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Christian hip-hop artist Lecrae looks to future with new album, book Grammy Award-winner shares his road to spirituality in DU speech On March 6, 2020



NEW ORLEANS (March 6, 2020) – Grammy Award-winning Christian hip-hop artist Lecrae, whose 10th album “Restoration” is due out this month, addressed a full house recently at Dillard University to discuss his musical and spiritual progress.

Lecrae, who was born Lecrae Devaughn Moore in Houston, was invited to speak to DU President Walter Kimbrough’s Philosophy 444 class about his life’s journey, which he described as being full of trials.

Lecrae introduced his second book, “I Am Restored: How I Love My Religion but Found My Faith,” which was available for purchase and autographs.

His best-selling 2016 memoir, “Unashamed,” summed up the philosophy he now espouses: “If you live for people’s acceptance, you’ll die from their rejection.”

The book, which debuted as a New York Times best-seller in the nonfiction category in 2016, recounts a range of difficulties – childhood abuse, drugs and alcoholism, a stint in rehab, an abortion and an unsuccessful suicide attempt, according to a book review.

During his DU appearance, Lecrae described a childhood on the wrong side of the tracks, with a single-parent mother and an absent, addicted father. He said he associated himself with the wrong crowd before realizing he needed to get rid of the violence in his life and make a change. At the age of 19, Lecrae gave himself to God. He went on to marry a girl he met at church and finished college at the University of North Texas (where he pledged Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity). He and his wife, Darragh Moore, have three children.

At 25, he released his debut recording, “Real Talk,” through his independent label Reach Records. And his third solo album, “Rebel,” became the first Christian hip-hop album to reach No. 1 on the Billboard Gospel chart.

During his early career, Lecrae said he found it difficult for many to accept his music. For example, he said, “I tried handing out mixtapes to the Sacramento Kings, and they rejected them because the music didn’t speak to them.”

Lecrae defined his art as complicated because of the positive and spiritual messages he tries to convey within a secular sound. He said the “pressure comes with his platform because there is no teaching in hip-hop today.”

Even so, Lecrae said he chooses to remain authentic. He said he refuses to conform to mainstream standards. And he said therapy helped him gain clarity about his past and struggles.

In addition to his upcoming album and new book, Lecrae, now 40, continues to look to the future and said he would like to collaborate with singer-rapper Lauryn Hill.

(Jordan Hampton contributed to this report.)

