

CCM

FAITH in the SPOTLIGHT | CCMAG

The MICHAEL **W** SMITH
Issue



COVER STORY 22

PLACE IN THIS WORLD

From the days of perms and *The Big Picture* to leading worship, running a record label and serving as a pastor, it's hard to believe, but CCM's guest editor, **MICHAEL W. SMITH**, has been our "friend" now for the past 20 years. Reminisce as we recount his favorite moments and capture a day in his chaotic life.

BY MICHAEL NOLAN

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BY CHRISTA FARRIS

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PHOTO BY LEE STEFFEN

As guest editor for this issue of CCM, Michael W. Smith had *carte blanche* to pick people to interview, provide input on our stories and photos and raid our bowl of M&Ms. You'll find his personal stamp on elements throughout the magazine starting with this opening page.

Worship Revisited

As long as I can remember, I've loved worship. I can still see those Sunday school classrooms at First Baptist Church in Kenova, W.V., where I belted out "Jesus Loves Me" with the other preschool kids. At home, there was almost always an open hymnal propped on the music stand of the piano.

As I became a teenager, my view of worship was transformed by the music of Andraé Crouch and the youth musicals we performed at church. With the increasing popularity of contemporary Christian music, my horizon of worship music continued to expand. My last two albums, in fact, were live worship experiences of songs, most of which were written in the last few years.

All the songs that run through my memory—from "A Mighty Fortress" to "There Is None Like You"—release something indescribable to me. They remind me of God's relentless love for people from the beginning of time. They challenge me to let go of the things of this world and hold tightly to the things that are eternal. But they are not, pardon the pun, the "big picture."

I'm concerned that worship has become a big buzz word these days. Making worship synonymous with music is a very limiting definition. Romans 12:1 says to "present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual act of worship." Being a living sacrifice is worship. You don't need a piano or a choir for that.

It's the 24/7 act of living for God. Taking a walk with your child or parent, seeking out the kid at school who never gets included, praying for the frazzled guy behind the counter at the fast-food restaurant, writing a letter of encouragement, looking beyond all your frustrations to find at least one place where you can be grateful, hiding God's Word in your heart by memorizing Scripture, telling someone how Jesus has changed your life—these are acts of worship.

At our church in Franklin, Tenn., we set aside time for what we call a "love feast." It's a time to hug someone's neck, greet a visitor, offer a smile. Francis of Assisi said, "Preach the word at all times. If necessary, use words." *This* is worship.

It doesn't matter if you can't carry a tune in a bucket—you can worship by being a living sacrifice and letting your life become music in praise to God.

Your guest editor,

Michael W. Smith

For believers whose walk of faith is strengthened through music, *CCM Magazine* goes behind the scenes to celebrate the artistry of contemporary Christian music.

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NASDAQ SYMBOL: SALM



CONFESSIONS OF A FORMER DOWNLOADER

I was in the middle of downloading The Elm's *Truth, Soul, Rock 'n' Roll* album from KaZaA and decided to pick up my issue of CCM to read while passing the 30 minutes it would take to download the entire album. I opened right up to Lizza Connor's article ["Christian Music's Worst Enemy?" August], and it immediately got my attention. I never realized in my selfishness and ignorance that the record companies needed the royalties to invest in more new artists so that more people can go out there and do what it is God is calling them to do—touch lives they were meant to touch and ultimately bring more people to the Truth. Paying for a CD is actually a little bit like giving an offering to a music ministry. I deleted all the files I loaded of The Elms and am planning to purchase the album tomorrow.

—Kim Nester, New Eagle, PA

In response to Mr. Turner's editorial and your article on digital "piracy" in the August issue, I can't help wondering why prominent Christian authors such as Philip Yancey and Frank Peretti aren't denouncing the evils of public libraries. After "borrowing" a book, one is highly unlikely to purchase the book because one has already "consumed" the product. Are library users not "stealing" the intellectual property of the authors? By your standards, they are. How did it come to be that "borrowing" books, a.k.a. intellectual property, is morally

acceptable but "sharing" music is not? I spy a double standard.

—Sandy Johns, via e-mail

I would like to commend you for the first part of your series on digital downloading and piracy. My eyes have been opened. I was (notice the past tense) among those who justified free Christian downloads because it made a "holy impact" on my life. Now I understand how that was negatively impacting the music industry—not to mention the moral implications!

—Jessica Pearson, Detroit, MI

I agree that downloading or burning songs will definitely hurt the Christian music industry. A band's career could be ruined due to lack of record sales because of the burning, and a lot of great CDs may never be made because of this.

However, I'm not going to pay \$18 for a CD with just a couple of good songs on it. We test drive cars, look over homes, etc., before purchasing so that we know what we're buying before doing so. We should have the same option with songs—full access to them so we can make up our own minds whether they are worth the money.

—Todd Elliott, Traverse City, MI

The piracy issue is definitely complex and one that the music industry will most likely deal with for some time. We don't have all the answers, but we hope we have, at least, stimulated discussion and perhaps encouraged people to think twice before downloading.

STUCK ON STACIE

Like many Christian music fans, I am pleased that Stacie Orrico is ["Saint or Sellout?" August] getting the opportunity to reach the world with her music, but I am concerned that in her song, "Stuck," she sings, "I hate you/I love you/I can't stop thinking of you." It is understandable that someone who feels "stuck" on someone they'd like to have for a girlfriend or boyfriend might be tempted to shout this out. But words are powerful, and it

bothers me that the phrase "I hate you" is being used in what is otherwise a wholesome song by a positive Christian artist. Stacie Orrico is still an awesome artist with a lot to offer the world. We just need to be careful with our words.

—Kevin DeValk, Geneva, N.Y.

Thanks to our readers for your interest in Stacie and in all of the "crossover" artists in the past months. We're excited to see how these individuals are making an impact on those in and outside of the Christian music community!

FEELINGS FROM FEEDBACK

I just wanted to put in my two cents about a letter in "Feedback" in August's issue. I have worked in the Christian retail business for almost 10 years now—most of that in the music department. I cannot tell you the number of stories I have about how artists' mainstream attention brought non-believers and even "fence riders" into the stores I worked at and how it made a difference in people's lives because they caught a glimpse of light in a dark place. Let's not bring our musical missionaries down but lift them up in prayer. They are being lamps in the night.

—Andrew Jorgensen, Oshkosh, WI

THE "B" IS BACK

Thanks for the article on "Maggie B" in the August issue ["Finding Life's Balance"]. It had been too long since we had heard anything about her.

—Mark Skipper, via e-mail

Ditto, Mark. We thought it was time to hear from "Maggie B" again as well, and we're so glad we did!

Correction:

The August edition of CCM Magazine included information about Universal Studios Florida's Rock The Universe and mistakenly identified the theme park as Disney's Universal Studios in Florida. Universal Studios Florida is one of two theme parks located within the Universal Orlando Resort and hosts the Rock The Universe concert event.



(L-R): Bob Borbonus, Taylor Guitars Artist Relations; Stephen Mason and Charlie Lowell, Jars of Clay; Rupert Neve, legendary pro-audio designer; Bob Taylor, co-founder, Taylor Guitars; Matt Odmark and Dan Haseltine, Jars of Clay.



(L-R) Salvador members Damian, Eliot, Nic and Joel



Nic Gonzalez with Gibson Entertainment & Artist Relations Director, Bob Workman



LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

Love is in the air, but we're not talking about the boy-meets-girl variety here. In fact, the love affair we've uncovered involves guys and their spiffy new guitars.

As a huge fan of country singer and fellow Texan **Travis Tritt**, **Salvador's** frontman, **Nic Gonzales**, fell in love with Tritt's Chet Atkins SST 12-string guitar that's only been created a handful of times for the likes of Tritt and musical legends **James Taylor** and **Joni Mitchell**. Knowing Gonzales was already a big fan of Gibson USA's six-string SST model, the company was happy to pull the proverbial strings to make sure Gonzales would have his dream guitar—a model they won't make again, according to Gonzales. While proudly showing us the guitar during

a recent visit to our CCM office, his mega-watt smile just wouldn't quit. Sounds like love to me. Look for the band on tour with newlywed **Jaci Velasquez** this fall in support of its first Spanish language album, *Con Poder* (Word).

Jars of Clay was also recently given a very special guitar in its honor from longtime partner Taylor Guitars. After receiving the signature model acoustic guitar, **Matt Odmark** remarked, "I'm honored that Taylor created such a beautiful instrument on our behalf. It's modeled after the prized 514ce I purchased seven years ago that has been the workhorse of Jars of Clay touring." Also, look for Jars at a city near you this fall with fellow labelmate **Caedmon's Call**.



FROM THE 'WHERE ARE THEY NOW?' FILES

Remember **Fono**? It was the band with the big Brit-rock sound that released an album called *WhatGoesAroundComesAround* in 1999 and introduced audiences to hits like "Now She's 24." Well, it's back and continuing to play on the club circuit, most recently at the Hard Rock Cafe in L.A. and the Ken Club in San Diego. Fans can check out a new song from the band called "Freeze Frame" (no, not the '80s classic by **J Geils Band**) at mp3.com/fono.

Letters have also been pouring in over the last few months asking about **Jennifer Knapp's** whereabouts. Now fans will have the opportunity to pick up a new album on Nov. 4 when *A Diamond in the Rough—The Jennifer Knapp Collection* (Gotee) hits store shelves. The album will be a two-disc set with the first CD featuring the songs fans chose in an online vote. Selected testimonials submitted by fans will also be featured in the album's packaging.

The second disc spotlights new music, rare demos, B-sides and other goodies that no fan would be able to live without. Look for our review of the project exclusively at CCMmagazine.com.



WHO KNEW NOVELIST EMILY BRONTË COULD BE PUNK ROCK?

When Emily Brontë wrote *Wuthering Heights* back in 1847, she probably had no idea her prose would find a place in a made-for-MTV movie. And luckily for **MxPx**, one of its songs fit perfectly into that movie's soundtrack as the band's recent Diet Pepsi commercial anthem "Well Adjusted" was selected as one of two MxPx cuts featured in the upcoming film. The guys will get a little screentime, too, as they portray a club band in the production. In musical endeavors, they are currently opening for emo rockers **Dashboard Confessional**.

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A CLOSE CALL FOR PILLAR

In what seemed like a scene straight out of the beginning of *The Wizard of Oz*, a 70 mile-per-hour wind gust caused a scare for **Pillar** at a recent performance at the Godstock Music Festival in Comstock, Nebraska.

While the group was performing the fifth song from its set, the wind began to gather strength, and everyone was told to evacuate the stage immediately. Less than a minute later, the wind actually picked up the stage, sending the lighting trusses crashing to the ground.

"We didn't know what to think. Since we were on the stage, it was hard for us to see what was happening. Someone screamed at us to 'get off the stage,' and a few seconds later, everything was trashed. It was a miracle no one was seriously hurt. There's no way to explain it," Pillar bassist **Kalel** explained. "I found a flier about the festival lying on the ground, and it said: 'Come feel the touch of the Master's hand.' I doubt they had any idea how true that statement would be."

In other Pillar news, the band was recently featured in *Spin Magazine* and announced on pillarmusic.com that it will record U2's "Sunday Bloody Sunday" on an upcoming U2 tribute album that will release on Sparrow Records in 2004. More details on that as they are uncovered...



SONICFLOOD

AND THE PRAISE GOES ON...

Sonicflood is continuing to stay busy these days as the guys gear up for their fall "SonicPraise" events. Slated at presstime for at least four major cities, including Seattle, Omaha, Minneapolis and Orlando, the events will include a Friday night service along with a Saturday morning meeting. "In a world of turmoil and uncertainty, the conferences are a chance for God's people—young and old—to come together as a family and join in a time of worship, teaching and application of God's Word," lead vocalist **Rick Heil** tells *CCM*.

Joining Sonicflood for the events are Promise Keepers co-founder **James Ryle**, new Furious artist **Everyone**, worship leader **Ron Kenoly** and Integrity vocalist **Leann Albrecht**. In addition to getting ready for touring, the band has also enjoyed a little early holiday cheer as it recently put the finishing touches on recording "Angels We Have Heard on High" with producer **Pete Kipley** for an upcoming *iWorship Christmas* (Sony) album set to hit stores this month.

ticker continued on page 12

LIL' IROCC IS COLLEGE BOUND—JUST GIVE IT A FEW YEARS!

He may be more than seven months shy of his 14th birthday, but ForeFront's newest rapper **Lil' IROCC** may be the most polite and professionally determined artist in Christian music. During the course of our interview where he said, "Yes, ma'am" seven times, he revealed he already has a game plan for his life beyond music. During a recent roadtrip on his way to Nashville, IROCC said, "I am going to home school until I go to college. I will go to college. I am going to play football and then do business and stuff like that." In the meantime, he'll continue to tour and promote his self-titled debut.



LIL' IROCC

WARREN BARFIELD'S 'GREAT ADVENTURE'

During his recent stint on a promotional tour for his debut CD, last month's "One to Watch," **Warren Barfield**, has embarked on many exciting adventures, including a duet with **Steven Curtis Chapman** at a recent Nashville concert. Turns out that shortly after Barfield accepted Christ, he saw Chapman's music video for "Great Adventure" and "his life's direction was set in motion." Now, he's doing just what he hoped—"making music he loves with lyrics celebrating his relationship with Christ."



WARREN BARFIELD WITH SCC



VINEYARD MUSIC GOES ELECTRONICA?

With a few notable exceptions, Christian music and hip dance beats have seldom found a home in the same CD player. Until now. With a modern electronica sound combined with the trademark Vineyard lyrical style, there's a brand-new offering that should make both parties happy. *Wash Over Me* features prominent worship leaders like **David Ruis** and **Chris Janzen** and incorporates loops and "inspirational decks" by **Andy Hunter**.



ROCK YOUR WORLD

If you attended Lifest, Kingdom Bound, Creation West, Alive Festival, Inside Out Soul Fest or either of the Cornerstone festivals, you just may have spotted the booth for Rock for Life, a division of the Youth Outreach Program of American Life League.

Each summer, Rock For Life takes a band of teenagers and travels across the country to share a pro-life message. They share the vision at booths at concerts, attend youth rallies, offer educational materials, help bands (mainstream and Christian) to spread the word, pray at abortion clinics and maintain pro-life chapters in various cities.

According to its statement of purpose, Rock for Life is committed to offering truth about abortion, infanticide and euthanasia to America's youth through music and ministry. Rock for Life began when secular bands gathered to counter pro-choice messages by promoting and raising money at concerts.

But now Christian bands such as OC Supertones, ZOEgirl, PAX 217, Out of Eden, P.O.D. and more are joining in as well. The RFL Web site states that "to counter this assault, [they] work to bring together bands who stand for the truth—that life is sacred from fertilization until natural death—with no exceptions, no compromise and no apologies."

And why is this issue so important to address? Matt "Mojo" Morginsky of OC Supertones says, "It is the most important social issue for Christians and for anybody today. Abortion and euthanasia are the greatest crimes of our society. Rock for Life is getting people involved; and the church needs to show up in this situation because history will judge the church of our era with how we dealt with this particular issue." **SHARON McCALLUM**

GET INVOLVED!

Rock for Life offers several ways to involve people in getting the pro-life message out. Sign the "Pro-life Proclamation Against Violence" pledge, participate in Rock for Life's peaceful (and legal) street-level rallies, pass out literature at your school, hold prayer services or find out how you can volunteer at Rock for Life events. Go to rockforlife.org for more information.

Connecting

fall in love for all the right reasons



ForeFront artist **Rebecca St. James** has become the most well-known face for the "True Love Waits" campaign. And when she gets behind an issue, there's nothing half-way about it. This singer/songwriter has attended rallies, spoken to youth about abstinence at her concerts, written a hit song "Wait for Me" and a book by the same name (in its sixth printing at Thomas Nelson). Now that's commitment.

And this 25-year-old has a few things to say about dating, too, so listen up!

What's the best piece of dating advice your parents or a friend ever gave you?

RSJ: "Take it slow! Build on friendship; it's not all about being attracted to someone. Time tells you a lot about people, so the more time you spend getting to know the other person, the more godly wisdom you will gather about whether or not he or she truly 'the one' God wants you to choose as your life's partner!"

HERE'S WHAT A FEW OTHER ARTISTS HAD TO SAY ABOUT DATING:

"Be respectful. A girl who appreciates and admires this trait could likely be the one for you!"—**Bobby Vergura** from **East West**

"Be at a point in your life where your primary focus is on growing and pleasing God; don't even worry about romance. Surrender and don't think twice about your "need" for affection. When you're in that place where you're constantly trying to let God shape your life so that it honors Him, you'll find your relationships doing the same." —**Bryan Nance Jr.**, from **Stereo Motion**

"Make a list of what you are looking for in a spouse and don't settle, especially in the "morality" category. Don't second-date someone you wouldn't marry." —**Jason Anderson** from **RE:ZOUND**

For more information, visit eharmony.com. Dedicated to helping people find the right partner for life-long love and happiness, eharmony offers free personality profiles, a risk-free seven-day trial period and membership packages to help get you started on the path to finding the right mate for you.

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5 QUESTIONS WITH KIRK FRANKLIN

"Do you want a revolution?" That's the question Kirk Franklin asks in his hit song "Revolution." And for most of us, the answer is "yes"... as long as Mr. Franklin is involved. Selling more than 12 million records in the course of his career, this Dove and Grammy Award-winning artist is currently co-headlining the "I Have a Dream—the Tour" with tobyMac. Teaming up with the E.R.A.C.E. (Eliminating Racism and Creating Equality) organization, founded by tobyMac and his fellow dc talkers, the two are working together to eliminate racism existing in Christian circles. Check out itickets.com for tour dates.

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

KIRK: I wouldn't trade responsibilities with anyone because I know I wouldn't be the man I've become without the responsibilities God has tailor-made for me.

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

KIRK: When I was about 19. The more people in my community that enjoyed my music, the more I wanted to do it professionally—it just kind of evolved.

3. Describe your most unforgettable romantic date with your wife.

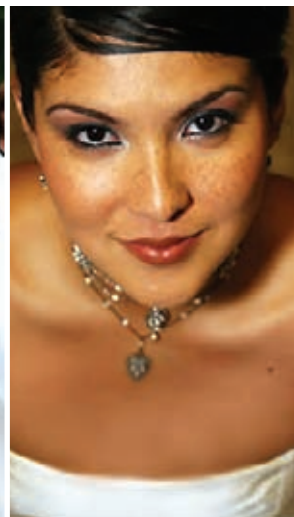
KIRK: I try to make every date a romantic date, so one date doesn't stick out in my mind.

4. What are you obsessive-compulsive about?

KIRK: Dirt—I'm hyper about cleaning stuff. I vacuum all the time!

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

KIRK: His patience. It's amazing to me how God continues to be patient with me.



ISN'T SHE LOVELY?

Well, guys, the days of pining over **Jaci Velasquez** are—at least officially—over. The 23-year-old Latin singer/actress tied the knot with musician Darren Potuck on Aug. 16 just outside of Nashville. And only a month after the wedding, she hit the road for her current spot as headliner for "Unspoken—the Tour" with Salvador.



JENNIFER AND JEROMY DEIBLER WITH "HUTCH"



JOHN AND SHAREE KATINA WITH RIVER E. JAMES

NEW FACES

If you saw any **FFH** shows this past spring, you might have noticed vocalist **Jennifer Deibler's** expanding form (and in some of the hippest maternity clothes we've seen!) to accommodate the arrival of her and husband/vocalist **Jeromy's** firstborn. **Jeremiah Hutchinson ("Hutch") Deibler** arrived safe and sound on July 21.

With **The Katinas**, it's all about family. The already expansive family (the five Katina brothers are part of a 12-sibling family) welcomed yet another addition with the arrival of **John and Sharee Katina's** baby boy, **River E. James Katina**. River comes in third after older brothers Zion, 3, and Jett, 2. Congrats!

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS:

07 – Michael W. Smith

09 – Phillip LaRue
DJ MAJ

11 – Tramaine Hawkins
Kurt Carr

13 – Shirley Caesar

15 – Josh Gonzales (Salvador)

15 – Jaci Velasquez

17 – Ian Eskelin (All Star United)

18 – Adrian Anderson (Trin-i-tee 5:7)
Matt Butler (NewSong)

19 – Dorinda Clark Cole

21 – Brian Pittman (Relient K)

22 – Charlie Lowell (Jars of Clay)
Toby McKeenan (dc talk)

ticker continued on page 16

A CHAT WITH CHAZ



CHAZ CORZINE

When Chaz Corzine pursued a degree in youth ministry at Greenville College in Greenville, Ill., little did he know that his career goal would be fulfilled in an unconventional manner. Instead of scheduling senior high retreats and junior high lock-ins, Corzine has had an impact on the lives of millions over the past 20 years working with such artists as **Amy Grant** and **Michael W. Smith**. Today he is a partner in the management firm of **Blanton Harrell Cooke & Corzine**.

What's your favorite Michael W. Smith song?

Two come to mind: "Never Been Unloved" and "Could He Be the Messiah?"

What's your favorite Amy Grant song?

"Doubly Good to You," a Rich Mullins song recorded for *Straight Ahead*.

You're manning a booth on a high school career day. Explain what you do.

You can think of an artist manager as a symphony conductor. I stand out of sight and keep all the instruments moving together. That means coordinating efforts with record labels, publicists, tour sponsors, promoters and others who may have a vested interest in the artist. Much of my time is spent keeping things in balance.

What skills are useful in your job?

This is a relationship business. It's all about getting along together. One of the most valuable lessons I learned from Mike [Blanton] and Dan [Harrell] is that a good deal is a deal that is good for everyone.

What would life be like without a cell phone?

I average 50 calls and probably 50 to 75 e-mails a day. If I didn't have a cell phone and a Blackberry [a portable phone/e-mail messaging system], I would never catch up.

Who have you been really excited about receiving a phone call from?

When I was first getting started, Brown Bannister called about something Amy was doing. I was in awe because he had produced so many great albums and worked with so many artists I admired—even 20 years ago.

What's the duller part of your job?

I would rather do anything than sit in a studio while an album is being recorded.

What's a moment that made you most proud to do what you do?

I went with Amy and Michael when they sang at the memorial service for the students who died in the Columbine shootings. The event was held outside of a movie multiplex; but, before the program, the individual theaters were used as "green rooms" to gather those involved in the program and the families closely tied to the tragedy. Amy and Michael were together in one theater when the families who had lost children began coming in. To see them comforting those parents—crying with them, praying with them, hugging them—was just amazing.

What's a dream project you'd like to put together?

We're working with Michael to find ways for him to have greater involvement and impact in a community setting by being able to spend a whole day in a given city instead of just being onstage for a concert.



