trying the same thing over and over and over again. Each time, we succeed for a while, faltered and then failed. And then, rather than learning from the past, we repeat it. According to an old Narcotics Anonymous pamphlet, that is the definition of insanity.

So, this is the end of Tastyfresh. After almost eighteen years, I'm going to turn off the server, turn out the lights and move on. This isn't an immediate change though. I'm still working out the entire exit strategy, but Tastyfresh is past it's prime. It's an old timer, like me. I can and have learned to adapt, but Tastyfresh cannot.

I'll let you know about the exciting details of my future with this scene in the upcoming weeks, but for now... examine your life. Is there anything in it that is holding you back from growing closer to God? Is there anything that you need to do that you haven't done for God yet? Why not do it now? Why not get a fresh start and outlook on life? Why not examine your motives? In our own ways, we are all part of the problem. It's now time to be part of the solution. It's time for our insanity to end so that God's glory can shine within the EDM community.

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Ki (2014-08-11 20:19:00)

Alright now calm down this isn't Pinky and the Brain. Or is it? Because obviously your plan to take over the world with this cute force of Christianity x EDM was never meant to be. 18 years? Seriously? You see I used to have big dreams too. Big dreams about saving the world and all. And then the truth dawned on me: 1) Humans are unreliable creatures/it's every person for themselves out there, 2) Nobody truly knows anything. We think we are all so smart. But we're not. EDM is not a catalyst for your personal wants. It is simply an emotional experience that comes and goes...like religion, like humanity, like life itself...yep. Here's some advice, from my own experience: don't wait on a community, don't wait on a team, don't even wait on friends. Your fellow humans can, will, and have already let you down. And you CAN actually get very far in your dreams all by yourself. Anyway sorry for the long rambling rant.

Dave Richards (2014-08-11 21:45:00)

Ki, I'm sorry that you've given up on people and dreams. I never viewed EDM as a catalyst for my personal wants. I really haven't. I enjoy the music. I enjoy the people. What I know though is that there are people there who think that EDM is life and that EDM is real family and that drugs and sex outside of God's design is the pinnacle of life and society. I know too many people who have destroyed their lives through EDM culture and after finding Jesus, are enjoying life and understand that they were living a lie and are now much happier and free from addictions. The assumption that TF was about building a cult around myself is just simply wrong. Thanks for reading the post though.

Craig Bryant (2014-08-13 17:04:00)

I think genre of EDM is limiting. I am so far to my knowledge the only vocaloid producer which make original songs with Christian lyrics. if do not know vocaloid is voice synthesis program. The genre of electric music is much wider which can include

electric rock.



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That brings me to my favorite computer game, Deus Ex. I know that's a pretty odd jump, but stick with me. My favorite video game actually provides us with the solution I think we need.

In the original Deus Ex, you are dropped into an international, one world government conspiracy. At the end of the game, you are allowed to make a choice based on all that you have learned. You can decide to join the Illuminati and rule the world from behind the scenes or you can merge your intelligence with an artificial intelligence and control every aspect of life on the planet.

For the sake of the argument, let's say the Illuminati and artificial intelligence represents either Tastyfresh vs. GodsDJs or that the two represent those of us who want to minister directly to the secular scene vs. those of us who want to replicate the secular scene within the church to ministry primarily to the church youth groups or it could be the old timers vs. the young guns. It really doesn't matter. The simple fact is that both choices will lead us right back to where we are at this moment.

Our desire for a larger unified scene is causing us to have more division. Each side has a desire to control the other to a certain degree. Neither side is fully willing to listen and adapt to the other's needs and desires. We are all making selfish choices to various degrees and it's causing us to fail.

Deus Ex does provide a third option however. It's a drastic one and the one I end up taking every single time I replay the game. I can't fathom doing any other solution. That solution is to cut the cable. To destroy the communication hub between all of the nations, cities and homes. It prevents the Illuminati from accomplishing their plans. It prevents the artificial intelligence from controlling anything. It actually forces every community to rethink what it is that they're trying to do and to raise new leadership that hopefully will find a better solution.

<http://youtu.be/YCzitO446ZY>

After years of praying and after years of seeking God's will for Tastyfresh and the community in general, this has been God's answer to me. It's time to shut Tastyfresh down and to invest in what I have known for years to be

the solution. It's time for me to invest in Atlanta and to focus on just Atlanta. It's also time for GodsDJs to focus solely on Detroit and to find a solution for that town. Dallas should be doing the same thing as well as Toronto, LA, New York and so many other location.

