

# FOCUS

YOUR CHRISTIAN MUSIC MAGAZINE SINCE 1978 | [COVER](#)

**STEVEN  
CURTIS  
CHAPMAN**  
**MISSION  
ACCOMPLISHED**

**PLUS:** UNDEROATH | SANDI PATTY | FFH | CASTING CROWNS

# 48

## The Gospel, According to Underoath

How does **Underoath** manage to play “Cornerstone” one day and “Hellfest” the next without compromising its beliefs? Find out what makes these advocates against generic hardcore tick as **DAVID JENISON** profiles this band on the rise.



## cover story

### 34 For the Sake of the Call

At a point in his career when he could've simply kicked into cruise control, **Steven Curtis Chapman** ventured to Los Angeles to make the most creative record of his career. But that's not all that's inspiring this father of six these days. **DOUGLAS KAINED McKELVEY** catches up with Steven to get the rest of the “big story.”

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### 42 13 Going On ?

Like Jennifer Garner's character in *13 Going on 30*, **FFH** members are ready to grow up. With 13 years of experience to its credit, the group forges forward with a growing family and plenty of new, catchy pop tunes for the masses. **BY LIZZA CONNOR**

### 46 Brand New Day

**Sandi Patty** never really left the music scene; but with a new record label and a double-disc set of hymns, praise choruses and patriotic songs, *that* voice is back in fine form. **BY CAROLINE MITCHELL**

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Appealing to the inner pack rat in everyone, **CHRIS WELL** unearths a few superfluous facts about your favorite Christian songs and unveils Rachael Lampa's nicknames.

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Chapman Henderson (L-R): Mark Apple, Steve Chapman, Brent Henderson, Herb Chapman



Before we called it a night, the guys showed me the stash of “driving music” in their van. As we flipped through their cassette collection, I startled upon discovering the album *Mannequin Virtue* (Exit/Word) by Vector. Thanks to a weekly Christian rock show broadcast across the state line from Georgia, I knew the obscure Vector had at least two incredible songs—“Desperately” and “The Hunger and the Thirst.” I wanted to hear more. Knowing they wouldn’t be leaving town until the following day, the men of Chapman Henderson offered to loan me the Vector tape overnight—on one condition: In exchange I had to loan them my Steve Taylor *Meltdown* (Sparrow) cassette. Deal!

Although a guitar-driven band, I soon discovered much of Vector’s captivating sound could be credited to the group’s keyboardist. In fact, if I’d heard this album before we debated Christian music’s best keyboard player, the name Charlie Peacock would have been added to the mix.

A lot’s happened in the 20 years since that summer day in Alabama. Of course, Vector’s keyboardist went on to become one of the Christian community’s most forward-thinking and influential artists and producers. And Steve? The unassuming college kid has since sold nine million albums and logged more Dove Awards than, well, anyone. On the way, he’s become a staple at the top of the Christian pop radio charts, cracked the pretentiously cool Triple-A format with “I Will Not Go Quietly” from *The Apostle* soundtrack and, just last year, landed his first major mainstream pop hit, the Top 30 charting “How Do I Love Her.” But most impressively? Steve’s relational life continues to leave a wake of thought-provoking admiration. For his closest friends, acquaintances and the fans who see his life from afar, Steven Curtis Chapman is proof that conviction and kindness can, and should, walk hand in hand.

## A Lasting Impression

Twenty years ago a young Steven Curtis Chapman made a summer tour stop in the sleepy town of Roanoke, Alabama. At the time he and his brother, Herb, were part of a contemporary pop band called Chapman Henderson. I, meanwhile, was a music-loving teenager still adjusting to life in the small town after having relocated with my family more than a year earlier.

After Chapman Henderson’s evening performance at our local Church of God, I approached the talented Anderson University students and, hoping to strike a chord, let them know I was a big fan of contemporary Christian music. Strike a chord, indeed. Imagine my surprise when Herb told me his brother had co-written songs already recorded by Sandi Patty [“Give Him the Glory”] and Whiteheart [“Carried Away (Safe on the Wings of the Lord)”]. I looked at Steve—as he was known back then—in complete disbelief. Since when did big-time artists start doing songs by college students? Being quick to play it all down, Steve quietly acknowledged the accomplishments.

He, Herb and their bandmates kindly spent about an hour hanging out with me, just talking music. We debated important things. For instance, who was Christian music’s best keyboard player—Eddie DeGarmo or Petra’s John Lawry? And I listened attentively when they told me about a “secular” rock band comprised mostly of devout Christians. Who had ever heard of such a thing? And what kind of name was “U2” anyway?

Jay Swartzendruber  
Jay@ccmcom.com

### CCM MAGAZINE

Your Christian Music Magazine Since 1978  
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For those whose lives are strengthened through faith-informed music, CCM Magazine goes behind the scenes to celebrate the artistry of Christian music.

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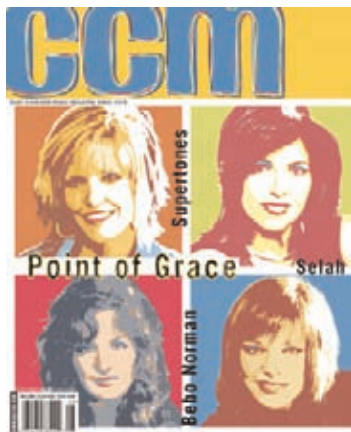
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## HOLE IN ONE

Recently your magazine has not been up to par. But your August '04 issue was awesome. You covered lots of Christian music types in that issue. I especially enjoyed the Point of Grace ["Point of Entry"] and Bebo Norman ["The Art of Reinvention"] articles. You are returning to covering Christian music extensively and in depth like the magazine I fell in love with years ago. Keep up the great work.

—Gary Butler, via e-mail

## A NORMAL "CELEBRITY"

In your August issue, there was an interview with Bebo Norman. What an awesome guy! It is great to know that he is so natural. It seems as though celebrities act really "different." Bebo sounded so normal and kind... just like a regular person. I have plans to be a singer/songwriter, and Bebo really encouraged

me! Good job to your writer, Christa Farris, for a great interview!

—Justin McCaghren,  
Richland Hills, TX

## WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO...

My name is Melissa Seehafer, and I have been a CCM subscriber for just about two years now. I would just like to thank you all for what an encouragement your magazine has been for me. Originally, I picked up CCM after getting into the whole Christian music scene, and I enjoyed learning about new, up-and-coming artists, older popular artists and the scoop on what was going on in Christian culture.

But the past few months, I have found myself just skimming certain articles about bands, reading the CD reviews and tossing the issue aside for another look later on.

Coincidentally, my spiritual life seemed to have been placed on hold starting this summer, and I felt myself drift further away from God's comforting presence and become distracted with my busy schedule and priorities.

Then I attended "Lifest" in Oshkosh, Wis., a few weeks ago and saw amazing bands that I had never seen perform or hadn't even heard of yet. So once I got home I decided to page back through my CCMs and read up on some of the bands that I had just seen but hadn't really heard of. As I was rereading I discovered the "Living the Message" section in



BEBO NORMAN

my newer issues and, instead of skipping over it, I took the time to read the excerpt from Max Lucado's book. Right away I was uplifted and felt that closeness to God that I had missed this summer. I became excited to read other faith-directed articles in the issues and went back and reread the entire magazine, especially enjoying the letters from the editor and Charlie Peacock ["Everything That's on My Mind"]. So I just wanted to thank you once again for publishing such a wonderful magazine that not only informs about the latest news on Christian bands but seeks to uplift and encourage its readers in their personal faith walks. You have taught me that Christian music is more than just cool bands; it's the integrity and spiritual mission of those bands, their music and those who support them for these purposes. Thank you for keeping your magazine focused on the One who deserves all the glory: Christ.

—Melissa Seehafer,  
Marshfield, WI

immediately and was almost starstruck by her, even though she wasn't a familiar name at that time. She just had such sincerity and a genuine love for people. She has the ability to make you feel so special and important, and we wrote letters to each other for years after camp, as she graciously allowed me to walk through the drama of teenage life long distance. And I got to watch as she struggled with the music industry and her own dreams, which weren't panning out the way she might have planned.

It's so true what you said in your opening column this month about the timing of our dreams. I was reading in *The Message* the other night a passage about not trying to get out of anything prematurely because God knows just the right timing for things to find their completion

—Michelle Orlando, via e-mail



## DARE TO DREAM

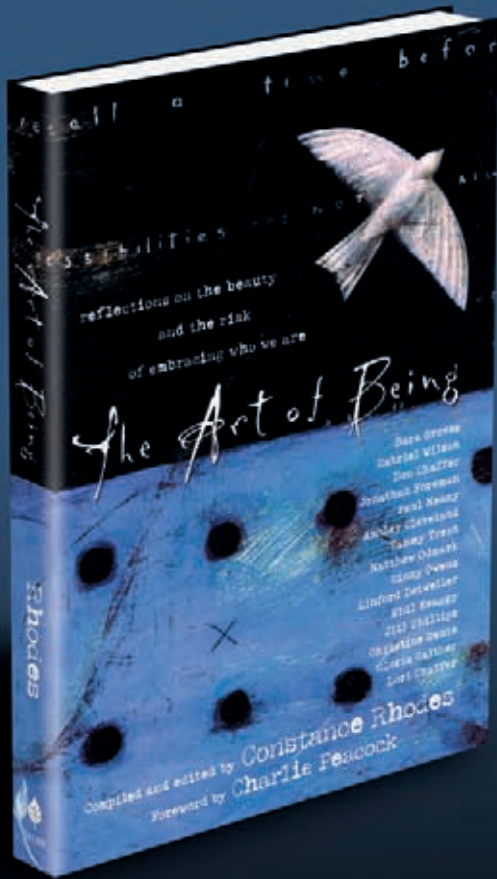
I just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed the August issue of CCM. I especially loved the spotlight on Selah ["What You See Isn't Always What You Get."] and hearing about your past friendship with Nicol (Smith) Sponburg ["From the Editor"]. I had the opportunity to go to Lisa Bevill's "Place in the Sun" camp for two years when I was younger, and Nicol was a counselor of mine both of those years. I was drawn to her



NICOL SPONBERG

I just read August's "From the Editor" ["Dream Out Loud"], and I just wanted to say thanks. Seems like my dreams are too big. I guess I tend to underestimate God, huh? It was really encouraging for me to hear, and I really enjoy yours and Nicol's [Sponburg] story. Please keep encouraging us. CCM is a good





# Slow Down and Just Be.

Featuring original essays and stories from a diverse list of recording artists including Ashley Cleveland, Don and Lori Chaffer (Waterdeep), Jonathan Foreman (Switchfoot), Sara Groves, Phil Keaggy, Matthew Odmark (Jars of Clay), Ginny Owens, Linford Detweiler (Over the Rhine), and Gloria Gaither, *The Art of Being* explores what it means to find fulfillment in *being*, not *doing*.

If you've had enough of looking for contentment in possessions and accomplishments, it's time to journey toward discovering your true identity—and finding a satisfaction that lasts.

Find out more about the book and the contributors at [www.artofbeingbook.com](http://www.artofbeingbook.com)



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## feedback |

source of that for me—especially Charlie Peacock's column and yours. God Bless!

—Jami Hazlerig, Elgin, IL

### 1 THING YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT JOSHUA SHIRLEY

I loved the "15 Things You Probably Didn't Know About: Rebecca St. James" [August]. I think she's one of the best artists out there today.

—Joshua Shirley, via e-mail

### CAN I GET A WITNESS?

Thank you so much for the article on Jason Morant in the August edition ["Insider"]. I had the privilege of spending three weeks with him at Wild Week Camps, and he is an incredible person. He is a very passionate singer who gives glory and honor to God and never fails to put you in a worship mood. Keep more coming! Could you possibly feature an article on Among Thorns?

—Jessica Gainey, McBee, SC

### OOPS!

I just got finished reading your article about The Imperials in your "Hall of Fame" section. I couldn't believe that a long time member (over 24 years), David Will's name was spelled David Willis. I can't believe someone did not check this on an album or something—maybe an old CCM article. David Will is my favorite Imperial, and it really bothered me. He deserves more respect than that. He is a contemporary Christian music veteran. I hope you will acknowledge this and correct it.

—Angela Smith, Nashville, TN

Well put, Angela.

We welcome your comments. Address your letter to Feedback, CCM Magazine, 104 Woodmont Blvd., Suite 300, Nashville, TN 37205, fax 615/385-4112, Attn: Feedback, or e-mail [feedback@ccmcom.com](mailto:feedback@ccmcom.com). Always include your full name, address and phone number. Letter may be edited for length and clarity.

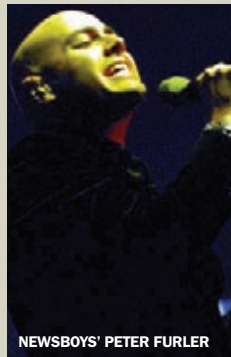
## TRUTH BE TOLD

**What's your favorite Christian music legend or supposedly tall tale? What about that nagging question concerning your favorite artist that, apparently, no one's been able to answer? That's where we come in. Check here each month as CCM Magazine distinguishes truth from fiction and e-mail your questions to [truthbetold@ccmcom.com](mailto:truthbetold@ccmcom.com).**

There is a rap during a song called "Boycott Hell" on one of the Newsboys' old albums. Can you tell me who did the rap and why? I still can't figure out why they would write a song and then make fun of it. Why bother recording it then?

—Newsboys Nut in Knoxville

The song "Boycott Hell" appeared on the Newsboys' album *Not Ashamed* (StarSong, 1992). The song was not, in fact, written by the Newsboys but rather by Eddie DeGarmo and Dana Key (better known as DeGarmo & Key, a pioneering Christian rock group formed in the '70s and disbanded in the early '90s). DeGarmo & Key had recorded the song on its album *The Pledge* (Benson, 1989).



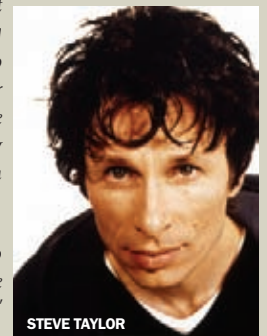
NEWSBOYS' PETER FURLER

When the Newsboys recorded the song with producer Steve Taylor, Taylor laid down an impromptu rap late one night in the studio as "a joke," he told the now-defunct *Syndicate Magazine* in 1994. When the band heard the rap, they wanted to include it on the *Not*

*Ashamed* album, and Taylor agreed to it "against my better judgment," he said. The rap included adjectives describing the song's lyrics as "lamer" and "dumb" and criticizes the rhyming of "pride" with "time" and "unionize."

"This is why you have to be careful when you joke," Taylor admitted. "It's the nasty side of me that comes out, and it sounds like I'm trashing their work. DeGarmo & Key are much bigger men than me, they've gone out of their way to be nice to me. I'm embarrassed."

Here's Steve Taylor's rap as it appeared in the middle of the Newsboys' version of the song:



STEVE TAYLOR

Guess who comin' through with a little disclaimer  
Tune's OK but the words are gettin' lamer  
Ain't no saint can legitimize  
Rhymin' "pride" with "time" with "unionize"  
See I agree we oughta boycott hell  
But we oughta boycott dumb lyrics as well



It's been a long, winding road for the artist formerly known as Tiffany Arbuckle (Lee) and now Plumb (her former band name). After starting as a backup singer and being offered a record deal at the age of 20, she released three critically acclaimed albums before nearly deciding to hang up her artist hat for good. But a note from a fan changed her mind; and the singer/songwriter, who's had impressive success with writing hits such as Mandy Moore's "I Wanna Be With You" and "American Idol" Kimberly Locke's "Wrong," went on to record *Beautiful Lumps of Coal* with Curb Records in 2003. Plumb is currently recording a new album that's tentatively set to release next May.

**1. If you could trade responsibilities with someone for a day, who would that person be, what would the job be, and why would you choose to do it?**

Venice Millenium Lee. (She is my dog.) She lies around or occasionally chases a ball because she is the coolest dog ever.

**2. When was the first moment you realized you wanted to pursue music for a living?**

When a guy called me and asked if I wanted a record deal. I guess an angel appeared to him in the middle of the night and told him I was the "next big thing."

**3. Describe your most unforgettable date.**

Any one of them that involved great conversation would rank right up there as great.

**4. What are you obsessive compulsive about?**

Cleaning.

**5. What characteristic of God has surprised you the most these days?**

He revealed that He actually was a woman... no, I'm kidding. The importance He has placed on the church being a part of my life.

## Different Kind of Vision

"You can't save them all, so do what you can today." Those were the words Alisa Girard said the Lord gave her this past July when she and her ZOEgirl comrades, Chrissy Conway and Kristin Swinford, were in Ecuador for a mission trip.

"I started to apply that to my daily life—like when ZOEgirl goes and does concerts," she says. "There's so much you want to do when you're there, but there are so many people there. And you can't sit down and talk with everyone for an hour, but God will lead you to certain times when you can do what you can. I approach my life from that perspective now. I can't save everybody. I can't do everything, but I'll do what I can today."

And what the three women and a group of 50 they took along with them were able to do in Ecuador on their trip was visit and minister to people in retirement homes, play with children in orphanages and do various work projects for churches in the Quito area.

"We grew a lot in our meetings at night when we would all come together and worship and talk, and sometimes people would speak," Alisa recalled. "It was just one of the moments in life that mark the beginning of a new era, even if that era is only a year long. It shapes the way you look at your own life when you get back."

Girard told CCM this was ZOEgirl's third trip to Latin America for missions—the trio has previously done work in Venezuela and Ecuador with a Focus on the Family *Brio Magazine* group. But this time, Big World Ventures, a company out of Tulsa, Okla., that puts together mission trips, approached the ladies and asked if they wanted to form their own trip. No question about it. In fact, Alisa said she hoped this trip would be the first of many to Ecuador. She explained that ZOEgirl wants to plan a trip for next year to bring along specific teams—such as a music team to help local worship teams, a beauty team to cut hair, a drama team to perform in parks, a construction team to build projects, a medical team and possibly more.

"The vision is grand, and I don't know how much of that we'll be able to fulfill next year; but that's the vision," Alisa offered. While ZOEgirl will be playing shows this fall, they'll perform on an official tour next spring when they plan to start promoting the trip and recruiting teams to join them. Stay tuned to zoegirlonline.com, and check out ZOEgirl concerts for upcoming information on the trip.



(L-R) Kristin, Sonya (ZOEgirl Compassion Child), Alisa, Chrissy





# fanfare

by Stephanie Ottosen

Newborns, engagements, birthdays and more.



## Baby Boom

A little girl (left) made her appearance recently. Elaine "Ellie" Grace joined her big sister, Madison, 17 months old, on July 22 to proud parents **Brian Smith of FFH** and his wife, Allyson.

Fervent Records artist **Jill Phillips** and husband/singer-songwriter Andy Gull-ahorn recently welcomed their second child, Adie, in mid June. The couple also has a son, Drew, 2.



Tooth & Nail Founder and President **Brandon Ebel** and his wife, Kori, recently welcomed their firstborn, Josiah James (left), into the family. Josiah was born June 21 and weighed 8 lbs 2 oz.



And then there's little Ella Maisie Clark (right), daughter of **Don and Erika Clark**, who was born on Aug. 10, weighing 8 lbs 14 oz. Don is the guitarist in **Demon Hunter** and is also a graphic designer with Asterisk Studio [check out CCM's "Hard Music 101" story in July 2004].

## Something to Celebrate

There will be more than just a new year to ring in come Dec. 31. **The O.C. Supertones'** lead singer **Matt "Mojo" Morginsky** plans to marry his fiancée, Sharon McCallum, in his adopted hometown of Nashville that evening.

But Mojo isn't the only one getting married. Bandmate **Ethan Luck** will walk down the aisle just a month earlier on Nov. 13 to marry fiancée Kallie Wakeman.

## Tell CCM

I got baptized in the church that I have been going to since last December; and, closer to the new year, I'd been feeling kind of sad and down all the time. It seemed like a voice inside of me was telling me that God doesn't really love me and cannot forgive me for all my sins. After coming home one night, I turned on the radio (to New Life 91.9 WRMC), and the song that had been playing was "You Are a Child of Mine" by Mark Schultz. I've heard the song many times because I have the CD, but I really never paid attention to the words. But this time I did, and the song talks about how God tells us that we are His children. Even though the voice through the night tells us that we are nothing and can't do anything, we are loved by the King.

It was really great to hear, and that night I prayed and went to sleep, feeling great and knowing that the devil is only trying to make us feel like we are not important when we really are.

—Alex Zabiran, Charlotte, NC

### 10.04 Birthdays

- 07 Michael W. Smith
- 09 DJ Maj
- 12 Kurt Carr
- Brian Pittman (Relient K)
- 13 Shirley Caesar
- 15 Josh Gonzales (Salvador)
- Jaci Velasquez
- 17 Ian Eskelin
- 18 Adrian Anderson (Trin-i-tee 5:7)
- Matt Butler (NewSong)
- 19 Dorinda Clark-Cole
- 22 Charlie Lowell (Jars of Clay)
- tobyMac

How have CCM Magazine, the artists and their stories changed your life? We'd love to know! Please e-mail us at [tellccm@ccmcom.com](mailto:tellccm@ccmcom.com) or write to 104 Woodmont Blvd, Suite 300, Nashville, TN 37205.