Steven Curtis Chapman recently accepted a position as co-producer of an album by Atlanta-based group **Casting Crowns**. The group is the first signee on Beach Street Records (an imprint of Reunion Records and Provident Label Group), a label formed by Chapman's friend and country group Sawyer Brown's lead singer, Mark Miller. The album, featuring co-writes by Chapman, hits streets Sept. 30.

Industry veteran **Carman** recently signed with Cross Driven Records and released *House of Praise*, his first studio recording in three years, on Sept. 9. The tour in support of the album began Sept. 30.



Pictured (l to r) are: Elliott Cunningham, vice manager of Weston Entertainment; Janet Leese, studio manager of The Sound Kitchen; Dino Elefante and John Elefante, co-founders of The Sound Kitchen and 3.1 Productions; Gregg Weston, chief manager of Weston Entertainment; and David Del Sesto, general manager and business affairs manager of The Sound Kitchen.

Former lead singer of **Kansas**, solo artist and businessman **John Elefante**, along with his brother/business partner **Dino**, recently sold a major stake in The Sound Kitchen studio to San Antonio-based Weston Entertainment in a multi-million dollar deal. The 20,000-square-foot, seven-studio complex is well-known for hosting recording sessions for big names such as **Bruce Springsteen**, **Dolly Parton**, **Wynonna**, **Faith Hill**, **Garth Brooks**, **Steven**

Curtis Chapman, **Amy Grant**, **Michael W. Smith**, **Jewel** and **Brooks & Dunn**. Weston Entertainment also acquired a stake in 3.1 Productions, the production company owned and operated by the Elefante brothers.

Michael W. Smith and **Amy Grant** were the first recipients of the newly created "Seminar in the Rockies" Summit Award at the close of the summer's 29th annual seminar, honoring individuals, groups or organizations demonstrating remarkable achievement and a connection to the "Seminar in the Rockies."

The Gospel Music Association Board of Directors made a recent decision to separate the promotion of the **Gospel Music Hall of Fame** and benevolent activities to the newly created **GMA Foundation**. All other commerce activities, such as the Dove Awards and GM Week, will fall under the **Gospel Music Association Trade Organization**.

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**COMING SOON...
ACTORS REVEAL UPCOMING PROJECTS.**

CCM has featured many actors during the past year, and you may be wondering what they're up to. Now, see how these actors have spent the last few months and find out about their new gigs.



ZACHARY LEVI FROM "LESS THAN PERFECT"

["More Than Perfect," April CCM]: "I shot a film in Montreal for the ABC Family channel called *See Jane Date*. That should air this fall. Then I shot a role in next year's season finale of HBO's 'Curb Your Enthusiasm' that will air in the spring."



SHERRI SHEPHERD FROM "LESS THAN PERFECT"

["More Than Perfect," April CCM]: "My husband and I finally took our honeymoon. It was on a Carnival Cruise. It was fun for about the first two days until people started to recognize me. I've also been doing my stand-up comedy act almost every weekend."



JOHN SCHNEIDER FROM "SMALLVILLE"

["Behind the Scenes," November 2002 CCM]: "I've been working on a mini-series for NBC that should air in November. I play a father who is estranged from his daughter and tries to reconcile with her. I have also just optioned a book, *July, July*, that I hope to produce and direct."



KATERI DEMARTINO

["The Reel," July CCM]: "I shot the demo for the 'Kateri Show.' Let's pray first that they air the clippings from it on 'Regis.' We hired the dog ('Bruiser') from *Legally Blonde*, and I spent the day going throughout Hollywood in a limo, treating the dog like a real celebrity."



GEORGE NEWBERN

["The Reel," January CCM]: Though "Providence" was cancelled, George quickly grabbed a new job in front of the camera as part of the cast of the new CBS drama, "The Brotherhood of Poland, N.H."



SCENE FROM *SECONDHAND LIONS*

OSMENT'S COMING-OF-AGE FILM

A lot has changed for **Haley Joel Osment** since he saw dead people in *The Sixth Sense*. For starters, his voice has changed. He's in the throes of puberty, having turned 15 after wrapping *Secondhand Lions*, a '60s-era coming-of-age comedy shot outside Austin, Texas, last fall that hit theaters Sept. 19.

Hand-picked by writer/director Tim McCanlies as the centerpiece of the film, Osment plays Walter, a boy whose mother leaves him with his eccentric bachelor uncles for the summer. Rumors abound regarding Uncles Hub (Robert Duvall) and Garth (Michael Caine), who may have stolen a fortune 40 years ago and stashed it in the barn.

And when Osment's character discovers an old photograph, he embarks on a journey that unravels his uncles' wild, exotic past, played out in a series of Indiana Jones-style flashbacks, complete with swordfights and ladies in distress.

In a recent interview, Osment told *CCM Magazine* what he felt Walter learned by movie's end: "You have to put faith in the good things in life, like honor and virtue. You have to see past power and physical prowess and really concentrate on the lasting things and put your faith in them, even when they are not always supported by the world." Yep, the kid's growing up. And from the looks of things, he'll be around for a long time to come. —**JOAN BRASHER**

**MATTHEW LUHN:
FINDING FAITH**

He contributed to *Toy Story* and *Monsters, Inc.*, but most recently, Pixar animator and story editor **Matthew Luhn** gets credit for coming up with the exciting ending of the surprise summer blockbuster hit *Finding Nemo*. In fact, Luhn considers plot twists to be his specialty. "At least there's *one* thing I can do that not a lot of people can," Luhn says modestly. Luhn's talents are also in demand just as much—or even more—outside of the studio as well. He shares his testimony in churches, gives cartoon lessons to kids once a month and even teaches at the YWAM/University of the Nations art school. As far as his next project for Pixar, Luhn says he can't divulge any story secrets yet. But, as always, Luhn makes sure his faith is an integral part of the creative process. "I'm vocal, but I try to be friendly," Luhn says. And in case you are the one person who didn't see the movie in theaters, you can catch *Finding Nemo* as it "swims" on to video/DVD next month.



BY JESSICA ROBIN



(L-R) JON DRUSE, BOB VERGURA, MIKE TUBBS, JAMES (J.J.) JENKINS

EAST WEST MAKIN' THE MAGIC

Last year East West won the "Hard Music Album of the Year" Dove Award for *The Light in Guinevere's Garden* (Floodgate). Its follow-up, *Hope in Anguish*, released in June. During a break between festival performances, CCM talked with lead singer Mike Tubbs about the new album, the Osbournes and more.

CCM: What is the significance of the band's name?

MIKE: East West was actually based off Psalm 103:12, which says: "As far as the east is from the west so has He removed our sins from us to be remembered no more."

CCM: How is your new album different from *The Light in Guinevere's Garden*?

MIKE: Jon, our guitarist, joined the band last April. Some people can work together, and it just works. Other people can work together, and it's magical. Not to be corny, but I think it's kind of magical with the lineup we have now. And there is a big difference between *The Light in Guinevere's Garden* and *Hope in Anguish* because the songs on *The Light in Guinevere's Garden* were written maybe three years before the time they were actually recorded. We pretty much wrote the last album in two weeks and then recorded it in two months. It is a lot more raw, too.

CCM: What's the story behind the mention of Jack and Kelly Osbourne in your liner notes?

MIKE: For some reason, God puts people in our path. We live near Hollywood, so we're always going up there to hang out. One night Bobby [drummer] and J.J. [bassist] and their families cruised up there to have some pizza at this little place on Sunset. That night, Jack and Kelly Osbourne just happened to roll up in their SUV, and they got out and were talking to people. Bobby went over and started talking to Jack, then they talked to Kelly for a little bit and slipped her a disc. We try not to let opportunities slip through our fingers, so we come prepared.

CCM: What do you like most about being in a band?

MIKE: There are three things we enjoy. One is recording—that bond that comes through all of us playing and recording music. Number two would be actually playing live and having that interaction with people—even though we're onstage. We're up there just having fun; it's like taking kids to a playground. And three is talking to kids afterward. That's our favorite thing. I like to try and encourage people, answer their questions and try to cut through the junk that's out there.

CCM: About how many tattoos and piercings are there among the four of you?

MIKE: Well, two of us are sleeved [arms are covered], plus we have various tattoos and piercings... probably 20 at least.



NATE SALLIE MODEL CITIZEN

Life for Nate Sallie has been a whirlwind since the release of his debut album, *Inside Out* (Curb). He was part of the summer Radio Disney tour and the *Seventeen Magazine*/JC Penney "Back to School" mall tour. He opened for Newsboys, and he even performed in Florida at the Elite Model "Look of the Year" contest. Using his time in the spotlight to champion good causes, he is also a spokesperson for both the "Partnership for Drug Free America" and the "Support Music" campaign. Things haven't slowed down yet as fans can currently find him on the road this fall with "ShoutFest." CCM caught up with Sallie to learn about this former piano teacher's new life.

CCM: Since you travel so much, what's your biggest pet peeve about flying?

NATE: It would probably be just the amount of space—how your knees are always bumping up against the seat in front of you. I was afraid of flying for a long time. I used to tell this story to set up one of the songs in the show: I told this guy that I was afraid of flying, and he goes "Nate, you're not afraid of flying; you're afraid of crashing. And I believe that God has a specific purpose for your life, so until that is accomplished, you're indestructible." That definitely gave me a peace about flying.

CCM: What's your favorite lyric on your album?

NATE: It would have to be a funny one—"You watch your exercise videos while you down a bag of Oreos," in the second verse of "It's About Time." We can go through an entire 45-minute show, and the one thing a lot of people say when they come up afterward is, "I love that Oreo line."


CCM: Which celebrity would you most like to meet?

NATE: I'd like to meet somebody like Billy Graham and hang out with him. I've also always wanted to meet Michael Jackson. I'd like to catch him when he's not in front of the camera and see what he's really like, what he's really all about. Sometimes I wonder.

CCM: Is there an overt difference between playing for a church crowd and other types of crowds?

NATE: I try to tailor what I say. I try to say something between songs that somebody can catch hold of and go, "That meant something to me" or, "I can use that." Also, I put Psalm 91 on the pictures and CDs I sign. People will ask me, "What does Psalm 91 mean?" I tell them that it is my favorite chapter of the Bible. Sometimes they'll say, "That's cool," or, "I've never read the Bible; I'll have to check that out." It's just a little thing, planting seeds... you never know.



A black and white photograph of Michael W. Smith sitting in a tufted leather chair, talking on a mobile phone. He is wearing a dark, long-sleeved shirt with a light-colored collar and cuffs. The background is dark and out of focus.

20/20

Michael W. Smith

recalls **20** memorable moments from the past **20** years (and takes a look beyond his Second Decade)

WORDS Michael Nolan
PHOTOGRAPHY Darci Stebbins
Lee Steffen

20 Memorable moments from the past 20 years

In the Beginning

I really can't reflect on 20 years without first thinking of the early days with Amy. I was given the opportunity to play in her band and open for her even before my first record was out. The first night I stepped out with her in front of a few thousand people impacted me in ways I probably didn't fully understand at the time.

Youth Night at the Billy Graham Crusade in Cleveland

Over the years, Billy and Ruth Graham have been incredibly encouraging to [my wife] Debbie and me. But the most powerful night I ever spent with him was in 1994. Despite misgivings from some members of his staff, he invited me and dc talk to perform for a special youth night. It was the first time contemporary music had ever been performed and endorsed by one of his crusades. Over 50,000 kids showed up; and when he offered the invitation for people to come forward and accept Christ, 10,000 just poured out of the stands. I looked at Toby [McKeehan], we both began to cry, and I couldn't quit. It was one of those times that left me and my band speechless.



Writing "Friends" with Debbie

I have no idea how many times I've sung "Friends." When we wrote it for a friend who was moving away from Nashville to become a campus minister, Debbie and I never dreamed it would touch so many lives. Twenty years later, I still get letters on how it is being used at graduations, funerals and camps.

Collaborating with Ryan

My oldest son, Ryan, has a great ear for music. For example, he

introduced me to Jars of Clay's music before it really took off. What a hoot it was to co-write the song "Signs" with him that is on my *Second Decade* (Reunion) album! And because he's got a real passion for filmmaking, he took on the assignment of directing the music video for the song. So, stay tuned.

The video that almost didn't get made

In 1988 the producers of the "Fire by Night" TV show asked me two or three times to come out to Tulsa and make a music video of "Secret Ambition," but I kept turning them down. Their production budget was only \$2,000, and I couldn't imagine that anything good could be created for so little money. But thankfully, they were persistent. I finally agreed to do it, and I kicked in some money myself so they could shoot it on film instead of video. Scenes from "The Great Passion Play" in Eureka Springs, Ark., were woven in with my scenes shot way out in western Oklahoma. By the end of our shooting day, I knew something special had happened, but I had no idea of its future impact. To this day, people tell me they accepted Christ after seeing the video.

A pop song with bagpipes?

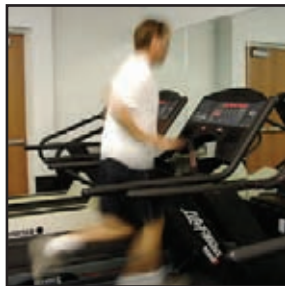
Performing at the memorial service following the tragedy at Columbine High School in Colorado remains one of the most sobering experiences of my life. After that day, I knew I had to do something. That "something" became the song "This Is Your Time" that I co-wrote with Wes King. I recorded it and sent a copy to Cassie Bernal's family to get their blessing, but I felt that the ending just wasn't right. At 3:00 one morning, I woke up and, in my head, heard the song being played with bagpipes. I called Cassie's mom later that morning to tell her I wanted to re-record the ending with bagpipes. There was silence on the other end of the phone, and I thought I'd offended her or lost the connection.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF MICHAEL W. SMITH

9:56

SHAPING UP TITANS STYLE

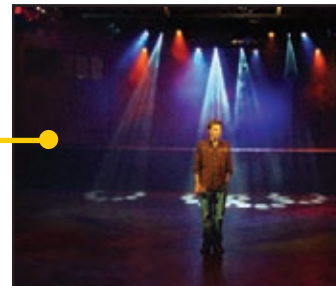
With the blessings of my friend Tennessee Titans coach Jeff Fisher, I get to work out in the NFL team's training facility. I'm in better shape than ever, but I still don't want to try to tackle running back Eddie George!



10:47

PURSUIT OF A DREAM

After a time of regrouping, Rocketown is bigger and better than ever. Our new club, located in downtown Nashville, has a very cool coffee bar, massive indoor skate park and a great venue for live music. In addition to drawing kids, it has also become popular with music industry people. Today MercyMe's label [INO] held a luncheon to celebrate the group's album *Almost There* going platinum.



Then, with obvious emotion, she told me that bagpipes were Cassie's favorite instrument. Enough said.

Rockettown becomes a reality

For four years, I had been trying to launch a youth outreach in the form of a teen club called Rockettown. Many times I had been told why it wouldn't work. On April 29, 1994, we opened the doors to a former warehouse in a business park on a dead-end street in Franklin, Tennessee. With no real advertising, 700 kids crowded into the building. While the theme from the movie *2001: A Space Odyssey* blasted through the place, I surveyed the sea of young faces eager to find out what this place was about. I sat on the floor of the sound booth and cried.

And so does the other Rockettown

I'd known for a long time that I wanted to start a record company someday. That dream became a series of serious conversations with Don Donahue, who was working at Reunion Records. One day we were on the farm talking about it for the umpteenth time, and I finally said, "Let's do it." Not long after that Don played me Chris Rice's "Welcome to Our World," which blew me away. I figured that anyone who could write something that good probably had a lot more great songs in store. He did—and does. Based on the strength of his music, the songwriter-centered record company was started.

Creative "Freedom"

Although I'm happy with a lot of the albums I've recorded, my absolute favorite is the instrumental album, *Freedom* (Reunion). The music I write tends to have a symphonic nature, so it was incredible to bring to life the arrangements I had heard in my head. It was an amazing experience to record most of the album with the Irish Film Orchestra at Windmill Lane Studios in Dublin, where U2 did some of its early work.

Friends Really Are Friends Forever

Looking back on the first tour I headlined in 1985 with Kathy Troccoli and Billy Sprague brings back great memories. My band was Wayne Kirkpatrick, Chris Rodriguez, Chris and Jan Harris, David Huff and

Mark Heimermann. Every member of that band has gone on to have an incredible individual impact on Christian music as writers, producers, studio musicians and performers. Those early days were rich, and it was a blast to be a part of it.

Holy Land

A few years ago, Debbie and I traveled to the Holy Land with a tour group led by her stepfather, Murray Severance. The most striking moment was walking through the East Gate in Jerusalem. It's the only time I remember laughing and crying at the same time. The instrumental "Hope of Israel" on my *Christmastime* album was inspired by that experience.



The Best of Times, the Worst of Times

When "Place in This World" was picked up by pop radio stations, I was tossed from the cocoon of Christian music into the mainstream, where audiences could be pretty brutal. One night I performed solo in front of 7,000 rowdy people at what is called a "star party," hosted by a pop/rock station. I opened with "Emily," and I could tell I was not winning them over. When I tried to pick up the pace with "Love Crusade," people began throwing things on stage, and a can actually slammed against my shoulder. I was furious but finished the song and moved on. When I finally started "Place in This World," they recognized it and, finally, I got a reasonably positive response. But by then I was just desperate to get off the stage. I

bowed quickly and stormed backstage. Eventually I cooled off and walked to where I could survey the crowd. It was like God was saying, "I gave you a heart for the lost—well, here they are." It was a sobering and painful moment that deepened my commitment to touch lives.

"Place" at the American Music Awards

Thanks to the undying enthusiasm of Claire West (in Geffen Records' radio promotions department) for "Place in This World," the song reached No. 1 on the pop charts; and, at the 1990 American Music Awards, I received the surprise of my life. When Alan Jackson and Queen Latifah read my name for "New Pop Artist of the Year," it was a very surreal moment. What I love about

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Timeline continued on page 27

M



On being a businessman...
I don't want to invest in the stock market because I don't know much about it, but I do know about the music business because I've been doing it for 20 years. I started Rockettown Records because I wanted to invest in younger artists. I'm incredibly honored to work with the artists on our roster and I know their music is affecting lives.



11:01





A DAY IN THE LIFE OF MICHAEL W. SMITH

12:16

DOWN AT ROCKETTOWN

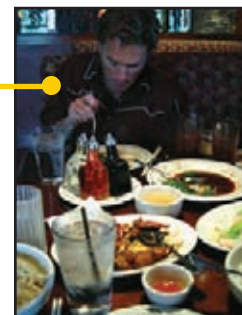
Since 1996, Rockettown Records has grown from one artist to 11. By the end of this year, we will have released 28 albums—phenomenal! Here I am playing art director by reviewing photos for Christine Denté's new album. I enjoy being involved in all facets of the label, but my forté remains song selection. I love listening to our artists' demos—hearing their latest songs and watching as they grow creatively.



1:03

OUT WITH THE OLD

I used to hit a local fast-food restaurant up to five times a day for a Diet Coke—and the occasional deep-fried something-or-other. These days I'm eating my (stir-fried) vegetables and easing off fat, sugar and caffeine.



On being an artist...

For me, gratitude is the key to being an artist. By being thankful for all He has done for me through my music, I am nearly always excited about what the future holds. Inspiration can strike at any moment—what's important is to be available for inspiration to hit. Humility and gratitude make that possible.

the American Music Awards is that they are voted on by the public. Just thinking back on that night really humbles me.

*S*r. Smith Goes to Washington

My first real contact with the Bush family was in 1989 when I was asked to perform on NBC's "Christmas in Washington" special. After the performance the President asked some of us to come over to the White House. As we passed a piano, President Bush asked me if I'd like to play something. Without thinking, I blurted out, "Is it in tune?" He responded, "Well, I hope so!" And our friendship began. I'll never forget: I was playing Christmas carols... in the White House... for the First Family... with Olivia Newton-John... and the whole time I'm thinking, "How did I get from Kenova, W.V., to here?"

A few months later I found myself on the tennis court in a heated match with the President and his son "W." I spent more time with the younger George when I performed at his brother Jeb's inauguration as Governor of Florida. One of the biggest honors of my career came when George W. Bush asked me to perform at the prayer service honoring his own inauguration. It was the first time I ever played the song "Above All." I was nervous, of course, and I think that I actually sang a few wrong words but I kept playing anyway. I appreciate so much what the Bush family has meant to our country.

*N*o One in the Spotlight

Several years ago we took worship in a new direction on the first night of Gospel Music Week. We gathered a bunch of artists but agreed it should not be self-serving in any way—no new songs were introduced and no one got a step-out or a solo. We all just gathered together to worship. I think that event set the mood for the entire week and has had a great impact on our industry as a whole. I think it was one of the most meaningful events I've ever attended at GM Week.

*S*piritual Warfare... On the road

Probably the hardest and most rewarding tour I have been a part of was the "I'll Lead You Home" tour. We had mounted this huge production, and it seemed like there were problems at every turn. I completely lost

my voice and, for the first time ever, had to cancel shows. The Jars [of Clay] boys were opening, and one of them had to have an emergency appendectomy. One of the crew guys was hit with severe food poisoning... and on and on and on. It was hard to understand at the time what was happening. Looking back, I truly believe it was a spiritual thing. It was warfare. We ended the evening everynight with some clips from Billy Graham—and I know that we were making a difference out there.

*T*he Bono Connection



Bono, of U2 fame, has been reaching out to the Christian community to enlist support of the organization D.A.T.A. (Debt, AIDS, Trade for Africa). My first contact was when Bono was in Nashville for some meetings. We spent a good bit of time together and began a friendship. And while my family was in Dublin this past summer, I called him, and he invited all of us over for lunch. He brought out a boombox and played four new songs that probably even his record company hadn't heard yet. What a thrill for my kids! His hospitality was over the top.

*E*go Check

We had the incredible privilege of having the pastor of Belmont Church, Don Finto, join us on the road several times over the years. I remember

standing backstage waiting for an encore at a concert on Oct. 31, 1986, in Seattle. A group of girls could see me from the balcony and began screaming, "We love you, Michael!" Just as I was starting to swell with pride, I felt Don's big, loving hand on my shoulder. He leaned toward me and said, "It's not you. It's not you. Give it up. Give it up." Don has had an incredible impact on my life, and I wouldn't be where I am today if it weren't for him.

*W*orship... for the record

Recording the first *Worship* record was one of the most amazing experiences of my life. We charted four or five planes and took 20 or

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Timeline continued on page 28

2:02



On family...

My greatest gifts are Debbie, Ryan, Whitney, Tyler, Emily and Anna. They're my No. 1 priority. I was amazingly blessed that my mother and father were such great role models to show how a family should work.