God is ready to move in our major cities and so many of us are stuck behind a computer screen wondering when Tastyfresh and GodsDJs are actively going to put forward a plan that will reach everyone... including the rural towns.

That's what we've been trying to do now since 1992. For twenty-two years we have been trying the same thing over and over and over again. Each time, we succeed for a while, faltered and then failed. And then, rather than learning from the past, we repeat it. According to an old Narcotics Anonymous pamphlet, that is the definition of insanity.

So, this is the end of Tastyfresh. After almost eighteen years, I'm going to turn off the server, turn out the lights and move on. This isn't an immediate change though. I'm still working out the entire exit strategy, but Tastyfresh is past it's prime. It's an old timer, like me. I can and have learned to adapt, but Tastyfresh cannot.

I'll let you know about the exciting details of my future with this scene in the upcoming weeks, but for now... examine your life. Is there anything in it that is holding you back from growing closer to God? Is there anything that you need to do that you haven't done for God yet? Why not do it now? Why not get a fresh start and outlook on life? Why not examine your motives? In our own ways, we are all part of the problem. It's now time to be part of the solution. It's time for our insanity to end so that God's glory can shine within the EDM community.

As a community, we have lost our focus. We can no longer express common goals or a plan that will help us to achieve them. We even have problems acknowledging our leaders and following their leadership or advice.

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Alright now calm down this isn't Pinky and the Brain. Or is it? Because obviously your plan to take over the world with this cute force of Christianity x EDM was never meant to be. 18 years? Seriously? You see I used to have big dreams too. Big dreams about saving the world and all. And then the truth dawned on me: 1) Humans are unreliable creatures/it's every person for themselves out there, 2) Nobody truly knows anything. We think we are all so smart. But we're not. EDM is not a catalyst for your personal wants. It is simply an emotional experience that comes and goes...like religion, like humanity, like life itself...yep. Here's some advice, from my own experience: don't wait on a community, don't wait on a team, don't even wait on friends. Your fellow humans can, will, and have already let you down. And you CAN actually get very far in your dreams all by yourself. Anyway sorry for the long rambling rant.

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Ki, I'm sorry that you've given up on people and dreams. I never viewed EDM as a catalyst for my personal wants. I really haven't. I enjoy the music. I enjoy the people. What I know though is that there are people there who think that EDM is life and that EDM is real family and that drugs and sex outside of God's design is the pinnacle of life and society. I know too many people who have destroyed their lives through EDM culture and after finding Jesus, are enjoying life and understand that they were living a lie and are now much happier and free from addictions. The assumption that TF was about building a cult around myself is just simply wrong. Thanks for reading the post though.

