

## ENTERTAINMENT

## Beverly Crawford: Singing from personal experience

By Janice Malone  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Most of the world first became aware of the anointed singing of Beverly Crawford during her years as a featured singer with Bobby Jones Gospel. But that was then and this is now. Recently, the talented Crawford released her second solo album "Now That I'm Here," on the Warner Alliance label. She is backed by the Nashville choir, Potter's House Choir and directed by gospel sensation O'Landa Draper. More with Beverly Crawford follows. Read on:

**THE SCOOP: SOME OF YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS ARE ALSO WITH YOU ON THIS CD?**

CRAWFORD: Yes, I have my father (Rev. Walter Camps) and two of my nieces with me on this one. My dad also sang with me on my first solo album. My sisters and nieces were also a part of that one too. My father's a minister and throughout my childhood I had always dreamt of making a record with him. He was always a good singer. My dad was a state evangelist for his church and we'd travel all over and he'd sing "Nobody But You Lord," so I included that song on this CD. Now that I see him as an older man still singing that same song and recording it on my album, well that says it all. I remember when he once

made a little 45 single and from that point on it was just a lifelong dream to record with him and now it's happened twice.

**THE SCOOP: TELL ME ABOUT YOU AND YOUR HUSBAND'S MINISTRY.**

CRAWFORD: It's called Potter's House Ministries, which is based in Nashville. It's an evangelistic ministry. We go to lots of prisons, juvenile shelters, etc. We do a lot of youth and women conferences, plus, he and I often team up together to do husband/wife ministerial conferences. Our ministry is truly for the broken hearted—just trying to minister to people in order to help them put their lives back together. We're dedicated to seeing people delivered and set free. We see so many different forms of broken hearts but I think the most common is working with people who've been hurt and abused. It's across the board. Problems and abuse with families, spouses, children and low self-esteem problems. We pray and counsel them and then try to get them with a good church or Christian counseling that will keep them guided and motivated.

**THE SCOOP: WHEN YOU FIRST LEFT BOBBY JONES AND NEW LIFE TO GO SOLO, WERE YOU SCARED?**

CRAWFORD: I had been doing some small solo



BEVERLY CRAWFORD

projects before I left them. But after being with them for six years I had started to get too comfortable. Even after I got my solo record deal I was still trying to go back with the group and record my album. It finally came down to my schedule couldn't accommodate both, so I had to make a decision to get on there on my own. It's like when you're working on a job and you've gone as high as you can go with a company, then it's time to move on. That's where I was. Bobby was just so very supportive when I made the decision to leave. He was a bit sad. It was like a father having his daughter leave the nest. He hated to let me go. But he gave me prayers and his blessings and remains one of my dearest friends and supporters.

**THE SCOOP: I**

UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ONCE SUFFERED FROM LOW SELF-ESTEEM PROBLEMS.

CRAWFORD: That's true. When I was a teenager I went through lots of low self-esteem problems. I was picked at, made fun of and laughed at on numerous occasions. They called me names like "skinny-minnie," and "blackie." People didn't realize it but those kinds of things will stick with you even after you're an adult. They don't go away. People were telling me I'd never amount to anything. When I was going through that low self-esteem stage, I had to learn to love myself, which is what God helped me to do. He showed me that if no one else loved me, then he did. When a person is experiencing low self-esteem they often become dependent on others for their opinions and decisions. When that happened to me I looked up one day and these people were nowhere to be found. So I had to learn to call on God for myself. And that came from knowing and having a personal relationship with him. That's one reason I entitled my new CD "Now That I'm Here." That song took me back to when I was a little girl. I look at my life now and what I've been able to accomplish through God. That song is truly my testimony.

**THE SCOOP: THIS CD WAS RECORDED LIVE. IT SEEMS THAT YOU ENJOY DOING LIVE**

RECORDINGS.

CRAWFORD: (she laughs) You're right. When I'm on stage I'm totally tuned in to the Lord. And I want to share that energy with the audience. The other thing that I like about this project is the live video, which captures all of the energy as it happened...On this album I've included many different variations of gospel music. There's traditional, contemporary, ballads, praise and worship and even a little hip hop. But all of these styles makeup who I really am as a singer. For so many years people would see me on "Bobby Jones Gospel" and I was mostly singing totally traditional music. But there's so much more inside of me that I can do musically speaking. I especially like doing songs that minister to the youth. This current CD, I think, totally captures Beverly.

**THE SCOOP: TELL ME ABOUT YOUR HEALING FROM CANCER.**

CRAWFORD: I was healed of cancer about 15 years ago. And I'm still totally healed to this day! About two and half years ago I had a little boy. He's healthy and fine and so am I. When I was diagnosed with cancer, I opted to pray relentlessly for healing rather than risk the side effects of chemotherapy. About a year after I was diagnosed, I was healed when a visiting pastor at my dad's church prayed for me. Within an hour, all pain disappeared and later examination

revealed the tumor had also vanished! My testimony has been a great inspiration to so many people. There are many times when I have prayed for people who have cancer. There are those who are constantly asking me what I did. What did it take for my healing? They want words of encouragement. What I did was quote healing scriptures daily, prayed daily and left it in the Lord's hands from there. He was bruised for my transgressions and by his stripes I am healed. And I believed that. I walk by faith and not by sight. I didn't look at my situation, I had to look beyond my situation. Even though I would go through pain and suffering during that year before I got the prayer, I would continue to hold on to my faith no matter what.

**THE SCOOP: SO AFTER YOU WERE PRAYED FOR, HOW LONG WAS IT BEFORE YOU WENT IN FOR A CHECK UP?**

CRAWFORD: It was about a week later. The doctors found nothing—nowhere! I was totally healed. My doctors were amazed. One of them even said "It's a miracle!" I also had a praying family behind me too—especially my mother, who had also once gone through cancer. So when I'm singing some of these songs about Jesus and his healing power to save and deliver, I'm singing from personal experience. This whole album is just my testimony—especially the song "Now That I'm Here."

## Pop singer Rick James still hospitalized

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Rick James is still in the hospital about a month after suffering a stroke, failing to be discharged on schedule because of complications with his medication, doctors said.

"Given the seriousness of his initial condition, we thought that he should go home when his medication is perfect," said Dr. William Young. "It should no means imply that there's been a setback in his care."

James has been at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center since Nov. 9. He was admitted after rupturing a blood vessel in the back of his neck during a show in Denver the previous

week.

"He continues to progress well," Young said. "He's been participating well in therapy and we would expect that his discharge will be imminent in the next several days."

The 50-year-old singer, perhaps best known for his 1981 hit "Super Freak," has a history of drug and alcohol abuse. He also served more than two years in prison for assaulting a woman he held hostage during a drug-induced episode the woman said included torture. A jury failed to reach a verdict on the torture charge and James got out of prison in 1996.

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