2:21

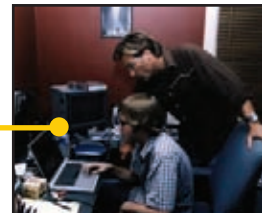
Up until about 10 years ago, Deer Valley Studio was just part of my basement. Sometimes we even recorded vocals in the bathroom. Much to Debbie's relief, we moved everything to a little house in Franklin. It's a comfortable place to write and record—or just sit on the front porch and unwind.

MY HOME AWAY FROM HOME



2:25

My older son, Ryan, has wanted to be the next Steven Spielberg since he was 10. Now 19, he's developed skills as a video director and editor. Here he shows me his ideas for a music video for "Signs" we'll shoot next month.



On being a church leader...

My passion is to build community. The simple truth is this: We're all just a bunch of sick people who need the Lord. Once we stop putting up a good front, it's so much easier for God to work.

New Guy in the Editor's Chair



so artists to Lakeland, Fla., to sing on the record. We rehearsed during the day, and the time together was so great. When we all got together to pray before going onstage, the Spirit moved in a way that we lost all track of time. We wound up starting the concert/recording really late. I can't really explain what the recording was like—and the time together with the other artists after the concert—other than to say, "God showed up." It was really an amazing night, and I am still so grateful to everybody that showed up to be a part of that night.

Gavi's Graduation

In 1988, our family "adopted" a young girl in Ecuador through the child sponsorship organization Compassion International. We have always exchanged letters and photographs over the years, and I've been able to visit her several times while on Compassion trips. The culmination of this 16-year relationship was the honor I had to hand Gavi her high school diploma and reflect on how God had transformed a little girl from a poverty-stricken family into a beautiful young woman. It reminds me of the promise given in the book of Jeremiah that He has given us all "a hope and a future." **ccm**

Note: Through the promotion of Compassion International during Michael's concerts, more than 22,000 children have been sponsored.

On philanthropy...

If you try to hold on to what God has given you, you lose it. But if you stayed focused on the fact that every good gift comes from God, you find the joy and freedom of giving. I'm attracted to things that work—Compassion International, for example, saw 70,000 kids come to Christ last year and the Rockettown club builds relationships with kids who may never have set foot in a church.

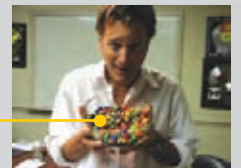


Since Michael didn't study journalism, he wasn't sure exactly what his job entailed. Fortunately, our staff was eager to turn over lots of responsibility to the "new guy" as the photos show.



Not to say that Michael is unaccustomed to office life, but he needed instructions to operate the coffee carafe. And we specifically asked him for two sugars and just a touch of cream.

How did we know M&Ms were his favorite candy or that he was trying to cut down on sweets?



Only two ears but 32 CDs (and one cassette—"Where's this guy been?") Michael asked to listen to—unbelievable. To quote Chris Rice: "Welcome to our world."

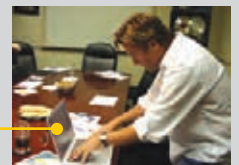
Michael discovers a fast, new way to make headshots and nearly goes blind in the process.



And the envelope, please. And the bubblewrap, please. And so on and so on as Michael sorts things out.



Old habits are slow to die. Michael discovered that a laptop keyboard is a little different than a piano keyboard.



A DAY IN THE LIFE

3:13

ROCKETTOWN, PART II

Steve Taylor and I are among the artists Bono has recruited to help get the word out about his non-profit organization, D.A.T.A. (Debt, Aids, Trade for Africa). Steve volunteered to direct a promotional video of Christian artists asking church leaders to become involved in helping impoverished countries through charity and changes in government policies. I zoomed back over to Rockettown to tape my part.





Smitty interviews **A BACKSTREET BOY**—His Way

A few years ago, people began telling me that **BRIAN LITRELL** of the Backstreet Boys had been quoted as saying that my music was a big influence on him. A few years ago, at the Grammy Awards, I learned he was backstage, and I decided to find him and introduce myself. Since then, we've talked a number of times. Excerpts of our most recent conversation are presented here as I make my debut as an interviewer instead of an interviewee!

MWS: First off, how about an update on your life? You're a new father, you've taken some time off, and you're dreaming up some new musical possibilities. What's the scoop?

BL: Well the scoop is I'm a proud father of a 9-month-old son [Baylee], and I'm enjoying life. I'm at a stage where I've kind of slowed down a little bit. The Backstreet Boys have gone really hot and heavy for the past decade. We started in '93, and we've been going ever since. It was nice to take the year off and be a new dad. And married life is wonderful.

I'm looking forward to branching my career out in the gospel world and doing something I grew up doing for many, many years. And fans of the BSB know that Brian Littrell stands up for what he believes in, and I believe in a living God and feel that He deserves the praise. He's given me a huge platform with my pop success to do something in the gospel field. I look forward to that. I think He's working in my life day in and day out.

MWS: That's awesome. What started your connection to Christian music? Did you grow up listening to it?

BL: I grew up listening to a guy by the name of Michael W. Smith!

MWS: Well that was a setup, wasn't it?

BL: Yeah, that was a good setup! There was this song called "Place in This World," and I love that song. I used to sing it at church all the time, and I did grow up listening to you. I've always wanted to have the opportunity to bless people with songs and with music. I grew up singing in a huge Baptist church in Lexington, Kentucky. Growing up in the Bible belt, there were always big churches and a lot of music to hear.



"I GREW UP LISTENING TO A GUY BY THE NAME OF MICHAEL W. SMITH!"

And I enjoy gospel music—I just enjoy blessing people with songs. That's the gift God gave me.

MWS: Well you're obviously gifted; there's no doubt about that. Tell me about the BSB. Anything new coming up?

BL: There is a possibility of trying to work out coming back together. We've been on hiatus for a little while. We shut down everything because it is hard to get five people to agree on one thing. As a solo artist you don't have to deal with that as much. I'm sure you know about that!

God is directing me. He's opened up some doors of opportunity in Christian music. I'm tired of waiting around. When God opens doors—you know we all pray for doors to be opened—and then when God opens them, you get kind of timid and scared, and you don't step out in faith. And now I'm taking that opportunity to step out in faith and do something He's called me to do.

MWS: That's awesome. I get asked this all the time about being a role model: How do you view yourself? Do you see yourself as a role model?

BL: I don't view myself as a role model. I think role models are our parents, teachers, police officers and fire fighters—the people who don't necessarily get the credit. The world we live in has changed since Sept. 11. We saw the whole city of New York come together and basically hold hands and help each other through. It's sad that our world has to see things like that in order to get our views straight. We look at professional athletes—18-19-year-old kids who get paid millions of dollars to play basketball or to play football. I enjoy sports, but I don't think they really stand up for what a role model stands up

for—for me. Not like my dad, someone who worked for 30 to 40 years to provide for his family.

And you were a role model for me for quite some time. [Laughs] And I understand that kids, in what they love, will find a role model.

Someone who is godly like yourself and worships the God I worship—those are things you find in good role models. But it was always my dad. He was always my role model.

MWS: Yeah, same here. It's amazing what a strong a family will do for you. And it's hard to see these kids from broken families—I don't know what that's like because I have a great mom and dad.

BL: We are the lucky ones.

MWS: What's one thing you'd love for your fans to know? What do you hope to leave with your fans?

BL: I would want them to know that I'm just a real person. I'm nobody special. I have a God-given talent that I've had the opportunity to use. And all of these kids who are BSB fans have God-given gifts, too. I

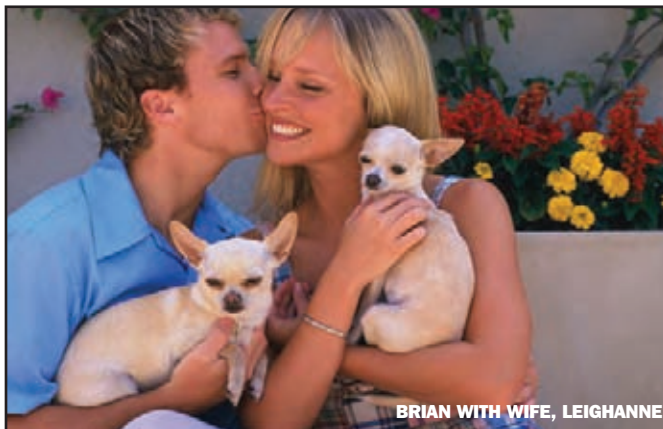
would just urge them to use those gifts to benefit people around them. I've never thought of myself as a role model, but I know that the BSB made an impact on this world musically. And I've always tried to share with the fans that I'm just like them. There's nothing that makes me different. I am a normal human being, I love life, I enjoy my life, and I enjoy my career.

MWS: I know what you're feeling. You know the feeling on a much grander scale than I do. Everyone treats you differently—that whole "superstar" thing. Does it get old?

BL: Yeah, it does. It's still hard to fathom the success of the group. I never imagined in my life that we'd sell almost 70 million albums.

You know, I don't hope to carry 70 million albums through the contemporary Christian world, but I do hope that fans will come with me

and see another side of music in an inspirational way. I hope they do that. If I got just a small percent of those 70 million people who we've touched, I would hope they would follow me there because I'm going to take them to a better place! **ccm**



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A photograph of Michael W. Smith, a man with light brown hair and blue eyes, wearing a dark green ribbed shirt and blue jeans. He is sitting on a wooden chair, leaning forward with his arms crossed on the chair's backrest. The background is dark.

STILL
MAKING FRIENDS
MICHAEL W. SMITH CELEBRATES
20 YEARS IN MUSIC

BY GREGORY RUMBURG
AND WENDY LEE NENTWIG

PHOTO: ANDREW SOUTHAM



Michael:
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of music and ministry.

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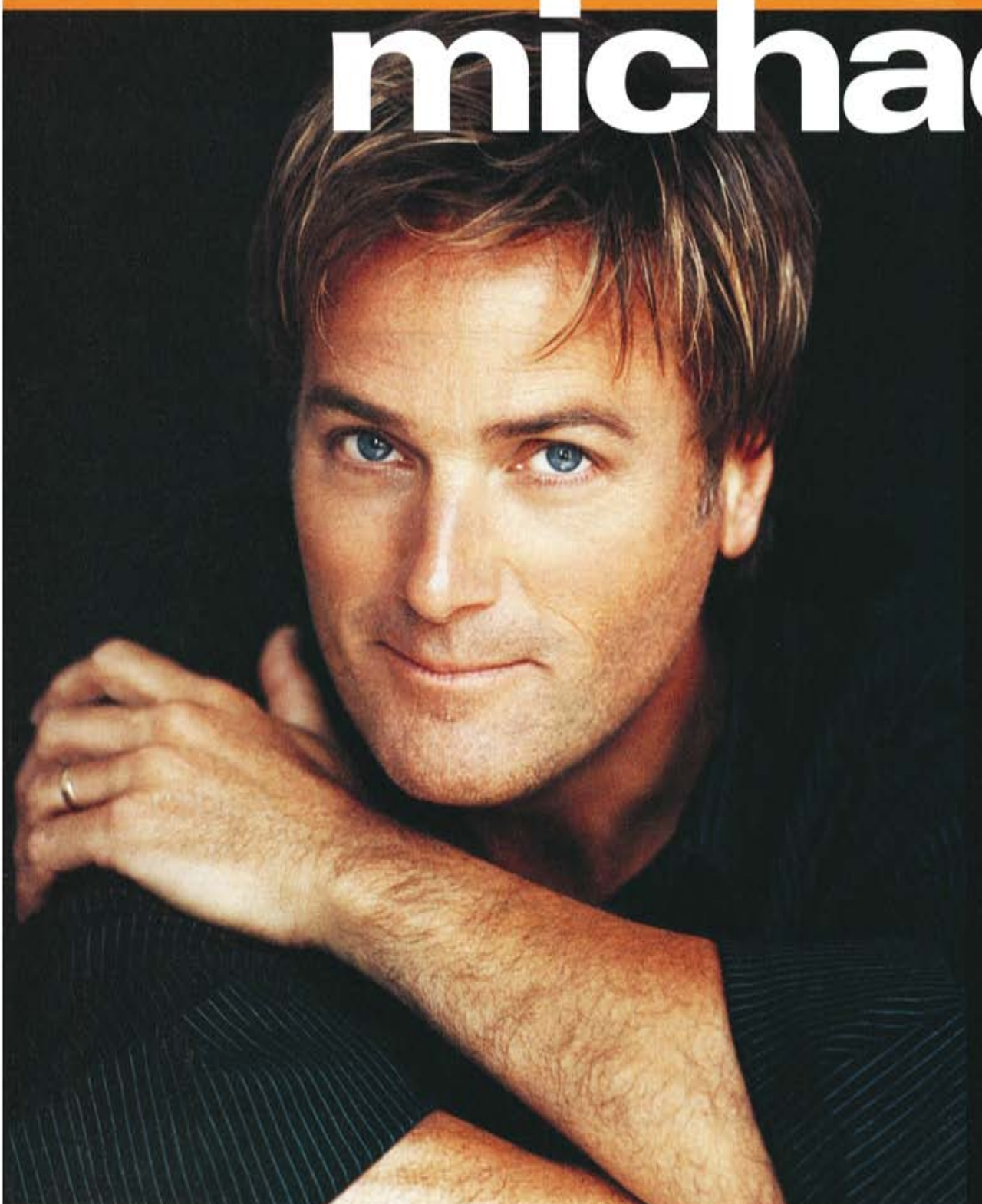
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FRIENDS ARE FRIENDS FOREVER



michael



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20!

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**amy
graht**

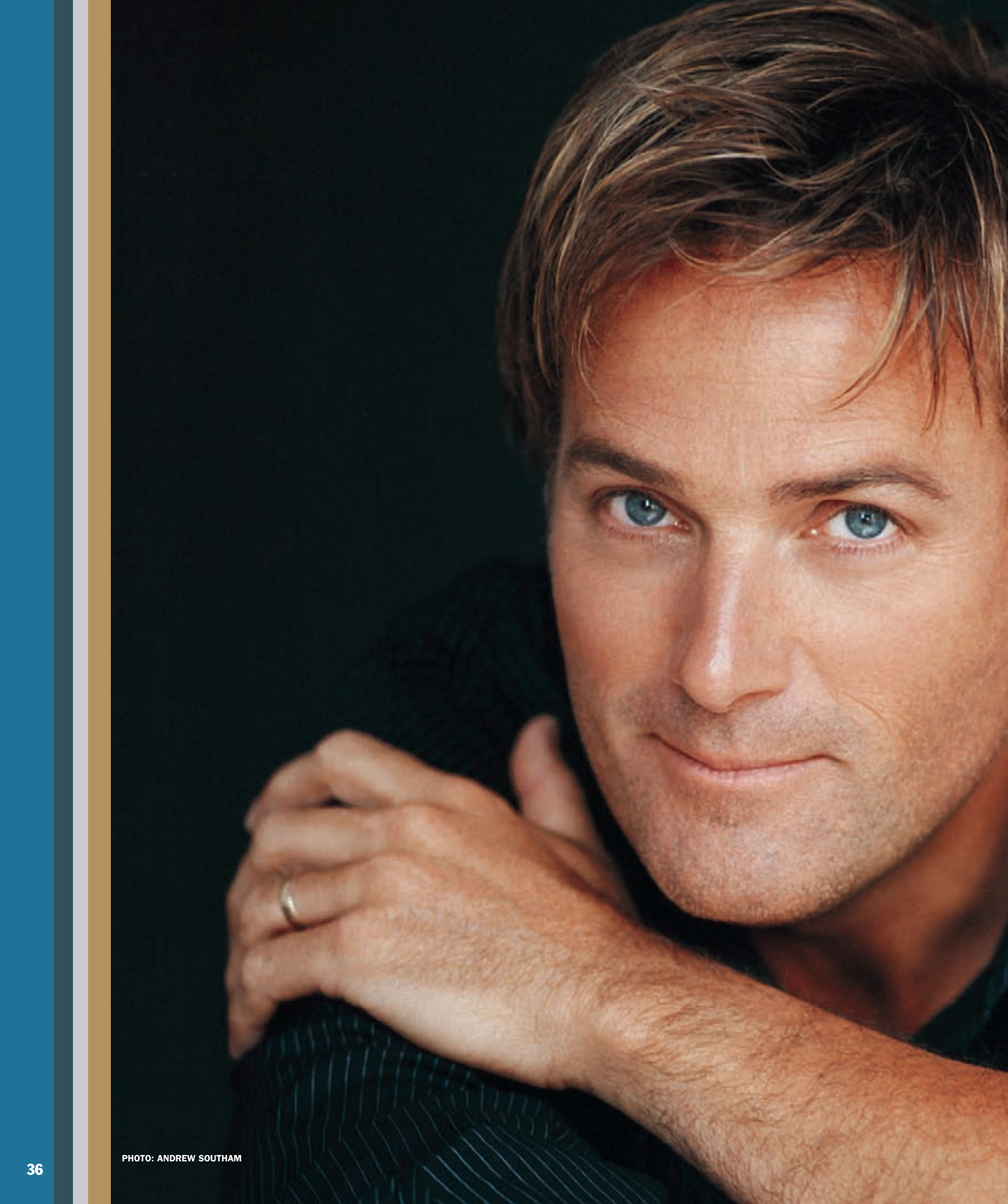


PHOTO: ANDREW SOUTHAM

He's been our friend for 20 years now.

For the last two decades, Michael W. Smith has earned his place as one of music's most influential leaders, bringing to the industry unmatched musical diversity (Christian, pop, praise & worship, instrumental), not to mention master musicianship and numerous critically acclaimed live performances. For his efforts, he's enjoyed mainstream hits with "Place In This World" and "I Will Be Here for You," and he's been honored with two Grammy Awards and an American Music Award, to mention but a few of his accolades.

From a cascade of albums, 17 in all, flows a river of more than 10 million career records sold, making him second only to his longtime friend Amy Grant. He's earned more than 40 Dove Awards, Christian music's highest honor. With 28 No. 1 hits alone, to spin all of his accomplishments at Christian radio would require a week of morning-drive time. Pass a box of tissue as we gladly hear again Michael's signature song, "Friends," and we remember the first time we listened in stunned silence. "Those words... that's what I've been trying to say," we think.

Optimism, based on a strong sense of what Michael describes as a spiritual calling, directed the small town West Virginia native each step of the way. "I always believed I needed to stay focused and stay grounded and be accountable for what I do and not get caught up in the hoopla of it all," he says.

THE EARLY YEARS

Sitting in his Franklin, Tenn., office at Rocketown Records, the singer/songwriter-friendly label he launched in 1995, Michael acknowledges no one can plan the sort of success he's enjoyed.

"The goal for me was to write songs. If I could cut records, that would be icing on the cake!" he says. True enough, that wish hadn't even been spoken out loud when Kenova, West Virginia's favorite son moved to Nashville in 1978, barely two years out of high school. Chasing his songwriting dreams, Michael recalls seeking his big break while enduring jobs as a restaurant server, a landscaper planting shrubs and a Coca-Cola employee.

He'd been playing with the group Higher Ground when he signed with Meadowgreen Music as a staff songwriter in the fall of 1981. Soon, he connected with Amy Grant, playing keyboards and contributing three songwriting credits to her landmark *Age to Age* album. He went on to tour with Grant's band and opened for the headliner in 1982.

"A lot of my early acceptance came from being on the 'Age to Age' tour," he recalls. "I would come out and do these four songs, 'Great Is the Lord,' 'You Need a Savior,' 'The Race Is On' and 'Too Many Times.' Later, we'd end Amy's part of the show with 'Friends.' That just caught, but we didn't realize it right away."

Grant's managers, Michael Blanton and Dan Harrell, warmed to Michael's work and established Reunion Records—the only Christian label home Michael's known—largely to give the songwriter his shot at becoming a recording artist. That birthed his 1983 debut, modestly titled *Michael W. Smith Project*. It now stands among *The 100 Greatest Albums in Christian Music*, as compiled by

MICHAEL, AMY

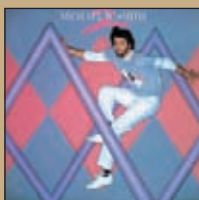


MICHAEL W. SMITH: DISC BY DISC



1983 MICHAEL W. SMITH PROJECT

Trivia buffs take note: This release has two different covers. When his record label decided to reissue the album, the original image of a conservative-looking Michael sporting a full beard was replaced by a hipper one, shown above.



1984 MICHAEL W. SMITH 2

This simply titled album hints at the fashion-forward approach Michael would take in the coming years. And that argyle shirt he sports on the cover? Michael admits "it's in Goodwill somewhere."



1986 THE BIG PICTURE

"It was a big leap," Michael says of the recording process for this project, which included his first big budget. "I went to the famous Power Station Studio [in New York City] where all these famous people worked and that was the big time for me."



1987 THE LIVE SET

Among the songs covered live on this recording was "Rockettown," a title that Michael would also give to the record label and Nashville-based youth club he would later found.

"THE GOAL FOR ME WAS TO WRITE SONGS. IF I COULD CUT RECORDS, THAT WOULD BE ICING ON THE CAKE!"

CCM Magazine in 2001. Running point on the record's popularity was "Friends," Smith's ode to friendship that has presided over graduations, youth camps and the like practically since it was pressed to vinyl. It stands as the No. 1 single in Christian music history.

"I remember making *Project*. What a blast! We made it for \$11,000," Michael says, smiling, as if to acknowledge a Smitty record today requires measurably more to underwrite. "We just hoped we'd recoup our expenses." (Apparently they have.)

"I guess that's how it all got started, and I've been having fun ever since. It goes to prove you never know where something is going to lead."

On *Project's* heels was *Michael W. Smith 2*, for which Michael nabbed his first Grammy Award in 1984. In all, these initial self-produced offerings birthed two now-classic Christian records, each revealing a budding talent contagiously passionate about his faith.

"I walked down the aisle at church and rededicated my life...when I was 15. I knew [then] God had a calling on my life," Michael says. "I felt it was some sort of call to ministry and that music was a part of it."

CHURCH GOES POP

If his first couple records formed the genesis of Michael's worship music today (those albums were promising precursors to *Worship* and *Worship Again*), the season containing his third and fourth studio releases anchored the mainstream pop success he'd eventually find—success that would lend him greater credibility as he emerged as a world ambassador of faith.

MICHAEL PERFORMING IN THE NETHERLANDS



1987



I 2 (EYE)

Gone was the perm, and a more serious-looking Michael graced the cover of this notable CD. The record laid the groundwork musically for his mainstream success of the early '90s.

