
Holy Spirit Rekindle our passion as youth

So that the unchurched will hear and experience God's grace!

Prayer and Renewal for Youth—Hip Hop Models

Out of this driving engine called Hip Hop, a special genre has been created called "Holy Hip Hop." Many Christian rap artists have taken the scripture 1 Corinthians 10:31 and applied it to their music, or in other words they are making hip hop music for God's purpose. If it is made for God's purpose, then God makes it "Holy." I ask you, can God take something or someone which was initially unholy and make it holy? Surely, we can review the testimony of Saul (Acts 7:54-60) who witnessed and approved of the stoning of Stephen, and later would write nearly two-thirds of the New Testament. God may be worshipped in many ways including using Hip Hop to do so, just as God used Paul to preach and spread the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul gives us a prime example of how he became all things to all men that by all means he might win some, according to 1 Corinthians 9:19-23. In Acts 17:16-34, Paul shows how he used the existing culture of the people to preach to them about Christ. Hip Hop is strongly influencing our youth; it is their existing culture and they are highly responsive to "Holy Hip Hop."

The Hip Hop gathering model provides an untraditional, unconventional method of worship yet it is a method that directly relates to the youth. The Hip Hop model focuses on full participation by everyone because the best way to allow the Holy Spirit to move us is by allowing ourselves to be used. Whereas, many youth tend to rebel from traditional, conventional ways of doing things because it appears "boring or dated." They tend to lean towards "modern, youthful" ideas. Hip Hop is each of these things and they will participate because of this. Once they take part in the activities, they will be both encouraged and empowered to take what they've learned with them into their communities. The "prayer party" teaches them how to pray. The "graffiti glory" workshop prepares them to "spread God's graffiti" or, in other words, "spread the gospel" in their own unique way.

Exposure to "Holy Hip Hop worship" provides a new perspective on how they can be "in the world but not of the world" (John 17:11, 14). By writing and sharing their own prayers, by creating Scripture based skits, by witnessing through art on their clothes, by expressing themselves through dance, by discussing how to shine as beacons of light during dark situations in their lives our youth will be spiritually recharged and ready to **Glow for God** (Matthew 5:16).

Theme: Glow for God

Theme Song: “Who do you Love” (or your choice)

Bible verse: Matthew 5:16 “Let your light so shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”(NRSV)

This model is ideal for any type of youth gathering:

- a conference style gathering over the weekend
- evangelism efforts on college campuses
- a day long youth group event
- regional LYO assemblies, etc.

Presentation: As with any gathering, strive for the most professional staging and equipment that you can afford. Send the message that God’s music is more important than the secular counterpart. Typically, a 10 x 10 foot stage or comparable floor space with cordless microphones, and a sound system complete with mixer, monitors, and speakers will work fine.

Hip-Hop: What is Hip-hop? Hip-hop is both a noun and an adjective; it is both a culture and a type of music. Hip-Hop is the expression, the art, and the invention of youth from the 1980s. Hip-hop has four components: the MC (master of ceremony), DJ (disc jockey a.k.a. the beats), The B-Boys (“Break-dancers” a.k.a. Rockers) and Graff (Graffiti a.k.a. the Art). The MC is the leader; they tell stories over music and use call and response to get the audience involved. The DJ chooses the hottest beats or best music to get the crowd excited. The B-Boys bring their best moves to the dance floor and showcase their talent. The Graffiti literally paints the picture and brightens the scene through funky urban artistic expressionism. Many people get Rhythmic American Poetry (a.k.a. RAP) confused with Hip-Hop. Rap is not Hip-hop; Rap is a component of Hip-Hop. The true Hip-Hop youth gathering incorporates each of the four elements.

Speakers: Speakers in the traditional sense won’t work here. It is the nature of youth to lose interest quickly; they have a desire to be entertained. After all, they’re bombarded with people talking to them everyday of the week: their teachers lecture, their parents demand, their pastors preaches, etc. Everywhere they turn its talk, talk, talk. So when they give up their evening or their weekend to go to a gathering the last thing they really want to hear is a bunch of talking. Speakers for the Hip-Hop inspired gathering must make their presentation engaging. The key is crowd participation; get them involved. Rappers, Poets, Comedians are ideal speakers for this type of event. They will incorporate music, art, photos, laughter, emotion, and energy into their speech, further engaging the audience.

If you’re unable to find that dynamic speaker for your Hip-Hop inspired event then an alternative would be a short film or video relative to the gathering theme.

Break an hour into 40 minutes of viewing and 20 minutes of discussion. If possible, invite the writers, directors, or actors to appear at your viewing and make themselves available for questions and answers. Contact your local film society for listings and samples of independent short films or documentaries dealing with issues and concerns of teens. Many film societies in major cities often hold separate film festivals for high schools and already have materials set aside for that purpose.