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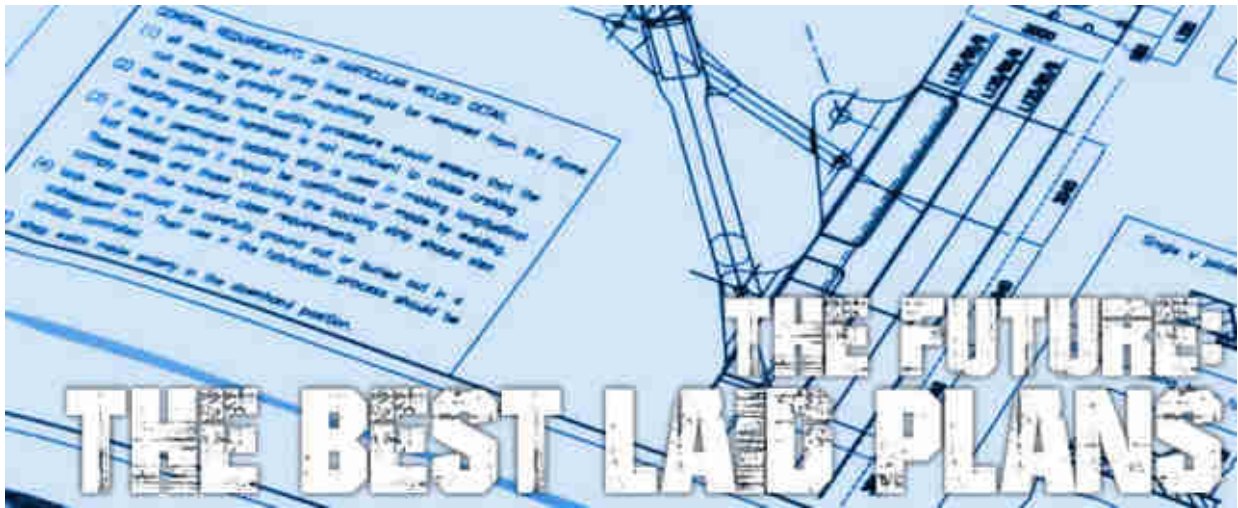
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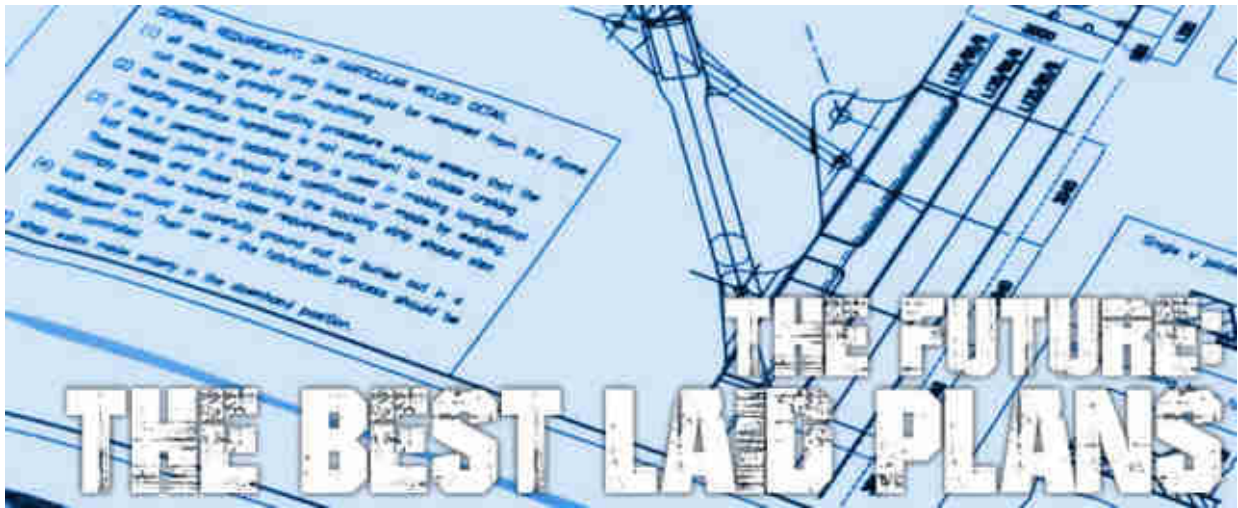
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Thom McGuire (2014-07-27 20:28:00)

NO worries it was worth an ask!

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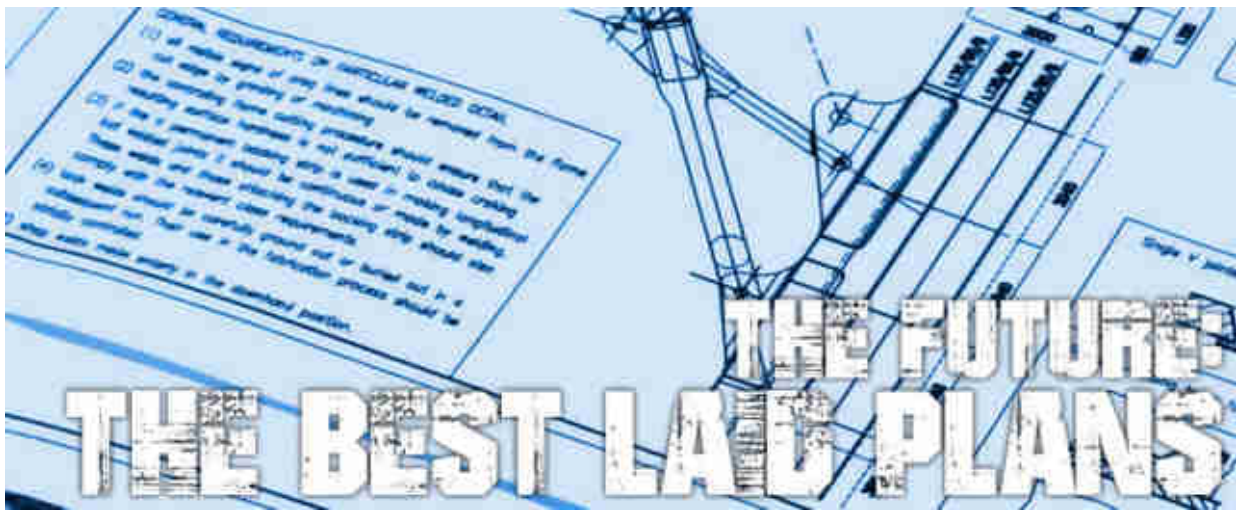
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NO worries it was worth an ask!