1989



CHRISTMAS

Michael put the reverence back in Christmas with traditional treatments of original songs like "Lux Venit" and "Christ the Messiah."

1990



GO WEST YOUNG MAN

With *Go West* receiving a big push to mainstream audiences, the tour supporting this groundbreaking project drew some 250,000 appreciative fans.

1992



CHANGE YOUR WORLD

Not every recording session is a grind. While making this album, Michael says he remembers "having so much fun working with [producer] Mark Heimermann and laughing much more than anybody deserves to laugh."

1993



THE FIRST DECADE

For the first time, all of Michael's hits were available in one place. A boxed set was also released, titled *The Wonder Years*, featuring personal family photos of the young man from Kenova.

By the mid-'80s, Michael was reinventing his sound, revealing his ever-increasing knack for stout pop sensibilities. Songs like "The Race Is On" and "You Need a Savior" had hinted at such notions, but the opening wall of sound on *Big Picture* (1986) and the staccato harmonica opening of the veiled personal memoir that was 1988's *i 2 (Eye)* signaled a new approach to Michael's music making. That included the addition of talented lyricist Wayne Kirkpatrick. The Lennon & McCartney-like songwriting team has been together so long now that it's hard to believe Kirkpatrick wasn't always part of the process.



MICHAEL, WAYNE

Big Picture, too, brought Michael a new producer in John Potoker (Genesis, Talking Heads, Brian Eno), broadening the canvas on which Michael could paint. With *Big Picture* sporting production values on par with mainstream pop, Michael gained momentum in pursuit of crossover opportunities and collected a Grammy nomination. It was simultaneously inspiring and risky to consider the possibility too openly, given the flash point of debate the issue sparked among church gatekeepers and fans at the time.

"Secret Ambition," from the Kirkpatrick-produced *i 2 (Eye)*, and its supporting music video, seemed to indicate where Michael stood on the matter. Embracing the technology as the latest tool in cultural communication, and marrying it with an ancient story about Jesus, proved that Michael had a vision for broadly communicating hope. When a benchmark business arrangement between Reunion and mainstream Geffen Records created the opportunity for Michael's music to cross over, he was more than ready to enter that arena.

Go West Young Man (1990), produced by rising star Bryan Lenox, was Michael's seventh record, but his first with notable mainstream distribution opportunities, a dominant component to an artist gaining widespread general market exposure. Boosted by Geffen's clout, in 1991 "Place In This World" reached No. 6 on *Billboard's* Hot 100 singles chart and went to No. 4 on *Radio & Records' AC* chart. He earned invitations to appear on many mainstream TV programs, including VH1's "21 Countdown" and "The Tonight Show," plus coverage in top mainstream press. It was a rare achievement for a Christian artist then and one that gave the genre props by drawing a new crowd.

Blending his fresh crop of fans with his loyal stable of Christian music aficionados, *Change Your World* released in 1992 rounding out Michael's first decade with outstanding success. "I Will Be Here for You" (co-written with songwriting legend Diane Warren) went to No. 1 on *Radio & Records' AC* chart and landed in the *Billboard* Top 100. "Somebody Love Me" tackled mainstream audiences, too, garnering a Top 10 slot on AC radio.

"I WALKED DOWN THE AISLE AT CHURCH AND REDEDICATED MY LIFE... WHEN I WAS 15, I KNEW [THEN] GOD HAD A CALLING ON MY LIFE."

1995



I'LL LEAD YOU HOME

This album's stripped-down sound was a nod to the popularity of the previous year's acoustic tour, which found Michael and friends playing unplugged versions of his hits. Of this project, Michael said at the time, "I think I tapped into a well inside me that I didn't even know was there."

1998



CHRISTMASTIME

Michael's second holiday disc features "Emmanuel," a song he penned but first lent to pal Amy Grant for her *A Christmas Album*. This CD was followed up with a seasonal tour by the same name.



LIVE THE LIFE

Michael reportedly wrote 26 songs for this long-awaited 11th album. Of those, 12 made the cut, including "Love Me Good," which included the line "I could never live in a yurt on a diet of Mongolian barbecue," leaving more than a few fans scratching their heads.



1999

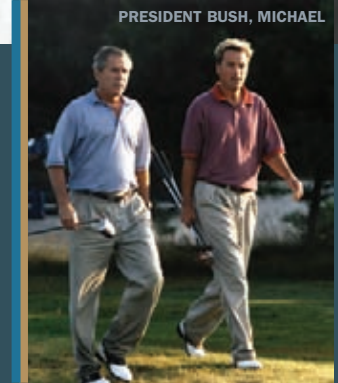
THIS IS YOUR TIME

This album was colored by the Columbine tragedy. The title track, a tribute to high school student Cassie Bernal, who reportedly lost her life after fearlessly proclaiming her belief in God, was penned after Michael returned from performing at a memorial service for the slain students in Littleton, Colorado.

Any artist achieving these feats would merit acknowledgement. What makes them distinguishing for Michael W. Smith is that instead of basking in the glow of his star power, he used his new clout to emerge as one of faith's most trusted ambassadors, leading him toward celebrity cheerleading for do-gooder causes, presidential performances at the White House and the launch of youth events with none other than the world's top evangelist, Billy Graham. It's a status that would empower Michael with the opportunity—and perhaps the responsibility—to share with the world his emotions in response to important life events no one could have predicted.



MICHAEL, DR. GRAHAM,
MRS. GRAHAM

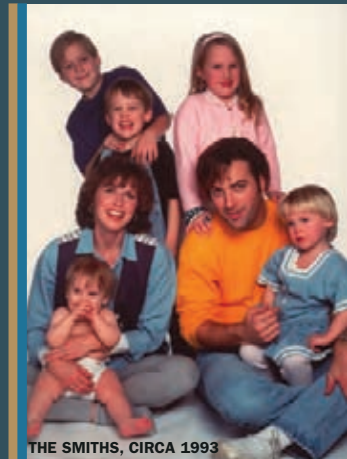


PRESIDENT BUSH, MICHAEL

GETTING PERSONAL

In 1993, Michael celebrated a decade as a recording artist with the fittingly titled best-of collection, *The First Decade*. That was followed by 1995's *I'll Lead You Home*, a return to a more acoustic, organic sound after years of polished pop. It seemed to signal some sort of foundational shift. Or, maybe the artist was just finally settling in—to fame, family life and a long future doing what he loved. For this father of five, a shift in priorities was probably inevitable. Even while Michael continued to rack up accolades and awards, his growing family continually helped put his professional life in perspective.

"Your priorities change when you get older and have kids. You find out what's important," Michael says. Those realigned priorities seemed to make Michael even more conscious of the message he wanted to deliver. As a result, the music he would make during his second decade would be the direct result of mining his own personal experiences for material.



THE SMITHS, CIRCA 1993

"YOUR PRIORITIES CHANGE WHEN YOU GET OLDER AND HAVE KIDS. YOU FIND OUT WHAT'S IMPORTANT."

As he got more personal, Michael also found new outlets for his message. In 1997, he released two books (several more titles would follow), appeared at Billy Graham and Franklin Graham crusades in the U.S. and abroad, and found time to be part of the DC/LA youth conferences. His 1998 release, *Live the Life*, would also contain a message close to his heart. It is this project that Michael has said contains songs he knows he'll like for the rest of his life. It's also a message he continues to connect with. "I'll be preaching that for the rest of my life: 'Actions speak louder than words, you've just got to live it.'"

Work on another album was well underway in the spring of 1999 when word came of the Columbine tragedy in Littleton, Colorado. Just days later, Michael was asked to appear at the televised memorial service in hopes his music might provide some comfort to the families and friends still struggling

2000



FREEDOM

A longtime dream of Michael's finally realized! In a 1995 interview with *CCM Magazine*, Michael said, "The next album that I really would like to do is an instrumental album ... I think that one will be the one that's really, really me." It would be five more years (and three more albums) before *Freedom* released.



WORSHIP

What Michael remembers most from recording this album was gathering with the guest artists backstage after it was over. "It was like this family," he says of the many artists from a variety of genres. "We still don't do it enough," Michael laments, "but it was a great thing."



WORSHIP AGAIN

Recorded at Louisville, Kentucky's Southeast Christian Church before a crowd of 11,000, *Worship Again* features one song that's a true family affair. "I Can Hear Your Voice" was written by Michael, his wife, Debbie, and their teenage daughter Whitney.



THE SECOND DECADE

With this release, Michael W. Smith marks two decades in the industry he helped build. Despite all he's accomplished, he shows no sign of slowing down, ensuring loyal fans of a *Third Decade* release down the road.

2003



AMY, WAYNE, MICHAEL, WES

to make sense of what had happened. Those events would inspire the title track to *This Is Your Time*, co-written with Wes King, and serve to immortalize eternal teenager Cassie Bernall for her courageous stand for her faith.

The new millennium saw Michael realize a longtime dream of creating an instrumental project. Upon completion, Michael said *Freedom* (2000) was created to provide a soundtrack for the movies in his mind. With its timeless flavor and big symphony sound, Michael reminded his longtime fans of just how diverse his talents were. Little did they know, the best was arguably yet to come.

As he neared the 20 year mark, many probably expected this Christian pop pioneer to begin slowing down, but Michael had a new direction in mind. Always a worship leader at heart and the composer behind enduring worship classics like "Great Is the Lord," Michael made a bold career move. He left the comfy confines of Christian pop to help usher in a worship revolution.

Released on Sept. 11, 2001, *Worship* became a balm for a hurting nation. The CD went on to platinum certification in record time, and Michael said he had found what he was meant to do. In 2002, *Worship Again* would nearly duplicate that success and solidify Michael as one of the preminent voices of the modern worship movement.



PHOTO: RICK DIAMOND

MICHAEL AND THE "FRIENDS 2003" ENSEMBLE

The year 2002 was about continuing his calling as a worship leader, while 2003 has been a year of reflection and celebration. To commemorate all Smith has accomplished as he celebrates 20 years of recording, Reunion Records is releasing *The Second Decade*, a collection that traces a prolific period in an amazing career. Smith's peers have also paid tribute, gathering to record a special anniversary edition of his signature song, "Friends," featuring Steven Curtis Chapman, Amy Grant, Third Day's Mac Powell and others. The new "Friends 2003" was performed on this year's Dove Awards telecast.

Next on the schedule is a new pop project, to be recorded in the coming months. Beyond that, the options are endless. Smith has hinted at giving acting a go in 2004, and he's always dreamed of doing more film scores. Then there's the idea for a sort of rock opera that puts a gleam in his eye. No one can say what the future will hold for Michael W. Smith, but wherever he's headed, it's a sure bet it will be worth going along for the ride. That's what friends do.

MICHAEL W. SMITH BY THE NUMBERS

With career sales topping 10 million and enough awards and accolades to require their own room, Michael W. Smith is certainly performing at the top of his musical register. Here's a quick highlight sheet of some of this talented artist, songwriter and producer's many accomplishments.



PHOTO: RICK DIAMOND

THE MUSIC 17 albums, including the brand new *The Second Decade* project

28 No. 1 songs on Christian radio including "Great Is the Lord," "Pray for Me," "Picture Perfect," "Missing Person," "This Is Your Time" and "Breathe"

9 mainstream radio hits, including the No. 1 Adult Contemporary tune "I Will Be Here for You" and "Place In This World" which reached the Top 10 on *Billboard*, *Radio & Record's* AC and *Gavin CHR* charts

2 platinum album certifications, for *Change Your World* and *Worship*

10 gold album certifications

THE AWARDS 2 Grammy Awards, the first in 1984 for *Michael W. Smith 2* in the Best Gospel Performance - Male category, the second for *I'll Lead You Home* in 1995 in the Best Pop/Contemporary Gospel Album

8 additional Grammy nominations, beginning in 1983 and most recently in 2002 for *Worship*

1 American Music Award, in the Best New Artist - Adult Contemporary category

40 Dove Awards, beginning with his first for Songwriter of the Year in 1985. Smith's most recent Dove wins were for Producer of the Year and Album of the Year (for *Worship*) in 2002

1 ASCAP Gold Note Award

1 Nashville Music Award for *I'll Lead You Home*

Named to *People* magazine's "50 Most Beautiful People" list

THE VIDEOS 5 video projects including *Michael W. Smith in Concert* and 2002's *Worship* DVD. The longform video for *Worship* is certified gold and platinum.

THE BOOKS 10 published works including several teen titles, two gift books, a children's book, even a culinary endeavor, *Cooking With Smitty's Mom* (just what was his role on this project, official taste tester?)

BY INVITATION ONLY Dozens of TV appearances including "The Tonight Show," "Good Morning America," "ABC World News Tonight," "Live! With Regis & Kathie Lee," "The View," CNN, "The Grammy Awards," "CBS This Morning," "NBC Nightly News," "Christmas in Washington" and "Entertainment Tonight"

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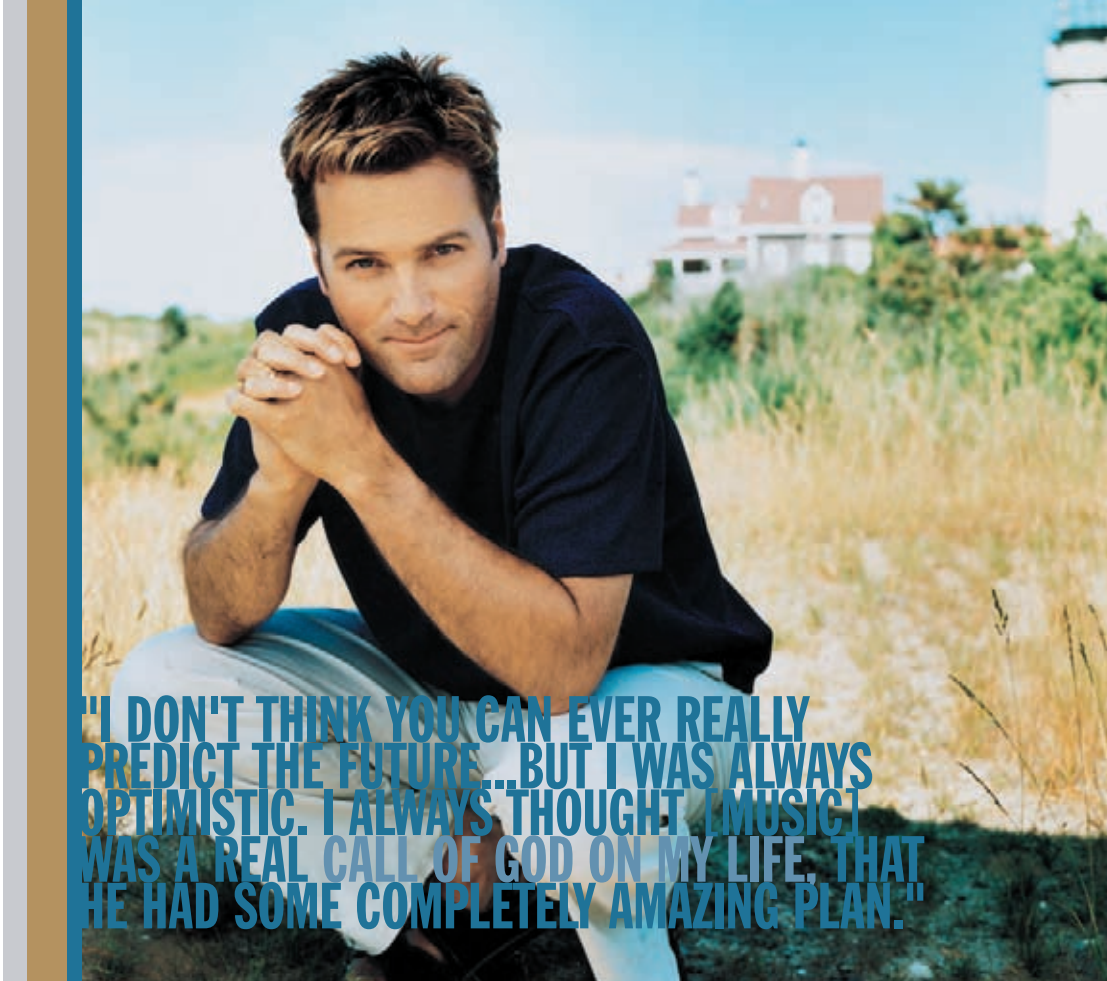
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"I DON'T THINK YOU CAN EVER REALLY
PREDICT THE FUTURE... BUT I WAS ALWAYS
OPTIMISTIC. I ALWAYS THOUGHT [MUSIC]
WAS A REAL CALL OF GOD ON MY LIFE, THAT
HE HAD SOME COMPLETELY AMAZING PLAN."

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**CCM's
EXCLUSIVE
INTERVIEW
WITH THE
ENTIRE
ORIGINAL
LINEUP OF
STRYPER**

BY **DAVID
McCREARY**

PHOTOS BY **BOB DALTO**



You know what I was actually close to all those guys. Michael and Oz sang on the *i2(eye)* record with me on "All You're Missing Is A Heartache"—until 3:00 in the morning at my house in the studio. Then the first time I met them, I was doing a concert in L.A., and Stryper came to my show.

SMITTY SAYS



Michael Sweet sits Indian-style on his bedroom floor in Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Today he's stuffing padded envelopes with Stryper merchandise and various solo CDs that bear his name. He'll continue this same menial task for several days—fulfilling orders generated from the now-legendary pop-metal band's Web site and his own cyber portal, MichaelSweet.com.

"I'm such a procrastinator," says the vocalist/guitarist. "The amount of orders sometimes gets overwhelming, and I don't always stay on top of them like I should."

Perhaps Sweet's proclivity to put things off explains why it has taken him and his fellow Stryper comrades more than a decade to reconnect (aside from a few one-time appearances such as Cornerstone Festival).

But that's about to change.

After years of speculation about a possible Stryper reunion, at long last the yellow and black attack is back! While the group has made no long-term plans, all four original band members have reassembled, as the guys head out this month for a full-fledged nationwide tour (for dates and venues, visit Stryper.com).

So, what's all this fuss over an '80s glam-rock band? To understand the Stryper phenomenon and what this band has meant to not just the Christian but the mainstream music scene, it helps to have a clear perspective of the group's history and purpose.

★ **LOUD 'N' CLEAR** ★

Stryper was the first blatantly evangelical rock band to enjoy success in the mainstream and Christian markets alike. Originally known as Roxx Regime, the band that started as a garage outfit from Orange County, Calif., gained attention on the Los Angeles club circuit. The group eventually signing with Enigma Records in 1984 and recorded its debut mini-album, *The Yellow and Black Attack*.

Stryper went on to release six more records, selling more than seven million albums and generating several *Billboard* Top 40 hits. In addition, the band garnered heavy airplay on MTV and a place on VH1's "Top 40 Hair Bands" list, as well as coverage in such publications as *Rolling Stone*, *Time*, *Spin* and *Newsweek*.

But the road to success wasn't always rosy. Some may remember that, at one point, the members of Stryper encountered a brief period of spiritual rebellion. According to Sweet, around the time the band's *Against the Law* album was released (1990), the guys collectively let their guard down and experienced a time of spiritual wandering. "We stopped reading the Word and praying together," he admits. "We began getting caught up in things that were not godly. We had rebellious attitudes, and we even became bitter toward the church."

But Sweet says each member eventually realized he needed to make a prodigal-type return to Christ. "By God's grace, [we] came away from that and learned from it," he says.

Shortly after, Sweet left Stryper to pursue a solo career. And although the other three members—drummer (and Sweet's older brother) Robert, guitarist Oz Fox and bassist Tim Gaines—continued on for another year, no other albums were recorded.

★ **A FAMILY REUNION** ★

In the years since the band's "break" from performing, all four guys in Stryper have continued to pursue musical interests. Besides recording several solo projects (see sidebar), frontman Sweet runs Michael Sweet Productions, which works with several current artists. His brother, Robert (often referred to as the band's "visual timekeeper" due to his elaborate drumming technique), currently plays in Las Vegas-based rock group Blissted. Fox fronts hard-rock group SinDizzy, while Gaines, who plans to relocate from California to Nashville soon, owns recording business TGM Productions.

Despite pursuing separate endeavors, the band continued hoping for an opportunity for Stryper to reunite. Gaines tells of a Jan. 1, 2003, meeting where the guys met at a Motel 6 in Seekonk, Mass., and prayed together about the future of Stryper. And in response to those prayers, Gaines relays, "These days everything has been falling into place, and doors are reopening that have been closed to us over the years."

Michael explains that the band talked off and on for years about reuniting, but the timing never seemed right until recently. Then late last year, he received a call from Hollywood Records (Stryper's label after Enigma went bankrupt)

LEARNING FROM THE TYPICALS



(L-R) TIM GAINES, ROBERT SWEET, OZ FOX, MICHAEL SWEET

about the possibility of releasing a new Stryper compilation disc. "I told them that had been done already with 1991's *Can't Stop the Rock* best-of record," he recalls. "I suggested they get us back into the studio and record a few new tracks. Before long, we had cut two new songs and released the new record [2003's *Seven: The Best of Stryper*]. After that, we all began talking about touring once more. It's been amazing to see how God has worked it all out."

Fox says he's open to an ongoing commitment with Stryper, but he's trusting God to provide wisdom and direction. "We recently hooked up with a management company called Deep South Entertainment," he explains. "They have some great ideas for the future, and I'm happy to be working with them. I would love nothing more than to see Stryper continue... and I'd love to see us grow closer to each other and more intimate with God as a group."

★ ON THE ROAD AGAIN ★

So as Stryper celebrates the 20th anniversary of its formation, the band has decided to make another run, albeit a potentially challenging one. With approximately 30 shows slated this fall, the foursome is poised to encounter a far different scenario than some of the one-off, live performances played in recent years.

"I'm excited, but I'm nervous at the same time," Michael says. "To go out on tour without having played together for so long, it's easy to be rusty. But we will practice together as much as possible before hitting the road." Robert says he can't wait to "smash, bash and crash on my beloved drums and to turn a new generation of kids on to the greatest gift in the world: the message of Jesus."

But one question about the upcoming tour simply begs to be asked: Will the band sport its once-trademark spandex outfits again?

"We're definitely not going to wear spandex," Michael says emphatically. "We're way too old for that. But we will have yellow and black instruments and amps. The striped thing will be happening, but it's going to be more modern."

And when the questions arise about why the band is bothering to get back on the road again? "I get countless e-mails from people whose lives were affected by our music," Michael says. "Whether these people were drug addicts or suicidal or whatever, God has continued to use Stryper to make a lasting difference."

Fox adds, "We are not the greatest musicians out there, but when the four of us get together and perform, the Holy Spirit does something special," he says. "That special something has caused people to dedicate their lives to Jesus, to reconcile, and to be encouraged."