## A Day in the Life of Love

By Rocketown artist **George Rowe**

My day: Up at 7 a.m. for phone interviews. Finished at 8 a.m. Call home. Got my wife, Merritt's, voicemail. Go for a jog. Return to a voicemail from Merritt. Talk. I hear our three kids in the background. Someone has spilled something; someone is hurt; someone is bickering. She's gotta go. We'll talk later.

I take a shower. Several hours of paperwork, phone calls, soundcheck, the concert.

In the meantime... Merritt is running someone to ballet, soccer, gymnastics; hitting the grocery store with all three kids; calling me to ensure that the kids and I speak at some point in the day; doing a fun activity with the kids; cleaning the house; cooking dinner; giving baths; reading bedtime stories. She sits on the couch for a well-deserved, short breather. Then heads into the kitchen to unload the dishwasher, do dishes, sweep the floor. Then to the desk to open mail, pay bills, balance the checkbook. It's now 10:30 p.m., and she'd like to call me; but it's 8:30 p.m. where I am, and I'm in the middle of giving a concert. She works for another half hour then calls me to leave a voicemail to tell me that she loves me, that she and the kids miss me, that she hopes I had a great day, that she hopes my concert went well and that she can't wait to talk to me.

It's now 11:30 p.m. on the West Coast and 1:30 a.m. at home. I just left the venue. Walking back to the tour bus, I check voicemail. I hear Merritt's sweet, exhausted voice. I return the call, hoping that she has her phone turned off so that the ringer won't awaken her. In fact, she's left it on so that in case I do call, she wouldn't miss it.

Sounding cheery and alert, she asks all about my day. "How was the concert? What'd you do today? Can you believe you're getting to do this? This is what you've wanted to do your whole life. Are you loving it?"

Through it all, I hear nothing but patience, kindness, humility, celebration of the good, a healthy pride of the gift of our children, trust in the faith-based decision we made to enter into a music ministry that affects our entire family, perseverance in light of the stress and struggles she faces daily—indeed, unflinching love. (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

For more information, visit [eharmony.com](http://eharmony.com).



# industrybeat

by Jay Swartzendruber and Stephanie Ottosen

A conversation with  
Kevin Avery and  
Taylor Scott



Photo by Susan Power

## Good Morning, Atlanta

Kevin Avery and Taylor Scott, program director and promotions director, respectively, at Atlanta's WFSH The Fish (owned by CCM's parent company, Salem Communications), have worked together as a morning radio team for six years (They were also the morning show team at WAYF/West Palm Beach, FL.). Each with more than 15 years of experience in cities such as Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Md., and Wheaton, Ill., their teamwork in Atlanta is, obviously, paying off. The 4-year-old station has already become one of America's most listened-to Christian music stations. In fact, 104.7 is ranked No. 9 out of 30 radio stations in Atlanta, is a two-time Dove Award winner for "Radio Station of the Year" (in a major market) and has won the prestigious 2002 and 2003 GABBY Award (Georgia's peer-judged radio award).

**Was there a category or division you won for The Gabby Awards or were you guys literally named the overall top station in the state of Georgia?**

**Kevin:** Literally, the top station in the state as guided by a panel of our peers!

**What do you think was the best promotional campaign your station has done to date?**

**Taylor:** "Rock and Shop." It's when we give away tons of concert tickets to see some of our biggest artists and qualify listeners to win a \$10,000 shopping spree at Rich's-Macy's.

**An impressively high percentage of Atlanta's radio listeners tune into your station on a regular basis. What is it about WFSH's approach that's distinctly different from most other large market Christian stations?**

**Kevin:** We strive to sound like a great radio station that is as good or better than any other station on the dial. All of our on-air content, promotions and jingles are designed to create an atmosphere that makes people say, 'Wow, that's a fun radio station.'—not just, 'That's a great *Christian* radio station.'

**How about specifically your morning show? "Kevin and Taylor in the Morning" has won *Radio and Records'* "Christian Air Personality of the Year" award in 2002 and 2003. So, what do you do to draw in listeners who may not normally tune into Christian radio?**

**Taylor:** We try to address a wide range of topics that normal people care about in their everyday lives. Just this morning we interviewed Olympic Gold Medalist Michael Phelps. We did not interview him because he was a Christian athlete; we interviewed him because he was on the cover of *Time* magazine, and he is a national hero.

**Kevin:** We've done the same thing interviewing Sarah Ferguson (The Duchess of York), Will Ferrell of "Saturday Night Live" fame, Paige Davis from "Trading Spaces" and a host of other "mainstream" guests. They are people who are a part of the fabric of pop culture; and by having them on the show, it adds another layer of accessibility to our radio station.

**What's your all-time favorite moment from your radio career so far?**

**Taylor:** Crossing the two-million dollar mark in money raised for Food for the Poor and World Vision.

**What was your most embarrassing on-air moment?**

**Kevin:** Having my mother tell our audience how proud she was that I was in a Polish folk dancing group as a child. (Now also my most embarrassing moment in print... Polka anyone?)

**Who was your favorite radio interview? Why?**

**Taylor:** Amy Grant was great. She was very real, open and honest. She is a genuine and sweet person who has been through a lot in a very public way. In a word, graceful.

**Kevin:** Will Ferrell. We laughed our behinds off.

**Taylor:** Michael Hingson: He is a blind, World Trade Center survivor. He's also a spokesperson for Guide Dogs for the Blind. Amazing story.

**Kevin:** Brennan Manning (author of *The Ragamuffin Gospel*). Taylor cries every time. (I do, too; don't tell anyone.)

**Of the songs currently in your station's rotation, what's your favorite?**

**Taylor:** Building 429: I love the sound of "Glory Defined."

**Kevin:** Casting Crowns: "Who Am I" has great lyrics, and they are from Atlanta. What's not to love?



## reel

by Joan Brasher

DVD releases and  
artists talking about  
their favorite movies

Director Sean McNamara (inset), actor Hillary Duff

Terri Fletcher is a singing star—well, at least in her small-town church choir, that is. When a tragedy forces her to take a hard look at her life, she decides, against the wishes of her strict father, to hit the road for L.A. to enroll in a summer study program at a school for the performing arts. Following your dreams is the subject of **Raise Your Voice**, a confectionary tale featuring real-life 'tween queen Hilary Duff (*A Cinderella Story*, *The Lizzie McGuire Movie*) as the aspiring singer, along with Jason Ritter (*Swimfan*, "Joan of Arcadia"), John Corbett (*My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, *Raising Helen*) and Tom Hanks' missus, Rita Wilson (*Runaway Bride*, *The Story of Us*). On a quest to "find herself," Terri must deal with the hurts of the past as well as a potential romance while immersed in a competitive new environment that's far from everyone and everything she knows. CCM recently spoke with Director **Sean McNamara**, known mostly for his television credits ("Even Stevens," "That's So Raven"), who was at the helm of this family-friendly project (Rated PG), which opens Oct. 8.

**CCM: What drew you to this particular project?**

**McNamara:** It was the music. I grew up playing guitar, piano and drums; and this was a great way to get back into that world. I was raised Catholic, and I have six brothers and sisters. We all played in the church band. Now I go to St. Agatha's [Catholic Church] in Los Angeles, and they have a great choir. It's cool because it's [multi-racial], and they sing these songs that are a gospel and rock hybrid. I wanted to get some of that great music into the film. What I did was try to make the music in the film eclectic—from gospel to classical to the songs Hilary would sing. It's a 104-minute film, and 94 minutes of that is music and score.

**CCM: What lessons or values do you hope young people will get out of this movie?**

**McNamara:** Following your heart, following your dreams. If you concentrate and work hard through any adversity, with yourself and God's help, you can do it.

**CCM: What project is next for you?**

**McNamara:** A movie called *Pope Jack*. It's a comedy along the lines of *Bruce Almighty*. It's a story about a guy who is elected Pope, and then it turns out he had been married before; but he and his wife both thought the other one was dead. It sounds crazy, but my priest was actually the one who gave me the script!

Also hitting theaters this month, *I Am David*, based on the novel by Anne Holm and starring Jim Caviezel (*The Passion of The Christ*, *Frequency*), recounts a young boy's harrowing escape from a prison camp in post-World War II Bulgaria in the 1950s. Aided by a kind mentor (Caviezel), the film follows David's trek across Europe, in search not only of freedom but his own identity. His memories entail nothing but the harsh conditions of growing up in the labor camps; and once he finally experiences freedom, he finds that surviving the outside world can be almost as challenging as his life in captivity. *I Am David*, rated PG, opens Oct. 8.

Favorite DVDs From  
Your Favorite Artists:**Ashley Jett, Palisade:**

"I recently watched **Signs**, written and directed by M. Night Shyamalan (*The Village*, *The Sixth Sense*) and featuring Mel Gibson (*Braveheart*, *What Women Want*). It was the first time I had ever seen it—a little bit on the freaky side but very suspenseful. The story, all based on faith, is incredible. The best part of the DVD is all the extra footage—how they made the movie was just unbelievable. The extra footage is almost better than the movie itself."

**David Crowder, David Crowder Band:**

"The original **Manchurian Candidate** (released in 1962) was named by the American Film Institute as one of the top 100 movies of all time. It was close to the beginning of the list if memory serves (which it rarely does). In my book, Frank Sinatra (the original *Oceans 11*) never was more 'swinging.' On a cautionary note, don't watch this eating a bowl of chili while wearing your favorite shirt bought at Goodwill in Panama City, Fla., as did I."



## \* HAWK Nelson

Extremely Glad to Be Here

Hawk Nelson lead singer Jason Dunn reveals that two of his life goals have included signing a record deal (which he can now check off his list, thanks partly to Trevor McNeven of Thousand Foot Krutch) and having dinner with Michael W. Smith. While he's still waiting for supper with Smitty, the future looks bright with the recent release of Hawk Nelson's debut, *Letters to the President* (Tooth & Nail), and air time on WB's "Summerland."

**CCM:** *What or who is a Hawk Nelson?*

**JASON:** [laughs] When I was 14 years old, I made up the name Hawk Nelson for the game "2Xtreme" for Sony Playstation. It was just one of those crazy names that always stuck. As a band we always joked around with that name, and here he is today.

**CCM:** *How do you know Trevor McNeven?*

**JASON:** We've been close friends growing up. We went to the same church together, same school and same youth group. He was always a good role model. His band was always the band to go watch in Peterborough [Ontario], our hometown. So we always followed in his footsteps, I guess. A couple years ago he noticed that we had just released a CD independently. He saw the artwork, and he realized how much money we had put into it; and he thought we were serious. This is right after they [TFK] signed with Tooth & Nail, so he really put our name out there to Brandon [Ebel, label president] and totally got us off on the right foot. It was really cool that he would do that for us.

**CCM:** *How do you feel about being compared to acts like Relient K and Thousand Foot Krutch and then general-market acts such as Simple Plan and Blink 182?*

**JASON:** I totally take that as a compliment; all those bands are amazing.

## \* Overflow

If It's Good Enough for Mac Powell...

South Carolina rockers Overflow spent 12 months hoping for a record deal—from the time the band recorded a six-song EP with producer Scotty Wilbanks (Third Day, NewSong) to when it captured the attention of Third Day's Mac Powell and Essential Records. That year solidified the band's decision to heed God's calling to reach out to youth and share a message of hope through music—even if a major-label deal had never materialized. But Overflow was signed to Essential with Powell himself serving as executive producer. Its debut, *Better Place*, released on Aug. 24, featuring long-time friends Tom Pellerin (vocals), Mark Breazeale (guitar), Josh Cromer (bass), Matt Hayes (keyboards) and Will Carter (drums).

**CCM:** *What have been some major influences on you individually and as a band?*

**WILL:** The four of us [minus Josh] all grew up together since we were maybe 2 or 3 years old, and we all went to the same church. That's how we all kind of met. And our youth pastor was very instrumental in—maybe not starting the band—but always wanting to know what we were up to and being very supportive.

**CCM:** *Does Overflow have any special traditions or rituals?*

**JOSH:** We pray right before we go onstage every night that God would completely humble us. We never walk onstage, never do a radio interview without being together and praying about it saying, "God, use this for You. Take control, and You do this."

**CCM:** *You guys have known each other for a long time. Do you always get along?*

**TOM:** We were best friends before we were in a band.

**WILL:** That's the secret. Normally the only fights we have are creative differences.

**MATT:** More like disagreements.

**WILL:** It's just that we want what's best for everything—for the song, for the music and for what we're doing.







# insider

by Christa Farris

Scott Stapp's faith,  
David Crowder's touring  
needs and more.



## With Arms Wide Open

With lyrics that always hinted at faith and following years of speculation, former Creed frontman (and now solo artist) Scott Stapp talks candidly about his renewed relationship with Christ, his solo career and how Mel Gibson's latest movie made a difference in his life.

Photo by Frank Veronsky

Ever since his ascension to rock star status, it was the question that Scott Stapp could never put to rest. At first he tried the shock approach with overkill responses and a foray into a lifestyle of rock & roll excess. "There was a point," admitted Stapp, "when my life really was sex, drugs and rock & roll. The last thing I wanted was for someone to think I was in a Christian band. The constant questions about whether Creed was a Christian band only made me more angry and intent on proving otherwise."

Now, less than four months after the announcement of Creed's breakup and on the eve of

the launch of his solo career, Stapp is more reflective about the endless inquiries regarding the creed of Creed. "It's ironic when I look back on it now," he said via phone from his parents' home in Florida, "because, of all the times we were asked if we were a Christian band, only once did anyone ever ask me if I was a Christian." For Stapp, that's really where the controversy was.

An interesting twist on that one incident when Stapp was asked about his personal faith is that it didn't come from a member of the Christian media; it came from Bill Maher, a self-professed lapsed Catholic and the former host of ABC's "Politically

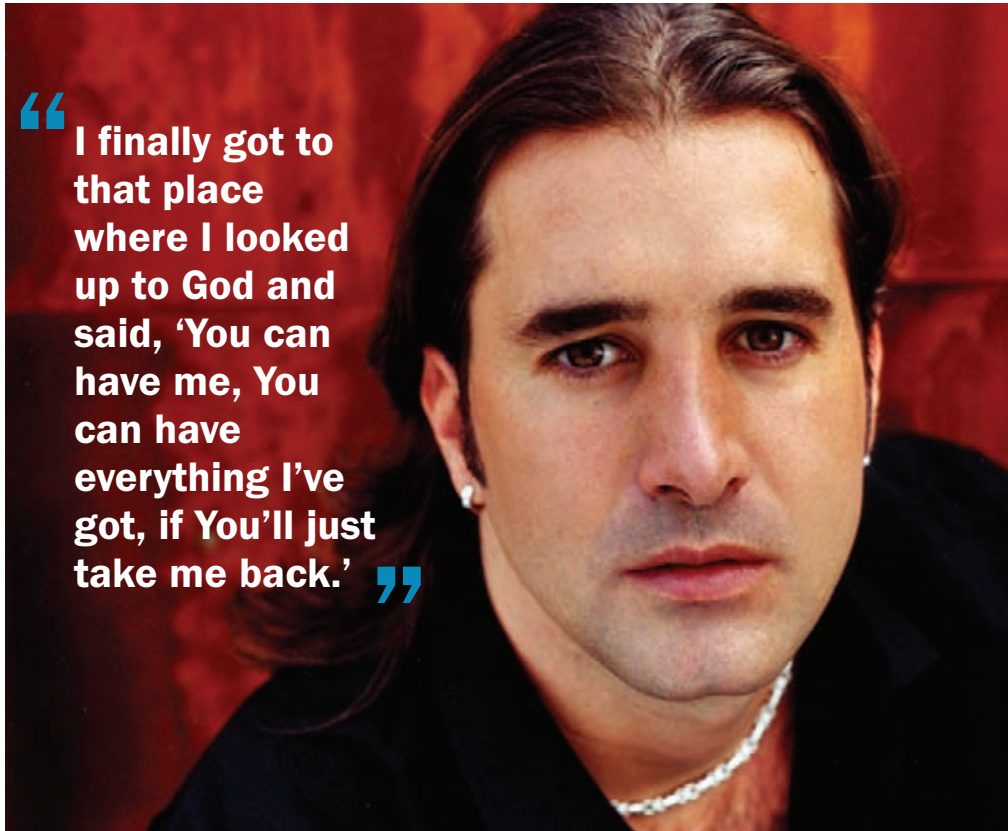
Incorrect." "I was really nervous when I went on that show; and when Bill asked me if I was a Christian, it sort of caught me offguard." And what was Stapp's response? "I'm not sure." Says Stapp, "That's where I was at the time; that was as honest an answer as I could give."

Stapp continued, "Over the last two years I've come full circle, spiritually. Unfortunately, it took a lot of heartache to get to that point; but I've always been a little hard-headed. I had to finally get to the place where I wasn't being influenced by how I was brought up (Stapp's legalistic, religious upbringing has been well documented.). I had to finally stand alone as a



“I finally got to that place where I looked up to God and said, ‘You can have me, You can have everything I’ve got, if You’ll just take me back.’”

Photo by Frank Veronsky



In regard to how his life used to be, Stapp says, “Before, I was always afraid to take that leap of faith because I was afraid of being looked at through an even more intense microscope. I didn’t want to be a hypocrite because I knew there were things in my life, according to the church I was raised in, that weren’t of God. I didn’t want to be a stumbling block to anyone. I knew in my heart that I was a believer and that I loved God, but I was leery of making some sort of public profession because of what, as I understood it at the time, it would entail.” But Stapp is careful to add, “Those were all really only excuses.”

When Stapp arrived at a surrendering point, he started getting back in touch with Rick Berlin, his former pastor. Stapp credits Berlin with being instrumental in helping him make a fresh start in his journey, offering counsel about what is and is not essential as he tries to walk the line between the legalism of his formative years and the grace he has now embraced.

Considering how much conflict he had with the church as a teenager, why did Stapp reach out to a former pastor? “Pastor Rick is really liberated from the old ways,” Stapp responded. He’s really helped me understand how important joy is, how being human and a Christian are not contradictory ideas.”

Becoming reacquainted with Scripture has also played a key role in helping Stapp redefine what it means to be a believer. Stapp says that recently he’s been studying the life of Paul. “I never realized the kind of conflict that Paul had with Peter and James over the issue of the law. Paul was obviously the radical of the three—but not in the sense that he was right and everyone else was wrong. He was the one out in the world coming in contact with people who were pagan and nothing like the rest of the church.” Stapp continued, “Paul wasn’t out trying to get people to conform to a set of rules about how they looked on the outside so they could join some club. He was preaching love and reaching people’s hearts.”

According to Stapp, that’s the biggest difference he sees in the church as he is experiencing it now versus the one he walked away from as an adolescent. He says, “I think there has been a maturing among a lot of Christians. In a lot of ways the church seems to be growing into this place where fear is no longer being used as the main way to get people to give their lives to Christ.”

So, which has changed more: the church or Stapp’s perception of it? “I have to admit,” confessed Stapp, “that a lot of my rebellion was just an excuse to live the way I wanted to. But you can only make excuses for so long. What I’ve learned as an artist is that I can be a Christian human being and have a relationship with God through Christ, but I don’t have to be a full-blown evangelical Christian artist. I’m a three-dimensional human being. Yes, I’ll talk about my faith; and I’m sure that’ll come out in my music because I’ve always had a tendency to wear my heart on my sleeve.” **TIM ADAMS**

man and see Christ from my own perspective and choose Him for myself. When you grow up in church, especially the kind of church I did, it’s sort of like, ‘Your name is Scott, and your faith is Christianity.’ I didn’t get to choose my faith any more than I did my name; so it was time to come to terms with where I stood, what my commitment would be.”

When reminded that he seemed to be expressing those same sorts of sentiments seven years ago in the lyrics to “My Own Prison,” Stapp responded, “My dad used to always say, ‘It’s a matter of 12 inches. There’s 12 inches between your head and your heart.’ There have been plenty of times when I’ve cried out to God in the past; but it was almost always when I was in a jam, when I wanted to make a deal with God. In my head I knew it was right to call on the Lord in a time of need; but I wasn’t ready to give Him my whole heart, to recommit my entire life to Him.” Stapp continued, “That’s what’s different this time around. I’ve stepped back into the arena of faith, of faith in Christ. I’m not just looking at God as a way out of a jam; I’ve embraced being a Christian as what shapes my values, my worldview, my morals. My commitment to Christ is what establishes my priorities, how I will raise my son, my whole person.”

“The important thing for me now is that I want my heart to be renewed, which is what I was trying to express when I wrote the song ‘Relearn Love.’ I saw the movie *The Passion of The Christ* while I was going through all of this, and it really brought home the idea

of how I needed a new heart, that I needed to relearn what it means to love. For me, that’s what salvation is—asking God for your heart to be reborn.”

Creed’s 1997 debut, *My Own Prison*, was followed in 1999 with *Human Clay*. 2001’s *Weathered* completed the short—but incredibly popular—Creed catalog, which has registered more than 30 million albums sold to date. The other three original members of Creed have joined with former Mayfield Four frontman Myles Kennedy to form the new band Alter Bridge. Their album, *One Day Remains*, released Aug. 10, debuted in the top five on the *Billboard* charts and has earned some critical acclaim as well. So, where does that leave Stapp?

