

# RAP - SONGS ABOUT LIFE

My name is Ashley Clifford and I love rap. It's black music and it's about life. One day, while reading our church magazine, I saw something about a rap group at the church. "I'll go there and see what happens," I thought. Knowing that rap sometimes has bad words, I was surprised that the rap group was at the church.



On the first evening there were five boys and me.

The teacher was a man called Michael Brennan.

He had a cassette with rap music. Each of us had to rap in front of the group. We used our own words.

That was OK because I had a few of my own songs. But I felt nervous in front of the boys.

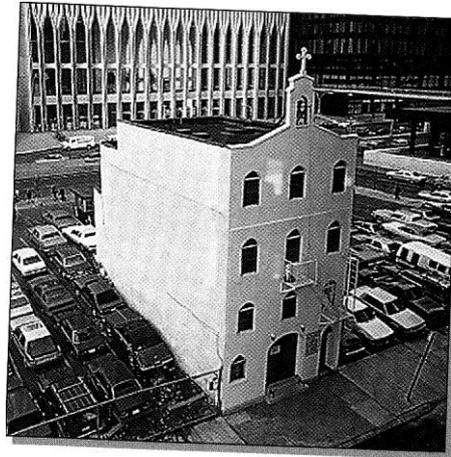
After listening to our songs, Michael said, "While singing, you all looked down. You shouldn't do that. Rappers have

to talk to the audience. And you have to look at them."

In the next weeks we all worked at our rap styles.

*'My life isn't bad and I don't feel sad.  
But listen to me because I want to be free.  
Use your brain, that's the name of the game,  
If you like my style, then start to smile.'*

On the last evening Michael told us about his plans for a show. We all felt nervous about a big audience. "Don't worry," said Michael, trying to help. "You have to believe you can do it."



I rapped every night in the week before the show.

I sang the words and I moved to the music. Not being a rap fan, my mom wasn't very happy about this. She didn't like the loud music.

On the evening of the show, I left home very early to go to the church. I felt nervous.

The audience started to arrive. Some of my friends were there. I wanted to run away.

One of the boys started and he was great. Then I sang.

When I started, the music didn't feel right. But then I remembered Michael's words. Looking at the audience, I

tried to talk to them. I wasn't nervous then.

After the show I felt tired, but happy. "You were great, Ashley," Michael told me. He was pleased. "You really showed us what you can do," he said, smiling.