Michael says he looks forward to reaching even more people for Christ in the days ahead, especially since the band will play in clubs and other venues likely to attract non-Christians. But he also is quick to insist that Stryper isn't the only band making inroads in the tough-to-reach places.

"There's a great need for more bands like P.O.D. that are going to these kids who are caught up in really dark stuff," Michael says. "We're also going to be on the front line, and music is the tool we use to convey the message of Christ."

Sounds like now is just the right time for Stryper to re-emerge—and for Michael to get caught up on those product orders. **ccm**



MICHAEL SWEET RECORDS NEW HYMNS ALBUM

Proving Michael Sweet is not all rock, the Stryper frontman recently released a 10-song independent project entitled *Hymns* of rewritten melodies and music of the classics. Recorded at Mixed Emotions Music near Boston and his home on Cape Cod, Sweet says the disc is "not a rock record," and it reveals a significantly different sound than his earlier solo efforts. "There's one song called 'Balm in Gilead' that has a Peter Gabriel vibe to it," he says. "Since there was no label involved up front, I had the freedom to do a lot more experimental stuff with it."

In addition to *Hymns*, this weekly church music leader (at the Evangelical Free Church of East Dennis, Mass., and Cornerstone Christian Fellowship in Sagamore, Mass.) is also working on a new solo CD. For more information, visit MichaelSweet.com.



I still think she has one of the most endearing voices in our industry. She goes unrecognized most of the time. Although Scott's really involved in this record, it's really a record for women—in my opinion.



SMITTY SAYS



Becoming Christine Denté

by Anthony DeBarros

Sandwiches and apple juice. Gauzy pink dresses and sidewalks that wind around the neighborhood. These are everyday images, for sure, but to singer/songwriter Christine Denté, these simple things are the telltale markers along the journey from girl to woman.

And this subject matter appears in the lyrics of *Becoming* (Rockettown), the first solo effort from Denté following six albums with Out of the Grey, the duo she formed with her husband, Scott. Slightly more mellow than Out of the Grey's pop/rock, *Becoming* is intensely personal—much like the inward growth it chronicles. Denté's music highlights life's joys and struggles as well as the result and process of maturing; but woven throughout is resolution—not only to make the journey but also to know it holds meaning.

"The older you get, the more you can step back and see the Lord's hand and trace His movements in your life," Denté, 39, says from the Tennessee home she shares with her husband, son and two daughters. Songs like "Bigger Story" and others, she muses, come from "the realization that all along He was there guiding and directing. And my significance lies in the fact that I am part of the conversation. He's invited me in."

For Denté, the earliest parts of that conversation occurred in Pennsylvania Dutch Country, the Lancaster, Pa., area that's home to large numbers of Amish people. Her house was on a street (yes, with sidewalks) surrounded by farms, where the Amish would borrow the family's bicycles and use the telephone.

But things weren't always picture-perfect according to Denté. Her parents divorced when she was 10; and, like many children of divorce, she grew up with a certain emotional detachment.

"I remember trying to be the pretty little princess girl, and it never worked for me," she says. And why did she feel this way? "Maybe [I was] getting a sense of what beautiful was in the world and then looking in the mirror and saying, 'That's not me' and being a tomboy."

As a result, identity became an issue. "I got involved in cheerleading and popularity contests just to try to figure out how to make the world work for me," Denté says. "When you don't have a constant diet of Christ, of people steering you in God's Word and God's truth, you try to make it work your own way."

But faith would come, and the journey toward it came in increments. Occasionally she went to church with her grandparents and "got shoved into some Sunday school class," she says. "I felt so stupid because I had no idea who Noah was or what all the Bible stories were that the other kids knew."

Still, she felt drawn to God. "The seed was planted by going to a Good News Bible Club when I was probably 7 or 8," she says. "It was just an after-school thing; someone invited me to it because we never went to church. And, felt figures and all, I just loved the stories, and I always remember believing in Jesus."

By the time she reached high school, she was ready for a commitment to Christ. "When I was about 17, I started going to church with my boyfriend and his family. And that's the year I was baptized. But I knew about the Lord, and I probably technically was a Christian before that but didn't really know what that meant."

Still, life in Lancaster was just the first part of this woman's "becoming." The journey continued in college, first at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh and later at Berklee College of Music in Boston.

Deciding on music instead of veterinary science, Denté first studied as a vocal major at Carnegie Mellon. "But after three semesters of great basic training, I realized I loved pop music, and they didn't even acknowledge its existence there. So that's when I transferred to Berklee."

In Boston, among the world's brightest musicians, major things happened. One was an awakening to new cultures and sounds. "There were recording studios there, and the kids in the engineering department would ask me to sing on their projects, so I got a lot of experience in the studio," she says. She also remembers hearing Grammy-winning jazz guitarist Pat Metheny for the first time, "and it was transforming to hear that kind of music."

Even more significant, she met her future husband. "What's funny is that when Scott saw me in the lobby [at school], he asked somebody about me, and they said, 'Oh, don't bother with her, she's Amish!'" Denté says with a laugh. "I was also known as 'Sister Christian' up there" (a reference to the Night Ranger song of the 1980s).

Another "theme song" tagged on her was the Foreigner hit "Cold as Ice," an unpleasant reference to her introversion.

"I was a loner," she says. "And yet I had a million boyfriends one after another because I didn't want to be alone—but I *did* want to be alone. It was this very weird dichotomy of this very needy, lonely person who wanted to be alone and not be close with people. And when I met Scott, it could have been just another emotional attachment for a while before I moved on. The Lord decided that this was it. We were gonna stop the pattern."

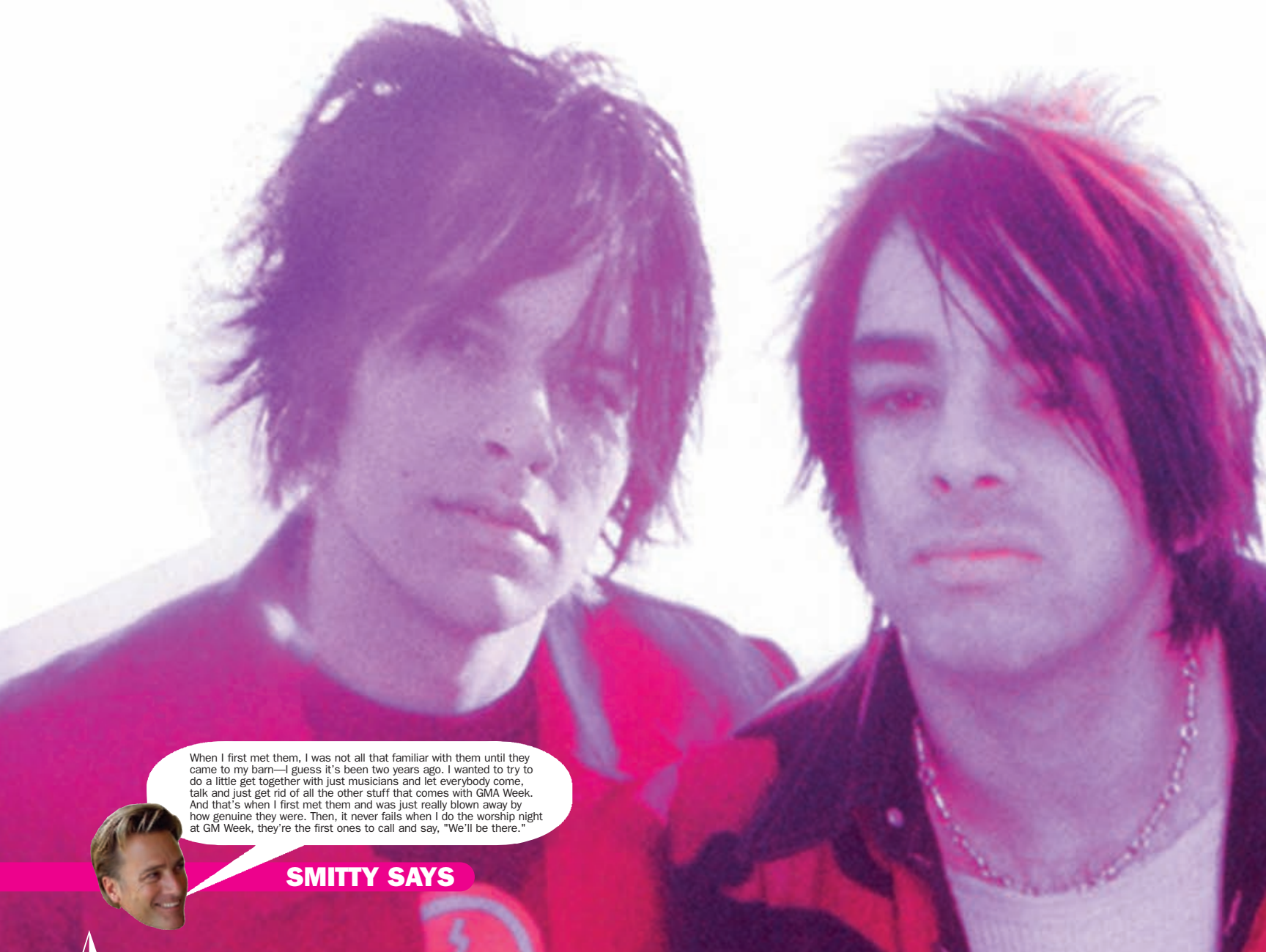
At first, Scott did not share her faith in Christ. "I said, 'Lord what should I do? I'm emotionally involved. And he knows I'm a Christian, and we're not sinning. But, you know, I gave him *Mere Christianity* to read.' It was missionary dating at its worst, and yet the Lord was so merciful. Scott went to an Amy Grant concert with me in Boston, and slowly but surely the Holy Spirit grabbed him. He became a believer, and we were engaged not long after that."

Scott, an extrovert, began to affect Christine. "Scott is the pursuer," she says. "He is the picture of Christ loving the church, giving Himself up for her. He pursued me through those thorns and those walls. He didn't give up, and he continues to be that way after 16 years of marriage. It's a great story." On the title song to *Becoming*, she sings: "And I had been running/Still you pursued/I watched you move each heavy stone."

The journey isn't over, of course. She'll promote her solo album and continue to record with Scott as Out of the Grey. Meanwhile, marriage and motherhood and its responsibilities (the Dentés home-school their kids) offer their own growth opportunities—even on a summer day spent enjoying sandwiches and apple juice, as she sings about on the song "Summer."

She also gets to help her children begin their own faith journeys—their own process of "becoming."

"I love to tell my girls they're beautiful," she says. "I love to watch them play with their hair. One daughter loves wearing dresses, and my other daughter is more like me, more of a tomboy. It just thrills me to know that with all of God's grace that we need, we're going to be able to raise our children to know who they are in Christ." **ccm**



When I first met them, I was not all that familiar with them until they came to my barn—I guess it's been two years ago. I wanted to try to do a little get together with just musicians and let everybody come, talk and just get rid of all the other stuff that comes with GMA Week. And that's when I first met them and was just really blown away by how genuine they were. Then, it never fails when I do the worship night at GM Week, they're the first ones to call and say, "We'll be there."



SMITTY SAYS



Iock 'n' Roll Worship Circus frontman Gabriel Wilson has recently stumbled upon an important revelation as his band continues to travel the country and carve out its niche in music and ministry: "There are apparently enough Chris Tomlins, I guess. God's just called us to take worship to a place it's not usually taken."

This epiphany comes as Wilson recognizes the confusion on the part of Christian music lovers as to who this Dove Award-winning band really is. With its colorful moniker, unorthodox approach to writing congregational worship songs and musical influences as diverse as The Dandy Warhols and as classic as the Brit-rock sensibilities of The Rolling Stones and the Fab Four, audiences are still not quite sure what to make of the fashionable foursome.

But, in fact, the band, which includes Wilson's wife, Blurr, drummer Zum and the recent addition of a new guitarist, Eric, still continues to be surprised with where it ends up playing. Instead of the Passion "OneDay" conferences they expected to play with the likes of Tomlin, they usually share the stage with rock acts like Skillet. While Gabe certainly doesn't mind sharing the stage with other rock 'n' roll enthusiasts, it's still a little bewildering to the guy who led worship for 11 years at his church before signing with Integrity Music's Vertical Music two years ago.

"I feel like we get misplaced sometimes. We're a worship team, yet we end up mostly playing the rock slots at festivals and such," Gabe says. "It's frustrating when you grow up in the church and you just want to keep doing the whole 'I-want-to-go-lead-worship-at-a-worship-conference-where-people-are-ready-to-worship thing.' But it's been an interesting line to toe of going into rock venues, into places where people aren't expecting to have prayer or worship. And the amazing thing is that we've been more accepted in those venues."

When the band does play in churches, however, adjustments have been made to help the audience feel more comfortable. "There have been times when we've gone into a church, and I just have a sense in my heart that if I'm standing up there and slinging an electric guitar like I do, they aren't going to worship with us," Gabe says.

"So, I'll go to the pastor and see if they have an electric acoustic, sit down on a stool while the rest of the band stands, and it's instantly a little more appealing. It's like I don't look aggressive. I'm not beating a guitar. Instead, I look more laidback because I'm sitting and playing an acoustic. We'll sometimes adjust our set like that. But at some point, though, it's like, 'This is who God made us to be, and it's not out of rebellion or anything like that; we're just trying to be true to who He's created us to be.'"

identity crisis



"It's kind of like David trying to fight Goliath and Saul trying to put his armor on [David]. And it's heavy. It's cumbersome, and it's just weird. That's what happens when we're not ourselves—even when we try to cover other people's songs. I can't do songs like that with any conviction. It's not what God has given us to do. We'll turn it down if it's too loud. We'll do our best to make concessions as long as it doesn't compromise our vision, mission or who God wants us to be." **ccm**

Look for a review of the band's sophomore release, *A Beautiful Glow* (Vertical) on page 62.

fashion conScious worshipers

Forget Versace, Dolce & Gabbana or even Gucci. Fellow artist Steve Taylor's look is what's inspiring Gabe these days. "That guy is more rock than anyone else in this industry," he muses after spotting Taylor at a recent festival

performance. "With his pin-striped bellbottoms, rad shoes and a simple shirt, he's got the most rockin' look going on. In fact, I have pin-striped pants on right now!"

Other trends that are inspiring Gabe's wardrobe choices are the "really cool denim resurgence going on right now" and pointy boots that recall the Beatles' era. "It's pretty great that pointy boots are starting to come back in and are not just being sold in Europe," he says.

As for his better half, Blurr, who he describes as "always foxy," she's recently added some fuchsia streaks to her naturally red hair. "It's totally wrong, but that's what makes it so cool," Gabe says.

"I guess I didn't know what I was getting into. [The stylist] put a lot of magenta in there, but it's fine. It's new. It's just hair," Blurr adds.

But despite the band's knack for fashion, there are still only so many clothes you can pack into a cramped van, Gabe confesses. "When we play a youth conference, I think people are starting to catch on that I've worn the same thing all three days. But when you find something that's working, so you just stick with it."



Poetic Justice

Not only has Ten Shekel Shirt 'risked' a new sound musically, the band is answering the call to action for those in need.

By Anthony Barr-Jeffrey

In every band's musical journey, the story typically goes something like this: The first album is recorded, and fans get acquainted with the band's brand of music based on this initial recorded sound.

Then, when it comes time to record that follow-up disc, the band fights hard against that clichéd "sophomore slump" by branching out, trying new sounds and making more of an experimental effort, often to the fans' disappointment. And for the third time around? It's usually back to the trademark sound the band initially created.

If we stick to that storyline, then Vertical Records' Ten Shekel Shirt is venturing along toward chapter two at the moment, poised to release its second disc, *Risk* (Fervent). But when it comes to taking "risks," the band isn't just settling for breaking the vertically focused worship mold of its first album and forging ahead with a new rock sound. Instead, this whole "risk" motto has even become a prototype for the band's new outlook on the world. Now here's how it all started:

Imagine visiting Thailand. Ancient beauty is everywhere, and while the language sounds foreign to your ears, the people's smiles seem as familiar as an old friend. The child approaching you could be your sister, your child's best friend or even your own child. She is about 14 years old and is wearing a red dress that matches the outfits worn by the other children powdering their faces behind a glass partition. You notice she has the number 8 on her claim tag, a tag that matches the number her pimp will give to the next "customer" who walks in and pays. Your guide has brought you into a brothel to see and understand the mind-numbing reality of hundreds of thousands of children worldwide. You feel nauseated, angry and helpless; but what are you going to do?

You could shudder and turn away. Or you could do something about it. Ten Shekel Shirt has chosen the latter.

While many artists promote ministry organizations like World Vision, Compassion International or D.A.T.A., less are actually creating their own organizations. But after frontman Lamont Heibert and some friends took a trip

in September 2002 with International Justice Mission (IJM), that's just what this Dove-nominated band did, forming Justice for Children International (JFCI).

"I think our love for God and our worship of Him becomes stale and even false if we are not reaching out to those in desperate need," Heibert says. Citing Micah 6:8 and Luke 11:42 as evidence of the need for justice for the less fortunate, Heibert goes on to point out the Father's call to action for distressed orphans and widows in James 1:27. "Our vertical worship of God is inextricably linked to our horizontal love for others," he says.

Ten Shekel Shirt's goal through JFCI, Heibert says, is to raise awareness and resources for the rescue and aftercare of sexually exploited children. "There are still many outside the church who see Christians as irrelevant, hypocritical and even dangerous," Heibert explains. "What if we gathered up all the time and effort we as Christians spend on trying to prove we are right and spend that energy on being good?" And in response to this question, Ten Shekel is working to raise \$200,000 for IJM and aftercare programs by September 2003—partially through proceeds from an exclusive, six-song, donation-only EP from the band and partially through special benefit concerts, dinners, golf tournaments and simple requests for donations.

And while it may look as though the band has found a new line of work in philanthropy, the guys are still focused enough musically speaking to add a band member and change its initial acoustic-based sound. And about that new musical sound? Heibert explains, "The new direction in sound evolved as our taste in music evolved. We are fans of the Brit pop/rock scene, so things naturally took a turn in the right direction. Having Jake Carey [lead guitarist] join the band," he goes on, "has helped shape the entire sound and has given us more confidence in songwriting and live shows. I'd say we are trying to accomplish a creative sound that we like first and foremost and then something that both the church and unchurched can connect with." **ccm**

For more information on Justice for Children International, visit jfc.org

It's lunchtime at a crowded restaurant just a block away from Nashville's famed Vanderbilt University, and by the Tree's fearless leader, Chuck Dennie, just can't get enough of the word *transcendent*. In fact, during the course of two hours, he manages to work it in at least seven times when describing the music he believes will live on for decades to come. In his estimation, the creators of this caliber of music are the Larry Normans, Keith Greens and Al Greens of the world.

Surprisingly, this singer/songwriter doesn't feel his band's current catalog fits into that esteemed category. "We make music that is going to last for a while," he acknowledges. "But we're not here to write music that's necessarily transcendent. We're here to meet a need for this moment." So what exactly is this "need?"

For the unacquainted, it's important to introduce Dennie as a guy with many interesting contradictions. While his preppy, Abercrombie-model face would make him the perfect graduate student at Vanderbilt, his arms are a gallery of tattoo art. With permanent ink dedicated to everything from PacMan to a Latin translation of Romans 5:8, his rock star persona doesn't match his aspirations or ideals.

The opinionated frontman claims, "My objective in traveling and being onstage in front of kids is to tell them that God has a plan for their lives and that He loves them. It's not because I want to be a rock star. It's not because I want to smoke pot and drink tons of beer. I am a Christian artist because I love Jesus, and I want to tell people about Him."

Yet, in the middle of his responsibilities, there is a grand tension that Dennie continues to struggle with. He relays "a harsh conversation" he had with a friend recently. When he said, "Yeah, we're a rock band," she responded back with, "No, you're not a rock 'n' roll band; you're a *Christian* rock band." Admitting he was a little offended by the comment, her statement still got him thinking. "I guess a lot of non-Christians just don't take it seriously that there is good, quality music in Christian music," Dennie remarks.

But what will give Christian music the credibility it needs to be taken seriously among the general public? A change in the Christian music industry itself, Dennie believes.

"For me and a lot of artists I've talked to, when you're a Christian 24 hours a day, seven days a week, you don't always think about the cross. There are



CHRISTIAN MUSIC, CHEESEBURGERS AND THE CROSS

By the Tree's frontman, Chuck Dennie, has plenty to say about all three.

BY CHRISTA FARRIS



times when I'm going to get a cheeseburger at McDonald's, and I'm not thinking about the cross. I'm thinking I want a cheeseburger. So there are times in my life where I want to write about what a great day today is or what rock 'n' roll means to me. It's not that you can't do these things; it's just not accepted. I'm not trying to point fingers. But until we as Christian artists, media, record labels, etc., can see that God is bigger—that you can write a song about a girl or just about life—until we can see that it's OK and inside God's confines of Scripture to talk about [those things], I don't think people are going to take [Christian music] seriously."

But at the same time, Dennie says he understands the Christian audience's need to hear about Jesus and doesn't want to get jaded in the process. "Christians want to hear about Jesus, and I understand that because when Jesus changes your life, that's all you want to hear about, and that's awesome," he muses. "But when you start to see the world the way you were before you got saved, and you see people are really lost, as an artist, that changes your perspective on the pictures you want to paint.

"Christian music has got to do something to reach lost people. We have the Creator of the universe in our hearts; therefore, we should be more creative and more able to reach people than everyone else in the world. And are we doing it? No. We follow suit. We copy bands. Two years later, we become Coldplay and everyone else, and that's really frustrating. And I'm guilty of it, too. I just wish there was a bigger box we could work in."

But despite the tension, Dennie and his By the Tree cohorts continue to write songs they are passionate about. Speaking of the band's most recent CD, *Root* (Fervent), Dennie will not claim this is the band's best album yet. In fact, he claims the band's debut—and the music it recorded in its Indie years—is its best music to date.

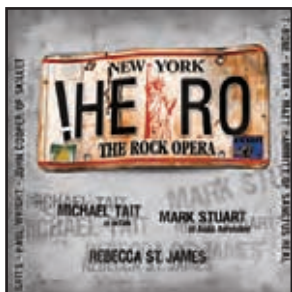
But Dennie does feel the band accomplished its goal in making the record after its sophomore album, *These Days* (Essential), yielded results that weren't exactly true to the band's sound. "I feel like we made a record that put us back on the map musically and lyrically," Dennie says. "I wanted to get back to where we started independently. I am just a guy who fell in love with music. It's exactly the record I wanted to make, and I wouldn't change a thing. Now it's up to whatever God wants to do with us next." **ccm**



REBECCA ST. JAMES, MICHAEL TAIT, MARK STUART

We Will Rock You!

