

RELIGION

Church Boy

The Life Story of Gospel Music Sensation Kirk Franklin

He has three platinum albums to his credit and his face recognized by millions, but he wasn't born to a privileged family of entertainers. Surprisingly, this music sensation, who is now worth millions to his record label, was raised in near-poverty and never even graduated from high school. And now, for the first time, millions of fans can read Kirk's entire rags-to-riches story in the pages of Church Boy, his autobiography from Word Publishing.

Complete with photos and never-before stories, Church Boy is the only authorized story of Kirk Franklin's life and music. Within its pages, Church Boy reveals how music shaped the life of this award-winning songwriter, performer and producer. And it reveals how God was always nearby—from the poorest streets of Ft. Worth, Texas, to the cavernous performance halls of this country. Gospel and R&B music fans, young people and aspiring musicians will be inspired by Kirk Franklin's remarkable story.

Kirk's trademark energy and humor come through in every chapter of his story, but also do the sad details of his early years of poverty and heartache. A musical prodigy, his elderly adopted mother collected and sold aluminum cans to pay for Kirk's piano lessons. He was teased because of his talent, nicknamed "Church Boy" because he was the choir director of his church at age eleven, and was regularly beat up on the church grounds. So Kirk had to find other means of being accepted by his peers; means that always include girls, trouble, and the "coolest" group of friends he could find.

With brutal honesty, Church Boy describes how Kirk rebelled against God in his youth and returned to

Him as a young adult. As a result, there are no holds barred when Kirk challenges today's young people to reject a life of sex and rebellion to follow after God with pure hearts. His message will inspire young people everywhere to consider how they should live their lives.

Readers will discover how gospel music great Milton Bigham helped introduce Kirk to the Gospel Music Workshops of America where he became a favorite of mass choirs around the country. And they'll see how Kirk's formation of a group called "The Family" changed the course of his life—their first recording went platinum. Church Boy recounts the media blitz and financial success that followed all three of their recordings. And it also details his recording project with God's property which, has gone double platinum and estab-

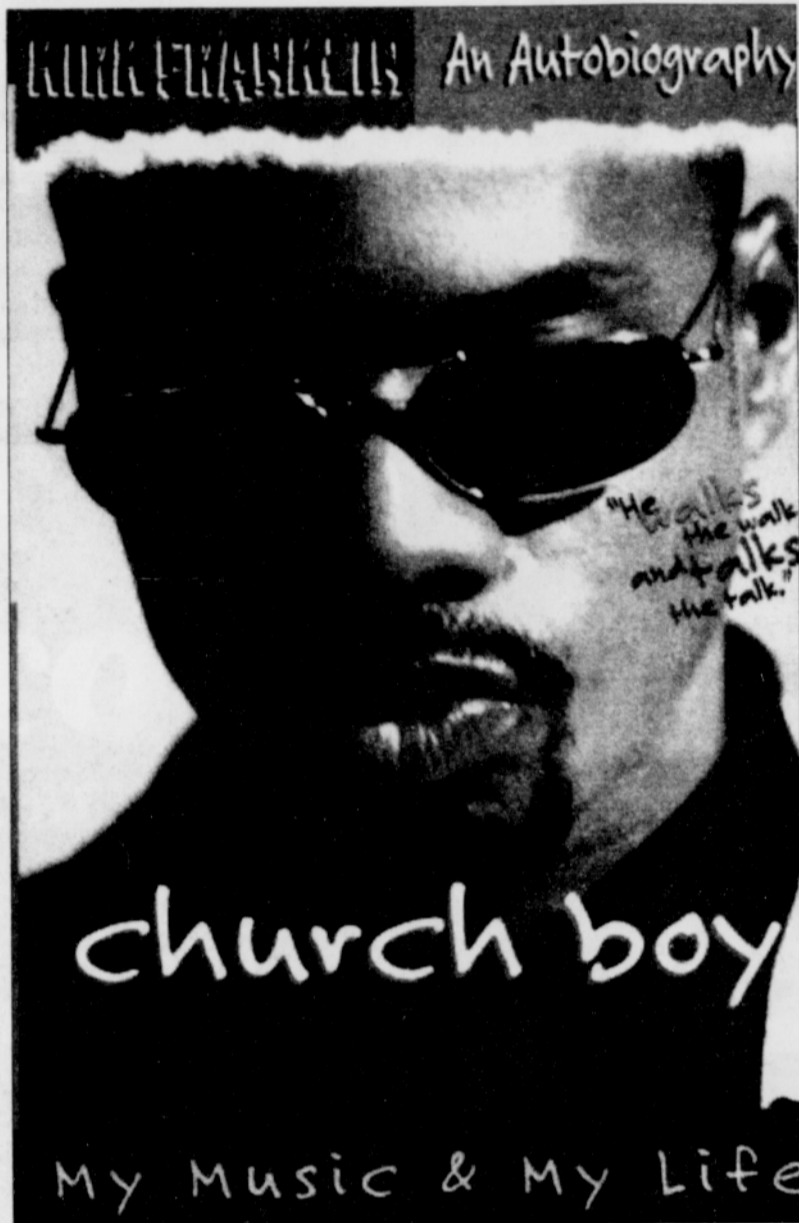
lished him as a master of R&B and hip-hop as well as gospel.