Craig Bryant (2014-08-13 17:27:00)

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Last week I announced that Tastyfresh.com will be officially shutting down. Again, the site has run it's course now and there isn't a lot more than it can do to drive our community forward. Now is the time that we all take action. It's time for all of us to step up and work locally in whatever capacity we can.

I realize that many of us feel isolated and alone. There are even some of us who live in rural areas where there isn't any type of EDM scene (secular or Christian). You still have the internet though. You can still be just as active as you are now.

Let me encourage you though to keep producing if you are a producer. Send your demos out to labels (both secular and Christian). Don't be afraid of rejection. Failure is just a step forward. There is always room for more well produced music. Never forget that.

If you're a DJ, keep recording mixes. Post them to Mixcloud.com. Post those links to various forums. Keep promoting yourself. Don't be afraid to accept an opportunity to DJ at a secular club or rave. Take a buddy with you for support, but don't avoid secular gigs. It's an opportunity for God to use you.

The point is that the existence or non-existence of Tastyfresh should not prevent you from making waves within your community. In fact, I know there are smaller, local groups out there who have very little contact with Tastyfresh. There are groups in Georgia, Texas, Canada, the UK, South Africa, South America and more. These people are the ones who will drive things forward and you have a chance to be a part of that in your local area as well.

The absence of Tastyfresh shouldn't prevent you in this day and age of social media from connecting with other like-minded believers. In fact, it's primarily social media that has lead to a point where I can shut Tastyfresh down with an expectation that the community will not simply fall apart. The relationships we have built over the years will not fade simply because the lights go off at tastyfresh.com. I know this because I know you. You all send messages to each other in private. You post to each other's walls. I've seen you all interact and it's beautiful. I know these relationships will not fade, because you will not let them.

So that leads me to the main purpose of this post: explaining what will happen with Tastyfresh.com.

The first thing that you need to know is that I am not simply pulling the plug. That would be the worst thing to do. I will keep the site up and running for a while, although I don't know how long in its current capacity.

Let's talk about some specifics though. First, the podcasts are one of the most central pieces of history for the site. I never expected them to be as loved as they are, but I'm proud to have been a part of something so special. As some of you know, Daniel (DJ Dunamis) and I have already started archiving these on Mixcloud. You can find the first year of the podcasts up on [1]www.mixcloud.com/tastyfresh today.

It may take us a few months to migrate them all there, so be patient. Mixcloud does two great things for the podcasts. First, they will create playlists (when they can) and link the tracks to JunoDownload for purchase. Second, they also report each track that is played to the various performance groups so that the songwriters can get paid for their work. The one downside is that Mixcloud is streaming only, so if you want to download a full archive of the podcasts, start doing so now.

Now for the second and more important piece of Tastyfresh content: the articles. Let me go ahead and state the obvious here, once this future series ends, there will be no new articles added to the site.

I'll be honest, I'm still confused on how to handle archiving the articles. We have articles going back to the start of the site in 1996. That's so far back that I don't even know for sure who wrote them. Usually, they were written by either Andy Payne or Jamey Wright. We also have a LOT of articles that are extremely dated and missing links to supporting files. While there might be something of value in an article about writing a good baseline, posts like that are using out of date techniques and are missing some links to audio examples.

What I would like to do is archive the best, if not all, of the articles in a nicely done and edited PDF. That would allow me to preserve the history of the site as well as the central messages for those who are interested in the site's history and goals. The PDF would be online for anyone to download. Currently, there are just under 250 articles. Many of them are 3-5 pages in length. That's a lot of content to go through. What I decide to do here will be completely dependent on who is willing to help me in this area. I'm open to suggestions and volunteers.