“I’m working on a solo album right now that should be released later this year, but ‘Relearn Love’ is my first single since Creed broke up.” The song, inspired by the Mel Gibson blockbuster, is the first release from a compilation album entitled *The Passion of The Christ: Songs*, which coincided with the recent release of *The Passion* DVD on the same day.

According to Stapp, the invitation to make a contribution to the album was confirmation that he was moving in the right direction. “When I was a kid, and even as a young adult, I was always asking God to prove Himself to me. After seeing *The Passion* it was kind of like God saying to me, ‘I’m here, what further proof do you need?’ I finally got to that place where I looked up to God and said, ‘You can have me; You can have everything I’ve got, if You’ll just take me back.’”



# SHE

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insider

>> pop/rock

“Anberlin's 'Change the World' is the most inspiring song I have ever heard...”



A couple months ago your favorite artists had their say. Now that we've posed the same challenge to you, the Christian music fan, on what tracks would top your list of the greatest Christian songs of all time, let's just say you had some pretty diverse answers. You can see how yours compare against ours in the brand new book on the subject titled *CCM's Top 100 Greatest Songs in Christian Music* (Integrity). In addition to the fact-filled extravaganza and the stories behind the songs themselves, four CDs will also eventually be released that feature the songs we're talking about. Check out [ccmtop100.com](http://ccmtop100.com) for more details and even hear a sneak peek of two revered tracks re-recorded by Warren Barfield and Across the Sky.

“I think the greatest song is **“Blue Skies”** by **Point of Grace**. This song means a lot to me because, no matter where I'm at in life or what fears I face, God is always there in the ‘blue skies.’” —Maria Litwinczuk, Canton, MI

“It's simple. **‘Awesome God’** by **Rich Mullins**.” —Heather Molden, via e-mail

“My nomination for the top song is **‘Not of This World’** by **Petra**. I have both sentimental and spiritual reasons for this pick. Seeing Petra on its ‘Not of This World’ tour back in January 1984 was my first major Christian concert. That was also the first Christian tape I ever bought and the start of my extensive Christian music collection.” —Andrew Persac, via e-mail

“I believe the best song is **Steven Curtis Chapman's ‘God Is God.’** Truthfully, this song pretty much says it all.” —Michael Shipley, Baltimore, MD

**“Anberlin's ‘Change the World’** is the most inspiring song I have ever heard, and it touches my heart every time. The song is a challenge to my generation, one I hope that we will take and run with.”  
—Caitlin Baird, Fresno, CA

>>> DISC • MERCYME HANGS OUT WITH THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST'S JIM >>>



Sharlok Poems

# It's Good Times For Hip-Hop Fans.

For those who need some new rhymes to liven things up musically, October is your month. First off, L.A. Symphony's **Sharlok Poems'** solo foray, *The Movement*, is hitting the streets Oct. 19 through a licensing deal with Gotee Records. As for the future of his fellow **L.A. Symphony** peeps, the group is currently working on a new studio album that'll release in the spring of 2005.

Keeping things diversified, duo **Mars III** also has a new disc that'll drop on Oct.19. Titled *Pro Pain*, fans can expect "something special," according to the band's official Web page at marsill.com.



## Cyberspeak:

What's New at CCMmagazine.com this Month!



- Artist chats confirmed with **Point of Grace** and the rescheduled **Rachael Lampa** event.
- *CCM Magazine's* own Mr. List-O-Rama, Chris Well, blogs away.
- New exclusive contests only available to CCMmagazine.com readers.
- Updated fall concert dates for up-to-the-minute information on shows near you.

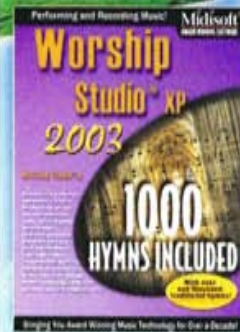
## Helen Baylor Signs on the Dotted Line

Known for her sweet, soulful vocals and classic songs, the future of Helen Baylor's career was unknown when she faced severe pancreas and gall bladder issues late last year. But with a clean bill of health, Baylor has resumed traveling and has recently signed with MCA Records, which reunites her with veteran songwriter and producer Jerry Peters (Mighty Clouds of Joy). Incidentally, it was Peters who had signed Baylor to her first contract with Word Records back in the late '80s. Baylor's debut is slated for release in mid 2005.



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## insider

It seems like every artist in Christian music is on a major tour of some sort this fall, (Check out CCMmagazine.com's searchable tour database if you need proof.), and **David Crowder** is no exception. Currently on its second headlining tour, "The Illuminate Tour," with Something Like Silas and Shawn McDonald, the quirky worship leader recently revealed quite the interesting list of "must haves" for the David Crowder Band's life on the road. Sounds like quite the party, indeed. Now about that bus driver...

Lawn chairs, a skateboard, 8 iPods, 3 Xbox video game systems, 1 Tiki lounge, a book about giraffes, a couple of bags of charcoal, lots of bacon, a bearded bus driver, a Willie Nelson record, an all-encompassing-love of the mustache, assorted "Sherlock Holmes" movies, Velcro.



## A New Way to Worship

Charlie Peacock strives to keep it simple and melodic on a new Family Christian Stores exclusive.

Veteran artist/producer and CCM contributor Charlie Peacock ("Everything That's on My Mind") has released a new batch of worship music, this time via an album sold exclusively through Family Christian Stores. *For Christ Alone* features 10 songs written by Peacock that he co-produced with Out of the Grey's Scott Denté. Similar in spirit to Peacock's standout 1992 project, *Coram Deo: In the Presence of God*, it features some of Christian music's unique voices: Sara Groves, Chris Rice, Margaret Becker, Christine Denté, Taylor Sorensen, Cindy Morgan and Nirva Dorsaint. The result is a subtle, worshipful album filled with gentle melodies.

"What Charlie would do in his devotional time in the morning is just write worship songs to the Lord at his piano," says artist Rick Altizer, whose Fuseic Music record label shepherded the album for the retail chain. "And so when I approached Charlie with writing the record and doing a record on just those terms—it's got to be creative, artistic; it needs to glorify God and be Christ-centered—he got excited. He said, 'I want to do that project. I want to write that record.' They are, in my opinion, some of his best work in latter years because they're just Christ-focused. I didn't want *I Can Sing of Your Love Forever Volume 23*." **ANTHONY DEBARROS**

>>> and P.O.D. frontman SONNY SANDOVAL signs on as an investor, music >>>





## Evangelizing the East Coast

This year's "Y Fest" featured plenty of music, teaching and outreach.

Like a bowl of tasty clam chowder or loyalty to New England Patriots football, Cape Cod's own "Y Fest" has become an annual tradition of music and ministry on the East Coast for the past nine years. Inspired by a young adult group Bible study, the evangelistic event with the motto "All about outreach" is run by volunteers through the contributions from dozens of local churches, businesses and individuals.

In coordination with WEZE 590 AM, New England's Family Radio, (part of the Salem Communications family, publisher of *CCM Magazine*), this year's "Y Fest" featured rockers **Everyday Sunday**, independent artist **Shana Cassidy** and national speaker **David Nasser**. According to "Y Fest's" Erik Anderson, this year's crowd of 525 "received the artists with great enthusiasm, and the event was a smashing success."

Anderson notes that in three years, more than 10,000 have attended "Y Fest" outreach concerts and more than 1,200 have made commitments or re-commitments to Christ. At this year's event at the Sandwich High School auditorium, prayer counselors distributed Bibles, prayed with participants and helped people get hooked up with local churches for discipleship.

For more information on the festivities, check out [yfest.org](http://yfest.org).

## What Are You Listening To?

Chris Tomlin reveals what four discs have been rocking his CD player lately.



**Michael Buble**  
Michael Buble



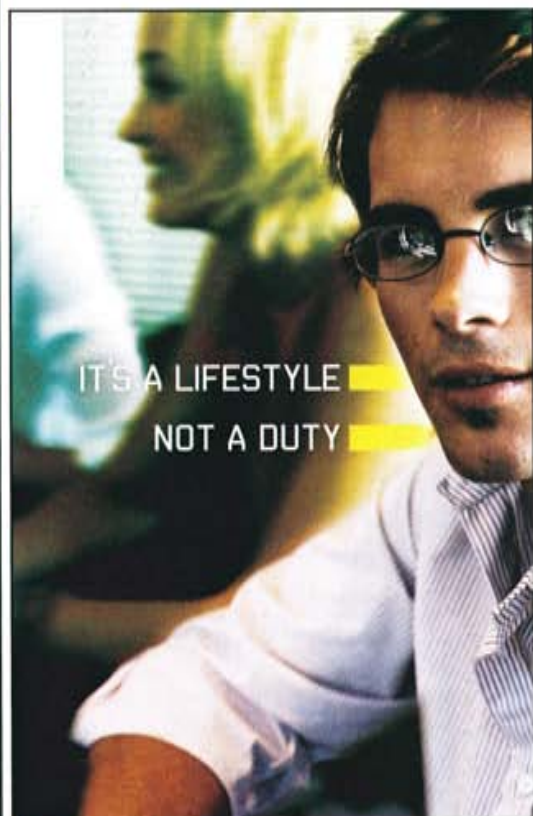
**Matt Redman**  
Facedown



**Brad Paisley**  
Mud on the Tires



**Delirious**  
World Service

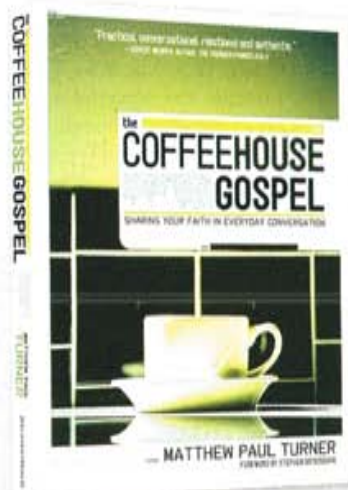


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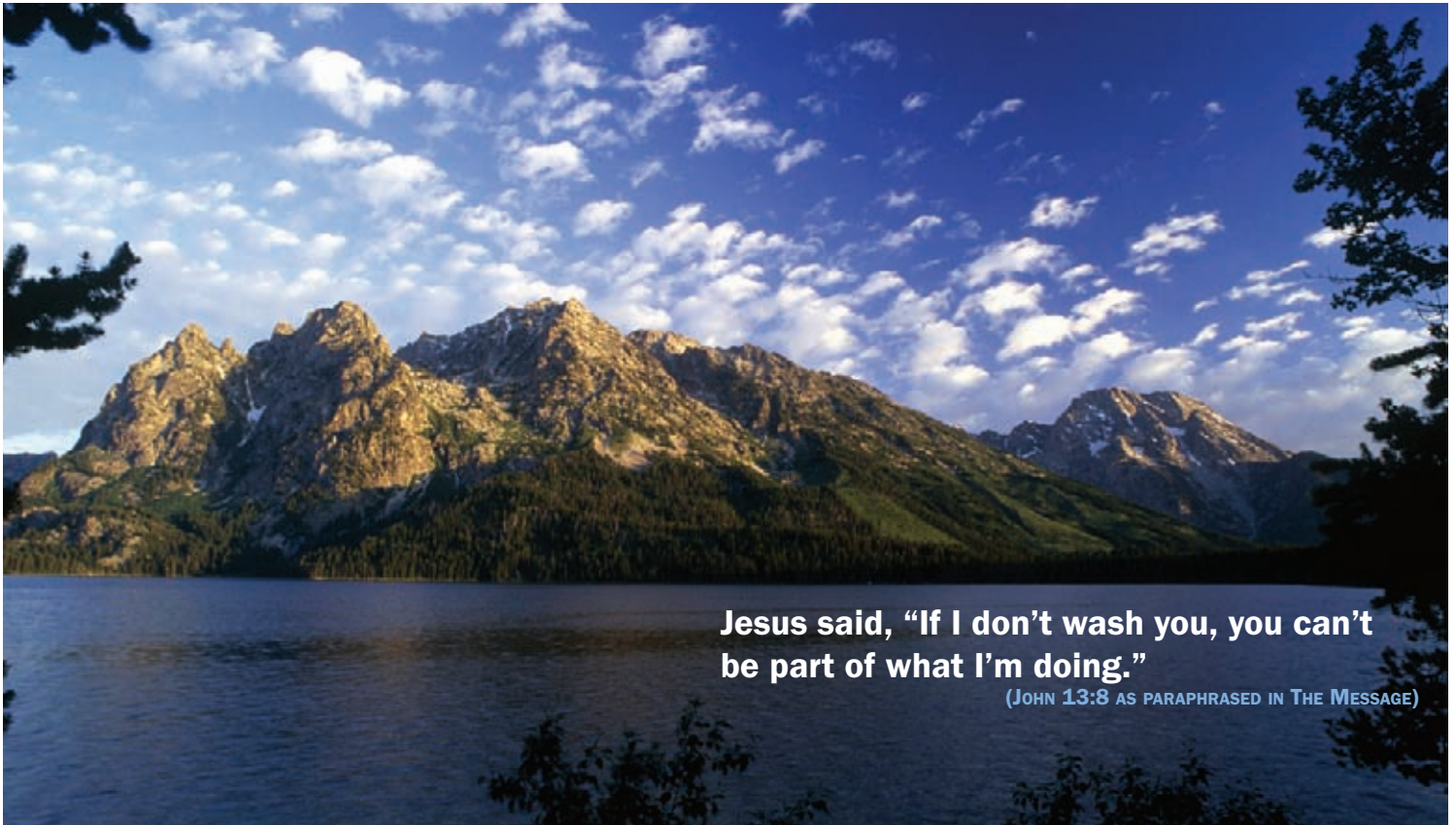
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**Jesus said, “If I don’t wash you, you can’t be part of what I’m doing.”**

(JOHN 13:8 AS PARAPHRASED IN THE MESSAGE)

## The Servant-Lordship of Jesus Christ

This passage contains a story that is only found in John. (Ninety-two percent of the Gospel of John is unique!) The other Gospels tell us about the Last Supper, but only John describes what happened just after the supper: Jesus washed the disciples’ feet.

From Luke we find out that at the end of the Lord’s Supper, the disciples started to bicker about who was the greatest (Lk. 22:24). It wasn’t the first time they had argued about this subject. In fact, they seemed to argue about it a lot (Matt. 18:1, Mk. 9:34, Lk. 9:46).

It is a unique and powerful moment. For once, we see Jesus giving up on words. He’s finally had enough. John tells us that He got up from the table, took off His coat, very deliberately wrapped a towel around His waist and filled a basin with water. By this point the disciples were probably wondering what was going on. Jesus makes His way around the three-sided table, washing their feet. For once, they shut up—that is, all except one of them.

“No,” Peter protested, “You will never wash my feet!” In essence, Peter is saying to Jesus, “You just don’t get it, do You? This is not appropriate! Of all the inappropriate things that You’ve done, this is most inappropriate.”

When Jesus asked John to baptize Him, John, in essence, says, “This is not appropriate. You should be baptizing me” (Mk. 1:9ff).

When Jesus embraced sinners the Pharisees said, “This is not appropriate” (Matt. 11:19).

He “inappropriately” reached out to prostitutes (Lk. 7:39).

He touched lepers; He touched dead people (Matt. 8:2, Mk. 1:40, Matt. 9:24, Lk. 7:15).

According to the values in Jesus’ culture, you were not allowed to touch anything that would make you “unclean.” But Jesus’ power reversed all that. From now on, His touch would make things clean. In order to demonstrate this, He washed the disciples’ unclean feet. It was the task of the lowliest slave, yet John tells us this is how Jesus demonstrated the “full extent” of His love to them.

Right now He’s serving us. He is interceding to the Father for us. He is preparing a place just for us. This day He wants to wash our feet with the water of His Word. He wants you and me to put our dirty feet, our dirty lives into His hands. He wants to serve us. In fact, you won’t understand who He is until you understand that He is absolutely delighted to do so. That’s who Jesus is: our Servant-Savior.

### Introductory Questions

1. When’s the last time you did something “inappropriate” for God?
2. Until we submit to the servant-lordship of Jesus, how can we truly be His followers?

“When’s the last time you did something ‘inappropriate’ for God?”



## Study

Read John 13:1-17. As you read the passage, interact at the level of your imagination, and picture yourself as the person who is struggling to allow Jesus to humiliate Himself to wash your feet.

Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He now showed the disciples the full extent of his love. <sup>2</sup> It was time for supper, and the Devil had already enticed Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to carry out his plan to betray Jesus. <sup>3</sup> Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. <sup>4</sup> So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, <sup>5</sup> and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel he had around him. <sup>6</sup> When he came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, "Lord, why are you going to wash my feet?" <sup>7</sup> Jesus replied, "You don't understand now why I am doing it; someday you will." <sup>8</sup> "No," Peter protested, "you will never wash my feet!" Jesus replied, "But if I don't wash you, you won't belong to me." <sup>9</sup> Simon Peter exclaimed, "Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!" <sup>10</sup> Jesus replied, "A person who has bathed all over does not need to wash, except for the feet, to be entirely clean. And you are clean, but that isn't true of everyone here." <sup>11</sup> For Jesus knew who would betray him. That is what he meant when he said, "Not all of you are clean." <sup>12</sup> After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, "Do you understand what I was doing?" <sup>13</sup> You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are right, because it is true. <sup>14</sup> And since I, the Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. <sup>15</sup> I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. <sup>16</sup> How true it is that a servant is not greater than the master. Nor are messengers more important than the one who sends them. <sup>17</sup> You know these things—now do them! That is the path of blessing.

1. What did Jesus do to show the full extent of His love? (v.1)
2. Judas had already agreed to betray Jesus; yet, apparently, Jesus still washed his feet. What might have been the effect of that on Judas?
3. Was Peter's protest based on his own pride or his desire not to see Jesus as a servant? (v. 8)
4. Jesus connects Peter's discipleship to his willingness to submit to Jesus' servant-lordship. Is that still true for us today? (v. 8)
5. What do you think Jesus meant when He talked about those who have already "had a bath." What does He mean by that? (v. 10)
6. Verse 14 makes it perfectly clear: We are called to wash feet as well. In our time, what does that look like?

Michael Card is an award-winning author, musician and radio broadcaster who resides in Franklin, Tennessee. His latest effort, *A Fragile Stone*, deals with the emotional life of the apostle Simon Peter. Visit [MichaelCard.com](http://MichaelCard.com) for more information.



*"It's not about me. It's more like, 'What can God do with us tonight?' I'm always thinking, 'OK, God, here's my little bit. Use it. And He does. He always does.'"*

—Adrienne (Liesching) Camp  
(former *The Benjamin Gate* frontwoman  
and now wife of artist Jeremy Camp)



## Commit

Nothing could have been more unexpected than Jesus' coming "in the form of a Servant" (Phil. 2:7). And yet we see in this passage that He is determined to serve us as well as to have us follow Him in serving others. Like Peter, our discipleship depends on it.

From another point of view, we could ask ourselves: How could we be disciples of someone who is the servant-lord without becoming servants ourselves? If we refuse His servanthood in our lives, then we truly have nothing to do with Him. Until you and I allow Jesus to wash our feet every day with the water of His Word, we will not be qualified to go and do the same for the world.

Commit yourself to coming to a fresh understanding of the Servant-Lordship of Jesus. Look for other passages in the Gospels that portray Jesus in this same light.

Pray for a new awareness of what it cost Jesus to become a servant for us. This perspective should lead you to a fresh experience of worshiping Jesus. Ask God to help you discover new and imaginative ways to "wash the feet" of those around you. Seek to understand those cultural values in our own time that would accuse such servant-hood of being "inappropriate."



# The Reading Bible

**God's Word has all the elements of a great story – good guys, bad guys, epic battles, devoted sidekicks, romance, betrayal, an eternal Savior. It's everything we need to stay alive. Sometimes the truth is better than fiction.**

NAV PRESS



# **MORE TO THIS LIFE**

**SO HE HAS MILLIONS OF RECORD SALES, BOOKCASES FULL OF DOVE AWARDS AND GRAMMY GOLD AND ALL KINDS OF RADIO HITS. BUT STEVEN CURTIS CHAPMAN KNOWS BETTER THAN TO TAKE IT ALL, EVEN HIS CALLING TO MUSIC, FOR GRANTED.** \_\_\_\_\_

**DOUGLAS KAINÉ MCKELVEY FINDS OUT WHAT INSPIRED THIS FATHER OF SIX TO MAKE HIS MOST INNOVATIVE RECORD YET.** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHOTOS BY KWAKU ALSTON**









to do this just because the calendar says it's time to do another record and the record company says it's time to do another record.'

"I've always prayed, 'If this isn't what I'm supposed to be doing anymore, please make that real clear 'cause I'm a slow learner, and I've got a hard head. So every time this cycle comes around, it's been real important for me to take some time and say, 'OK, God, first of all I'm assuming this is still what You want me to be doing; but if it's not, show me that.'"

Chapman's willingness to repeatedly assess the direction of his life and vocation rather than make the assumption that "material success plus popularity equals God's approval" has lent a certain gravity to his work over the last several years... which is to say that if he wasn't convinced God was still giving him a platform and things to say from it, he'd hang it up tomorrow and move on to something else. But, so far, each time he's considered whether or not to make that next record, he's found something he still felt compelled to say. And the best way he knows how to say it is still through tightly crafted, three-and-a-half-minute pop gems.