The gospel gets a diverse and modern soundtrack in this heroic re-telling.



File under: Pop/Rock/Urban
For fans of... music and drama colliding in a theatrical collection of songs.

Grade: B

VARIOUS

!HERO Meaux Music

Showtunes with substance

"Imagine." That was how many of Jesus' examples of the Kingdom of God began. "Imagine that the Kingdom of God is a farm." Or, "Imagine that the Kingdom of God is like a flock of sheep." Why? Because, of course, Jesus was expressing Kingdom truths to an audience comprised primarily of farmers and shepherds.

In that spirit, the ambitious rock musical *!Hero* digs down to the core elements of the Gospels and speaks in the

language of an audience raised on MTV and AOL, suggesting, "Imagine that Jesus came to Earth today." The multimedia event—a rock opera, stage tour, novel series, audio books and comics—forms a harrowing picture of a bleak world where Jesus is showing up for the first time.

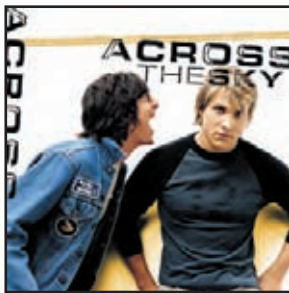
With an all-star cast—including dc talk's Michael Tait as the could-be Messiah "iHero," Rebecca St. James as the rescued-from-the-streets "Maggie" and Audio Adrenaline's Mark Stuart as the acts-before-he-thinks

"Petrov"—the double-disc CD is chock-full of music and drama.

There's the funky "Wedding Celebration," complete with a dramatic aside about Jesus' first recorded miracle. There's the gangsta-edged "Raised in Harlem," with "Jairus" (rapper T-Bone) as the desperate father hoping iHero can save his dying daughter. "Leave Here," a post-"It's a Hard-Knock Life" romp, finds the street urchins casting doubts on iHero and Maggie. And the electrifying rocker "Not in Our House" reinvents the familiar "Jesus-and-the-money-changers" scene quite plausibly as a rumble between iHero and the "Chief Rabbi" (John Cooper of Skillet).

Sure, those who get *!Hero* hoping for a collection of pop singles will be disappointed. And, as a musical, the CD is (presumably) an incomplete work if you don't get to see a live performance—true of nearly any musical.

But, overall, *!Hero* is inventive, rhythmic and should, no doubt, spark debate everywhere about the real Jesus. These timeless truths are as valuable now as they were to that audience of farmers and shepherds back in the day. **CHRIS WELL**



File under: Pop/Rock
Grade: A-
For fans of... harmonizing male vocals and country-tinged guitar rock.

ACROSS THE SKY

Across the Sky Curb

Plenty of happy pop for the masses

Unlike popsters Evan and Jaron or even Nelson, the guys that go by the moniker Across the Sky are not twins. In fact, they aren't even related and were complete strangers until early 2002. To hear them sing together, though, you'd never know it. Ben Kolarcik and Justin Unger harmonize on happy, pop songs with a slight country vibe.

Their soaring vocals are successful on upbeat tracks like "Give It All Away" and "Exciting Times" and on ballads "When I Open My Eyes" and "First Love Song." Fans of Michael W. Smith will especially enjoy the cover of "Do You Dream of Me?" which will undoubtedly be played at weddings everywhere. **JESSICA ROBIN**



File under: Rock
Grade: A-
For fans of... a muscular version of Petra's pioneer rock.

PETRA

Jekyll and Hyde Inpop

Petra's enthusiasm is still beyond belief.

There's something about Petra that makes you want to root for the band. It's like pulling for the veteran baseball player amidst a sea of younger talent. And sometimes the "old guys" can show the upstarts a thing or two. In this case, we're talking about a Grammy and Dove Award-winning band with 20 studio recordings and more than seven million records sold over a 30-plus-year career.

A key phrase applies here: Respect your elders.

Paying homage should come easy after hearing Petra's latest release, *Jekyll and Hyde*, the band's most aggressive rock album to date. Revved-up guitars, passionate vocals and urgent melodies abound, and virtually every song unashamedly goes for the gut. Petra founder Bob Hartman jumps back into action alongside eminent vocalist John Schlitt, who sounds as fiery as ever. Newsboys frontman Peter Furler capably handles production duties and contributes standout percussion to boot.

The no-holds-barred approach works well for Petra, especially on grinding power tracks like "Stand," which speaks of remaining firm in Christ, and "Test of Time," a sobering reminder to redeem every moment because "tomorrow is a chance that may not come." By sounding experienced yet relevant, Petra delivers one of this year's biggest musical surprises with an exceptional record that should please old and new fans alike.

DAVID McCREARY



File under: Pop/Rock
Grade: B+
For fans of... straightforward rock with plenty of emotion.

BY THE TREE

Root Ferrent

Branching out into finer musical territory

By the Tree's third album finds the band in peak musical form, taking the quartet's melodic pop-rock to a more expansive soundscape. Imagine Train derailing into Delirious, and you've got the essence of *Root*.

With the assistance of producer Joe Baldrige (Jewel, Newsboys), this spit-shined effort mostly ventures into full-on rock territory. Plenty of treats are worth savoring here, the most satisfying of which include the emotive "Root of It All," co-written by Phil Joel, and the brawny but much-too-brief "Faith That Breathes."

There's also the requisite smattering of mid-tempo ballads ("Your Arms" and "Don't Throw It All Away"), which offer just enough mellowness to soften the roar. The one shortcoming on what's a fine album overall is occasionally simplistic lyrics. By the Tree is too good a band to play the trite card with verses like "There are so many ways/Every day/I'm learning more/To trust you" (from "Far Away"). Given time, though, surely the band's songwriting will catch up to its solid musicianship.

DAVID McCREARY



File under: Rock/Worship
Grade: A-
For fans of... worship with a lava lamp glow.

ROCK 'N' ROLL WORSHIP CIRCUS

A Beautiful Glow (INO)

More entertaining than your average circus

On its second album, Rock 'n' Roll Worship Circus proves its brand of classic rock/modern worship fusion is no mere gimmick. *A Beautiful Glow* is, in fact, a force—that rare sophomore disc that outshines the debut and uses its creativity to exhort and entertain.

The band's musical touchstone remains the classic rock of the '60s and '70s. "Morning Glory" blends The Byrds and The Monkees with a call to "Wake up you people/Wake up all you saints." On "Gift of Cool," leader Gabriel Wilson evokes Lou Reed's spoken-word style before kicking into the chorus: "We will run and never stop." Even the psychedelic sitar on "Loveliest Bride" would have fit perfectly on The Beatles' *Revolver*. Occasionally, you might find yourself playing "name that influence," but the nods to the past never get tiresome. The band's bold testimony and sense of abandon is simply too inspirational. **ANTHONY DEBARROS**

MAKING THE GRADE

See where your favorite artists rank this month as our panel grades this month's CDs.

Title	Artist/Band	Reviewer Grade CCM Magazine	Christa Farris CCMmagazine.com	Brian Mansfield USA Today	Andy Argyrakis Chicago Tribune Contributor	Robin Parrish CMcentral.com	Michael Herman Christianitytoday.com
<i>IHero</i>	Various	B	C	—	C	—	B+
<i>Stereo Motion</i>	Stereo Motion	B	B	—	B-	B+	B
<i>Throne Room</i>	CeCe Winans	B	B	B-	B-	A-	A
<i>Jekyll and Hyde</i>	Petra	A-	C	C-	D-	B+	B+
<i>Different Kind of Free</i>	ZOEgirl	B	B+	C	C+	—	A-
<i>Across the Sky</i>	Across the Sky	A-	B-	B-	C+	B+	C+
<i>A Beautiful Glow</i>	Rock 'n' Roll Worship Circus	A-	A-	B-	B	A-	A-
<i>Who Would Have Guessed</i>	Sky Harbor	B	C+	B-	C+	B	B+
<i>Root</i>	By the Tree	B+	B	—	C+	B	A
<i>Grand Incredible</i>	G.I. Gantic	B	B-	B	C	C+	A-



File under: Worship/Adult Contemporary
Grade: B
For fans of... soothing, uplifting worship music.

CECE WINANS

Throne Room Wellspring/INO/Epic

A mellow but refreshing journey of worship

CeCe Winans has built a lasting career by continually doing the unexpected. Whether it's a collaboration with rapper MC Hammer, a duet with controversial pop songstress Whitney Houston or a lushly orchestrated album of mostly hymns, Winans has continually stretched herself artistically, thereby keeping her fans pleasantly surprised and along for the ride. (Every studio project she has released as a solo artist has been certified gold or platinum—a

rare thing in an age of here-today-gone-tomorrow "divas.")

With *Throne Room*, Winans offers yet another departure from the predictable. *Throne Room* is a worship album, but it's not the hand-clapping, foot-stomping, choir-blasting extravaganza many might anticipate from an artist as vocally formidable as Winans. Instead, it is largely a quiet, intimate affair that builds slowly from simple, piano-based melodies to more triumphant fare, moving the listener from a place of peace to high praise.

Winans wrote or co-wrote the majority of the songs on the project, which helps give a personal touch other worship-oriented projects sometimes lack. Packed with 16 songs, the album is a showcase for Winans' unmistakable voice, albeit in a way less gymnastic than one might look for. Highlights include the title track, which was co-written with gospel music legend Andraé Crouch, and a cover of Greg Long's powerful "Mercy Said No."

While Winans has yet to deliver that jaw-droppingly great album that's comparable to her live show, for now *Throne Room* should please the CeCe faithful as she continues to work on her next pop release, scheduled to be out next spring. **MICHAEL CIANI**



File under: Pop
Grade: B
For fans of... issue-oriented pop with catchy modern beats.

ZOEGIRL

Different Kind of FREE

Sparrow

A different kind of ZOEgirl yields engaging and entertaining results.

It's not always easy being a teenage girl in the fast lane of today's pop culture superhighway, and that's what makes ZOEgirl's empathetic dance-rock all the more valuable. This third release from the female trio addresses issues ranging from unconditional love ("Love Me for Me") to extremely serious topics like suicide ("Wait"), with an irresistible beat that's inventive and sounds that show a new maturity from the group's previous offerings.

Honest-to-goodness rock guitars fatten the sound on the title track which separates ZOEgirl from some of the other more frothy vocal groups on the scene today. The passionate singing on this album nicely matches the serious tone of its material. The worshipful opener, "Beautiful Name," brings to mind Rebecca St. James' intensity, whereas "Feel Alright" is a drum-driven track with a Sheryl Crow-ish quality. It's hard these days to "be in this world but not of it," but *Different Kind of FREE* offers plenty of good advice on ways to be different and, in this case, godly kinds of girls. **DAN MACINTOSH**

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File under: Modern Rock
Grade: B
For fans of... head-pounding pop rock.

SKY HARBOR

Who Would Have Guessed

Inpop

Rock with maturity

Sky Harbor is a Phoenix-based quartet whose debut rocks with a maturity that surpasses the under-20 ages of its musicians. Produced by ex-Whiteheart guitarist Billy Smiley, the album has that up-tempo, hit-'em-hard vibe that bands like Audio Adrenaline have mined for years. But though the music might not be revolutionary, it is played exceptionally well (guitarists will especially appreciate the tight riffing on tunes like "Day at the Beach").

Lyricaly, *Who Would Have Guessed* revolves around the believer's many challenges: love, fear, faith, doubt. One of the most interesting tracks is "Who Needs a Girl," which sees singer Garth Bostic realizing that his relationships ultimately matter more than his guitar. Another is "Identity," whose line "Will I figure out myself?" embodies teenage angst in a simple, effective way. The occasional break into rap-rock ("Way Too Long") seems a little predictable, but overall this debut will please many rock fans. **ANTHONY DEBARROS**

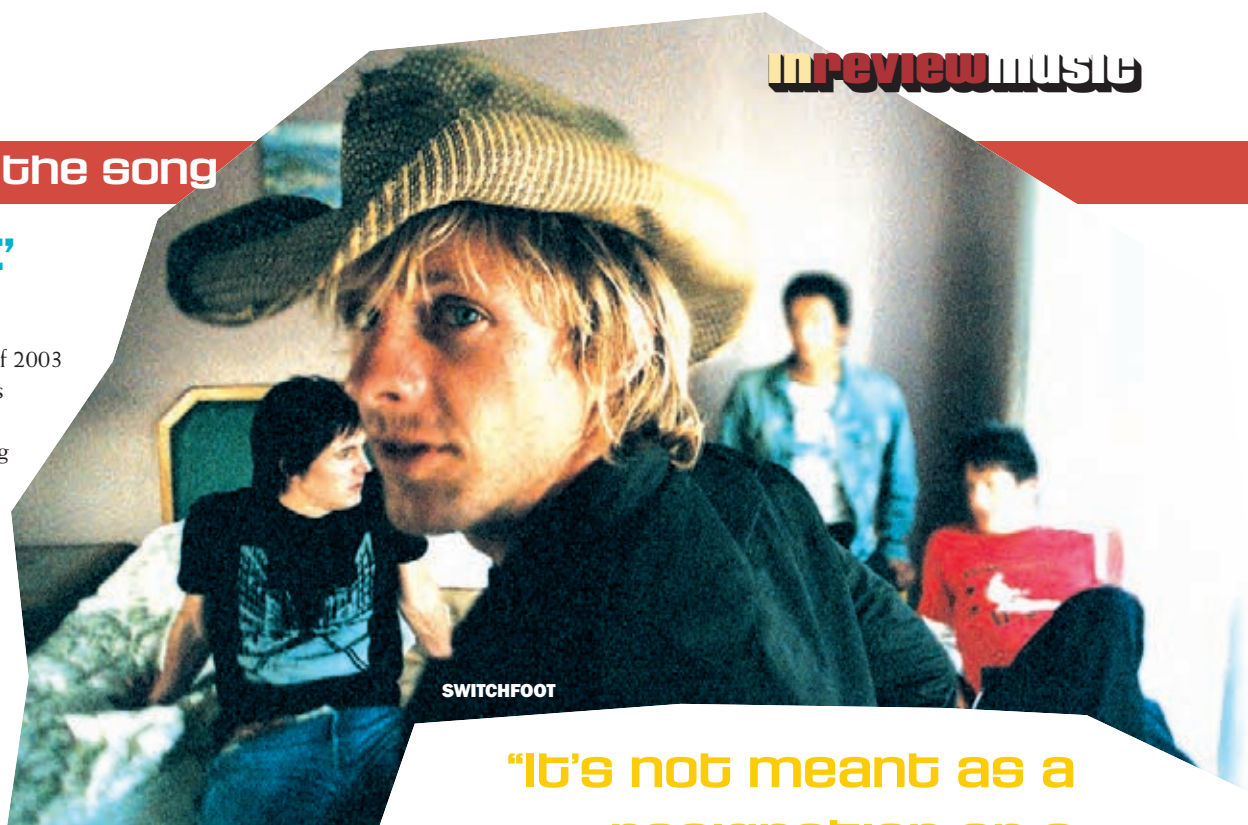
story behind the song

'MEANT TO LIVE'

by Switchfoot

If a modern rock radio anthem of 2003 were to be declared, Switchfoot's spirit-affirming "Meant to Live" would certainly be in the running for the honor. Given its grungy guitars spread over husky backbeats and frontman Jon Foreman's uplifting vocals, the song has been a true standout on the group's most recent CD, *The Beautiful Letdown* (Sparrow/Columbia) and will undoubtedly become a catalog gem. "That track is tuned in 'drop D,' which, for those of you who aren't guitar players, is a heavier tuning reminiscent of bands like Soundgarden or the Foo Fighters," explains Foreman of its arrangement. "The aggression really works with this song because I really want to drive home the point of having unshakable hope in this world."

Partially inspired by Foreman's personal failures and soul searching, along with C.S. Lewis' musings about not finding fulfillment within worldly confines, Foreman passionately presents lines seeking out more than "the world's got to offer." "It's not meant as a resignation or a backing down from the environment around us but rather a 'stepping up to the plate' sort of motivation to get us living life to its fullest," Foreman says. "The goal of the song is to get people thinking a bit more about what their priorities are and, hopefully, point them away from emptiness and closer to the Light." **ANDY ARGYRAKIS**



SWITCHFOOT

"It's not meant as a resignation or a backing down from the environment around us but rather a 'stepping up to the plate' sort of motivation."



File under: Rock **Grade: B**
For fans of... Phat Chance with a decidedly classic rock spin.

STEREO MOTION

Stereo Motion Flicker

Imagine a trip down rock 'n' roll's memory lane.

Stereo Motion's eponymous release rocks in a way that belies the group's youthfulness. In the sea of pop and electronic projects taking up space on store shelves these days, *Stereo Motion* resonates with the classic rock 'n' roll immortalized by The Who, The Rolling Stones, Jimi Hendrix and the like.

Though not entirely a Brit-rock

throwback, strains of the British Invasion's influence on rock are woven through thoughtful strands of mature lyrics and real-world applications.

Produced in-studio as live tracks, the album's dozen songs ask and attempt to answer the difficult questions young Christians deal with daily such as relationship struggles and day-to-day living. Songs ranging from the guitar-laden "Steal the Show" to the radio-friendly groove of "Rise" all create a seamless album sure to leave every rock fan salivating for more.

HEATHER WIEDERSTEIN



File under: Rock **Grade: B**
For fans of... forgetting the Supertones' ska roots in favor of rock.

GRAND INCREDIBLE

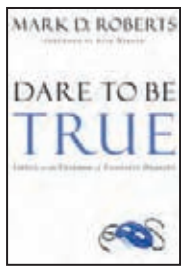
G.I. Gantic BEC

Two Supertones strike back.

Boasting a bold moniker and epic influences that include Elvis Costello and The Clash, Grand Incredible is not fooling around on its premier release, *G.I. Gantic*. The duo, which consists of O.C. Supertones members Matt "Mojo" Morginsky and Ethan Luck, has ditched the horn section in favor of a fists-in-the-air brand of raucous rock 'n' roll.

Though the band doesn't always successfully find the sound it seeks, Luck—who doubles as drummer and guitarist—and mega-producer Aaron Sprinkle give the album the flair and fire it calls for. Luck's meaty instrumentation hits with an exuberant crunch that carries some of the album's most dynamic songs, such as the explosive "Here We Go," the aptly-titled "Rock Your Face Off" and the oft-covered Cyndi Lauper classic "Time After Time."

TYLER L. CLARK



DARE TO BE TRUE
Mark D. Roberts

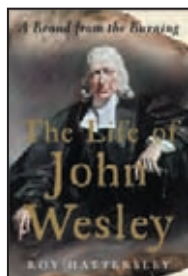
WaterBrook
In an age of rampant public relations “spin” and rationalized lies, Mark Roberts offers *Dare to Be True: Living in the Freedom of Complete Honesty* as a

welcome antidote to the deception.

Based on the premise that “any type of deception hurts us,” Roberts offers a clear call for the church to begin living in the honesty it’s called to. Providing personal insight and examples from popular culture, Roberts establishes his case quickly and easily: We are drowning in our own lies.

Whether they are the “big” lies like the Enron scandal or “little” lies like “I looove your new haircut!” Americans have a serious deficiency when it comes to telling the truth. Roberts offers a solid biblical basis for the necessity of truthfulness among Christians but tempers his call with the acknowledgement that we must speak the truth in love and that gentleness can go a long way to diffuse hurt feelings.

Overall, this book is a refreshing swim against the stream of our society. **AARON KING**



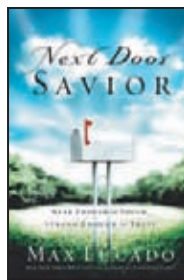
THE LIFE OF JOHN WESLEY
Roy Hattersley

Brown
In *The Life of John Wesley*, Roy Hattersley paints a balanced picture of the man who changed the face of Christianity 350 years ago. Hattersley

illustrates the constant tension between Wesley’s pious personal expectations and the uncomfortable reality that never quite harmonized with them. Wesley found that a methodical lifestyle was the only way to deal with this tension and facilitate living in a state of moral victory. He constantly walked the razor’s edge between self-righteous indignation and self-deprecation—a struggle all too common among Christians today. How do we live in this world but not of this world? Wesley’s answers lie in the regimented lifestyle that would later be known as “methodism.”

Hattersley doesn’t glorify Wesley to the mythological proportions the Methodist church eventually would. Rather, he introduces us to the man behind the denomination—a man just like any other—with the same struggles and conflicts we all experience.

JOSHUA LICKTER



NEXT DOOR SAVIOR
Max Lucado

W Publishing
Imagine if Jesus pulled up in a U-Haul and moved into the house next door. In *Next Door Savior* this is exactly what happens as one of the most

beloved Christian authors of our time, Max Lucado, takes readers on a journey into Jesus’ neighborhood.

Lucado does an excellent job of dealing with the dichotomy of Jesus’ being both “completely human and completely holy” in a manner that’s easy to grasp. And he does this by using his trademark storytelling to offer a fresh view of Jesus as both Savior and neighbor.

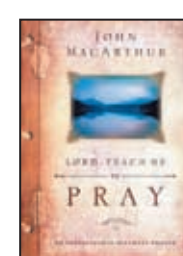
The book itself is divided into two parts: “No Person He Won’t Touch” and “No Place He Won’t Go,” and the lack of transitions between the chapters in these sections occasionally make the book choppy. But each chapter is like a small sermon with a very similar structure that could easily stand on its own. Though this sermon-esque style makes for easy reading, the end result is much more like individual devotionals than chapters.

Next Door Savior is a unique, new addition to Lucado’s exhaustive literary catalog and it certainly is worthwhile reading. When

explored, the concept of Jesus as one’s neighbor allows for an exciting discovery into who He is in a Christian’s life.

NICOLE SHERIDAN

LORD, TEACH ME TO PRAY:
AN INVITATION TO INTIMATE PRAYER



John MacArthur

J Countryman
This attractive gift book is designed for Christians yearning for more meaningful prayer lives. The creator of *The MacArthur Study Bible* explores the topics: why

we should pray, how to pray, hindrances to prayer and Scriptural motivations for prayer. Several helpful lists such as “5 Reasons Why We Ought to Pray” and “10 Motivations to Pray” keep things moving quickly.

Decorated with vivid and colorful nature photographs, MacArthur ends each chapter with a sample prayer—some written by himself and some by the late author/pastor Charles Spurgeon. Although somewhat dry and lengthy, they could still be useful.

