

January 2010

Over **Flow**

Houston



Movies • TV • Urban Missions • Outreach

Street Life Worldwide

Street Life

It's not everyday that you meet people that truly are reaching out. Several years ago, Robert Taylor introduced me to Street Life Worldwide Evangelistic Association, Inc. (herein referred to as Street Life Worldwide or just Street Life), a ministry committed to reaching those influenced by the hip hop culture. As I learned about Street Life, it didn't surprise me that Robert was heavily involved with this ministry. After all, in high school (yes, we go way back), Robert used to carry a "boombox" around campus! Several weeks ago, Terry and I had the pleasure of sitting down with Terrance Levi (Founder & CEO) and Robert Taylor (Director of Operations).

Overflow: How was the vision of Street Life birthed?

Levi: The vision of Street Life was birthed after the Lord delivered me out of organized crime. I did promotions before I was a Christian and was able to draw a crowd. I could move a group of people to a certain spot. I felt I could do the same thing with ministry: moving people to a certain spot with some type of entertainment-related event, and then share the only thing I knew to share at the time which was my testimony, how the Lord saved me. That's how we got started. Using what I had done on the secular side in the form of promoting events to doing event promotions still, but now when I draw a crowd and give them the entertainment, before going home, I tell them about Jesus.

Overflow: What year was Street Life birthed?

Levi: October 1995.

Overflow: You mentioned that you would be changing the name or modifying the name?

Levi: Because our vision has transcended urban, we are doing all kinds of outreaches. What's pushed us that direction is our movies. We won't do away with Street Life but the new umbrella organization will be Evangelism World Inc. It's not so much that we are traveling over the world doing evangelism. Evangelism World, Inc. is a state of mind where we develop creative evangelistic tools to evan-

Street Life has a monthly newsletter email blast.



LEVI

gelize the world for Jesus.

Overflow: Your monthly email newsletter mentioned some type of award or recognition you just received.

Levi: Yes. We received an award from the Baptist Union Convention of Texas for Innovation and Evangelism in Ministry for our innovative and cutting edge ideas on evangelism which includes our movies, the truck, different outreach events we've done over the years.

Overflow: What all does Street Life encompass?

Levi: Rob, you take this.

Rob: Evangelism World, Inc. takes it to a broader scale. But Street Life Worldwide is an urban missions organization committed to reaching those influenced by the hip hop culture with the gospel, and getting them discipled whether it be with us or someone we partner with. We

Worldwide

Photo by: Nathan Simmons



ROBERT

are committed to developing cutting edge, innovative tools for evangelism -- event-driven evangelism including sporting events, car shows, Christian rap concerts and different types of Christian music, barbecues, festivals --- any creative thing to drive the crowd. A big part of Street Life is the media side. Our film division which we've produced two urban faith-based evangelistic films. We have several more movies and television series in development.

We have the Spring Church. Many times ministries are birthed out of our churches, but in our case the church is birthed out of the ministry. Most of the members of our church are involved in our outreaches. Some have been featured in our movies. So Street Life encompasses those things: reaching out with evangelistic events; reaching out through our church; reaching the culture through media productions; and of course the truck.

Overflow: When did you get the truck? How did that start?

Rob: April of 2008.

Overflow: What significant event led you to getting the truck?

Levi: I'm by no means a rocket scientist. When I feel led of God to do something, I just run with it. I may not know the full scope of what it is or will do. I had a friend of mine back 16 years ago. He had a short pull behind trailer. I felt the Lord say to make a truck like that trailer so I can run over curbs and drive in the fields -- you can't take a trailer everywhere but you can take a truck.... I spent like two and a half weeks and we raised the money. From the time I woke up in the morning to the time I closed my eyes at night, that truck was all I could think about. I found myself in places in front of people. I went to visit a friend who wanted me to meet this pastor and this pastor was telling me whenever you meet people you need to give them the opportunity to sow into your ministry. So I put it on his mind about the truck. He picked up the phone and started telling this guy on the phone about our evangelistic ministry and the guy gave me \$12,000. That was the first or second \$12,000 that we got, but the Lord did it. I can't take credit for anything.

