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James Brown - The Hardest Working Man In Show Business Returns To The Stage

By Jay Nault

There are legends, there are icons and then there is James Brown. Brown is every hyperbole balled into one combustible being that exudes energy, style, soul and pure musical talent. His fans know no age boundaries or nationality. He has been performing live for decades, and he's taking his act back to the stage again in 2006. A look at his life will help explain how James Brown became a true legend of music.

Early Life

James Joseph Brown, Jr. was born on May 3, 1933 in Barnwell, South Carolina during the Great Depression. As one would expect, life during this time period was difficult for Brown. His childhood was spent in Barnwell and later in Augusta, Georgia, and most of his time was spent picking cotton to help feed his family.

Brown spent what little spare time he had doing two things: practicing his music and committing petty thefts. At the age of 16, Brown was convicted of armed robbery and sent to a juvenile detention center. His time in juvenile detention was not all negative, however.

Brown was befriended by Bobby Byrd through the prison baseball team, and his help resulted in Brown being released from juvenile detention early. He served three years for his crime. Brown's release was conditioned on a few important factors. First, he could never return to Augusta. Secondly, he had to try to land and maintain gainful employment.

Brown was a gifted athlete, and that led to a brief stint as a boxer. When that did not work out, Brown tried his hand, or more accurately his arm, at a career as a professional baseball pitcher. He injured his leg, however, and had to retire. These failures led him to his ultimate career path - music.

Career Beginnings

Brown began singing gospel music with Byrd's sister and his style soon transformed into a more classic rhythm and blues singer, which led him to join Byrd's band, the Avons. The band soon changed

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their name to the Famous Flames, and the group toured the south, otherwise called the "Chitlin' Circuit."

In 1956, Brown took over the direction of the Famous Flames, and it wasn't long until the band was noticed. The band signed a record deal with King Records and released their first single, Please, Please, Please, which climbed into the top ten of the R&B charts. Their subsequent releases did not do nearly as well, and this led to an ultimatum from King Records: Your next single is a hit, or else.

In 1958, the band released the single Try Me, which climbed to the top of the R&B charts and even made a small splash on the overall US charts. It was at this point that many historians believe that the legend of "James Brown" was born.

Soon thereafter, Brown took on a greater role in the band in regards to its marketing, and in 1962, Brown gave a legendary performance at the Apollo Theater. This performance was recorded, and

since Brown had covered the expenses himself, he was credited with all the accolades that came with such a stirring show. James Brown was now a star.

Legendary Success

On a roll, Brown released 52 singles that climbed into the top ten of the R&B charts over the next several decades. His albums sold millions of copies, and his true legend was a result of his scintillating stage performances. Brown was known to dance and perform with such vigor that by the end of the show he was physically and emotionally exhausted, as were his audiences. Brown was constantly sweating profusely and gasping for breath towards the end of his sets, which is how he earned the nickname the "Hardest Working Man in Show Business."

Struggles

Brown also had more than his share of difficult times. He had several brushes with the law, including several drug-related offenses and assaults with deadly weapons. One of the victims was his wife. Before being sentenced to a prison term of six years in 1988, Brown had led police on a harrying car chase that only exacerbated his circumstances.

Ultimately, Brown was released into a reintegration center after serving only 15 months of his term for good behavior, and he proceeded to record several public service announcements. He was completely released from his term in 1991, and has been trouble-free ever since.

Simply put, seeing James Brown live is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. His life is incorporated into every aspect of his performance, and his shows are a true celebration of music.

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Sowing Thoughts of Peace

By Daniel N. Brown

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Thinking thoughts of peace toward every person will bring great peace to us.

Whether by the law of attraction or the law of sowing and reaping, it is impossible to give without getting in return. When you give out thoughts of anger, frustration or ill will, they are certain to be returned to you.

"The man who thinks hateful thoughts brings hatred upon himself. The man who thinks loving thoughts is loved." ~ James Allen

"If I knew you and you knew me,
and each of us could clearly see,
the meaning of your heart and mine,
I'm sure that we would differ less,
we'd clasp our hands in friendliness,
if I knew you and you knew me.

~ John Canary

We're a whole lot more alike than we are different. The same wants, needs, loves and hurts. Knowing this will help us to think thoughts of peace towards others.

A person who sows wrong thoughts and deeds and prays that God will bless him, is like the farmer who, having sown weeds, asks God to bring forth for him a harvest of wheat.

If you want to be blessed, scatter blessings. If you want to be happy, consider the happiness of others.

Daniel N. Brown is the publisher of the "Living the Abundant and Prosperous Christian Life" Newsletter. A free weekly publication that teaches people how to live the abundant and prosperous Christian life. Receive a free copy of Dan's 14 page report entitled, "5 Biblical Keys to Outrageous Prosperity," when you sign up. www.secretplaceonline.com



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