Peppered with poignant Scripture, this book successfully accomplishes its goal “to awaken a renewed passion to pray to our great and gracious God.” A possible tool for group Bible studies or personal devotions, it would also make a meaningful gift. **TRACY & C.J. DARLINGTON**

editor's pick



READING THE BIBLE FOR THE LOVE OF GOD
Alan Reynolds

Brazos Press
In *Reading the Bible for the Love of God*, pastor/author Alan Reynolds encourages readers to lay aside their dogmas, church denominations, literal or liberal hermeneutics or any other hang-ups when it comes to reading the Word. Then, he encourages readers to approach Scripture by simply seeking God’s *agape* love.

Fruitful and fulfilling relationships with God and others in one’s life, Reynolds advocates, are the evidence of understanding this divine, unconditional love. Throughout these 150 pages, Reynolds relays insight

from theologians of the ages, as well as from his personal testimony to illuminate what *The Westminster Confession* calls man’s chief end: “to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.”

Reynolds explores biblical battles, such as the debate over evolution vs. creation and issues of cultural relevance that, while important in shaping one’s biblical perspective, often shift one’s focus off his or her personal relationship with God.

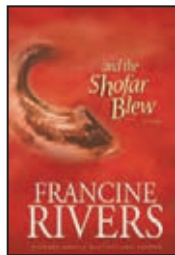
Effectively guiding the reader from seeker to participant in God’s Word, Reynolds instructs the reader in deeper ways to respond to the Word through prayer and corporate worship.

Theologian Henri Nouwen, often quoted throughout this text, said: “The question is not ‘How am I to love God?’ but, ‘How am I to let myself be loved by God?’” *Reading the Bible for the Love of God* is a great starting point for those asking the question. **LIZZA CONNOR**

AND THE SHOFAR BLEW

Francine Rivers

Tyndale



The success of a church is sometimes measured with the same yardstick the world would use to measure productivity. Whether it's growing attendance numbers or a successful building project, people may believe these

indicators lead to its success or failure. However, these people are misled, according to Rivers. Rather, it's quite possible that the church may be doing things only to bring people into the church instead of feeding those people spiritually.

And the Shofar Blew examines this problem with understanding and forgiveness. Paul Hudson and his wife, Eunice, feel God's call to pastor a dying church in California. Surrounded by people who are described as men and women of faith, they begin to rebuild the church. As attendance increases, Paul shifts his sights from spreading the gospel to getting people in the doors, surrounding himself with like-minded people and a new building project that kills some budding relationships.

Like her previous efforts, Francine Rivers has written another page-turner that keeps a reader hoping for the success of some characters and

the redemption of others. The discussion guide at the end of the book can be used for a book club or even church discussions.

SUZIE WALTNER

THE RULES: TEN TO LIVE BY

Mark Nicholas

Transit



In *The Rules: Ten to Live By*, author Mark Nicholas takes the Ten Commandments and, without changing the standard, makes the rules relevant for today's teen. Nicholas applies the Commandments to situations in modern society

that weren't such a problem in Moses' day. For example, he equates digital file swapping and cheating on a literature exam to violating the eighth and ninth Commandments.

The book is handily divided into two parts: the first dealing with the Commandments that reflect one's relationship with God. He specifically addresses subjects such as making idols—like focusing on a fledgling sports career, schoolwork or taking the Lord's name in vain.

Nicholas devotes the second part of *The Rules* to the Commandments that affect one's relationship with others. He illustrates how lying, cheating, stealing and dishonoring one's elders have not changed when it comes

to dealing with the repercussions.

When considering this book, it's wise to first read the biblical account of the Ten Commandments, and if you still feel the Bible is outdated or irrelevant pertaining to the problems that plague this age, pick up *The Rules*. My guess is you'll change your mind. **LIZZA CONNOR**

OVERCOMING ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOR

Dr. Neil T. Anderson and Mike Quarles



Regal

As one who has traveled the road of addiction and recovery, I can attest to the wisdom found in *Overcoming Addictive Behavior*. Neil Anderson and Mike Quarles base their recovery principles on Scripture and the power of God.

Once the drinking or drug use ends, the book says, each person needs to find a new identity and fresh guidelines to direct his or her path. And Anderson and Quarles show readers how to build a foundation based on truth.

For the Christian who struggles with issues of guilt and shame, this book is especially valuable. The authors use verse after verse to show that Jesus forgives and heals. Someone just beginning to recover might need additional, practical advice on how to abstain. But the bottom line is that all transformation begins and ends in Christ.

JANET CHISMAR

QUICK PICKS

A SNEAK PEEK INTO A FEW OTHER TITLES WORTH CHECKING OUT:



SINCE NOBODY'S PERFECT, HOW GOOD IS GOOD ENOUGH?

Andy Stanley Multnomah

As the old adage goes, good gifts come in small packages, and this book is one great example. In fewer than 100 pages, Andy Stanley provides insightful information that could be especially helpful in evangelism endeavors.

Addressing a lot of the common questions seekers ask, this resource cuts through the clichés and digs down into the "nitty gritty" of the questions with sound biblical advice.

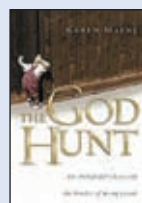


KEEPING YOUR FAITH IN COLLEGE

Abbie Smith VMI

Whether you attend a faith-based university or a state college, maintaining your Christian faith is no easy endeavor when temptation runs rampant. But there is hope despite what looks like an impossible tightrope to walk. In *Keeping Your Faith in College*, students from more than 35

nationwide campuses comment on their experiences of living as Christians in a collegiate environment. With commentary on everything from pledging a sorority to the issue of gossip, this volume is a must-read for current and prospective students.



THE GOD HUNT

Karen Mains InterVarsity Press

When He can't be seen with our human eyes, sometimes "seeing God" isn't the easiest concept to grasp. But whether it's obvious or not, God can be found in the everyday scenarios of our lives—in the answers to our prayers and even in what merely seems coincidental.

With a playful and practical writing style and plenty of real-life examples, Karen Mains takes readers on an exciting journey of encountering God in the mundane—something that will undoubtedly serve as welcome encouragement.



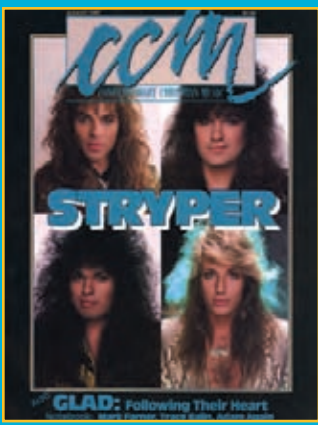
A FRAGILE STONE: THE EMOTIONAL LIFE OF SIMON PETER

Michael Card InterVarsity Press

As a singer/songwriter, Michael Card has always painted deep but unconventional portraits of faith in his songs. Now in his latest book, *A Fragile Stone*, Card introduces readers to another unconventional subject: Jesus' disciple

Peter. With insight not usually obtained through a quick read of the Gospels, readers learn a little more about Christian discipleship through Peter's example. An excellent forward written by Brennan Manning also adds depth to this intriguing read.

CHRISTA FARRIS



Then & Now

From big hair and spandex to hip-hop urban chic, CCM Magazine has covered it all for you.

What did you miss?



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new releases in

music

pop

Billy Ray Cyrus, *The Other Side*

Oct. 14 (Word)

Billy Ray Cyrus returns to his gospel heritage with masterful storytelling of his personal journey that will surely inspire listeners from all walks of life.

Christine Dente, *Becoming*

Oct. 7 (Rocketown)

Out of the Grey's Christine Dente's solo debut reflects on her ongoing journey of "becoming" a woman of God.

Jump5, *Accelerate*

October (Sparrow)

Jump5 is back and ready to impact culture with its hopeful message. Songs include the Radio Disney hit "We Are Family" and "All Because of You," written by Jump5's Brandon Hargest.

Kelly Minter, *Wrestling the Angels*

Oct. 7 (Cross Driven)

Like the Genesis account of Jacob's wrestling match with God, Kelly Minter is also in a wrestling match of sorts. With a wisdom that belies her age and a clarity refined by her own spiritual experiences, the album can best be described as an honest exploration of the hopeful struggle of the Christian journey.

Motivo, *Motivo*

Oct. 28 (Crowne Music Group)

This San Diego-based group has been building a loyal following around the Southwest region of the United States and in Mexico with its energetic brand of Latin pop. Now, with its self-titled debut, Motivo wants to bring joy and hope to a hurting world.

snapshot



The Katinas, *Roots*
Oct. 7 (Gotee)



On *Roots*, The Katinas return to its signature R&B-tinged pop sound with guest appearances by Amy Grant, Tommy Sims and John Reuben. A limited edition Christmas EP is also free with purchase through Jan. 1.

Erin O'Donnell, *Wide Wide World*

Oct. 21 (Inpop)

Produced by Dove Award-winner Mark Hammond (Nichole Nordeman, Jump5) and Alain Mallet, O'Donnell returns with 10 new songs written by acclaimed songwriters like Cindy Morgan and Pete Kiple, along with O'Donnell herself.

David Phelps, *Revelation*

Oct. 28 (Word)

Although still an active voice in the Gaither Vocal Band, David Phelps' latest solo project is a departure from what Gaither fans might expect. Produced by Chris Harris and Regie Ham, *Revelation* is high-energy pop with compelling vocals and uplifting lyrics.

Various, *True Image Revolution*

Oct. 21 (Flicker)

Coinciding with a partnership between Zondervan and its new teen Bible line, this CD features a collection of hit songs from artists including Audio Adrenaline, Rebecca St. James, The Swift and Erin O'Donnell.

Darlene Zschech, *Kiss of Heaven*

Oct. 14 (INO)

As the songwriter of "Shout to the Lord," Darlene Zschech ventures out with her first pop solo project. Zschech also produced many of the tracks and explores the constant need for each other within the body of Christ.

rock

Taylor, *The Fill (EP)*

Oct. 7 (Rocketown)

Currently a Belmont University senior, Taylor admits his pure rock and melodic pop styles reflect a steady diet of Bruce Springsteen, U2 and Elvis. But his EP debut explodes with a sound that's all his own. Crunchy guitars and plaintive vocals surround Taylor's insightful songwriting.

urbangospel

Natalie Wilson & the S.O.P. Chorale,

The Good Life

Oct. 7 (Gospo Centric)

On her second album and companion DVD/VHS, *The Good Life* features a diverse urban mix of sounds that spring from Natalie's deep well of talents as a vocalist, arranger, writer and director.

snapshot



Mark Schultz, *Stories and Songs*
Oct. 14 (Word)

This third recording from Mark Schultz features 11 new, heartfelt songs, all written or co-written by Schultz, with co-writing contributions from Brown Bannister, Cindy Morgan, Chris Eaton, James Isaac Elliott and Scott Krippayne.



hiphop/dance

Apt.core, 2

Oct. 21 (Rocketown)

The music of Apt.core is best described as electronic/eclectic. It is an experience in futuristic soundscapes and global voices that gives listeners a taste of God's community on earth.

worshiporiented

Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir,

LIVE...This Is Your House

Oct. 14 (INO)

With a shout of joy and a heart of praise, the Grammy-winning Brooklyn Tabernacle choir returns with a new album of worship and adoration live from its new sanctuary in Brooklyn, New York.

Marty Goetz, *Songs of Israel*

Oct 28 (Crowne/Tovah Music)

As a "contemporary psalmist," Marty Goetz explores the traditional music of his immigrant parents with *Songs of Israel*.

Cindy Cruse Ratcliff and Israel Houghton,

Cover the Earth

Oct. 14 (Integrity Music)

Recorded at Lakewood Church in Houston, Texas, this CD features the talents of worship leaders Cindy Cruse-Ratcliff and Israel Houghton.

John Tesh, *A Deeper Faith II*

Oct. 14 (Garden City)

On the much-anticipated follow-up to *A Deeper Faith*, John Tesh offers up 10 new recordings including new arrangements of "I Can Only Imagine" and "Bring Me to Life," plus three bonus acoustic tracks.

Various, *Dwell*

Oct. 21 (Vineyard)

Recorded live in Cincinnati, Ohio, with a crowd of more than 1,500 people, *Dwell* offers 15 new modern worship songs.

Instrumental

Anthony Burger, *Masterpiece*

Oct. 21 (Spring House Music)

Moving easily from Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" to Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus," *Masterpiece* includes beloved hymns, classical favorites, Broadway showtunes and more.

Various, *Forever*

Oct. 14 (Hillsong/Integrity Music)

This instrumental album features the musicians and music of Sydney, Australia's Hillsong Church.

Christmas

Rivertribe, *Christmas*

Oct. 7 (Elevate/Inpop)

With *Christmas*, Rivertribe returns with its signature instrumental sound, creating this unique Christmas CD.

John Tesh, *Christmas Worship*

Oct. 14 (Garden City)

With a lush mix of Christmas classics and your favorite worship songs, *Christmas Worship* is a must for the holidays.

Various,

iWORSHIP—A Total Christmas Worship Experience

Oct. 14 (Integrity Music)

This CD spotlights 33 Christmas worship songs from a variety of artists, including Darlene Zschech, MercyMe and Sara Groves, among others.

snapshot



Superchic[k],
Regeneration
Oct. 21 (Inpop)



Featuring eight brand-new versions of favorites like "One Girl Revolution," "Barlow Girls," and "So Bright," the project also features the group's newest hit, "Me Against the World," from *Legally Blonde 2: Red, White and Blonde*.

snapshot



Michael W. Smith, *The Second Decade 1993-2003*
Oct. 7 (Reunion)

For 20 years Michael W. Smith has been changing the landscape of music. Now with *The Second Decade*, a collection of Michael's most popular songs over the last 10 years, the retrospective captures a season of Michael's creative work and points to all that is to come.



new releases in books

feminine insight

The Beautiful Balance for Body and Soul,
Cynthia Culp Allen and Charity Allen Winters
(Revell)

A fun-loving mother/daughter team guides women in finding a realistic balance between physical and spiritual beauty.

Priority Planner, Linda Dillow (Nelson)

Updated and redesigned for a new generation of women, *Priority Planner* is the ultimate organizer to help women keep their responsibilities in order.

Twilight Travels with Mother: How I Found Strength, Hope, and a Sense of Humor Living with Alzheimer's, Mary Ann Mayo (Baker)

As a practical book about Alzheimer's written from the author's profoundly moving perspective, it will encourage women who are losing a mother or afraid of potentially facing the disease.

going deeper

The Blessing of God: Previously Unpublished Sermons of Jonathan Edwards,
Michael McMullen (Broadman & Holman)

Serving as the book's editor, Michael McMullen has compiled a collection of 22 sermons preached by Edwards that haven't appeared in print before.

Breakthrough Prayer, Jim Cymbala (Zondervan)

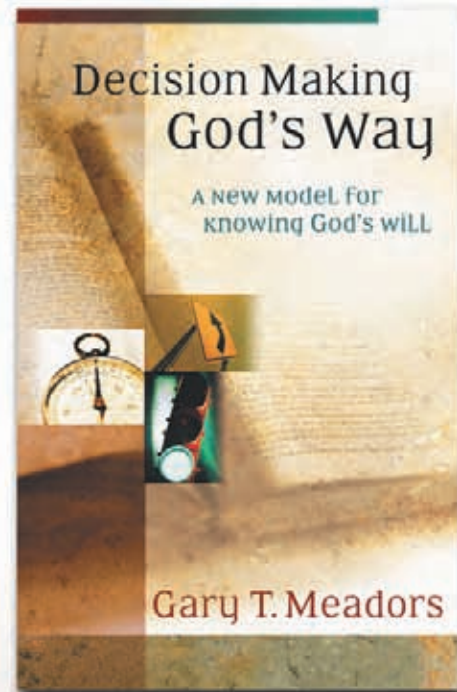
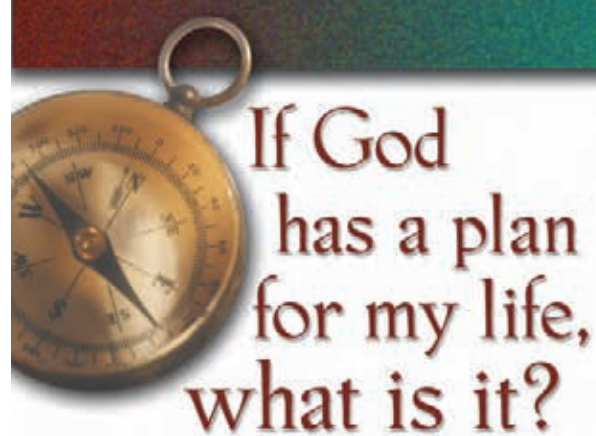
Jim Cymbala explains principles that can enable us to see all that God has for us. Includes amazing stories of answered prayer from the Brooklyn Tabernacle, including the story of the final survivor of the World Trade Center collapse.

The Church in Emerging Culture: Five Perspectives,
Leonard Sweet, Brian D. McLaren, Andy Crouch,
Frederica Mathewes-Green, Erwin Raphael
McManus and Michael Horton (Zondervan)

Five Christian thinkers with diverse perspectives present their views of how the church should respond to culture.

Coach Wooden: One-on-One,
Coach John Wooden & Jay Carty (Regal)

This book of 60 daily readings is the result of one-on-one conversations between basketball's



ISBN 0-8010-6429-5
\$12.99 paperback

Many Christians miss God's will because they look in the wrong place. In the Bible, believers were concerned with doing God's will, not finding it.

But before you can do God's will, you must know what it is.

Gary Meadors believes the best guidance for decision making already exists in the teaching of Scripture. He teaches an objective way to know God's will and make the right decisions. If you struggle with knowing God's will, *Decision Making God's Way* will provide you with helpful, thought-provoking insights for determining the answers to life's tough questions.

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legendary coach and teacher John Wooden, and Jay Carty, a former player for the Lakers and one-time assistant to Wooden.

The Dad in the Mirror, Patrick Morley and David Delk (Zondervan)
Showing dads how their children can develop a faith and trust in God, this book helps fathers answer tough parenting questions.

Dangerous Wonder, Mike Yaconelli (NavPress)
Most Christians think they need to “grow up” to have a mature faith. Yaconelli explores the fact that we can discover childlike qualities that should be the characteristics of faith.

Daughters of Hope, Kay Marshall Strom and Michele Rickett (InterVarsity)
Telling the stories of persecuted Christian women from around the world, these authors give a voice to women’s suffering under oppression and injustice.

Discipleship Counseling, Neil T. Anderson (Regal)
This new counseling ministry guide for church leaders focuses on creating a ministry in your own church and how discipleship counseling works.

The Eternity Portfolio, Alan Gotthardt (Tyndale House)
Respected CPA and financial advisor Alan Gotthardt combines biblical teaching with modern investment-portfolio theory and offers fresh, practical ideas for strategic, satisfying giving.

Finding a Church You Can Love and Loving the Church You’ve Found, Kevin and Sherry Harney (Zondervan)
Using real-life stories to illustrate the process, the authors offer simple ideas to help people as they search for the right church.

Finding God’s Will in Spiritually Deceptive Times, Neil T. Anderson (Harvest House)
Anderson examines how to identify counterfeit messages, the roles of Scripture, the Spirit, and other believers and how to replace fear of wrong decisions with freedom.

Getting Your Financial House in Order, David and Debbie Bragonier (Broadman & Holman)
This book serves as a floor plan for managing finances by laying the proper foundation with

basic methods of money management and practical application.

The Holy Wild: Trusting in the Character of God, Mark Buchanan (Multnomah)
Mark Buchanan bravely approaches the intriguing question: Can God be trusted?

Is God to Blame? Gregory A. Boyd (InterVarsity)
Wrestling with this poignant question, Gregory A. Boyd offers a hopeful picture of a sovereign God who is relentlessly opposed to evil, knows our sufferings and can be trusted to bring us through them to renewed life.

Knowing God by Name: Names of God That Bring Hope and Healing, David Wilkerson (Chosen)
This volume explores 10 Hebrew names for God that reveal hope, encouragement and extraordinary insight in difficult times.

A Little Pot of Oil: A Life Overflowing, Jill Briscoe (Multnomah)
This book encourages readers to step into the forward motion of God’s love and find the power of the Holy Spirit!

Living Extreme for Jesus Devotional, Tony B. Rhoda (Thomas Nelson)
Known for spearheading a teen daily devotionals Web site, Tony B Rhoda now encourages teens to live “extreme” lives.

Love That Goes the Distance: Discover the Power That Conquers All, Jud Willhite (Baker Books)
Exploring modern-day and New Testament stories to show God’s love in action, this book bridges the gap between what men and women want from life and what they are experiencing.

Love the Life You Live, Les Parrott and Neil Clark Warren (Tyndale House)
With a candid but realistic approach, this book guides readers to become more complete in Christ. Chapters include self-tests and practical suggested activities.

Making Sense of Church: Eavesdropping on Emerging Conversations about God, Community, and Culture, Spencer Burke (Zondervan)
This book is a snapshot of community conversation at theOoze.com, a Web site where people can converse about making sense of God.

The Minirth Guide for Christian Counselors, Frank Minirth (Broadman & Holman)
Serving as a comprehensive resource from the Scriptures, this book features analysis of the four most common emotional obstacles encountered by counselors.

Moments Together for a Peaceful Home, Dennis and Barbara Rainey (Regal)
A 30-day devotional of readings for married couples, focusing on ways to maintain peace and harmony at home.

Moments Together for Growing Closer to God, Dennis & Barbara Rainey (Regal)
Focusing on a couple’s walk with the Lord, this book provides 30 more days of study.

Our Jealous God: Love That Won’t Let Me Go, Bill Gothard (Multnomah)
God’s intense jealousy is your highest honor, an overflowing of sheer grace. And when you understand it better, it becomes a pathway to countless blessings.

Out of the Whirlwind, Mark Tabb (Broadman & Holman)
Highlighting the reality that life doesn’t always turn out the way we want, this book explores the fact that God is still good.

Overcoming Addictive Behavior, Neil T. Anderson (Regal)
Discover the teaching about freedom in Christ that pertains to the problem of addiction.

The Pursuit of God in the Company of Friends, Richard Lamb (InterVarsity)
Featuring the Gospel narratives of Jesus’ ministry with His disciples and offering engaging stories from real-life experiences, Richard Lamb shows how people can help one another spiritually when their lives are intertwined.

The Rabbi’s Heartbeat, Brennan Manning (NavPress)
Brennan Manning challenges readers of all ages to become “real” with Christ and live their lives without hiding or posing as perfect. This book is a daily reminder to live as we really are—God’s beloved children.

Sacred Rhythms: Finding a Peaceful Pace in a Hectic World, Christine Sine, M.D. (Baker Books)
Find relief from a fast-paced culture by returning to the God-ordained natural and spiritual rhythms of life.

Searching for Home: Spirituality for Restless Souls, Craig Barnes (Brazos Press)
For those with a sense of spiritual homelessness and an unrelieved longing for community and family, Barnes has good news: Discover the God who is with you on the road.