The current project is no exception. While it flips a few things around musically for Chapman (more about that later), lyrically, *All Things New* revolves around the central theme of God's promise and commitment to renew all creation. Chapman approaches the weighty subject head-on in several tracks. But he also explores the minutia of the way that overarching theme plays out in the context of his own increasingly busy life and family in songs such as "I Believe in You" (written for his daughter Emily's high school graduation) and "What Now" (a song about encountering Jesus through service to orphans).

"I've never been more compelled and never been more inspired," Steven says. "I've never been more sure that God has given me things to say, and I'm not having to guess. I can't stop wanting to communicate these things. But I've also never been more exhausted. I'm 41 years old, I've got six kids, and two of them are under the age of 4. Since the last record we've adopted two new daughters from China, and then here's Emily [the Chapman's oldest daughter] getting ready to head to college. I'm not sure how to live with it yet."

In addition to the changes in Steven's own life, a major influence in the writing of *All Things New* was John Piper's recent book *Don't Waste Your Life* (Crossway). Steven picked the book up before a flight to Seattle, and, by the time he touched down, he had

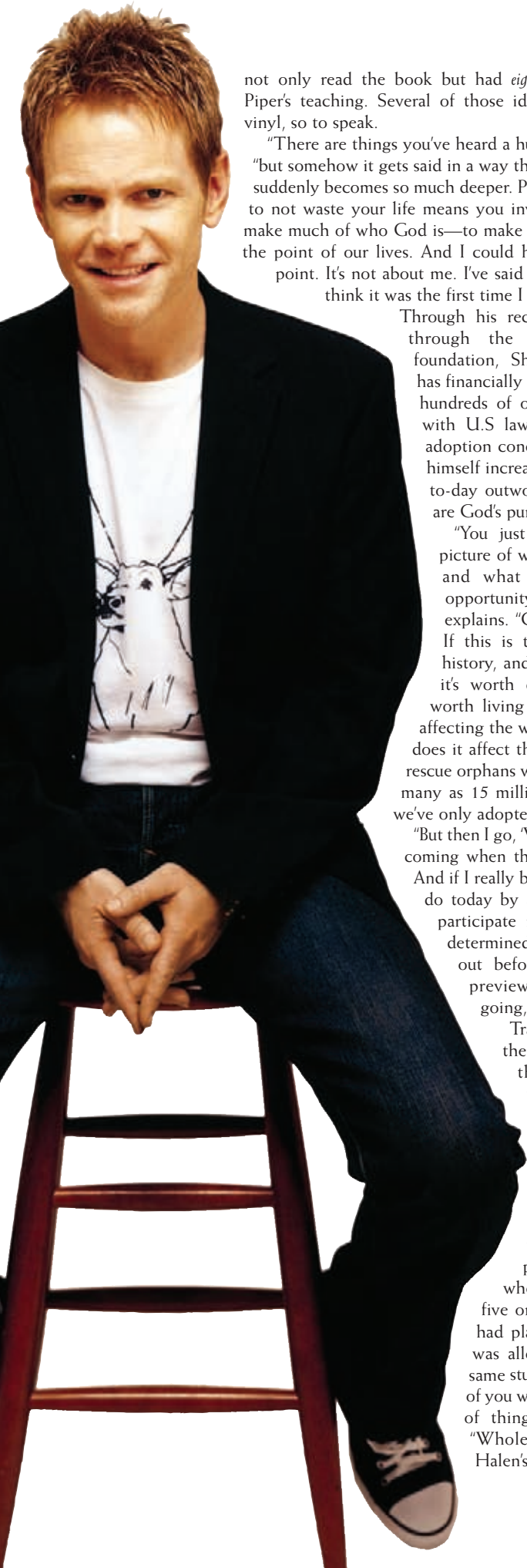
the right motivations? Is it time for a change? Has Elvis left the building? That process of re-evaluation is a natural part of maturity, and even more so, of discipleship for believers.

But most of us don't have a record of, say, nine million albums sold, 47 (That's not a misprint.) Doves and four consecutive Grammy Awards won and 41 No. 1 singles notched at radio. Do those statistics really leave any room for doubt? Apparently so.

"Every album, every creative season it gets more intense," Steven Curtis Chapman says, reflecting on the genesis of his 14<sup>th</sup> studio project, *All Things New* (Sparrow). "It's this process of trying to get to a place where I can hear one voice above all the others—that being the voice of God's Spirit. Three years ago I lost my voice for about three months with paralyzed vocal cords. I didn't know if I'd ever sing again. That gave me even more of a sense of, 'God, I don't ever want

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Granted, most of us have introspective moments when we stop and take a look at what we're doing with our lives. How are we using our gifts? Are we investing in eternal things? Are we acting from



not only read the book but had *eight* song ideas inspired by Piper's teaching. Several of those ideas eventually made it to vinyl, so to speak.

"There are things you've heard a hundred times," Steven says, "but somehow it gets said in a way that your understanding of it suddenly becomes so much deeper. Piper was simply saying that to not waste your life means you invest all of who you are to make much of who God is—to make much of Christ. And that's the point of our lives. And I could have told you: I'm not the point. It's not about me. I've said that in songs before. But I think it was the first time I really began to grasp it."

Through his recent adoptions as well as through the ongoing work of his foundation, Shaohannah's Hope, which has financially assisted in the adoptions of hundreds of other orphans and worked with U.S. lawmakers to address global adoption concerns, Chapman has found himself increasingly invested in the day-to-day outworking of what he believes are God's purposes for the world.

"You just start to get this bigger picture of what's going on around you and what God has given us the opportunity to be involved in," Steven explains. "God is renewing all things. If this is truly the course of all of history, and I believe it, and I believe it's worth dying for and, therefore, worth living for, then how is it really affecting the way I'm living my life? How does it affect the work I've been doing to rescue orphans when I consider there are as many as 15 million orphans in China, and we've only adopted three?"

"But then I go, 'Wait a minute. There's a day coming when there won't be any orphans. And if I really believe that, then what I can do today by adopting one orphan is to participate in what God has already determined. God has invited us to live out before the world these little previews of where [history] is going, of what's coming.'"

Translating the *All Things New* theme into the mechanics of the recording process as well, Chapman made an early decision to disrupt his own comfortable routine and "mix it up" a bit. For the first time he recorded in L.A. rather than in Nashville; and, with the exception of producer Brown Bannister, who's been a staple for the last five or six projects, no one who had played on a previous record was allowed into the studio (the same studio, by the way—for those of you who keep track of these sorts of things—where Led Zeppelin's "Whole Lotta Love" and Van Halen's "Jump" were recorded). In

addition to special guests such as Mac Powell (Third Day), Jason Wade (Lifehouse), Kendall Payne and blues sensation Jonny Lang, the L.A. players hired were some of the hottest in the industry, with resumé's that include credits for Sheryl Crow, Emmylou Harris, Pearl Jam, Iggy Pop, Michelle Branch, Jane's Addiction, Alanis Morissette, Carly Simon, Jude Cole and David Bowie. Those new players and engineers pushed Chapman's music to places it had never gone before.

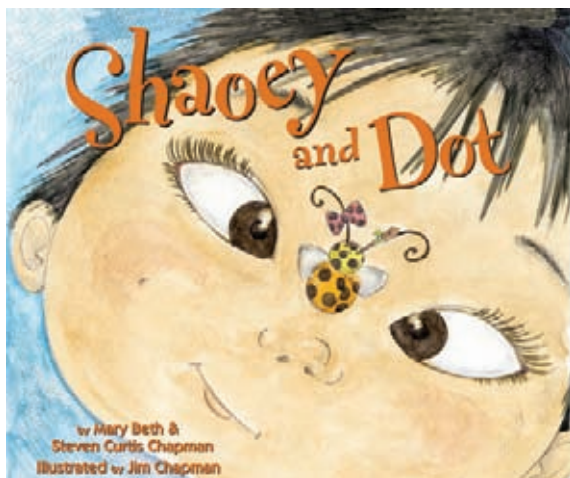
"It was really crazy," Steven says. "I was like, 'Man... we would never have tried that in Nashville, it's too crazy!' It was just that kind of exploratory, experimental stuff. I would end up reeling it in, just to say, 'This is more what my record needs to sound like.'"

Even prior to the official release of *All Things New*, there was a growing music industry buzz that the vocals captured on the album were easily Chapman's best ever, somehow bigger and deeper and fuller than his past efforts. This says quite a bit when you consider how many "Best Male Vocalist" and "Artist of the Year" Dove Awards he's already won, which is, well... a lot. Steven gives most of the credit for the improved vocals to the folks who engineered and mixed the record. But he says it also partly goes back to his vocal cord injury.

"When the damage began to heal," he explains, "I found that I was going to have to back off from screaming the high notes. So I wrote all these songs in lower keys and sang in a lower register. That gives a different kind of texture in my voice. Some of it could just be age, too—just hanging out on planet Earth a little longer now and getting less sleep with more kids and all the crazy stuff like that."

Not to worry. There's probably still a Dove or two in there somewhere... **ccm**

## SHAOEY AND DOT: BUG MEETS BUNDLE



To introduce kids and families to the idea of international adoption and to raise funds for the Shaohannah's Hope Foundation, Steven & Mary Beth have recently co-authored *Shaoey and Dot: Bug Meets Bundle*. Told from the perspective of a friendly (aren't they all?) ladybug, the book's rhyming verse and colorful illustrations (courtesy of Mary Beth's brother Jim who also has an adopted Chinese daughter) tell the heartwarming story of Shaohannah's adoption from the orphanage, and of her subsequent trip overseas to join her new family. Published by Tommy Nelson, the book's royalties will assist other families with adoption expenses.





Steven with Maria

It started out as a one-time thing. Emily, the eldest Chapman child, had hounded her parents for months ever since learning of the plight of millions of orphan girls in China. (Due to the “one child” policy and because boys have higher social value to families than girls, thousands of Chinese girls have been left for adoption.) Her brothers, Will and Caleb, joined the cause; and, in time, they wore their parents down (or won them over, depending on how you look at it). And so a trip was made to China, and little Shaohannah Hope joined the family. The Chapmans even started the foundation Shaohannah’s Hope afterward to assist other families with adoption. But that was where the family was going to stop—four kids, that’s it.

That was the plan, at least... until they felt compelled to go back and adopt Stevie Joy. “I was sure we were done then,” Steven recalls, “But I was making another trip to China, and people joked, ‘You’re going to China again, man? That’s

not a good sign. You’re gonna bring another little girl home, aren’t you? It’s not like I was in denial. I totally felt at peace.”

But as Steven finished singing in a Beijing church and walked outside, he met an American family holding two Chinese infant girls. He picked one of them up. As it turned out, the girl in Steven’s arms was with the foster family because of a heart condition. Most healthy orphans in China bypass the foster system and go straight to adoption. “We’re just taking care of her until God sends a family for her,” the foster parents said. The baby was named Maria.

“In my mind it’s like this siren goes off,” Steven says, “because years earlier I wrote a song for a little girl, and the chorus says, ‘Who’s gonna love Maria?’ I hadn’t thought about the song in 10 years. But the chorus immediately starts playing in my head, and I immediately start to tell God, ‘No, it ain’t gonna be me! It’s gonna be somebody, but it ain’t gonna be me!’ So I get in the car, and I drive away, and I’m crying. And I’m saying, ‘God,

what is the deal? I’m not supposed to feel this way about another little girl. I’ve held hundreds of orphans on trips like this, and I’m able to walk away and pray for them and trust you to send a family. So why am I feeling this way about *this* little girl?”

A week later Steven ran into the family again. This time they took his picture with Maria. Steven returned to Tennessee shortly thereafter and poured his energy into writing and recording. One day, as he was sitting at the computer, his pastor, Scotty Smith, walked in. “I had come home and argued with God for about two weeks, telling God this was crazy and didn’t make any sense.” Steven remembers. “Scotty asked me, ‘What are you doing?’ and I said, ‘Well, I’m trying to make a record, but right now I’m trying to convince God that I don’t have any business adopting another daughter.’”

Even as he was saying this, Steven received and opened an e-mail from China. It turned out to be the picture the family had taken of him saying goodbye to Maria.

“I called my wife,” Steven says, “And I said, ‘I just got a picture of me holding my little girl Maria. At that point, it wasn’t a man with an orphan anymore. It was a dad with his daughter. That was the moment when I knew we were supposed to go get her.’”

Before Steven even got home from the studio, his wife already had the paperwork filled out. “All those times in your life when you pray, ‘God, is this really Your will?’...it’s almost like every time I asked God about these kinds of things related to adoption, I just hear Him laughing, going, ‘Please, give Me a break. Is it My will? How much clearer can I make it? It’s in Scripture. Yeah, you’ve got concerns. Yeah, you wonder about this and that, but don’t you think I can handle that? If I called you to it, won’t I give you what you need to deal with it?’”

After finally getting Maria home, the Chapmans took her to a doctor to have her heart condition evaluated. Following a thorough examination, the doctor concluded there was nothing wrong with her heart. She had been completely healthy from the beginning. “God gave her a misdiagnosis of a heart condition and put her in that foster family just so I would meet her and get to be her dad,” Steven says.

Now as the parents of three adoptive daughters, the Chapmans are firm believers that adoption is an invitation to the heart of God. “It’s like God saying, ‘You said you wanted to know Me... so I’m inviting you in,’” Steven explains. “But it’s not just that you ask and all of a sudden—poof!—you know Me. I’m gonna reveal myself to you and invite you deeper and deeper into My heart. It’s mystery, but it’s not unexplained mystery. Scripture tells you this is where you’ll find Me. It’s why I said, ‘Care for orphans.’ It’s why I said, ‘Visit the ones in prison.’ It’s why I said, ‘Feed the hungry.’ Because when you do that, you’re doing that to Me, and you’re drawing near to Me and you’re getting to know Me.”

# CHAPMAN CLIFF NOTES

Steven Curtis Chapman is an artist (and avid reader, evidently) who wrestles with his own faith and humanity. And, beginning with his third album, *More to this Life*, he has tended to create musical artifacts that honestly reflect where he is at a given season of life. The joys, the struggles, the doubts, the awe, the lessons learned—these (plus truths learned from a lot of books) become the raw material his songs are built of; and, with each project, a new theme emerges. Here is a behind-the-scenes “short story” version of how each was inspired.



## **MORE TO THIS LIFE (1989):**

Life is short. What more is there to this human experience than just living to die? **Catalyst:** The funeral service of [wife] Mary Beth's uncle.

## **FOR THE SAKE OF THE CALL (1990):**

What does it truly mean to call yourself a disciple of Jesus Christ? What does it mean to follow Him? **Catalyst:** *The Cost of Discipleship* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

## **THE GREAT ADVENTURE (1992):**

Only God's grace can tear down walls and free us to live the life we were created for. **Catalyst:** A meeting with Steven's pastoral advisory board at which he confessed a sense of failure and, ultimately, was led to a deeper experience of God's grace in the midst of his own weakness.

## **HEAVEN IN THE REAL WORLD (1994):**

What does it look like to be living representatives of heaven in the midst of this world's chaos? **Catalysts:** *Loving God*, *How Now Shall We Live* and *The Body*—all by Chuck Colson.

## **SIGNS OF LIFE (1996):**

God makes Himself known in the most unexpected places—even in death row prison cells and at the funerals of friends. **Catalysts:** The life story of Oswald Chambers and experiences working with Prison Fellowship.

## **SPEECHLESS (1999):**

"Gospel astonishment" as God reveals a deeper level of grace in the midst of sin and brokenness. **Catalysts:** *What's So Amazing About Grace* by Philip Yancey, performing at the memorial service for the slain Columbine students, attending the funeral of three girls shot at his alma mater (Heath High School), burying the daughter of dear friends after a tragic automobile accident.

## **DECLARATION (2001):**

Walking by faith through seasons when God doesn't make any sense and, ultimately, realizing that God is God and doesn't owe us explanations. **Catalysts:** *Disappointment With God* by Philip Yancey and multiple tragic circumstances in the lives of friends.

## **ALL ABOUT LOVE (2003):**

Marriage isn't just about a man and a woman; it's about the faithfulness of a God who reveals Himself through the marriage relationship, using it to expose the selfishness of our hearts and draw us nearer to Christ. **Catalysts:** 18 years of marriage to Mary Beth; a continually deepening love and appreciation for her; lots of counseling.

## **ALL THINGS NEW (2004):**

God is renewing all things, directing all of history towards a new heaven and a new Earth. How do we live today in light of this glorious truth? **Catalysts:** *Don't Waste Your Life* by John Piper, Pastor Scotty Smith's sermon series on the renewal of all things, *Rumors of Another World (What on Earth Are We Missing?)* by Philip Yancey, personal involvement with Chinese orphans and the AIDS crisis in Africa.





# The Ties That Bind







**After almost 13 years on the road together, FFH says the decision to stay the course is a conscious and sometimes self-sacrificing choice. But a passion to spread the gospel, a shared opinion of lifestyle choices and an understanding of growing family demands keeps this group together. *By Lizza Connor***

**N**ashville's The Castle recording studio hearkens back to the Middle Ages with its imposing grey stone structure, sprawling green front lawn and wooded area behind. Coming up the long, winding drive, one almost expects to see armored knights on horseback guarding the entryway. Strangely enough, local legend has it that famous Chicago gangster Al Capone originally built it as a hideout—his half-way point between Chicago and Florida.

Rounding the corner to park your car, however, sets The Castle in a contemporary context. An elaborate alarm system clocks your presence, in place, no doubt, to protect the pricey recording gear used recently by country star Brad Paisley and too many Christian artists to count. Land Rovers and Fords line the perimeter, and a basketball court has now eclipsed the parking lot. Cigarette butts and empty Coke cans are evidence of the hours logged and the music created here.

This Tuesday morning, Essential Records act FFH is gathered to shoot a promo DVD to accompany its new record, *Still the Cross*, due out this month. Band leaders/husband-wife duo Jennifer and Jeromy Deibler are bleary-eyed from yesterday's long airplane ride followed by a late night with their 1-year old, Hutch.

However, after a session with the band's stylist, professional hair and makeup in place and trendy rock-star attire on, the two look fresh and ready for their close-ups. In between takes, they take time to chat about their new record. The interesting thing that emerges from speaking with the Deiblers, bassist Brian Smith and guitarist Michael Boggs is not quite what one would expect from the group with seemingly endless energy. While we did discuss the album's 10 tunes (all co-written by band members), the producers (FFH's longtime friend Scott Williamson and Mark Miller) and its sound (catchy pop/rock fans have come to expect from the band), these guys let us in on what really goes into making the band. And it's not your average VH1 special.

Maybe it's because they are all, self-admittedly, exhausted—from babies, touring and recording—that they are bare-it-all honest today. But it's stuff they *want* us to know. Like, for instance, that while life as a best-selling Christian artist has its perks ("It's allowed me to buy a house," says Boggs.), it's also just another day at work sometimes. And there are days they just don't want to go. After a year of immense change, including new additions to the families and the passing of loved ones, "The only way we would be doing this is because we are supposed to, that we were called to it," Jeromy says.

## **MAKING THE BAND**

FFH credits its beginnings nearly 13 years ago, when Jennifer, Jeromy, Smith and former member Steve Croyle began playing together. The band didn't sign its record deal until nearly six years later. Croyle departed shortly thereafter, and Boggs stepped in. And that's when FFH really started taking shape, Jeromy says.

On early, independent records (*Called a Christian*, 1996, and *One of These Days*, 1998), the band members employed top-notch, technical studio musicians to help round out the sound as they worked to improve their own musical chops. "When we first came to Nashville in 1998 and watched how the whole studio thing worked, it was intimidating. We realized that we couldn't play our songs and make them sound radio-ready. My background was more piano-based; Brian had just picked up the bass. We went from a group of singers to a 'band.'"

The miles logged playing live shows forced FFH to sharpen its act. *Ready to Fly* (2003), its previous album, served as the



rehearsal. The band had decided that, for the first time, the core group would play the bulk of the songs, and studio musicians would be used for “ear candy, only,” Jeromy says.

*Still the Cross* finds the band confident and assured of its newfound roles. Alongside Miller and Williamson, Jeromy wielded control from behind the producer’s console as well. And it actually felt comfortable, he says, since he put in his share of knob-turning as producer on projects by Fervent Records artist Big Daddy Weave and new Fervent artist Palisade. Additionally, the songwriting for *Still the Cross* represents the band as a whole, more so than any other time because more of its members had a hand in writing. Jeromy co-wrote material with Smith and Boggs, partly “from necessity as we were working on so many songs at one time,” he says.

The result is a body of work that represents the band on all creative fronts. “I think we’ve found ‘our sound,’” Jeromy says. “Not only are the vocals trademark, but we’re really coming into our own. It’s like we just hit our stride,” he explains.

## LAYING THE FOUNDATION

Functioning as a band, however, means far more than perfecting the musical aspect. Though it’s common to hear of band breakups due to “creative differences,” it’s often the stuff outside of music that serves as the agitator. Throughout history bandmates have been notorious for their lifestyles as much as their musical prowess. A shared outlook on life is an important and binding thread for any collective. For this band, the commonality has always been Christ, Jeromy says. “We had the opportunity early on to learn everything that it takes to be a band, aside from the music.”

He recalls a series of conversations that took place when Boggs first joined the band. “We talked about how our lifestyles would be different if we weren’t in this band. We talked about what FFH was going to leave as a legacy. It’s more than just playing and singing. Christian music is not a style of music. It’s a lifestyle of people who listen... and we got all that stuff figured out before we put on this mantle,” he explains.