Be sure to screen the material before presenting it to the group for age appropriateness. This is great for the young audience to evaluate their responsibilities as Christians and to compare themselves to the characters and the situations in the film. Also, it's a way to tie in the theme by discussing how we can "Glow for God" in the midst of unpleasant situations in our lives.

Workshops (break into smaller groups):

Spoken Word – participants will explore the power of language through poetry. They will write one massive poem demonstrating God's love by taking the statement "God's love is ..." and finishing the rest of the statement with their own thoughts. Each of their creations will then be compiled into one huge poem to be shared with the entire group as a reminder of God's love to us. Also, students will be given cards with Bible quotes and they must move around the room to unscramble the message. This promotes socialization and Christian education by having them speak with each other and test their knowledge of the Bible. Finally, participants will write a poem using words related to the theme: light, shine, glow, radiate, luminous, brilliance, shimmer, luster, glimmer, glisten, flash, twinkle, etc.

Graffiti Glory – participants will stimulate their inner expressionism and promote Christianity through painting and design. They are encouraged to bring plain old T-shirts & jeans and paint graffiti inspired Bible verses and/or the theme onto the clothing accompanied with pictures and other creative accents. The purpose is to encourage the participants to become active witnesses to God's love in their community by using themselves as walking billboards. The clothing generates conversation which eases them into evangelism by sharing and explaining the motivation for the clothing and what Jesus means to them.

Jesus Walks – This Hip-Hop dance workshop allows participants to learn the latest urban grooves in a positive, non-competitive setting. It promotes socializing among male and female teens without concentration on sexuality. Everyone can participate from beginners to advanced dancers. It prepares young Christians to be confident about participating in school dances without compromising their morals and values. The music is pre-screened and incorporates a mixture of secular instrumentals and Christian Hip-Hop artists.

Activities (Entire gathering):

PRAYER PARTY - This is a portion of the program that again encourages full participation. Everyone is encouraged to bring a prayer to the party. A facilitator begins with soft music playing in the background and invites everyone to repeat the words of the opening prayer. Three microphones are set up in the front of the room labeled accordingly:

- 1) **“Give Props”** *{use this microphone to give thanks to God},*
- 2) **“Holla Back”** *{use this microphone to ask God for help and forgiveness},*
- 3) **“For My Peeps”** *{use this microphone to pray for others}.*

Everyone is invited to share their intercession by stepping up to the microphone and saying their prayer. Those who wish to offer up personal confessions may write them down a sheet of paper, conceal it, and then drop it into a trashcan up front. This signifies that they have brought their burdens to God, prayed about it, and are now “letting go and letting God.” After all of the intercessions have been offered, the facilitator closes the prayer.

THE BIBLE BATTLE – competitiveness and the desire to be original is a Hip-Hop tradition. This activity challenges participants to demonstrate their understanding of the gathering theme by creating and performing original skits based on selected bible passages. For example, during the Bible Battle each group will make a three-minute presentation of their creation and a panel of judges will choose the top three. Along with encouraging active participation from each group represented at the gathering, it also gives everyone a variety of ways to carry the theme with them in their daily lives.

COFFEE HOUSE /OPEN MIC – There are many talented participants throughout the gathering who want an outlet for their creativity and who simply want to share their talents with the rest of the group. People may share their poetry, song, dance, monologue, music, comedy, prose etc. Have a sign-up sheet of 15-20 slots and allow 3-4 minutes per sharing. You should have an MC and either a DJ or a band to complete the vibe. Don’t limit yourself to coffee - try a Pizza Party, Popcorn Party, Ice Cream Social, etc.

The Glow Show – The gathering culminates with The Glow Show. This is where the word is shared over funky, hype beats inviting the audience to nod their heads, wave their hands and repeat the words back to the MC. This is where the hard work of encouraging participation and breaking down self-awareness pays off. The audience engages, learns and has fun doing it. The scene is preferably a stage with microphones and speakers and a sound engineer. Florescent and/or Glow in the Dark Graffiti inspired backdrops of the

gathering theme. Everyone wearing glow in the dark necklaces or waving glow sticks at night time or in a room that can be darkened. This is the physical example of how Christians can help bring light into the world, how they can “Glow for God” in the midst of the darkness of the world. A hi-energy performer will move the crowd and everyone will leave filled with the spirit and ready to glow.

The After Party - After parties are also a Hip-Hop tradition. No Hip-Hop influenced gathering is complete without a party, preferably right after The Glow Show. Call the dance “**Glow in the Dark**” and decorate accordingly. Have a blast and send God’s light out to shine in the world.

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