The third thing we need to talk about are the social media accounts. I will be closing the [2]Twitter account for sure. I rarely, if ever, posted to directly to it. The site has been posting updates to it automatically as new content has been added to the site. The [3]Soundcloud group will be deleted as well. It isn't moderated for content and is barely used by anyone these days. The Tastyfresh page on Facebook will also be deleted. The mailing list, while small, will also be deleted.

Despite deleting all of those, I am still tempted to keep the Facebook group going, but I will be considering how to re-brand it. I personally will not be trying to lead anything there. I'll just be another participant in the discussion, or... I may actually leave the group for a while and just see what develops. I don't really want to destroy the last "official" gathering place for this community.

Back to the website itself, once everything has been archived, I plan to keep the domain up for a while. For how long, I don't know. There's a legacy here that does need to be preserved and to be honest, I'm rather fond of my tastyfresh.com email address, so don't expect the domain to go up for sale anytime soon. What I do know is that it will have links to the article and podcast archives and a short bit about the site's history. Beyond that, I will use the domain to direct people to [4]JesusLuvRavers.com which has yet to be built out.

Why JesusLuvRavers.com? It's simple. They are the local Atlanta ministry that I am serving in right now. The group is being led by two very strong and dedicated Christians, Goshen Sai and his wife Tiffany. Both of them came out of the rave scene and were saved and they're now being led back into it. They have managed to pull off a vibrant and growing ministry to both the lost and the church that is authentic, fluid and did so without having to be tied to either Tastyfresh or GodsDJs. In fact, GodsDJs is [5]trying to capitalize off their ministry name right now.

So when people visit Tastyfresh.com in the future, there will be a page with links to the archives, a short his-

tory of the site and a statement to encourage people learn more about JesusLuvRavers.

Tastyfresh maybe shutting down, but it's not abandoning the cause or the community. It's just time to pour into new wineskins and build-up the next generation of leaders. God's not done with us yet, but He is revealing new tasks, new paths and new leaders. What is God leading you to do?

1. <http://www.mixcloud.com/tastyfresh/>
2. <https://twitter.com/tstyfrsh>
3. <https://soundcloud.com/groups/tastyfresh-com>
4. <http://JesusLuvRavers.com/>
5. https://www.etsy.com/listing/191575120/jesus-loves-ravers-black-light?ref=shop_home_active_2

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aka MJ12 (2014-07-23 09:14:00)

Sad to see TastyFresh go. Regarding the sets on MixCloud... can you enable all the download links so we can download them before they're gone? Thanks, and God Bless you in your new adventures!

Dave Richards (2014-07-23 10:06:00)

Unfortunately MixCloud does not allow downloading. You can still download all of the sets from the site now. So, please do so. ;)

Dillie-O (2014-07-23 15:11:00)

Thanks for all the hard work you've done through the years Dave. I've never been DJ myself, but I've been in love with the EDM scene and TastyFresh allowed me to find some top quality music that has a great focus as well. I think I have hours worth of podcasts of various "issues" around my computer here and there 8^D It will be sad to see things go but I think your insights are spot on and this is a bold and good move to make. I'll be keeping my links up to date so I can keep a bead on all the amazing DJs around here. As for archiving the articles, you might look into Anthologize (<http://anthologize.org>) as a solution for this. I'm pretty sure you're running WordPress, and this looks like an option on how to make it happen. I'm also a software engineer, so I'd love to volunteer any time needed to help get things exported out nicely. I don't know content you want to keep, but I can help with all the tech stuff needed to get things published. Feel free to PM me in Facebook or elsewhere in my Disqus profile if you want to talk more about it. Thanks again for all you do! I'll keep following over in the JesusLuvRavers site!

Dave Richards (2014-07-23 22:53:00)

Thanks man. I may call on you in a few weeks about the archives. I certainly could use the help.

Dillie-O (2014-07-24 09:08:00)

I look forward to it!

Thom McGuire (2014-07-27 16:33:00)

Anyway to make the podcasts into zip file for easier downloads?

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gads

BlogBook v0.5,
 \LaTeX 2 ϵ & GNU/Linux.
<http://www.blogbooker.com>

Edited: September 29, 2014