Eschewing drinking alcohol and smoking and cautiously filtering the movies they watch on the tour bus are self-imposed restrictions for these band members. “But it’s not to be legalistic,” Jeromy explains. “It’s just to be safe. It’s to make sure we create an atmosphere that’s pursuing God.”

Boggs interjects: “Some people try to get as close to the line of sin as they can without going overboard. We just want to stay away from that line so as to be holy, pure and blameless as [the apostle] Peter taught.”

Foundational for this band has also been the importance of family over the years. Aside from Boggs, all the members, including the touring drummer are related. Thus “keeping us together hasn’t been an issue,” Jeromy says. “There hasn’t ever been a time when we said, ‘Let’s just bail on this.’”



Top-bottom: Jennifer Deibler, Michael Boggs, The Castle, Brian Smith, Jeromy Deibler

The last year, however, given the arrival of the Deibler’s firstborn, the birth of Smith’s second child and a death in Smith’s family, among other changes, forced FFH to look hard at its future.

Juggling career and parenthood has proven more difficult than anything they ever anticipated, Jeromy says. “People ask us, ‘How do you balance all this?’ We tell them flat out, ‘We don’t!’ We’re not good at it yet.” Jennifer concurs, “Every day I consider quitting. But then I go out on the road, and I say, ‘God, You’re going to have to reconfirm to me that this is where You want me.’ All I want to do is be with my baby,” she admits.

Next to parenthood, it’s a general maturing process—for all the members of FFH—that’s prompted them to such soul searching. All the members span the mid-20s to mid-30s. And they actually welcome adulthood now, with all its responsibilities, they say.

“When you’re in your early 20s, most people think, ‘Oh, if I could just travel and have fun,’” Jeromy says, “But something happens in your mid-20s when you start to crave a home church and an inner circle of friends that you can really confide in.”

The late 20s hits, the 29-year old Jeromy explains, and the importance of community-building is just magnified. “You’re so scared your whole life of becoming an adult; then you get into your 20s, and you start to want to live like an adult. You start to want that normality,” he says. “We don’t have that.”


Though “normal” is still a foreign concept, FFH seems to be inching closer. Smith says all the changes have demonstrated to the group how much more to life there is than FFH. “We’re entering a new season,” he says optimistically. “We’ve come back around, and we’re enjoying it more than ever now.”

Boggs agrees. “Some years are exciting; some are harder—like this past year. But when you consider the course of things and when you see how God is placing things in your life, you realize that He’s moving you to this point because He knows what’s coming up.”

Despite their limited future forecast, all members agree that they’ve finally come full circle. “In ‘91, when we were starting, we couldn’t have stood up onstage and done it live like we do it now; we wouldn’t have been able to,” says Jeromy. “It really is 10 percent talent and 90 percent hard work. It’s learning how you grow together, play together, pray together and learn about each other.”

FFH credits a solid foundation rooted in Christ as the glue that’s held them together through the natural flux of life. Boggs explains: “Teaching that there was power in Jesus’ blood was an important thing for us at the beginning of our career. We made that statement of faith with our first record, *Power in the Blood*. *Still the Cross* is an echo of that. Our mission is to reach as many people for Jesus as quickly as we can... and that’s the reason we still make this music.” **ccm**





Another *Time,*  
Another  
*Place*

**With an amazing career that spans a quarter century, Sandi Patty knows both the joys of the highest honors Christian music has to offer and the sting of a fanbase that's wrestled with the troubled chapters of her personal life. And now, with *Hymns of Faith, Songs of Inspiration*, "The Voice" turns to her musical heritage, reminding us that we can all learn from the past.**

*By* Caroline Mitchell





“I’ve heard that a woman’s voice between [ages] 35 and 50 is really when it reaches its prime,” says gospel music legend Sandi Patty with a chuckle.

To think that Sandi is still “reaching her prime” is almost laughable when you consider the 39 Dove Awards, five Grammy Awards, four Billboard Music Awards and her recent induction into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame. But, if there is any truth to that statement, it certainly bodes well for Sandi’s new project.

Her 27<sup>th</sup> album—the latest in the course of an astounding discography that spans 25 years—*Hymns of Faith, Songs of Inspiration* (INO), features classic hymns of yesterday and a few new praise songs of today. With 22 songs on the double CD set, some of the tracks, including “We Shall Behold Him,” “The Star Spangled Banner” and “How Great Thou Art,” are the very ones that helped put this soprano on the proverbial map. But as the most awarded female vocalist in contemporary Christian music history, the chanteuse simply says she is “just thankful to still be able to work after all these years.”

These words certainly carry weight as they come from a woman who has experienced a very public and, doubtless, very painful divorce, a controversial remarriage and an uncomfortable uncertainty about the future of her career in Christian music. “I’ve learned so much about myself; but, more importantly, I’ve learned so many things about God that I don’t really know there’s any other way to learn than going through some tough times. And, for that, I’m thankful.”

And while Sandi has experienced bumps in the road with her career in recent years—her 2003 release, *Take Hold of Christ*, modestly sold 35,000 albums; and last year she made a label switch from her longtime home with Word Records to INO Records—her optimism and commitment to music ministry never seem to fail.

But aside from any planned or unplanned attempts to recapture old and new fans, the decision to record classic hymns and, what some may consider “old songs,” was quite a natural one for this mother of eight. “I don’t want my kids to forget,” she explains.

As a child of a minister of music and a church pianist, hymns were a regular part of Sandi’s musical diet. “Some of the best hymns have been written—not in times of great victory and triumph—but in times of great sorrow and great hurt and pain. It is because of that, when people hear them, they can almost just put their own story on top of those lyrics. They’re real, they’re honest, and I think that’s why they’re still around.

“My heart and my home have been in the church—as a kid growing up. And now, my family is very involved. Those hymns that were really part of my heritage have really become a foundation—in not only my professional life but in my faith journey as well.”

And part of this journey has been one of healing—healing that’s even extended to her desire to sing. Says Sandi, “The song ‘His Eye Is On the Sparrow’ is probably the song that I can really sing my heart in. The chorus says, ‘I sing because I’m happy/And I sing because I’m free.’ And that was a long time coming through a lot of pain and a lot of hurt, but I’m able to sing that with a full heart.

“Songs, more than anything else, help a generation speak what’s on their heart,” Sandi continues. “What we call hymns were the contemporary songs of the time to help that generation speak what was on their heart and help give words to their faith journey. I think these new praise choruses do the same thing. There are going to be some great ones that are going to fit alongside some of those classic hymns as well.”

Doing her part to ensure the recognition and validation of the new genre, Sandi has recorded some of the newer praise choruses, including Darlene Zschech’s “Shout to the Lord,” on the new record. In so doing, she again proves her versatility—the voice of the old, the new and the patriotic. Throughout her career, Sandi has incorporated patriotic performances on stages from the White House to the studio. In fact, Sandi was introduced to the world at large when her rendition of “Star Spangled Banner” was broadcast in 1986 on ABC for the Statue of Liberty rededication ceremony. And she pays tribute to the red, white and blue on the latest record. The reasoning behind these song inclusions on the album is simple: gratitude.

“We (the church itself) are part of a country that allows us to worship freely and to gather in places to express our faith and our commitment to Christ.”

And it’s that commitment that’s behind her motivation and perseverance in her faith and music. Sandi cites her favorite passage, John 8:31-32, as a promise that she clings to and lives by. (“If you continue in My Word, then you are my disciple and you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.”)

“I think there are some really important elements to that Scripture. That word ‘continue’ is a process word. It’s not something you do once and then you stop. You know, as a disciple of Christ, you have studied the Word of God. A disciple of music studies music. A disciple of medicine studies medicine. As we study the Word of God, we come to know what the truth is; and it is the truth that Christ teaches that will set us free.

“I think we can all learn from our pasts, and that includes some musical heritage,” she says. “There’s just a vast wealth of knowledge and wisdom and stories that we can all learn and grow from. And I guess in my own way, I just want to say, ‘Let’s not forget this treasure that we have in these songs.’” **ccm**





**F**aith-based bands talk about being a light in the darkness, but into exactly how dark a place should a band go? For Tampa-based rockers Underoath, the darker the better. In fact, for the past two years, the band has played a New Jersey hardcore festival with a name that will certainly raise a few eyebrows: "Hellfest."

Sure, a New Yorker might say that's the perfect name for a festival held in New Jersey, but religious folk free of state rivalry might wonder if a Christian band should be playing such a show at all. Knowing how boldly they embrace their values, these Sunshine State boys would, without a doubt, beg to differ.

"Hellfest is a three-day, hardcore fest with 6,000 kids, and it's insane," explains guitarist Tim McTague. "It's funny because it was at the same time as 'Cornerstone' last year, so Norma Jean, Beloved and [our band] went straight there after 'Cornerstone' and played on the last day. The big joke was that all the Christian bands were playing 'Hellfest' on Sunday. It seems like a lame joke, but it's kind of funny if you look at it."

Does playing such a music festival pay off? Underoath finds the answer when the guys read and respond to all their e-mail. The most common questions come from kids who see the band members at shows like "Hellfest" and ask about their faith.

"A lot of non-Christian kids hear the lyrics and see that we are on Tooth & Nail, and they want to find out what our deal is," explains McTague. "We always answer the same way: 'It's what we believe in and why this band started. No matter what music or members change, that focus will never be lost. Without it, Underoath isn't Underoath anymore.' I know a lot of bands like to say how they are Christians in a band but not a 'Christian band.' I

respect everyone's opinion, but that's not what we are about. We are not ashamed of what we believe because it's what we are all about as a band."

Underoath—whose members include six-stringers McTague and James Smith, vocalist Spencer Chamberlain, bassist Grant Brandell, drummer Aaron Gillespie and keyboardist Christopher Dudley—finds itself making an impact in the mainstream market with its new hit album, *They're Only Chasing Safety*. The video for "Reinventing Your Exit" is already playing on music channels MTV2 and Fuse, and the band backed up the buzz as a mainstay act on the entire "2004 Vans Warped Tour." And beyond the TV exposure, the new album has sold more than 50,000 albums in only two months—impressive numbers for any type of artist, much less a hardcore act. Underoath also "crossed over" with its previous releases, but *They're Only Chasing Safety* is such a strikingly innovative hardcore album that the entire scene is taking notice. In fact, the band boasts so much creative growth that it was actually bumped from Solid State to its big brother label, Tooth & Nail.

And with the opportunity to play the general-market shows and tours, the band feels it's found an untapped ministry niche. Underoath has the opportunity to reach many non-Christian kids because so many are fans, a result of the band's music being so authentic and creative. Comments McTague, "You have to know 'what's up,' and if someone doesn't feel he is connecting with you on a certain level, you aren't going to break through to him. Half the kids we talk to at shows won't go near a church. They feel like they need to meet a certain criteria to be accepted, and that's our ministry—to bridge that gap and show people the love and acceptance of Christ."



# DC★RE DAY'S NIGHT



For the past few months, the band's new album has hovered around the Top 10 of the Christian music sales chart. So, who is **Underoath**? And what in the world is a hardcore band doing among Christian music's biggest acts?

By David Jenison

(L-R): Spencer Chamberlain, James Smith, Chris Dudley, Aaron Gillespie, Grant Brandell, Tim McTague

The band members admit, surprisingly, that they weren't always this bold. The new album ends with the song "Some Will Seek Forgiveness, Others Escape," which addresses a period when the guys realized they were too timid.

McTague explains, "The song is about realizing the error of your ways, asking for forgiveness and making a vow to start over and do what's right. There is a balance in everything, but it seems a lot of Christian bands are willing to be so flexible and so accommodating that they end up putting their beliefs on the backburner and forgetting why they started the band in the first place. When someone used to ask if we were a Christian band, we'd be like, 'Yeah, we are all Christians who believe in God, but we aren't here to shove anything on you.' It's always some beat-around-the-bush answer. No one just says, 'Yes! This is the real deal; it's why we are here, and it's what we do! If you don't like it, that's OK. You don't have to buy our record or come to our show.'"

Truly, a lot has changed, but as longtime fans know, it's more than just the band's boldness that's different. Even though *They're Only Chasing Safety* is its fourth album, the band's actually had more than that number of member changes. In fact, drummer Aaron Gillespie is the only original member, which isn't surprising, considering the founding members were all young teens when Underoath started. After the band's debut EP, 1999's *Acts of Depression*, Chris Dudley joined on keyboards, while McTague joined soon after 2000's *Cries of the Past*. Underoath then signed to Solid State Records, and, after 2002's *The Changing of Times*, Grant Brandell took over on bass and James Smith on guitar. The biggest change happened last year, though, when the band was slated to play 10 "Warped Tour" dates. Vocalist Dallas Taylor was asked to leave the band two shows in, and Underoath bowed out of the remaining dates.

McTague, who said it involved personality differences, explains, "It's hard to be in a hardcore band and try to have a regular life at the same time. There's not a lot of money, you're always on the road, and you're never at home. Dallas was older than the rest of us, and he needed to be in a more stable environment. But it's cool now. We just played Birmingham, and he came to the show, and half of us stayed at his house. He just wasn't having fun anymore, but now he's married with lots of stuff going on in his life."

Pressed on what specific event sparked the split, McTague responds, "It really isn't relative. I wouldn't want to say anything to make him or anyone else look bad, and it's not anyone's business but his. We've straightened out our business with each other, so there's no reason to bring it back up."

Whatever the reason, Taylor left the band last October, and, with studio time planned for January, Underoath needed a replacement fast. Fortunately, the right vocalist was not far away. The band knew Spencer Chamberlain from his group This Runs Through and as the fiancé of Dudley's girlfriend's roommate. According to the guitarist, Chamberlain was a perfect fit, and Underoath now has a locked-in lineup with its best chemistry ever. In fact, the newfound dynamic inspired the band members to push themselves to make the new album a creative statement.

"We just didn't want to write the millionth generic hardcore record," exclaims McTague about *They're Only Chasing Safety*, which hit stores in June. "For the new album, we experimented with drum loops, keyboard samples and overall different feels for each song. We wanted to do something different than [what listeners had] heard before, whether from us or from another band." After a pause, McTague concludes, "We are a hardcore band, but we just don't want to be a typical hardcore band." **cm**



\* A compendium of arguably useless and "researched" musings.

## You Probably Think This Song Is About Me: 5 Songs Where Artists Reference Themselves

**READ THIS FIRST:** In the tradition of "Monkees Theme" and "I Am Prince" (songs mentioned for promotional purposes only, not intended to induce or encourage listening), the phenomenon of an artist referencing himself or herself in song is as old as, well, Ludwig Von Beethoven's "Ode to Me" (not actual composition). Other examples include Gary S. Paxton's verbal introduction leading into his song "Different World" and the Man in Black's famous declaration, "Hello, I'm Johnny Cash." While there are many more examples in the world of Christian music, these are the five examples you should know about today.



### 1. JUMP5, "Throw Your Hands Up"

On its 2002 album, *All the Time in the World* (Sparrow), the Disney-fave,

now-foursome makes reference to itself (twice) in the kinetic "Throw Your Hands Up." (However, there is no truth to the rumor that the lyric "jump 4 joy" was a prophecy that member Libby Hodges would leave the group within a couple years.)

### 2. DEITRICK HADDON, "D.D."

On his 2002 album, *Lost and Found* (Verity), Deitrick Haddon introduces himself "to those who don't know me" in the R&B opening track, "D.D." The background singers smoothly invoke his name again and again.



### 3. NEWSBOYS, "Taste and See (Remix)"

Just prior to the 1991 CD *Boyz Will Be Boyz* (Star Song), Newsboys had spent time on the road with dc talk, after



which they decided to try some of that rap stuff themselves. The experiment began (and, more or less, ended) with a remix of "Taste And See," featuring the thick Aussie-accented rap, "Newsboys are here in effect with the Word... full-bustin' a rap with the Holy Ghost scene."

### 4. JOE CHRISTMAS, "Coupleskate"

This indie guitar-pop gem appeared on the Tooth & Nail Records 1997 album *Upstairs Overlooking*. A sweet account of a date at the skating rink, the song's second verse includes the line "Joe Christmas playin' in the stereo."



### 5. ANDRAÉ CROUCH, "Jesus Is Lord"

In the funky anthem "Jesus Is Lord," found on the classic 1979 album *I'll Be Thinking of You* (Light), the legendary songwriter points out how often people cling to different ideas about truth, "So they often criticize the way that I believe/They say, 'Andraé, tell me, where is your proof?'" The answer, of course, comes in the timeless chorus that proclaims the history and truth of Jesus.



### RACHEL LAMPA'S 5 NICKNAMES (HONEST!)

1. Rachy-poo
2. Rach
3. Rocky
4. Rayla
5. Chalampa

Rachael's latest album is *Rachael Lampa* (Word).



### 5 SIGNS YOUR SONG WILL NOT BE ONE OF CCM'S TOP 100 GREATEST SONGS IN CHRISTIAN MUSIC (AVAILABLE WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD)

1. It's another substance-abuse metaphor song.
2. Could never figure out a suitable rhyme for "transubstantiation"
3. One of those pesky "Jesus is my boyfriend" songs
4. You left the bag of unmarked bills under the wrong bridge.
5. Was already featured on *WOW: These Songs Are Terrible*

**transubstantiation** (tranzuh-stan-tye-shun) n. (MLA style) 1 the act of transubstantiating; change of one substance into another 2 R.C.Ch. Eastern Orthodox Ch. 3) 4) in the Eucharist, the whole substances of the bread are changed into the body and blood of Christ, only bread and wine remaining 5) this change







# @ 10

## Company President Joey Elwood reflects on the urban/pop label's first decade

BY THOM GRANGER

In the 10 years that have passed since its humble beginnings in 1994 as the brainchild of "The Gotee Brothers" (Toby McKeehan, Todd Collins and Joey Elwood), Gotee Records has come to be synonymous with excellence in pop music from a distinctly Christian viewpoint and with a diverse musical palette. From Grammy-nominated rocker **Jennifer Knapp**, to breakout pop/punk act Relient K to urban girl group **Out of Eden**, and the hip-hop/rap hybrid of **GRITS** and **John Reuben** to the powerful worship of **Sonicflood** and the Latin strains of **The Katinas**, Gotee has shown an unwavering commitment to developing talented young artists to their fullest potential.

With more than 30 million dollars in gross sales, the label has sold nearly six million albums in its first decade (an average of 110,000 units per release)—with only 56 albums released. Two titles have also received RIAA-certified Gold status (for sales of 500,000 copies on a single title). The label has also been honored with a Grammy nomination, two Billboard Music Video Awards, 12 Dove Awards and 40 Dove Award nominations.

Gotee's artists have appeared alongside the likes of Sarah McLachlan, Sheryl Crow, LL Cool J and Monica and are no strangers to MTV or BET. Their songs have been used in films and television programs such as *Something's Gotta Give*, *Dr. Doolittle*, "Judging Amy," "Felicity," "Third Watch," "Mercy Streets," "Judgment" and the Showtime series "The Hoop Life."

*CCM Magazine* spoke with Gotee president, Joey Elwood, recently at the label's Franklin, Tenn., offices to reflect on what has been a remarkable first decade for "the little label that could."

**CCM: Is the Gotee Records that exists today the company you thought it would be when you started? Did you even think the company would make it to this anniversary?**

**JE:** I don't know if I had the vision, at first, to believe we'd be here in 10 years. I was a guy just excited about making a record, caught up in the moment rather than the bigger picture in 1994. That may have been one reason why it worked—because Toby

was always working on the grand scheme, and I was always excited about the band or artist of the moment. There were many days I didn't think we would make it to 10 because it has been such a scrap the whole way.

But I think a year into it, my goal was honestly very brazen and kind of nutty. My goal wasn't to be the best independent label in Nashville. I wanted to see Gotee be a great independent company

*worldwide*. I don't think we've achieved that yet, but that was the goal. We wanted to get outside the finite circle of the Nashville music scene.

**CCM: Let's go back to the roots of this company. How did the "Gotee Brothers" meet and become a production team?**

**JE:** At first, everything centered around Todd Collins, who ironically is not a part of Gotee anymore. We met Todd in 1990. He was in a band called 3D on Atlantic Records but was based out of Nashville. He was one of the few guys in Nashville

who could do the kind of programming Toby was looking for. Toby and Todd were doing a lot of writing at first, working at that time on the *Nu Thang* album for **dc talk**.

[Producer] Joe Hogue brought the three Kimmey sisters [Out of Eden] to Toby—who he had actually met the year before at one of his rehearsals. They were 10, 13 and 15 at the time. We believed in them and wanted to make a record with them even if nobody signed them; so we started doing production work for other artists to pay the bills, which enabled us to work on the girls' record on our own time. The first song we produced was **Kevin Max**'s version of "Lonely Moon" for the Mark Heard tribute album. We also worked on **Audio Adrenaline**'s *Bloom* and a ForeFront artist named **Karhi**, as well as some remix stuff and beginning work on what would become the *Erace* album.



Joey Elwood

I had zero musical knowledge, other than a passionate love of music. Todd understood more than anybody. He knew music theory but also had an incredible feel for the music. Toby had a feel for music but, more importantly, a vision for where all of this could go.