Church Boy also shares personal details such as the story of meeting his wife Tammy and the truth about his infamous fall from a darkened Memphis stage, which

could have ended his career. Kirk talks openly and warmly about his love for his children, his debut to his deceased mother, and his appreciation of friends who keep him accountable.

Kirk Franklin's other major release is an album entitled "The Nu Nation Project" (GospoCentric), which features U2's Bono, R. Kelly, Mary J. Blige, The Family and more. "The Nu Nation Project" won the Contemporary Soul Gospel Album of the Year at the 1999 41st annual Grammy Awards.

Kirk Franklin has been honored with dozens of awards including Grammy's, Soul Train awards, Stellar awards, Image awards, Dove awards, and Excellence awards. His three platinum albums have sold more than 5.6 million copies in six years, and such celebrated artists as Whitney Houston have recorded his songs. Kirk and his wife Tammy reside near Dallas-Ft. Worth with their children.



High School Bible Club Commemorates Christian Heritage Month And Celebrates Sixth Year of Existence

Image Changers, an official chartered club at Thomas Jefferson high school, Portland, Oregon is celebrating its sixth year. What began in 1993 as an informal gathering of 15 students in the school library quickly grew to over 30 students and now has Bible groups in middle schools?

To celebrate its sixth year, Image Changes is sponsoring a third play for the Community entitled, "Keep It Real". This dramatic musical is written and directed by 1996 Rose Festival Princess Renee Watson, also a Jefferson graduate. The production will

take place at the end of the school's events held in commemoration of Christian Heritage Month, April 1999.

The schedule of events held on campus is as follows:

Monday, April 19 Gospel Music Showcase (rap, hymns & contemporary songs)

Tuesday, April 20 Christian Literature (poetry, monologues)

Wednesday, April 21 Dramatic Expressions (dance, mime)

Thursday, April 22 Official Kick Off KEEP IT REAL, PLAY @ JHS, 7:00 PM

Friday, April 23 Image Changers

Reception

The purpose of Image Changers is to positively change the image of inner-city youth as well as across the nation through promotion of biblical values. The club is dedicated to equipping young people to be respectful and responsible in academics and social relationships.

During its six years Image Changers has expanded to afterschool programs at the high school and middle school levels. Two branches club are at the gender-specific groups, Men of Valor and Women of Excellence.

Classes for 8th graders are conducted to assist with the transition from middle school to high school. The club also sponsored two plays and holds seasonal clothing drives.

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The Portland Observer

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Jesus Comes to Oregon Seminar Emphasizes Community Outreach Using Jesus Video

Area pastors, church leaders and local citizens interested in spreading the hope of the Gospel through an easy, impactful program, are invited to attend an all-day seminar on Friday, April 23, at the Double Tree Hotel Portland in Portland, Oregon.

This one-day Leadership Briefing, sponsored by Jesus Video Project, offers attendees the opportunity to coordinate a highly effective outreach distributing the Jesus video, a full-feature movie depicting the life, teachings and message of Jesus Christ. Registration begins at 7 a.m. The information-packed conference presents speakers, workshops and handouts for promoting community outreach using the video. Cost is \$20 and includes continental breakfast and lunch. The Double Tree Hotel Portland is located at Lloyd Center, 1000 NE Multnomah Street.

Multnomah Street. For directions, call the hotel at (503) 281-6111.

"We're bringing the Leadership Briefing to Oregon to offer local church organizations the training and support to make a successful ministry outreach, said Pamela Dumas, conference coordinator. "We'll share exciting ways churches have teamed up to use the video, and offer the resources and encouragement to make the JESUS video available to the local community."

By working with church organizations and volunteers, the Jesus Video Project aims to give the gift of a Jesus video to each home in America. Since 1992, more than 5 million homes in America have received a video through this program.

"It's a completely 'no pressure' approach to sharing the

Gospel and is an ideal tool for both small and large churches," notes Lloyd Olson, director of the Jesus Video Project. "We've found that people are very receptive to receiving the video and viewing it in the convenience and privacy of their own homes."

To register for the Leadership Briefing in Portland, or for more information about the Jesus Video Project, call (toll free), 888-Jesus-36. Additional Leadership Briefings scheduled throughout 1999 will be offered in California and New York.

Based in Arrowhead Springs, CA, the Jesus Video Project is a ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ. Since the project's inception in 1992, more than 8,500 churches have offered the Jesus video as part of their community outreach efforts.