Rob: Tell them how that guy thought you were crazy.

Levi: Oh yeah. I would go lay hands on the truck of the guy that was selling it. The guy thought I was crazy for praying over the truck. But I knew it was time. We even had a mock picture of the truck for years. In two and a half months we went from saying we were going to get a truck to having the truck and having it paid for.

Overflow: When it's God, He can move things fast. It will flow.

Levi: Like I said for me and most of the things I've done, I can't take credit. I'm not a smart guy. I'm like Moses and the bush. I can be just walking down the street and I see a Bush on fire and I just start having conversations with the Bush. Sixteen years later the Bush is still talking. I try to be obedient and listen to the Bush, but the Bush is the smart one and not me.

Overflow: A pastor was talking about God's overflow last week, and He said God can make you look smart.

Levi: That's me. God does stuff that makes me shine.

OverFlow: Now moving to the film side, what films do you have? How would you categorize them?

Levi: The first film we did was "PAIN."

OverFlow: Loved it!

Levi: Thanks and the second one was "Tales from the Players Manual." We are about to do an advertising campaign for "PAIN."

Rob: We are preparing for a release in the early part of January with a soundtrack.

OverFlow: Yeah. On Facebook, you were saying something about praying for some release in South Africa.

Rob: South Africa and Brazil and some other countries say they want to distribute it.

OverFlow: What else is going on?

Levi: We just finished a pilot episode for our first sitcom. It's called "A Family Thing." The big project we are working on now is a film called Remission which would be our biggest film to date. We anticipate it to be about \$20 million budget.

OverFlow: How do you expect to get funding?

Levi: *(jokingly)* The Bush will tell!

OverFlow: How can other people get involved?

Rob: We have a website for our films. We have different categories of films. Right now we are doing urban but plan to go broader. Casting is going through our urban division, Black Christian Entertainment. Black Christian Entertainment (BCE) is the premiere online destination for urban Christian media – focus on film and television. There's a lot of stuff out there for music, but we found a big gap in film and television. And somehow no one had ever taken the name Black Christian Entertainment so we were able to trademark it and purchase domains. So if you go to blackchristianentertainment.com, you will see a cast and call link which will take you to our casting site where you will be able to upload photos, resumes, portfolios etc.

We will be visiting churches telling people about our films what we are doing and our casting opportunities. We're looking for writers. People who can take concepts and put

it on paper. Writers, people who want to learn about producing.

We went through the school of hard knocks. We didn't have mentors and still have a lot to learn but we can share a lot. We'll be doing workshops for acting, producing, and writing.

Visit www.BlackChristianEntertainment.com for more information.

We have a member in our company, his name is Toby Gabbison. You will see him on Black Christian Entertainment's website and on the casting link. He was in "Ray" with Jamie Fox. He was in "Dukes of Hazard" and had a scene with Jessica Simpson. He was in "Just My Luck" and had a scene with Lindsay Lohan. He is a good brother, a down to earth guy. He was in our second film Tales of the Players Manual as one of the stars Romeo. He'll be teaching acting classes. So if anyone is interesting in learning from someone who has been in Hollywood, he'll be teaching in addition to his own projects.

OverFlow: Do you still have your television program?

Levi: No we're not doing it now. A lot of our energy is going towards the films, church, and the truck. The productions on BCE will have webisodes on that. So it won't be a full TV show but it will have shorter versions of a television show.

Rob: The goal is to put the word out. We need help with filming. Go to BCE and sign up. If it's something that's quality that we can get online then let us know.

OverFlow: How did you two meet?