**CCM: What made you decide to move from a production company to a full-fledged record label?**

**JE:** We finished the single [a cover of Bill Withers' "Lovely Day" and an original titled "A Friend"] and put the girls on the road, opening up for **dc talk**. With no label deal or distribution, we sold 10,000 of those singles at the back tables and at local Christian stores in the areas the tour was playing.

We had a couple of labels express some interest in Out of Eden, but we could tell in their eyes that their commitment couldn't match ours. I mean, these girls became like sisters to us. We were picking them up after school to work with us in the afternoons; and it became so personal that we just didn't want to trust anyone else with this, even though our original desire was to remain a production company and let them go to another label.

Fact is, as we went around talking to labels, we received an education on what it meant to be a successful label; and Toby convinced us we could do this ourselves. Finally, a year and a half after we had begun to work together, Roland Lundy and Loren Balman at Word Records offered us a distribution deal for our own label, Gotee Records. Word went out of its way—and way beyond its responsibility—to help Gotee stay alive in those early days.

**CCM: Did you intend to have an urban focus to the label from the beginning?**

**JE:** I think the reason the label took an urban focus was that the three of us—despite very different tastes—all enjoyed hip-hop and urban music and knew that there were kids all over the country who wanted to hear more of it than the [Christian music] industry was giving them.

**CCM: What was the first big crisis you had to face with the label, and what did you learn from it?**



tobyMac



**JE:** There have always been financial challenges; but when it got to the point when I was spending more of my time talking to bankers and lawyers than artists, I became unhappy personally. Whether that's my job to do or not, I have a heart for artists; and it gets me in trouble sometimes.

I think the first real crisis for us—and for me, personally—was what happened with Sonicflood. I don't mean to be self-deprecating or overemphasizing my role, but I think I failed those guys. I watched it hit the wall at 90 miles an hour, and I don't know if I could have stopped it; but I know now that my role was to have stepped in somewhere to try and correct it.

You had these guys—who were originally dc talk's band—and Toby wanted to make an album with them, which we did, under the name **Zilch**. It was a good pop album, very underrated, though, and didn't sell well. A couple of the guys had to quit because they were struggling, but the ones who remained started focusing on worship at the end of their sets.

Then they went down to Brownsville [Texas] and came back so fired up they looked like deer in the headlights. They made the album [*Sonicflood*], and it caught on in a big way. But it also caught up with them... in the sense that it wasn't the way they got into the business. At some point I think they began to weary of doing well, and not everybody was in sync with what was happening. I saw it unraveling, and I don't think I was a good leader for them at that time. Communication had broken down between the members, and maybe I could have pulled them together in a room until they got it all settled... maybe not. But I'll tell you this, the worship was powerful with them... and real. It was not an act. It touched me—a Catholic kid from D.C.—in a way nothing had before. Anyway, it was unfortunate what happened, but it's part of our story now.

**CCM:** Why have most of your artists stayed with Gotee instead of signing with a major label? In indie label terms, you guys have been an incredible farm team for the majors, haven't you?

**JE:** The fact is, it's easier for both the label that is interested in acquiring an artist and the original label that holds the artist's contract if the artist is



Out of Eden on a CCM Cover



tobyMac on a CCM Cover



GRITS

selling around 25,000 units rather than 250,000 units. In the case of GRITS, we were at about 45,000 units when Chris Blackwell (who discovered U2) wanted them for Island, and that might have worked... but he, ultimately, decided not to get into the hip-hop arena; and then he got out of the label completely.

In the case of Out of Eden or Jennifer Knapp, the first question the larger labels would always ask was, "Why do you want to leave if you are selling 200,000, 300,000, 400,000 units on an album? Ninety percent of our artists don't sell this many records, so why would you want to leave Gotee?" There was almost a suspicion—and it had nothing to do with religion—that something had to be wrong if we were trying to sell off the contract of an artist who was doing so well for us. One form or another of that conversation happened basically every time we met with a major label about one of our artists that was selling at that level.

One of the blessings of this industry that we, perhaps, take for granted is that we are allowed to develop artists more than the general market. The way that happens, quite frankly, is that these artists are able to make money that they aren't necessarily "worth" yet—which allows them to support themselves and their families—while they develop their skills on the road. Most bands at that level in the general market have to pay to play the clubs or at best might get a pitcher of beer for their efforts.

Many of our bands really weren't that good to begin with but survived long enough to become really respectable—some even great—while many mainstream acts have to call it quits after a couple of years because the bills aren't paid or, worse yet, they are in debt to the record companies.

The end result is that our bands tend to be better bands after four or five years than these baby bands in the general market because we allowed them to grow and supported them while they did. And by then, more often than not, sales are good enough that the major labels back off when they see the numbers.

**CCM:** What do you think makes one artist succeed when others fail?



## A Passion for Artistry and Careers

Toby McKeenan, better known these days as tobyMac, is the other Gotee "Brother" and label partner with his cousin, Joey Elwood.

**CCM:** After 10 years, are you still enjoying your other role as record company executive at Gotee?

**TM:** Yeah, it's going great. Our staff is amazing and as passionate as I've ever seen them.

My primary focus at this point is the A&R department, and working with our team has been amazing. When I'm out scouting around or touring and hearing stuff that I fall in love with, I have the confidence they're going to not only get the deal done but get the right record made.

I get a little bit away from Gotee when I make a record of my own. I shouldn't say this; but right now, I'm as far away from Gotee as I ever have been. Right now, I'm in the season that happens every two and a half years, where I have to trust that they're doing their job; but I have so much confidence in them right now.

**CF:** Why do you think the label has been so successful?

**TM:** I think Gotee started up at a time when there was sort of a changing of the guard when it came to the Christian music scene. Gotee began after that second wave of Christian bands like Whiteheart, DeGarmo & Key and Mylon and Broken Heart. All of a sudden, there seemed to be a need for a label that was thinking about modern pop music; and we tried to employ this sort of new school of thought, where the artist leads the label instead of the label leading the artist.

That's kind of what Gotee tends to be about. We let the artists lead, and we support their art. We've never manufactured a group. We're not good at signing artists that need us to find songs for them and create an image for them. Gotee is a label that's looking for artists who do what they do, and we're there to support them and the art they're making. Our artists name their records. Our artists write their songs. Our artists make their music. That's what Gotee was founded on, and that's what Gotee will continue to be.

—Christa Farris



**JE:** I think it comes down to some level of an ability to communicate. Whether that's through a lyric people resonate with or a personal ability to make people smile or whatever. The effect that type of artist has on an audience is one that makes that crowd tell all their friends about them as if they were a paid employee, and you couldn't buy that kind of loyalty if you tried.

**CCM:** Talk to me a little bit about the ERACE Foundation. Describe the original vision you all had for it.

**JE:** ERACE was really just birthed out of a heart to talk about the issues surrounding racism—how it impacts us, our church, our culture, our everyday lives. The name itself is very ambitious: Eliminating Racism and Creating Equality, and it's easy to poke fun at. Really though, the goal is just: Let's talk about it.

**CCM:** Was this started to address conditions you all observed in the Christian music industry?

**JE:** Toby knew he had a platform, and this is what he wanted to use it to address—to the church, to anyone who wanted to listen. This is a condition of our hearts, a human condition and the result of sin.

**CCM:** What has been effective and what hasn't?

**JE:** I think the biggest challenge is that everybody's interested in talking about the problem; but because there seems to be no apparent answer anybody can grab onto, you lose people pretty quick. It's too abstract. I think one of the reasons the ERACE album wasn't more of a hit was because people didn't really want to hear about that subject over all 12 songs. But even though we know this, our desire is just to keep talking about it.

One of the lessons learned, perhaps, from the "I Have a Dream" tour [w/TobyMac and Kirk Franklin] revolved around booking the tour in nightclubs. Toby's audience might go there, but Kirk's audience was like, "What are you doing?" It was a bad strategy.

**CCM:** Are you all still committed to it?

**JE:** Absolutely. It's a very silent work; but I think in our own way, we're making small dents in the problem. Because of our full-time jobs, we're not able to spend the time we'd like to on it; but it is close to our hearts.

**CCM:** If there is a legacy that people are left with from Gotee Records and its artists, what would you hope that would be?

**JE:** I think we always strove to make this an artist-friendly home, one that is trying to empower artists to become more than just singers, one where they can grow to become songwriters and producers and authors and have a major say in what they do. To be honest, we may have been artist-friendly to a fault at times. But I'm very proud that, 10 years on, we still have a home here for artists.

The fact is, we have—I have—learned so much from them [the artists] over the last 10 years. **Relient K** for example, has taught me more in the last three years about being a record company president for this new culture and generation than I had learned in all the years previous. They talked us into a lot of things that didn't always feel comfortable to us; but we've always allowed artists to have that kind of voice here, and I've learned a lot from listening. **ccm**

## THE GOTEE ROSTER: JOEY ELWOOD WEIGHS IN ON THE LABEL'S PAST & PRESENT



### OUT OF EDEN

"These girls are the reason Gotee exists. They started with us as 12, 15 and 17-year-old girls; and five albums later they still are a cornerstone of our label. They have sold the most silent 1.5 million units ever in Christian music history. We love these girls, and we appreciate all they've done—not just for Gotee but for the artists who will eventually follow them."



### GRITS

"These guys have hung in there for the toughest of seasons. Another of the original four Gotee artists (Out of Eden, Christafari and **Johnny Q. Public** are the others.), they have sold over 100,000 units on their last two albums, which, as a rap group in our industry, is an amazing achievement. They are also two of the best songwriters on our label."

### CHRISTAFARI

"We heard the song 'Selah' and flew to California a couple of weeks later to meet the band and ended up doing two albums with these guys. They made a great impact by doing the 'Reggae Sunsplash Tour' and sitting on the *Billboard* Reggae Top 10 chart for more than 20 weeks."

### JOHNNY Q. PUBLIC

"This band was the most amazing live act we think we've seen in 10 years at Gotee. Oran Thornton was the most tasteful guitar player we'd ever seen, and he was 15 at the time. Dan Fritz was a great front man and spoke to kids about God with a tremendous authority. So much potential... we wish that it could have been expressed in five or six albums."

### THE GOTEE BROTHERS

"We're very proud of this record, and it is a staff favorite. I learned a lot from Todd Collins about music theory and production on this record, and it's really where their friendship was forged. There are tons of memories tied into this record, but the making of this record was a large part of my education in this business."

### CURIOUS FOOLS

"A very talented group of guys. We love Steve Murray's voice, and Troy Deaton is one of the best writers of guitar riffs we've had in this business. A pure rock band and excellent live."

### TEMPLE YARD

"This was the second incarnation of **Christafari**. This was a group of very talented musicians who worked very hard to be able to stay on the road and tour. Some of the guys painted houses; others worked as waiters. The album is still a great listen."



### JENNIFER KNAPP

"Todd and I went to a small college in Arkansas to see her perform, and were floored by her performance and her personality. She was the real deal, and it didn't take a genius to see it. We've been very blessed to have an association with her music, her sincerity and the words she gave us to chew on. *Kansas* may be top to bottom the best album I've read... and heard."



### THE KATINAS

"Heart and soul. The two most descriptive words we can use regarding these guys. A huge blessing to have on the label because they impact the spirit of any room they walk into. These guys will be writing, recording and producing music for longer than probably anyone who has been on our label."

### ZILCH

"Their album was the first incarnation of what would become Sonicflood and the production behind Relient K (Mark Lee Townsend). We did this album as an outlet for the dc talk band, and it never really caught on; but the talent is there if you go back and listen."

### DJ MAJ

"The silent one. We really started out doing the Maj records to help us market our urban records, but he had more in mind than that and has birthed a syndicated hip-hop radio show (virtualfrequency.com) across America. He has also been a faithful DJ to TobyMac."



# CONGRATS ON TEN YEARS WITH GOTEERECORDS

Congratulations Toby on such a great accomplishment!

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## VERBS

"This is the kind of guy where you just want to grab a hold of his ankles and hang on for the ride because with a spirit like his, peace and joy are ever-present. This guy is a servant to a degree that we could only one day hope to attain."



## SONICFLOOD

"What a journey this was. This album had a huge impact on our industry and really exposed some great songs to the church. This will be one of the five or six albums I take with me out of this industry and listen to over and over again till I'm old and more bald. This album may be the piece of evidence we all need to look back on and see that it doesn't take the most expensive radio promotions, cover art or album production to touch people's lives. It's about the songs."



## RELIENT K

"These guys write songs with sections—and a lot of them. They remind us constantly that one good idea in a song is never enough. You need four to five ideas—unique and different melodically—for a song to have an impact. Watching them grow as a band has been one of the best experiences at this label. They've taught us, unknowingly, how to be a better record label in this new and changing record environment."

## JOHN REUBEN

"John is a massive talent. An unbelievable blend of skill and entertainment wrapped into one package. There's nothing more that we can say here but to say we count John as a friend, and we have tremendous admiration for him."

## JEFF DEYO

"The voice behind the first Sonicflood album and the live *Sonicpraise* record on Gotee. He's actually one of the big reasons we believe Zilch became Sonicflood."

When he joined Zilch, they did a worship set to end their show (about 10 minutes); and that's when the show came alive. It was pretty obvious that Jeff was a worship leader, and we know the band was influenced by the gift Jeff brought to the band.



## SANDTOWN

"An unbelievable ministry. One of the best things anyone could do for themselves is to go to [sandtown.com](http://sandtown.com) and check out what is happening in this Baltimore neighborhood. This one was from the heart, and the story is so compelling that we had to work with this community. Our prayer is that this ministry will not only stay alive but begin to flourish... and that the model they've built begins to spread nationwide."



## MARS ILL

"Great art meets great heart. This was another decision to attach ourselves to music that we know is quality and to people you know represent what the gospel stands for. **Dust** and **MANchild** are individually and collectively two of the best we've ever seen at what they do as artists. Period."

## PAUL WRIGHT

"The acoustic B-boy. A natural youth pastor with great songwriting skills. We can't wait for the rest of the world to get to know the guy we know and hear what we know his talent to be. Don't sleep on this kid, America; he's written, is in the process of and will keep writing songs we'll all remember for a long time."

## LA SYMPHONY

"Have you ever seen these guys live? We could end it right here if you have; but for those who don't know, it's time to give some love to the Left Coast. Do yourself a big favor in the next 12 months. If these guys are within a two-hour ride of your hometown, go see them and buy a CD of their music, especially if you love hip-hop. But even if you don't, trust us, this music sticks to your bones."

## SARAH KELLY

"The voice, the voice, the voice. We're completely in awe of Sarah's joyful heart. If her passion is ever mistaken for just misaimed yelling, we'd challenge you to listen again under the context of knowing her joy is the basis for what comes through in her music."





# Raising the Bar

Caedmon's Call's artistic ambition pays off with this stunning "world music" album.



**File under:** Pop/World/Folk  
**Grade:** A  
**For fans of...** Faith-infused, socially conscious music that's still accessible.

## CAEDMON'S CALL

**Share the Well**  
 Essential

Your passport to intriguing pop sounds

When it comes to world travel, people might visit Ecuador to see the Galapagos Islands, Brazil for the rainforest and India for the Taj Mahal. Caedmon's Call, on the other hand, visited these countries with different sights in mind and came back with a new vision unmarked on any tourist map. Peering deep into the heart of the people and cultures,

Caedmon's put its experience into words and music with *Share the Well*, an album that transports listeners to other lands without the creepy airport security pat down.

Working with Peace Gospel Ministries and the Dalit Freedom Network in India and Compassion International in Ecuador and Brazil, Caedmon's Call sought out places where oppression, poverty and injustice affect entire communities. For example, the band—featuring vocalist/guitarist Cliff Young, vocalist Danielle Young, drummer Todd Bragg, percussionist Garrett Buell, guitarist Andrew Osenga, organist/keyboardist Josh Moore and bassist Jeff Miller—personally witnessed the Dalits' (those in the lowest caste, the "untouchables") plight in India's Hindu caste system. While in South America, they visited people's homes in the most

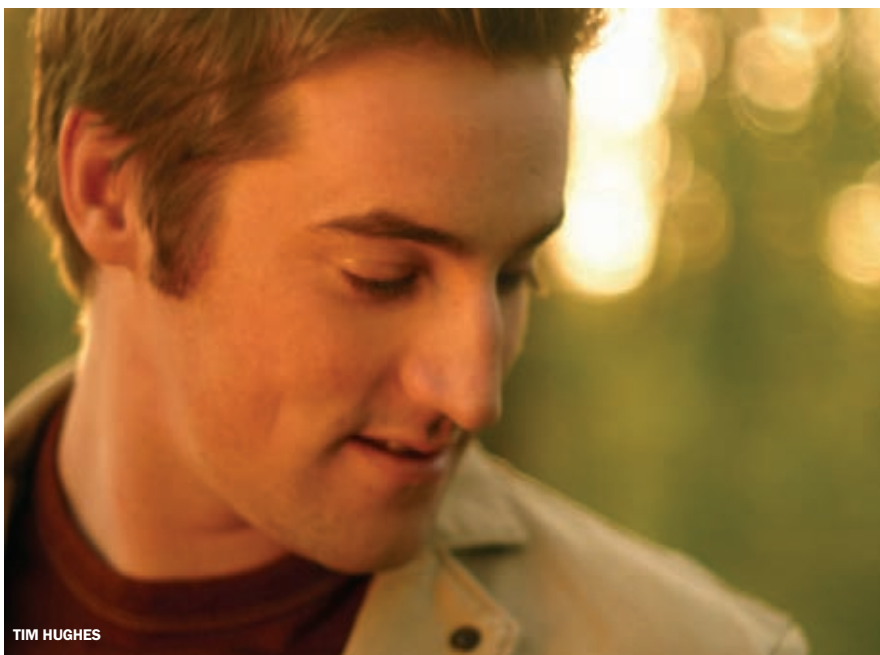
destitute slums. Though Caedmon's knew the album would center on these trips, the experience, ultimately, provided more than inspiration. Traveling with portable studio gear, the group wrote and recorded with locals and used several native instruments. The result is a collection of authentic songs that show the interconnected dynamics of a hard life and a glorious soul.

The album's title track sets the tone with heavily layered percussion, upbeat guitars and poppy vocals that breathe powerfully symbolic lyrics. Indeed, many of the songs retain an uptempo vibe, such as the chorus-heavy "Bombay Rain" and the hand-clapping "Volcano," while more intimate moments include the Danielle-led songs "Did Not Catch Her Name," "Mother India" and "Innocent's Corner," all of which paint stunning portraits of third-world living. Still, Caedmon's best pop-folk and world music blend is "Dalit Hymn," a heavily ethnic song with strong socio-political implications ("Caste is a lie, Caste is a lie, Prime Minister, caste is a lie").

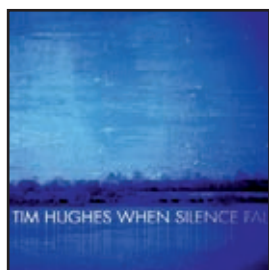
Following the worshipful *In the Company of Angels: A Call to Worship* and the return to its folk roots with *Back Home*, *Share the Well* actually marks the band's 10-year anniversary, which makes it fitting that this album would be its most artistically ambitious. Few groups could incorporate such diverse world influences without losing mainstream sensibilities while, likewise, making the deep lyrics more accessible with a surprising pop slant. *Share the Well* clearly showcases an intimate marriage of music and culture that no amount of frequent-flyer miles could ever reproduce.

DAVID JENISON





TIM HUGHES



**File Under:** Worship **Grade:** A-  
**For Fans of...** worship with a tinge of alt-rock sensibility.

## TIM HUGHES *When Silence Falls*

Worship Together

**Silence is golden.**

*When Silence Falls*, the second album from Tim Hughes, finds the British worship leader happily advancing toward postmodern rock territory. Author of the church favorite “Here I Am to Worship,” Hughes retains the lyrical yearning and melodic nature of his 2002 debut while exploring moodier and more eclectic song arrangements, similar in spirit to this year’s debut by San Diego worship band Something Like Silas. Clocking in at a healthy 51 minutes, the album covers lots of ground. There’s full-on power-pop, complete with ’60s-esque sitar (“Joy in This

Place”), quiet meditations on calling to God (“Beauty of Your Peace,” “Nothing in This World”) and the anthemic sing-along “Beautiful One” that Jeremy Camp covered recently on his *Carried Away* worship project. Here, Hughes offers a grittier take on his own song, rearranging the ending to build its impact.

However, it’s the album’s moodier moments where the music is the most transcendent. “When the Tears Fall” portrays steadfast faith in times of trouble and has a melodic chorus that rises above a slightly syrupy string section. Even better is “You,” which builds slowly from a strummed acoustic guitar and quiet vocal, layering drums to build to a chorus that releases one of the most truthful statements a worship leader can make: “*These words are not enough to tell of Your great name.*” Credit producer Nathan Nockels (Watermark, Point of Grace) for infusing the songs with sparse arrangements that allow warm guitar tones and rich bass to support rather than to overwhelm.

The disc wraps up with the simple declaration of “Holy, Holy” and a short, sweet reprise of “Beautiful One.” So subtle is the disc in its artistry that even at close to an hour of music, the end seems to come too soon—a sign that Hughes has succeeded in bringing his listeners somewhere special.

**ANTHONY DEBARROS**



**File under:** Pop/punk **Grade:** A-  
**For fans of...** fun, energetic songs of hope.

## HAWK NELSON *Letters to the President*

Tooth & Nail

**Catchy anthems from A-Z**

Tight harmonies, brightly layered guitars, catchy choruses and uplifting melodies that would make any mom proud: These are a few of the hallmarks of Tooth & Nail’s power

pop/punk foursome Hawk Nelson.

Hailing from the suburbs of Ontario, Canada, the energetic band was first discovered by Thousand Foot Krutch’s Trevor McNeven, who also knows a thing or two about crafting a catchy song.

Following the mold of mainstream giants Blink 182, Simple Plan and Good Charlotte, *Letters to the President* was deftly produced by West Coast heavyweight Aaron Sprinkle (Kutless, Pedro the Lion) with co-production and co-writing from McNeven.

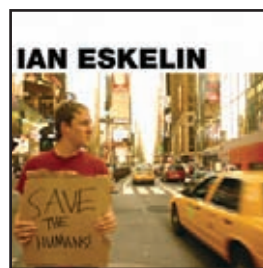
Standout moments include the title track with its crunchy guitars, fast-paced Caucasian jive-poetry *a la* Barenaked Ladies and a vocal vibe resurrected from the 1950s. Opening cut “California” effectively sets the pace early with palm-muted guitars, dreamy solos and the kind of repetitive chorus that haunts you at night while you’re trying to sleep.

But before things grow stale, the band mixes things up with the peaceful rock track “36 Days.” Stripped of loud guitars, drums and the stereotypical punk harmonies, the song

features an enjoyable mix of vocals and piano that, at first listen, seems awkward in context with the rest of the album but effectively shows a softer side of the band.

Above all, it’s quality production and clever songs that make *Letters to the President* an album worth giving a listen, especially for fans who enjoy the ever-evolving pop/punk genre.

**DICK FARLEY**



**File under:** Pop/Rock **Grade:** B+  
**For fans of...** unabashedly happy rock with a straightforward message.

## IAN ESKELIN *Save the Humans*

Inpop

**The recipe for radio-friendly rock is right here.**

In the spirit of Charles Lindbergh and Amelia Earhart, All Star United frontman Ian Eskelin takes flight solo-style with his new release, *Save the Humans*.



HAWK NELSON



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Eskelin, who started out with Superchic[K]'s Max Hsu in the duo Zero before Eskelin's first solo stint 10 years ago, tackles his new freedom with a clear mission to rule the airwaves. The 10-song disc, which he co-produced with the Wizardz of Oz (Avril Lavigne), pops out potential radio hit after radio hit without apology; and, thanks to some well-crafted songwriting, there's never a need to change the station.

The album opener, “Shout,” starts with simple vocals and acoustic guitars; but then the chorus quickly kicks in with a rocked-out praise anthem that repeats often. “Magnify” also starts out on a mellower note; and, while the guitars remain subdued, the chorus hits with a flood of background vocals. Lyrically, this song offers a picture-perfect example of progressive praise and could be used as a staple for most any worship service. “The Solid Rock” features similarly uplifting lyrics, but this track busts loose from the starting gate with catchy guitars and energized dynamics.

While the praise-driven songs lead the disc, *Save the Humans* soon morphs into straight-forward rockers like “Throw It Away” and the title track—both high-energy standouts. Another such uptempo song, “Taboo,” offers an ironic look at faith in the public square and starts with the idea of Jerry Springer as President (The pre-TV Springer was once the mayor of Cincinnati and a gubernatorial candidate in Ohio.). Tele-politics aside, “Taboo” makes excellent use of tempo changes, slick rhythms and an over-the-top pop chorus. Though equally accessible, the album takes quieter turns with such

smooth songs as “I Love to Tell the Story” and “Into Your Arms Again.”

While Eskelin's new songs will, obviously, be compared to the All Star United catalog, the singer's new solo disc competes as an alt-pop rocker ready for radio. *Save the Humans* delivers a perfect balance of energy tempos, lyrical slants and emotional levels. Eskelin is clearly ready for takeoff; but, unlike Amelia Earhart, this solo flyer won't be disappearing anytime soon.

DAVID JENISON



File under:

Pop/Dance

For fans of... evolving, harmony-filled voices behind a live band/rhythmic programming mix.

Grade: B

## JUMP5

*Dreaming in Color*

Sparrow

Proving that growing up isn't  
always hard to do

With each Jump5 album that drops, there's been continued development, an increased impact on pop

culture (including multiple television and motion picture soundtracks) and remaining relevance with its 'tween and teenage audience. Aside from a steady presence in such spectrums, there's been a recent line-up shift, which leaves Brandon and Brittany Hargest, Lesley Moore and Chris Fedun as a foursome after Libby Hodges recently stepped down.

Though the equation has shifted, the spunky overall formula remains on *Dreaming in Color*, a disc assembled with Jump 5's usual energetic charm but also with a more progressive direction derived from the members' personal and musical growth. On “Just a Dream,” it's obvious that the guys' voices have gotten deeper and smoother; and, although there's some space-age sampling, much of the track revolves around live pop players. That trend continues throughout the bouncy attack of “In My Heart” and the glossy, Hilary Duff-like “Feels Like Falling.”

“It's a Beautiful World” identifies quite closely with the group's fanbase, touching on issues of self-esteem, pursuing dreams and keeping one's life rooted





in the Christian perspective. Lines like *"It's about friends, it's about school, it's about changes/The ones you never thought they'd put you through"* personify the growing pains currently faced by Jump5's audience on a direct, empathetic level. The only instances that are a bit less appealing are the glossy "Mind Your Head" (which sounds outdated in the Spice Girls realm) and the overly cheerful "I Got the Music In Me" (falling toward the "Mickey Mouse Club" category). But even with that straying, the foursome that now makes up Jump 5 connects with one of its most variety-filled and relatable releases to date.

**ANDY ARGYRAKIS**



**File under:** Praise/Worship  
**For fans of...** anthemic congregational praise.

**Grade: B+**

## CHRIS TOMLIN

### Arriving

Sparrow/sixsteps

**New songs for your Sunday morning worship are "arriving."**

Chris Tomlin is responsible for some of the most widely sung worship music in America, having written or co-written such modern worship anthems as "Forever," "We Fall Down," "Famous One"

and "Enough." So the prospect of a new album from the Austin, Texas, worship leader will likely have church musicians worldwide on alert, eager for a new batch of classics. And they won't have to listen long to find them.

*Arriving* is primarily Christ-focused, revolving around themes of God's majesty and kingship. Fans of Tomlin's earlier albums and numerous contributions to worship compilations will quickly find that he hasn't drifted musically from his past work. Acoustic guitars and big, easy-to-sing choruses still define his sound as much as his clear tenor.

Tomlin, often with co-writers Jesse Reeves and producer Ed Cash (Bebo

Norman, Bethany Dillon), does provide several standouts. "How Great Is Our God" has gentle verses that yield to a sweet chorus, and "All Bow Down" rides a pumping bass line as it declares *"Here comes the King/All bow down."* The similarly catchy "Unfailing Love" features a cameo by Steven Curtis Chapman, and "Mighty Is the Power of the Cross" uses finger-picked acoustic guitar to reflect on redemption.

Every song on the album is successful at evoking worship, save one: "The Way I Was Made." It intends to celebrate living life to the fullest, but lines such as *"I want to dance like no one's around/I want to sing like nobody's listening"* come off like those pop-psychology

chain e-mails people post on their refrigerators. It's out of place on an album that is otherwise strong.

Ironically, the album's clear standout was written not by Tomlin but by one-time Silers Bald member Laura Story. "Indescribable" draws inspiration from God's rebuke of Job (*"Who has told every lightning bolt where to go?/Or seen heavenly storehouses laden with snow?"*) and builds to a chorus declaring *"You are amazing, God."* It is the kind of song with the anthemic appeal of Darlene Zschech's "Shout to the Lord" or Tim Hughes' "Here I Am to Worship." In other words, expect to hear it for some time to come.

**ANTHONY DEBARROS**

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**File under:** Pop/Rock  
**Grade:** B+  
**For fans of...** intelligent rock that communicates a Christ-centered message.

## SMALLTOWN POETS

*It's Later Than It's Ever Been*

BEC

**Poetic justice for fans who've been waiting far too long**

It's been three years since we last heard from Smalltown Poets, but these Georgia boys are back with a new album on a new label with a couple of new band members—namely Alex Peterson on bass and Troy

Stains on guitar. And just in case you may have forgotten what these literate rockers sound like, imagine a slightly more aggressive Jars of Clay feel that falls just shy of Switchfoot's rock crunch. The propulsive acoustic and electric guitars that drive the catchy melodies on these 10 sparkling new songs are joyful reminders of why Smalltown Poets' absence has made our hearts grow fonder. *It's Later Than It's Ever Been* has arrived just at the right time.

Solid hope is the underlying theme for much of this album, beginning with "The Truth Is Out There," which outlines God's great plan of salvation. Such optimism is touched upon again with "A New Beginning," which is a reminder that all things become new with Christ. The album also features a few

character study songs, including the (possibly) Apostle Paul-inspired "Show Me Who You Are" and "Upside Down," a song that certainly was inspired by a dating relationship. The album closes with the deeply worshipful "Love So Divine."

The track that makes the deepest imprint is "We Will Continue." It's a song that frames worship (and the Christian life in general) as a long-term life path rather than the mere singing of any particular praise song. "Our whole lives are a song," they resolutely sing at one point.

Overall, this new release is consistently melodic, undeniably sincere and inescapably uplifting from start to finish; and it will probably make many hearts glad to hear Smalltown poetry in motion once again.

**DAN MACINTOSH**

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**File under:** Pop  
**Grade: B-**  
**For fans of...** beautiful harmonies mingled with thoughtful lyrics.

## MONK AND NEAGLE

*Monk and Neagle*  
Flicker

**Here are two new names worth remembering.**

Boy bands may be yesterday's news, but there is still something magical about the harmony of male voices. Joining the fray of duos on the scene are longtime friends and Texas natives Trent Monk and Michael Neagle, also known as new Flicker Records artist Monk and Neagle. Falling somewhere between the rock of Across the Sky and the praise of Shane & Shane, Monk and Neagle's collection of 10 tunes is worth a listen.

There is a certain authenticity of sound as acoustic chords are interwoven with soft harmonies. Earnest lyrics about loving God and the life He's given flow with each song, never competing with the music. "All I Need," the opening track and first single, sets the tone of worship ("You're the reason I'm alive today/I throw my cares away/As I stand to shout and sing").

Rhythmically and lyrically the most memorable chorus on the record, "Secret" will have you singing, "You are the secret, I cannot keep it all to myself" in no time. *Monk and Neagle* also features three heartfelt ballads—"Stars Would Fall (I'm

Crazy)," "Lovely Woman" and "Harmony"—presumably written for Mrs. Monk and Mrs. Neagle. "Constantly" echoes the cry of every heart seeking to be more like Christ, and "Dancing with the Angels" reminds listeners of the promise of heaven.

While the tunes never stray from a typical acoustic pop feel, some lean toward a touch of bluegrass, while others are more jazzy. The bass and percussion add texture, but it's the vocals that give the music life.

**JESSICA ROBIN**



**File under:** Inspirational  
**Grade: B+**  
**For fans of...** hymns performed Sandi-style.

## SANDI PATTY

*Hymns of Faith...  
Songs of Inspiration*  
INO

**Sandi soars once again.**

Sandi Patty has little, if anything, left to prove. After 26 albums, 39 Dove awards, five Grammy awards and 11 million records sold, she has pretty much done it all. So it is refreshing to see her returning to her roots in such fine form after a decade of musical experimentation that included a concept album, a duets album, a Spanish album and a live album.

Largely overlooked for the past few years by an industry that didn't quite know where she fit, Patty returns to the scene under new management and is recording for a new record label. The resulting 22-track double CD (which includes several medleys) is composed largely

of hymns, as the title suggests, with the occasional patriotic tune ("America the Beautiful") or contemporary classic ("Shout to the Lord") mixed in. Produced by David Hamilton and featuring orchestrations by Hamilton and David Clydesdale, the project is beautifully enhanced by the City of Prague Philharmonic Orchestra. The tone of the recording varies from

traditional to classical, contemporary to near operatic. Overall, it is a nice blend of timeless and timely.

Patty uses her classic voice to glorious effect. She is an expressive yet controlled singer, and she proves here that she remains one of the great voices of our time. From the stirring rendition of "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" to an updated interpretation of her classic

"We Shall Behold Him" that is downright rapturous, Patty shines. Other highlights include "Amazing Grace," featuring some beautiful bagpipes, a truly amazing version of "How Great Thou Art," a soaring duet with her husband Don Pesis on "The Prayer" and a quietly effective "The Old Rugged Cross."

Though *Hymns* is likely to be appreciated most by fans

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**File under:** Pop/Worship **Grade: C+**  
**For fans of...** congregational praise with  
a mixture of upbeat and restrained  
selections.

## MATT REDMAN

**Facedown**  
sixsteps/EMI

### Treading familiar territory

Perhaps no other artist  
has made a more sub-  
stantive contribution to  
the modern praise &  
worship movement than  
U.K.-bred Matt Redman.  
Having led numerous  
Passion conferences and  
written contemporary  
church mainstays such  
as "The Heart of Worship"  
and "Better Is One Day,"  
Redman is a leading light  
in an enduring—albeit  
congested—genre.

On **Facedown**, his first  
all-live project, Redman  
offers a wellspring of  
experiential selections  
focused on reverently  
exalting God. Produced  
by Nathan Nockels  
(Watermark, *Passion*),  
the album was recorded at  
North Point Community  
Church in Alpharetta, Ga.,  
during a Christian  
songwriters' conference.

While he doesn't till much  
new soil musically, Redman  
does cultivate some fresh  
thematic terrain. Consider  
"Dancing Generation,"  
augmented by a bevy of  
supporting vocalists, on  
which he speaks of dancing  
for the Lord "because of Your  
great mercy." Elsewhere, the  
disc's ethereal title track



conveys the appropriateness  
of adoration from a prostrate  
position, while delicate cut  
"Pure Light" explores God's  
absolute holiness.

Sonically, the album's  
brightest moment appears  
on "Nothing but the Blood"  
(not the traditional hymn in  
melody or verse), a six-and-a-  
half-minute anthem that  
compares favorably with  
"Better Is One Day" in terms  
of dynamic likeability. In  
addition, the much-too-brief  
"Lead Us Up the Mountain,"  
tracking at less than 90  
seconds, contains the set's  
finest harmonies, thanks to  
the audience's wholehearted  
contribution.

Yet, for all its merits, as a  
whole, this album sounds

less impressive than  
Redman's earlier efforts.  
Whereas his erstwhile  
projects yielded numerous  
extraordinary songs, many of  
the tracks found here seem  
simplistic and subdued.  
Sure, the guitar-driven  
melody on "Mission's Flame"  
and ambient rhythms of "If I  
Have Not Love" are pleasant  
enough, but absent are the  
intensity and memorable  
refrains of classics such as  
"Blessed Be Your Name" and  
"Let Everything That Has  
Breath." Redman is an  
extremely gifted songwriter,  
yet the mild uplift  
experienced on **Facedown**  
provides merely a glimpse of  
his true talent.

DAVID McCREARY

## new releases

<b>OCT. 5</b> <b>tobyMac</b> <b>Erin O'Donnell</b> <b>Smokie Norful</b> <b>Fernando Ortega</b>	<i>Welcome to Diverse City</i> <i>Christmas Time Is Here</i> <i>Nothing Without You</i> <i>Fernando Ortega Live</i> <i>in St. Paul (DVD)</i>	(ForeFront) (Inpop) (EMI Gospel) (Curb)
<b>OCT. 12</b> <b>Caedmon's Call</b> <b>Point of Grace</b> <b>Ted &amp; Sheri</b>	<i>Share the Well</i> <i>I Choose You</i> <i>Celebrate</i>	(Essential) (Word) (Word)
<b>OCT. 19</b> <b>Shane &amp; Shane</b> <b>The Katinas</b> <b>Mat Kearney</b> <b>Mars III</b>	<i>Clean</i> <i>Family Christmas</i> <i>Bullet</i> <i>Propain</i>	(Inpop) (Gotee) (Inpop) (Gotee)
<b>OCT. 26</b> <b>Day of Fire</b> <b>Michael W. Smith</b> <b>Sixpence None the Richer</b>	<i>Day of Fire</i> <i>Healing Rain</i> <i>The Best of...</i>	(Essential) (Reunion) (Word)

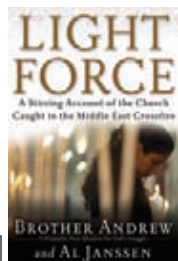




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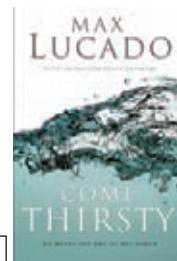
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4



5



6

**1** \_\_\_\_\_

I'm sure, at some point, you have read at least one book that radically changed your worldview. For me (and Steven Curtis Chapman), that book was John Piper's *Don't Waste Your Life* (Multnomah). If you ever feel that life is boring, that faith is just about "doing" church on Sunday, you have got to read Piper's work. Given how much inspiration I drew from *Don't Waste Your Life*, I approached his new release, *Life As a Vapor* (Multnomah), with mixed emotion. Could anything measure up? Well, once more, Piper blew me away. Set up as a series of 31 meditations, the book's chapters will remind you that life is short but can be lived fully and gloriously through and in Christ. Mac Powell (Third Day), Cliff Young (Caedmon's Call), Shane Barnard, Chris Tomlin, Steve Green and members of Jars of Clay have all been greatly influenced by Piper's writing and ministry. Check out what they have to say at [lifeasavapor.com](http://lifeasavapor.com)

**2** \_\_\_\_\_

Since life is fleeting, we need to make the most of days on Earth. Quite a few of the October releases address that theme. Ryan Dobson (yes, the son of James and Shirley) has written a great book called *2Die4* (Multnomah). Hard-hitting and fast paced, *2Die4* will get your adrenaline flowing. Taking the command found in Matthew 16:24-25 ("Deny yourself and take up your cross... Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."), Dobson shows readers how that truth translates in real life and how to take risks that will matter for eternity.

**3** \_\_\_\_\_

Need an example? Brother Andrew (*God's Smuggler*) and Al Janssen (*The Marriage Masterpiece*) are two guys who understand the meaning of risk. In bringing the gospel to Palestinians, these men routinely face persecution and peril. *Light Force* (Baker) outlines Brother Andrew's efforts to reach Israel's neighbors for Christ. Not light reading but very enlightening and thought-provoking, the first-person voice adds a sense of humanity to history—a feeling of holiness to headlines.

**4** \_\_\_\_\_

Toby McKeehan (a.k.a. "tobyMac") and Michael Tait have teamed up again, this time for a book project, *Under God* (Bethany House), a collection of short stories about the men and women of faith who shaped America's heritage. No, don't yawn! With teachers like Toby and Michael, how can history possibly be boring? As Toby points out, "Knowing the past is crucial in dealing with the present." Calling the nation to repentance and forgiveness, Michael and Toby urge readers to forge a fresh vision for the future.



**5** \_\_\_\_\_

One of the crucial times Christians can shape the future is on election day. Yet too many of us ignore our civic responsibility. Why? According to attorney and former President of the Family Research Council Ken Connor and Associate Editor of *SBC Life* John Revell, authors of *Sinful Silence* (Ginosko), many Americans have a poor understanding of what God expects regarding the civic process.

Drawing on biblical principles—and my favorite prophet, Isaiah—Connor and Revell will compel you to get off the couch and do something (and to vote!).

**6** \_\_\_\_\_

Finally, at the end of all this heavy reading, you're bound to need some refreshment. Enter Max Lucado, who invites you to *Come Thirsty*. Book after book, Lucado writes each in that cozy, conversational tone and with needed reminders. *Come Thirsty* will quench your soul's thirst in a few easy sessions. If you need your "Max fix" in person, Lucado will be traveling with Michael W. Smith to three cities this fall. "This is going to be one big church service, and I'm excited about that," says Smith. "It's an honor to work again with Max Lucado." (Visit [michaelwsmith.com](http://michaelwsmith.com) or [maxlucado.com](http://maxlucado.com) for more details.)



Steven Curtis Chapman shares that John Piper's *Don't Waste Your Life* "just rocked my world and totally wiped me out and inspired me. Several songs on *All Things New* (Sparrow) were inspired by that book." Chapman, along with members of Everlife, are enjoying once more *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis. According to Chapman, Disney is doing a \$180 million production of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. "I've been asked to come in and be involved in some different levels, so it's awesome."





## WORKSTATIONS

Learn more about the recording, editing and scoring workstations to get you in gear on your musical journey.



### DIGITECH GNX4

The first official guitar workstation, Digitech's GNX4, breaks new ground in the staid world of guitar effects. In addition to modeling 10 famous stompboxes, the GNX4 also covers guitar cabinet and amp versions ranging from single-speaker combos to mega stacks. A handy eight-track digital recorder is onboard along with a tuner, expression pedal, MP3 player and a mixer. The GNX4 completes the "studio on the floor" concept with cross-platform recording software included with lexicon effects and a USB CF card reader. Perhaps the most amazing aspect of this unit is its hands-free interface (It is a pedal board after all.). If you want to emulate what guys like Randy Pearce (Michael W. Smith) do, this is a good place to start.