Rob: To make a long story short, which I'm not very good at. Anyone who know me knows that... It was '98 and I was surfing through the tv channels one night after coming home from the clubs. At the time I wasn't going to church regularly although I was raised in church. Anyway, it was interesting show with rappers and they were showing music videos. It intrigued me. I liked watching it and would watch after going to the clubs at 3 in the morning. I kept saying I would call the guy on the show. I didn't realize



Photo by: Nathan Simmons



Photo by: Nathan Simmons

when I called that the program we pre-recorded so of course he wasn't at the studio but they told me where he could be found. So I went to Christian Life Center. He had a little office in the youth area of the church he was attending. He was having service called Friday Night Live – very different from anything I had seen before.

The sanctuary was converted to like a club setting. This was like spring of 1998. People were doing comedy and skits. Rappers were rapping. There were skits and low rider bikes on the stage. It was like a show. Levi would give a message. To be honest with you, the Friday night service was from 8 to 10 but I would still go to clubs afterwards. I was going to the clubs like 6 nights a week. Gradually over time, the message got me.

People always ask how to you reach out to the hip hop generation. People think you need to have the rappers and be all cool. And that's all fine but it's the word that must take root... But after a while I was on the road doing concerts and events in the secular scene. Over time I started going to the clubs less and less and the church more and more. So I was back and forth, but by Thanksgiving of 1999, I knew I had to stop everything I was doing. I had peace that I should go here. Some time later I was going through old business cards and saw "Terrance Levi". I then realized, we had crossed paths before.

OverFlow: What would you say to someone who comes from similar background as you?

"Glamour is man-made but glory comes from the Lord."

Levi: I would say that "yes the world is glamorous but it is fading. It's fading and has a horrific end." Why would you stay on a sinking ship? It's time to abandon that ship. Sin is fun for a while but at some point you will have to pay. Glamour pales in comparison to the glory. You can't dance with the devil forever. Glamour is man-made but glory belongs to the Lord.

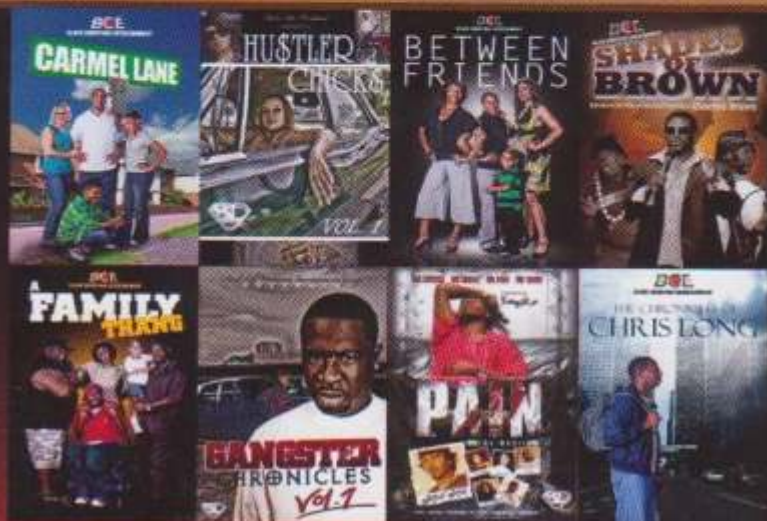
OverFlow: What is your favorite scripture?

Rob: Philippians 12:13 – It says that it's God that gives you the desire to want to please Him.

Levi: My favorite scripture is John 3:16. God so PASSIONATELY loved the world. God's love for us is a fatal attraction love. God is a jealous God. He gave His Son for us.

It is no doubt that these two men love the Lord and have a heart for God's people. They are taking the Word to the streets. If you want to know more about Street Life Worldwide Evangelistic Association, visit www.StreetLifeWorldWide.tv.

Interviewers: Terry Thomas and Samira Thomas



EVANGELISTIC MOVIES, TV, & MORE



STREET LIFE WORLDWIDE

GO ONLINE TO WATCH TRAILERS
www.StreetLifeWorldWide.tv