\$1295

[guitarworkstation.com](http://guitarworkstation.com)

### YAMAHA MOTIF ES/mLAN 16E

Hardware (box-based) musos (musicians) are far outnumbered by their software (computer-based) siblings, so Yamaha decided to redress the imbalance. Adding the mLAN 16E card to the Motif ES keyboard

creates a powerful combination. By using the Motif keyboard's front panel, you can now control full



recording and editing processes loaded on your laptop. The mLAN 16E Firewire music networking interface delivers Sonar, Logic, Digital Performer and Cubase compatible files to the computer while allowing direct connection of mics and guitars to the Motif ES keyboard. Taking advantage of Yamaha's reputation for superb effects, the mLAN team figured out a way to send audio from the computer back to the keyboard to add reverb and other spatial imagers. It all works and makes sense, with no "tacked on" sensation. Congratulations to Yamaha for doing what most parents can't—making "siblings" get along with each other.

\$995 / \$2495

[motifactor.com](http://motifactor.com)

### KORG TRITON EXTREME

Korg has been on a roll for years; and, to keep the ball in play, they have introduced the "Extreme" version of the venerable Triton keyboard workstation line. New to the roster is a 16mB sampling of awe-inspiring piano that will change more than a few minds about the possibility of trading in a "real" piano for a keyboard. As others have done with digital devices, Korg has thrown an honest-to-goodness tube into the works called Valve

Force that can mellow out some guitar tones to the point of asking, "Is this live or not?" The Touchview screen is simple, and the sequencer and arpeggiators work as promised.

\$2995

[korg.com](http://korg.com)



### EMAGIC LOGIC PRO 6

By itself, it's just a box with manuals and discs; but "joined" to your Mac, it's a powerful music workstation. Pro 6 has all the music composition, notation, editing and scoring Logic users expect but adds numerous soft synths and a grouping of some of Emagic's finest plug-ins to create a production studio monster capable of devouring entire films and reducing album projects to simple tasks. Value is the keyword here, as the plug-ins and synths would add hundreds of dollars to the price if purchased separately. Recommendation: Buy the box.

\$995

[emagic.de](http://emagic.de)

### ROLAND E-200

In the past, "intelligent keyboards" were birthed from the same gene pool as home organs, with cheesy arrangements of songs no one had sung for 20 years. Not anymore! Thanks to Roland's persistence, the E-200 Arranger keyboard has all the ease of the past with none of the cheese. Starting with excellent sounds helps, but the true genius lies in the way the keyboard responds to real-time musical interludes by adapting itself in a musically pleasing manner. Simple controls and a guidance system second only to a GPS unit make the E-200

a joy to play and a serious instrument at the same time.

\$1995

[rolandus.com](http://rolandus.com)







L-R: Michael Tait, Tait bassist Lonnie Chapin (formerly with Petra), Petra's John Schlitt

## PETRA/TAIT

### WORLD PULSE FESTIVAL, LAKE COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS SOUTH BEND, IN—AUG. 21, 2004

There aren't too many established artists who can musically recreate themselves as successfully as Petra and Michael Tait have. With a 30-plus year career to back them up, for the classic rock and rollers and hair metal crowd, Petra's influenced several decades of hard-edged performers, while Michael Tait (frontman for Tait) left an indelible mark on the rock landscape with his role in dc talk.

In the case of Petra, '70s and '80s-derived guitars and high-pitched vocals remain its forte, but recent years have led the band to incorporate modern praise & worship (on the group's Inpop debut, *Revival*) and, more recently, rip-roaring mayhem (*Jekyll and Hyde*). A trade-off between both demeanors drove Petra's platform, alternating between the head-banging "Test of Time," the riffed up "The Noise We Make," the shell-shocking "All About Who You Know" and the slap-happy spunk of "Lord, I Lift Your Name on High."

The fact that original guitarist Bob Hartman has re-joined longtime vocalist John Schlitt also brought back good memories from the past, most notably with his warp-speed shredding through "Right Place" and "Beyond Belief." For the old-school fans, a blasting melody of "Sight Unseen," "It Is Finished" and "This Means War" was tooled with fluid execution, reiterating the fact that Petra *still* means rock.

In an equally winning fashion, Tait took the crowd on an hour-long whirlwind journey through its past two projects (*Empty* and *Lose This Life*) along with a few choice covers. Members stepped out on many progressive alt rock and Brit-pop limbs, bringing the

likes of Coldplay and Keane to mind. "Lose This Life" provided a grand entrance for the guys, given its pumped-up whirls in the vein of U2's "Beautiful Day." Fellow album cuts, such as "Numb" and "Reconnecting," further demonstrated Tait's artsy direction, augmented by the singer's soulful struts.

A look at Charlie Peacock's "In the Light" (also a dc talk *Jesus Freak* alum) and Eddy Grant's "Electric Avenue" broke up the otherwise original canvas, both of which were spiked up with reggae and R&B skirmishes. A quick sampling of the *Mission Impossible* theme song led its way into the mysterious "Spy," which jarred to a reckless conclusion (complete with a chorus snippet of "Jesus Freak"). It was a suite that bridged Michael Tait's past with present—like Petra, he continues to evolve and inspire others with each incarnation.

### Hartman's Return:

It appeared as though lead guitarist Bob Hartman left touring for good in the mid-'90s to be home while his son went to school; but, thankfully, the group's latest record, *Jekyll and Hyde*, brought Hartman out of retirement. "It's just very, very cool," says singer John Schlitt of the road warrior's return. "It seemed like we were going through personnel changes every year, and the idea of trying to find another guitar player was really scary to me. We were sitting there, and Bob goes, 'Hey, I don't mean to put another wrench in your life here, but what would you think about me joining the band again?' I looked at him and was like, 'Yeah, we want you in!'"

### CHANGE OF PLANS:



Santana

An announcement was made this summer that Michael Tait would team with guitar guru Carlos Santana for a European tour. But a backstage conversation with Tait indicated plans have changed.

"Ultimately, I went to California, where we started working and talking about the record; [but] I realized this was a lot more than I expected," he explained. "I kind of bit off more than I could chew. And it came out to a question of: What's more important at this point in my life? Is it going to be Tait and my band... or is it going to be a serious commitment to Santana? And I couldn't do Santana. My heart's to be Tait's lead vocalist."

Still, that doesn't mean the time was unproductive or left any ill will. Tait said he hopes to work with Santana in the future and that he and another guy have recorded a song for him they're hoping he'll use.

### HERE AND THERE:



**Are you within a day's drive? Here are a few concert dates you won't want to miss!**

**10/9 The O.C. Supertones and Superchic[k],** Last Wave Club, Orlando, FL

**10/16 Israel Houghton and New Breed** with **Martha Munizzi,** Greek Hellenic Centre, Montreal, QC, Canada

**10/29 FFH,** 7p.m. Smith Opera House, Geneva, NY

For the latest concert listings, check out CCMmagazine.com's searchable tour database to find out when your favorite artists will play in a city near you.

All photos by Andy Argyrakis





# 15 THINGS YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT: CASTING CROWNS

BY MICHAEL NOLAN



No one has been more surprised by the record-smashing rise of Casting Crowns (Beach Street Records) than, uh, the seven members of Casting Crowns. They're the fastest selling debut artist ever in Christian music with sales of their self-titled release surpassing 800,000 copies in less than a year. They also made history in late spring when their song "Who Am I" became the first song to simultaneously hold the No. 1 position on *Christian Radio and Retail Weekly's* Adult Contemporary, Inspirational and Christian Hit Radio charts.

Their follow-up release, a combination CD/DVD titled *Live from Atlanta*, finds Mark Hall, Chris Huffman, Melodee DeVivo, Juan DeVivo, Andy Williams, Megan Garrett and Hector Cervantes combining five favorites from their debut with one new song in a concert performed for a passionate, hometown crowd.

We asked them to stop spinning from a whirlwind of activity long enough to answer a few questions.

## 15. RATTLING CAGES

It seems the majority of songs you hear on Christian radio lean toward consolation rather than confrontation. And then along comes the cage-rattling "If We Are the Body." "Honestly, I never knew my music was hard-hitting until I started reading it in magazines. It just comes out that way for me," explains Mark, the 2004 Dove Award winning "Songwriter of the Year." "As believers, we speak, act and write out of our spiritual gifts, and that is what makes Christian music so incredible. The same God who used John the Baptist also used Barnabas."

## 14. DON'T FIDDLE WITH IT.

Don't try to come between Melodee and her violin. Because it's 200 years old, she is extremely protective of it. Her bandmates report that she has a bulletproof, climate-controlled case that's nicer than their bus. She won't allow it out of her sight—even if the band takes a walk outside the bus.

## 13. SORRY WE ASKED.

Although the band members have plenty of ways to amuse themselves on tour, they have a rather unusual distraction. The Crowns say that Andy shows his bare belly to any and everyone.

## 12. JUST FOLLOWING ORDERS

The gang never gets into arguments about where they'll stop to eat when on the road. They have a simple default plan: They go wherever Mark's wife/road manager, Melanie, tells them to go.

## 11. OH, MERCY ME

What's it like to be easily recognized by Christian audiences? Mark was approached by a girl who said she really loved his music, especially the song "Spoken For." Mark graciously told her, "I like that song, too; but it's MercyMe's."

## 10. SO, OF COURSE, THEY BECAME MUSICIANS.

Most artists, it seems, don't take a straight path from would-be musician to full-time artist. But such is the case with Casting Crowns' crew. Mark was (and is) a youth pastor. Hector was a graphic designer for the church. Andy delivered office supplies and did some interior design. Chris did car detailing. Megan was the front office manager for a physical therapist. Juan edited local cable TV shows. Melodee taught violin lessons and was a real estate agent.

## 9. PRE-DEAL PLAN

Long before "If We Are the Body" took off, Casting Crowns was planning its foray into the video world. Carl Horstmann, owner of Triple Horse Productions and a member of their church in Atlanta, approached them about creating a live worship video prior to signing their record deal. "After God broadened the ministry of Casting Crowns, Carl still donated much time and effort because he believed in our ministry and our message," affirms Mark.

## 8. "DREAM" TO REALITY

The DVD features its first conceptual music video, a take on the band's new song "American Dream."

## 7. SUNDAY RESERVATIONS

Except in rare circumstances, the group plans its tour dates so the band members can make it home for Sunday morning worship.

## 6. CHECK IT OUT.

A Casting Crowns concert is intended to encourage full audience participation. To that end, the lyrics to every song are displayed on a screen. "We feel this makes our concerts more interactive and creates an environment for participation," explains Mark. "We also share the gospel at every concert."

## 5. WHEN IN ATLANTA

Yes, there's a zoo, the Braves, Underground Atlanta and the tour of the Coca-Cola Museum; but, according to Casting Crowns, if you want to act like an in-the-know local, check out the Lenora Park Frisbee Golf Course.

## 4. ALL-AGES CONCERT

Casting Crowns desires to reach out to all ages. One night in Tennessee the crew of seven got confirmation that they're on the right track. "We saw an 8-year-old girl walk the aisle during the 'invitation' and a senior adult lady come down right behind her. God showed us early on that He would use this ministry to reach out to all ages," Mark recalls.

## 3. THINKING AHEAD

With their upcoming CD/DVD barely completed, they're already considering what's next. "Right now I am collecting ideas and praying about how God wants to link them together," says Mark. "I'm listening a lot right now. The band will be meeting soon and walking through each other's ideas. I also talk with [producers] Mark [Miller] and Steven [Curtis Chapman] about the songs, and we will listen through them together."

## 2. SHOOTING STRAIGHT

"A youth pastor is living down there with the kids. Their hands are dirty, and their knees are worn," says Mark. "There is urgency to what they do because they know that they may only get one shot at a kid. I think that urgency comes through in our songs. Kids are hurting from home, school and every relationship in between. If they stop for four minutes and listen to my song, I don't want there to be any mistake about what I'm saying and Who I'm talking about. If anything, youth ministry has taught me to get to the point and shoot straight."

## 1. FELLOWSHIP OF SUFFERING

Mark has openly discussed his struggles with dyslexia and Attention Deficit Disorder with hundreds of students and adults "who share in the fellowship of suffering in these areas. God is encouraging them to open up and share their weaknesses with others, and they are beginning to see that God doesn't need them but that He wants them."





## What If?

When I was 15 years old, Rick Gibson, a young deejay on my hometown Top 40 station (KOBQ/Yuba City, CA) took me for a drive in his El Camino and played Todd Rundgren's "Something/Anything" for me. The Camino was fitted with JBL speakers (a big deal at the time). Wow! Having heard Todd's masterpiece at earth-shaking volume and seen the cover photograph of him at work in his living room studio, I was eager to experience my own version of the rock & roll studio life. Rick, a drummer and novice recording engineer, offered to help me realize the dream. A few weeks later he drove me to an unkempt ranch-style home hidden within a peach orchard—the "band house" of a local rock group named Whitefire. Rick was already set to track Whitefire and kindly squeezed me in for an all-night recording session of my own. This would be my first studio experience. A decade later, the band's drummer, Mark Proctor, would become a founding member of the legendary Christian rock group the 77s (a band I would later produce).

Ironically, 18 years after the fateful drive in Rick's El Camino, I met Todd Rundgren backstage at the War Memorial Auditorium in Nashville. My friend Larry Tagg introduced me as the co-writer of a song Todd had produced for Larry's band (Bourgeois Tagg) a few years earlier. "Oh yeah, a big hit," said Todd, raising his eyebrows to emphasize the sarcasm. Coming from a one-time musical hero, this hurt a little but not too much, considering that Todd had just come offstage dressed as a giant condom. (Don't ask!)

This is the way it goes when you trace the trajectory of an artist's life. You look at the stories. In the stories you find the glory and the shame—and the absolute lack of neutrality in human choices. The old saying "one thing leads to another" still holds true. In the early 1980s a rock group from England called The Fixx had a big hit with this idea. "One Thing Leads to Another" went to No. 4 on the U.S. pop charts. Somehow, in the grand

scheme of things, this led to my touring with The Fixx as their opening act. One thing leads to another, indeed.

Stories like these and their unpredictable connections are more than random cosmic accidents. They are nothing short of the flow of history itself. Every human has two primary, active roles that can be easily named. One is giving, the other receiving. When wellness is present in a person's life, you give with joy and receive with gratitude. Gratitude leads to generosity, and the good cycle of giving continues. You can see how it would be better to give than to receive. Giving is a necessary first choice.

Look at the story of Rick. He asked the question, "What if? What if I give this kid a ride home? What if I give him Todd Rundgren's record—see what he thinks of it? What if I give my talent and resources to help this kid get a couple of his songs recorded?"

Yes, what if? And one thing does lead to another. Giving leads to receiving leads to giving. Do it enough, and it becomes a way of living. I have a sense that this is really the business that I'm in—giving, connecting, dreaming, praying. If you're not in this business, I invite you to partner. There's a whole worldwide tribe of people involved and eager to receive you.

Recently I read an article in a Dallas newspaper about a young, new band made up of 14 and 15 year olds. I sent them an e-mail and asked to hear some music. Knowing of my work with Switchfoot, they e-mailed me back pretty quickly saying a CD was on its way. I really, really enjoyed it and let them know. An hour later, a mother of one of the boys called to say that she and another mom were in Nashville for a funeral. They wondered, could they come out and meet me? It was a wonderful visit. Two days later we received a gift from the band and their families, a beautiful basket of goodies and a lovely leather-bound guest book for the Art House.

Perhaps some day we will read a story about this young band in this very magazine. Remember, one thing leads to another. So ask, "What if?" Give, connect, dream, pray. There are no neutral choices in the story of God, people and place.

## arthouse



Illustration by Jimmy A.

Stories of good artmaking involve community. Artists don't grow in a void. This being true, who are you encouraging to grow as an artist? What help are you giving to the development of young people and the arts? Every follower of Jesus ought to be working to make this a more beautiful, interesting and God-honoring world. The arts have a unique role in this good work. Give careful consideration to your ways. Don't forget to dream well for the world. This will mean becoming a person who takes "What if?" very seriously. Give your time, talent and resources away. The world and the art you inherit will never be better than the collective, human vision for it. Do your part.

For more information about our ministry write to: P.O. Box 248307, Nashville, TN 37221 or e-mail: [arthouseamerica@bellsouth.net](mailto:arthouseamerica@bellsouth.net). (Visit [CharliePeacock.com](http://CharliePeacock.com).)

Charlie Peacock is an artist, producer, author and teacher. Both his album, Full Circle: A Celebration of Songs and Friends (Sparrow), and his book, New Way to Be Human (Waterbrook), released this year.



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## Bill and Gloria Gaither

**W**illiam J. Gaither founded The Bill Gaither Trio in 1957 with his sister, Mary Ann, and his brother, Danny. When Bill married Gloria Sickel in the early 1960s, she replaced Mary Ann in the Trio, and the group released its first major-label recording in 1963. Forty-three years later, it is difficult to even grasp the extent of the impact Bill and Gloria Gaither have had on Christian/gospel music.

First and foremost, the Gaithers are songwriters. Together they've penned more than 600 songs, churning out some of the most popular and most-sung tunes in churches in recent history. If you've ever attended an evangelical church, you've most likely heard, at some point, such classics as "There's Just Something About That Name," "Something Beautiful" or "He Touched Me." But the Gaithers are also recording artists and live performers. The Bill Gaither Trio has recorded more than 40 albums and has sold millions of copies. In addition, The Gaither Vocal Band, a male gospel quartet featuring Bill as the bass, has extended the Gaither reach. The group was originally

formed in 1981 as The New Gaither Vocal Band and was designed to be a more contemporary spin-off of the Trio. However, after a few years, they dropped the "New" and returned to more traditional gospel sounds. Both the Trio and the Vocal Band have had many outstanding members over the years (see "Alumni" list), and their live concerts have delighted millions of fans worldwide. Many now-classic Christian artists, including Sandi Patty, Carman, Larnelle Harris and Steve Green, received early career boosts by appearing with the Gaithers in concerts.

But in between songwriting, performing and presiding over Gaither Music, the media conglomerate located in the Gaither's hometown of Alexandria, Ind., that includes video production services, music publishing, a record label, a retail store, a booking agency and state-of-the-art studio facilities, the couple has also made time for family. Gloria and Bill are the proud parents of Suzanne, Amy and Benjamin.

Over the past decade, the Gaithers have experienced a whole new level of popularity through their "Homecoming" concert events. The Homecoming stage features many regulars, from the more traditional sounds of The Talley Trio and The Hoppers to the classic gospel of Lynda Randle (Michael Tait's sister) to more modern, up-tempo gospel from the likes of Jessy Dixon and bluegrass family The Isaacs. But even aside from introducing thousands from the older and newer generations to the many "versions" of gospel, the Gaithers, through the Homecoming stage, have helped revive the careers of many classic southern gospel artists, including George Younce, the late Jake Hess and the late Vestal Goodman. Not only are the concerts themselves nearly guaranteed sell-outs at venues as prestigious as New York's Radio City Music Hall, Washington, D.C.'s Kennedy Center, Sydney's Opera House and Colorado's Red Rocks Amphitheater, but the events are often televised on cable networks, including PAX, TNN, TBN and even BET. In addition, the CDs—especially the videos of the events—are extremely popular with music buyers; "Homecoming" videos routinely top the *Billboard* charts, eclipsing releases by mainstream superstars such as Britney Spears, Shania Twain and Snoop Dogg. "Homecoming" has turned the spotlight onto southern gospel music in a way many never imagined possible. And in the past two years, the Gaithers have partnered with Salem Publishing, CCM's parent company, to offer fans *Homecoming Magazine*.

When contacted recently by CCM, the Gaithers commented, "No artists or writers do what they do to achieve accolades or awards. They do what they do because they are driven to create by a passion for what they believe. It is a joy when they discover that what has changed their lives is affecting change in the lives of others, too. What a serendipity when that body of created work is recognized by one's peers in his or her field. So it's especially humbling and confirming for us to be chosen for the CCM Hall of Fame. We didn't expect this, but we thank you and are honored by it."

**MICHAEL CIANI**

For more information go to [gaithernet.com](http://gaithernet.com).

### CCM COVERS



May 1979

### SOME OF THE MANY FAMOUS GAITHER ALUMNI

Michael English	Gary McSpadden
Buddy Greene	Jim Murray
Steve Green	Guy Penrod
Larnelle Harris	David Phelps
Mark Lowry	Jonathan Pierce

### AWARDS, ACCOLADES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- 26 Dove Awards
- Four Grammy Awards
- Named No. 2 in "25 Powerful People Who Have Made Christian Music What It Is Today" by *CCM Magazine* in 2003
- ASCAP "Christian Songwriters of the Century" (2000)
- Gospel Music Hall of Fame—The Gaither Trio (1999)
- Gospel Music Hall of Fame—Bill and Gloria Gaither (1997)
- CBA Hall of Honor—Bill and Gloria Gaither (1996)
- Gospel Music Association Lifetime Achievement Award (1994)
- Nearly four dozen gold or platinum albums/videos

### ESSENTIAL GAITHER

"Because He Lives"  
 "Get All Excited"  
 "He Touched Me"  
 "I Am a Promise"  
 "It Is Finished"  
 "I've Just Seen Jesus"  
 "The King Is Coming"  
 "Let's Just Praise the Lord"  
 "Something Beautiful"  
 "There's Something About That Name"  
 "Upon This Rock"