The Search to Belong: Rethinking Intimacy, Community, and Small Groups, Joseph R. Myers (Zondervan)
This book serves as a guide for those struggling to build a community of believers in a culture that wants to experience belonging over believing.

Secure in God’s Embrace, Ken Fong (InterVarsity)
In this winsome, conversational book, pastor and speaker Ken Fong focuses on the biblical theme of adoption to explore the boundless love of God.

snapshot - CD & book



Darlene Zschech, Kiss of Heaven
Oct. 14 (INO)

As the songwriter of “Shout to the Lord,” Darlene Zschech ventures out with her first pop solo project. Zschech also produced many of the tracks and explores the constant need for each other within the body of Christ.

The Kiss of Heaven, Darlene Zschech (Bethany House)
This book presents Darlene Zschech’s personal reflections on living a life blessed by God’s favor.



Still God's Man:

A Daily Devotional Guide to Christ-like Character, Don Aycock (Kregel)

Featuring insight from men in all walks of life, this engaging devotional focusses on daily spiritual growth for today's Christian man.

True Faced,

Bill Thrall, Bruce McNicol, John Lynch (NavPress)

If we think pleasing God involves being sinless, then we'll hide who we really are. In *True Faced*, we discover that the source of defeat is in attempting to hide our unresolved sin.

Unceasing Worship,

Harold M. Best (InterVarsity)

Harold Best casts a holistic vision for worship that transcends narrow discussions of musical style or congregational preference.

Walking the Small Group Tightrope:

Meeting the Challenges Every Group Faces, Bill Donahue and Russ Robinson (Zondervan)

This book uses polarity management training and teaches that we must learn to manage the tension that exists between two good things rather than choosing one over the other.

Where's God on Monday?

Alistair MacKenzie and Wayne Kirkland (NavPress)

In *Where's God on Monday?* the authors challenge readers to reconnect the fragments of their "work" and "church" lives to uncover one life that's sacred and productive.

Your Signature Life,

Dianna Booher (Tyndale House)

Your Signature Life encourages us to give God the very best of ourselves at work, at home and in relationships, through the choices we make.

intotheword

Encountering God in the Psalms, Michael E. Travers (Kregel)

Encountering God is an in-depth study of the poetry of Psalms that highlights the character and actions of God in every psalm.

Transforming Bible Study,

Bob Grahmann (InterVarsity Press)

Bob Grahmann, a national and international Bible study teacher, introduces readers to the proven yet up-to-date method of inductive Bible study.

Zondervan's Great Bible Trivia Workout, Brad Densmore (Zondervan)

Detailing the people, places and things in both the Old and New Testaments, this trivia book also includes quizzes, top-10 lists, cartoons, group games and more.

otherscentered

Aftershock: Help, Hope and Healing in the Wake of Suicide, David Cox and Candy Neely Arrington (Broadman & Holman)

Offers helpful knowledge and resources for those grieving a suicide death.

Boundaries Face to Face,

Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend (Zondervan)

A practical handbook for having that difficult conversation you've been avoiding—why it's necessary, how to prepare for it, approach it and finish it successfully.

Don't Date Naked,

Michael and Amy Smalley (Tyndale House)

Using personal stories, humor and straight talk, the Smalleys challenge young adults to grasp the godly principles of honor and purity.

Fuel, Joe White

(Focus on the Family/Tyndale House)

With these 10-minute devotionals, parents can maximize devotional time with their teens and equip them with the spiritual foundation they need.

God's Gift to Women: Discovering the Lost Greatness of Masculinity, Eric Ludy (Multnomah)

Tired of everyone assuming you're a jerk just because you're a guy? Here's a book that recognizes your potential for courage and kindness, strength and spiritual sensitivity.

Making Love Meaningfully,

Charles and Virginia Sell (Broadman & Holman)

Focuses on the purpose and meaning of sex in the venue of God's intent.

Mentoring Millennials, Daniel Egeler (NavPress)

Mentoring Millennials will help readers understand how "millennials" are different from previous generations and explains several types of mentoring that you can incorporate into your life.

Moments for Couples Who Long for Children, Ginger Garrett (NavPress)

With encouraging stories and helpful advice, author Ginger Garrett, who has also battled infertility, gently leads couples to a new sense of hope in God's compassion.

Parenting Principles, William T. Stonecker, M.D. (Broadman & Holman)

A retired pediatrician uses biblical principles and a Christian perspective to show parents how to balance love and authority in parenting.

Pressure Proof Your Marriage, Dennis and Barbara Rainey (Multnomah Publishers)

Dennis and Barbara Rainey show you how to use pressure to your benefit by building intimacy with each other and the Lord.

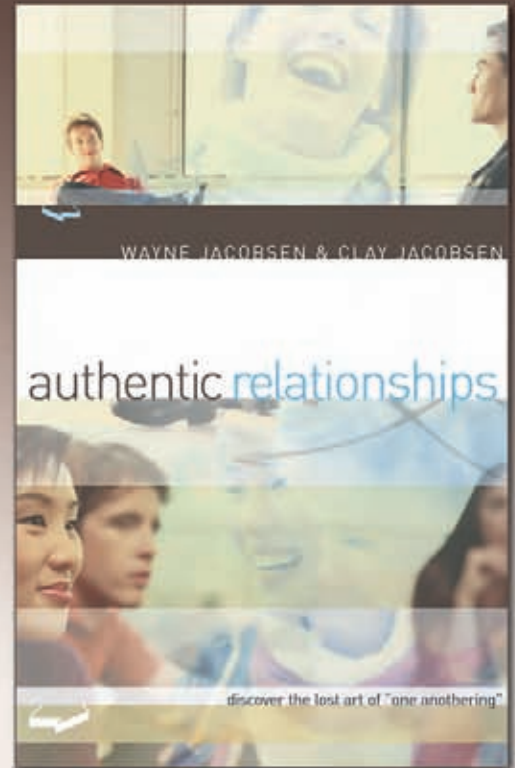
Wealth to Last, Larry Burkett and Ron Blue with Jeremy White, CPA (Broadman & Holman)

The two most trusted names in Christian finance team up to help those in the second half of life ensure continued fiscal well-being that provides for one's family and honors God.

When God is the Life of the Party, Dr. Richard Swanson (NavPress)

In this idea-packed book, the author invites you to step out of your "castle" and invite others in.

Experience True Community



ISBN 0-8010-6451-1
\$11.99 paperback

Beginning with God's simple command to "love one another," *Authentic Relationships* shows you how to create authentic and loving relationships and communities. In a fast-paced culture that values independence and autonomy, the principles of "one anothering" can transform your relationships and broaden your community of true friends.

Drawing from the rich fabric of biblical guidance and instruction, this book captures the essence of Jesus' concern and service demonstrated to his disciples and followers. You'll learn new methods for opening doors to deeper friendships and meaningful interactions with strangers. If you seek to strengthen relationships with other believers, you'll learn how to *be* the church rather than just go to church.

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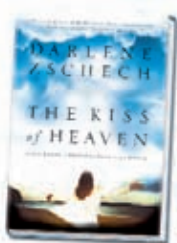
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Worship Live
SALVADOR
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Roots
THE KATINAS
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new releases

Why Men and Women Act the Way They Do, Bill and Pam Farrel (Harvest House)

Building on the popularity of their “Waffles and Spaghetti” books, the Farrels combine humor with solid research in a book designed to help men and women move past conflicts caused by sexual differences.

thepowerofastory

All Good Gifts, Kathleen Morgan (Revell)

When strong-willed Devra Mackay returns to Culdee Creek to claim her inheritance, she finds herself in a fight for the ranch and a struggle to find true happiness.

Back Roads to Bliss, Ruth Glover (Revell)

In book six of the “Saskatchewan” series, a grave error in judgment leads to a young woman’s banishment from English society to the untamed frontier of Canada.

Before I Wake, Dee Henderson (Multnomah)

Sheriff Nathan Justice and private investigator Rae Gabriella investigate a spine-chilling series of murders in this debut novel of the “Justice Files.”

Consuming Fire, Kathleen Morgan (Tyndale House)

Set in the Scottish Highlands in 1694, *Consuming Fire* tells the story of one woman’s struggle to find true freedom and love.

Dark Horse, John Fischer (Revell)

This beautiful allegory invites you to live in authentic faith and break out of complacency.

A Fine Line, Kathy Herman (Multnomah)

Charlie Kirby, the father of seven and the mayor of a small town, has a lot to lose by compromising his character in *A Fine Line*.

Following Gandalf: Epic Battles and Moral Victory in The Lord of the Rings, Matthew Dickerson (Brazos Press)

An exploration of free will, determinism, morality, relativism and heroism in J. R. R. Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*.

!HERO Graphic Novel, Stephen R. Lawhead and Ross Lawhead (NavPress)

In a series of five action-packed episodes, best-selling author Stephen R. Lawhead, collaborating with author and penciler Ross Lawhead, incites the imagination to wonder: What if He were born today?

It’s More Than the Music: Life Lessons for Loving God, Loving Each Other, Bill Gaither with Ken Abraham (Warner Faith)

Bill Gaither recalls the remarkable journey of his life from the Gaither Trio to the Gaither Vocal Band.

Jesus: An Interview Across Time: A Psychiatrist Looks at Christ’s Humanity, Andrew G. Hodges (Kregel)

A provocative fictional interview with Jesus by a skilled contemporary interviewer provides an unparalleled look into the daily life, formative events and personal feelings of Jesus, the man.

Line of Duty: Newpointe 911 Series, Terri Blackstock (Zondervan)

In the fifth book of the “Newpointe 911” series, Jill is trapped on the 30th floor after a bomb

explodes in her building. As firefighters attempt to rescue her, her husband, Dan, rushes inside to save her. After two more bombs explode, Jill is rescued, but Dan’s trapped inside. Can Jill’s faith carry her through this time of uncertainty?

More than a Skeleton, Paul L. Maier (Thmoas Nelson)

A follow-up to the No. 1 bestseller *A Skeleton in God’s Closet*, *More Than a Skeleton* follows Professor Weber as he determines if a mysterious miracle worker is indeed the Son of God or merely a Jesus impersonator.

Out of Time: J.D. Stanton Mysteries, Alton Gansky (Zondervan)

Two days after J.D. and his crew set sail, a storm damages their craft, leaving them on an eerie sea with no way to get their bearing.

Return, Karen Kingsbury with Gary Smalley (Tyndale House)

The third book in the highly successful “Redemption” series sees Luke Baxter determined to leave his faith and his past behind and embrace a new, free-thinking future. But when Luke finds out a secret from his past, his life is turned upside down, and he must turn back to his roots.

Round the Corner, Vonette Bright and Nancy Moser (Tyndale House)

In this second book in the “Sister Circle” series, Evelyn Peerbaugh is not so sure she likes the new dynamics of Peerbaugh Place. She’s starting over with a new set of boarders, and the bond of sisterhood that she had with her former boarders may not come as easily this time.

Thunder on the Dos Gatos, Paul Bagdon (Revell)

This is book four in the “West Texas Sunrise” series. Can Lee and Ben divert a dangerous group of cattle trail bosses, or will Burnt Rock be thrown into an all-out range war?

Tying the Knot, Susan May Warren (Tyndale House)

Tying the Knot will delight readers with its well-woven plot and heart-stirring romance.

The Wager, Bill Myers (Zondervan)

After a confrontation, God challenges Satan to choose any person he wishes to prove obedience to the Lord is completely possible. Satan chooses Michael, who has 10 days to live every truth in Matthew 5, 6 and 7, while encountering hellish tricks and temptations, as well as heavenly guidance and encouragement.

Whispers in the Wind, Orphan Train Trilogy, Book 3, Al and JoAnna Lacy (Multnomah)

Dane Weston’s dream is to become a doctor. Then his family is murdered, and he ends up in a colony of street waifs begging for food. The release coincides with the 150th anniversary of the Children’s Aid Society’s founding.

Without a Trace, Colleen Coble (W)

Mystery and romance readers will love this new series featuring Bree Nichols and her search-and-rescue dog, Samson.

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Awake My Soul and Sing: Poems Inspired by Favorite Hymns, Helen Steiner Rice with Virginia J. Ruhlman (Revell)

Helen Steiner Rice's beautiful poems paired with stories of the beloved hymns that inspired them. Features a CD of hymns.

The Everyday Light Planner, Thomas Kinkade (J Countryman)

The Everyday Light Planner features a full-color cover and interior art. The content comes from original inspirations from Thomas Kinkade, Scripture, and favorite quotes from Kinkade devotional books.

God's Promises Day by Day, Various (J Countryman)

The latest addition to the successful "Minute Meditations" series includes daily inspirational thoughts from the likes of Max Lucado, Charles Swindoll, John Eldredge, Franklin Graham, R.C. Sproul, Anne Graham Lotz and others.

Grace by the Cup: A Break from the Daily Grind, Louise Bergmann DuMont (Revell)

Jump-start your day with these java-induced devotionals full of warm anecdotes, Scripture, and fun facts and information about the joys of coffee.

The Power of Prayer & Worship, John Tesh (J Countryman)

This book offers thoughts of simple yet sometimes profound refreshment for readers who seek to drink in the Lord. Ten original songs on CD are available only with the book.

Running the Course, Kristi Overton-Johnson (Broadman & Holman)

A world-record-holding professional water-skier, Kristi Overton-Johnson shares her testimony and her road to becoming a world-class water-skier in this gift style book.

Teatime Treasures, Joy Marie (T.J. Mills)

Teatime Treasures features six sections, each looking at a different type of tea party, including inspiring thoughts and Scripture verses, plus ideas for decorations, recipes, games and activities, and finally a prayer appropriate for each subject.

A Year with C.S. Lewis: Daily Readings from His Classic Works, C.S. Lewis (HarperSanFrancisco co-published with Zondervan)

Beloved author C.S. Lewis is your wise and inspiring guide in this elegant collectible book of 366 poignant and thought provoking daily meditations.

thenewgeneration

The Chase, Jerry Bridges (TH1NK)

Taken from Jerry Bridges' best-seller, *The Pursuit of Holiness*, this book shows students how to pursue holiness.

Degrees of Guilt: Kyra's Story, Dandi Daley Mackall (Tyndale House)

Part of the new "Degrees of Guilt" trilogy, this book features three different perspectives on a tragedy, life choices and turning points in life by three best-selling authors. Includes Internet-only content.

Degrees of Guilt: Miranda's Story, Melody Carlson (Tyndale House)

Part of the new "Degrees of Guilt" trilogy.

Degrees of Guilt: Tyrone's Story, Sigmund Brouwer (Tyndale House)

Part of the new "Degrees of Guilt" trilogy.

Dirty Faith, Audio Adrenaline with Mark Matlock (TH1NK Books)

In its first book, Audio Adrenaline challenges its fans to do more than just sing along to its songs. In *Dirty Faith*, the band encourages students to put their faith in action—no matter what the cost.

Faith, God and Rock & Roll: How People of Faith Are Transforming American Popular Music, Mark Joseph (Baker Books)

The inside story of more than 25 musicians of faith and how they reconcile their rock 'n' roll lifestyles with deep-rooted Christian convictions.

The Hardest 30 Days of Your Life, Justin Lookadoo (Transit)

In this one-of-a-kind workbook, author and youth speaker Justin Lookadoo walks with teens through the experience of radical faith.

Live It Loud, Tim Baker (Revell)

Relevant devotions and thought-provoking questions help high school students apply biblical truth to real life.

Live It Strong, Tim Baker (Revell)

More relevant devotions and thought-provoking questions that help high school students apply biblical truth to real life.

The Struggle, Steve Gerali (TH1NK)

Author Steve Gerali opens an honest and thoughtful dialogue on the controversial subject of masturbation.

Christmas

And Jesus Will Be Born, Adrian Plass (Zondervan)

Through poems, stories, commentaries and reflections, Plass centers every insight around Jesus—the reason for celebration.

The Christmas Guest, Andy Griffith (J Countryman)

American icon Andy Griffith brings new life to this timeless tale. Included in the back cover of the book is a CD featuring a narrative of the story by Griffith.

Christmas Homecoming, Diane Noble, Pamela Griffin and Kathleen Fuller (Tyndale House)

Three heartwarming novellas tell stories of homecoming and love at Christmastime in this historical collection.

Christmastide: Prayers for Advent Through Epiphany, Phyllis Tickle (Galilee/DoubleDay)

Beginning with the first day of Advent and moving through Christmas Day and on to Epiphany (January 6), *Christmastide* provides daily prayers, psalms and readings from the Bible.

Maggie's Miracle, Karen Kingsbury (Warner Faith)

This is a heartwarming tale of a woman who no longer believes in love and the man who helps her learn that miracles really do happen.

Merry Christmas with Love, Chris Shea (J Countryman)

Chris Shea, whose artwork and prose have earned her nationwide acclaim, looks back on Christmas through her collection of art and reflection, leaving no doubt Who is behind the celebration.

The Red Suit Diaries: A Real-Life Santa on Hopes, Dreams, and Childlike Faith, Ed Butchart (Revell)

A Jesus-believing, professional Santa shares his secrets, inspiring kids of all ages to live out the love of Christ year-round.

Stories Behind the Great Traditions of Christmas, Ace Collins (Zondervan)

Explaining the stories and origins of treasured Christmas traditions, this gift book reveals the inspiration behind the special symbols and acts that mean so much at Christmas.

DVDvideo

Nicole C. Mullen, Live in Cincinnati...Bringing It Home Oct. 28 (Word)

Recorded at the Aaronoff Theater, you can now have a front-row seat at a Nicole C. Mullen concert. Nicole takes us on a journey of worship and dance as she performs new and familiar songs. Bonus DVD footage includes a tour of the Cincinnati neighborhood where she grew up and also a visit to her present life as a mother, artist and mentor in Nashville.

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Cross driven—crossdriven.com
DoubleDay—randomhouse.com/doubleday/
Essential Records—essentialrecords.com
Gotee Records—gotee.com
Fervent—ferventrecords.com
Focus on the Family—family.org

Galilee—randomhouse.com/doubleday/
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THE ELMS

RAVINA

HIGHLAND PARK, IL—AUG. 5

When Seymour, Ind., rockers The Elms got an invitation to open up several dates of legendary guitarist Peter Frampton's current tour, the quartet probably hit the garage immediately to whip its playing skills into top-notch shape. That's not to say the guys didn't have a high-energy, retro-minded, searing rock 'n' roll vibe already brewing. It's just that opening night of this particular tour was a materialization of the "practice makes perfect" adage, complete with more performance power, vocal spunk and instrumental sparks than the 20-something collaborators have previously presented.

Opening for the trendsetting "Baby I Love Your Way" balladeer and the "Do You Feel Like We Do" voice-box manipulator is no easy task (especially in front of a mostly older, classic rock crowd), but The Elms rose to the occasion with an arsenal of rock's finest roots and contemporary adaptations. (They cite The Rolling Stones, Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers and The Who as main influences).

Opening with The Who's "My Generation" earned the band early evening credibility, and the pavilion audience as well as the scattered lawn dwellers were reeled in with frontman Owen Thomas' muscular yelps from the very first chorus. The psychedelically punchy "Who Got the Meaning" and the evangelically intended "Come to Me" followed, allowing the backing gang to showcase their tightly crafted hooks, improvisational ability and far-reaching musical education, despite their young ages. "Speaking in Tongues" (from the group's latest Sparrow Records album, *Truth, Soul, Rock 'n' Roll*) elevated The Elms' rumbling relentlessness to an even higher degree, thanks primarily to a trailblazing extended guitar solo by former Miss Angie session man Thomas Daugherty. The catchiest number of the set and also the finale that paved the way for Mr. Frampton was the mild MTV2 hit "Hey, Hey," a cut that earned not only several patches of standing ovations (a true rarity for an opening act) but the crowd's overall respect.



PETER FRAMPTON



For more on The Elms recent tour with Peter Frampton, including a daily tour journal and photo gallery, log onto CCMmagazine.com. If you want to get even closer to the action, check out The Elms' *Truth, Soul, Rock 'n' Roll* DVD featuring music videos for the hits "Hey, Hey" and "Speaking in Tongues" plus *The Elms, American Band*, a short film by Daren Thomas, that gives fans their own backstage pass with exclusive interviews.



JUMP5

RIVERSIDE THEATRE

MILWAUKEE, WI—AUG. 21

The energy, enthusiasm and acrobatics of Jump5 has yet to be matched by any "tweenage" Christian pop act, and such a formula even blows away most mainstream kiddie competition (including its current tour partner, Aaron Carter).

While opening for the brother of world-famous Backstreet Boy Nick Carter, the five teens sang, danced, flipped and jumped their way through songs like the exuberant lip smacker "Throw Your Hands Up," the patriotic Lee Greenwood cover "God Bless the U.S.A." and an action-packed medley of past hits like "All I Can Do," "Beauty and the Beast" and "Spinnin' Around."

Though largely unfamiliar to the audience at the time, material from the band's brand new *Accelerate* disc (especially the foot-

stomping "Do Ya" and the modernized disco remake of "We Are Family") puts the group right on track to rake in record sales and light up the Radio Disney charts. The only letdown from Jump5's Midwestern appearance was the absence of member Lesley Moore, who was home sick. Her bright smile and additional vocal support may have been missed, but the remaining crew adjusted its choreography and sequencing without a hitch. Upon her return, the fivesome should have no trouble accelerating through the subsequent stages of their brightly glowing futures.

TOUR TIDBITS:

The theme for the traveling "Shoutfest 03" festival is "Let the Walls Fall Down," and its schedule includes a diverse lineup, including **ZOgirl**, **Tait**, **Skillet**, **Tree 63**, **Nate Sallie**, **Kelcey**, **Overflow**, **Tinman Jones** and **Detour 180**.

Jaci Velasquez just hopped off the state-fair circuit and makes her way to theaters for the second leg of her "Unspoken—the Tour." **Salvador** opens with tunes from the 2003 Spanish language album, *Con Poder* (Word), plus selections from its brand-new live worship CD and DVD.

Relient K, **Anberlin** and **Don't Look Down** join together this month in a national jaunt named after the Tears for Fears '80s tune "Everybody Wants to Rule the World."

20 THINGS YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT: DARLENE ZSCHECH

BY CHRISTA FARRIS



Her last name still may be problematic for people to pronounce and spell properly, but Darlene Zschech's signature worship song, "Shout to the Lord," has made her songwriting a household name in worship services around the world. Now find out a little more about this Australian artist, who is branching out and releasing a non-worship, pop record, *The Kiss* (INO/Epic), on Oct. 13.

20. CHECK, PLEASE?

Speaking of that tricky name, Darlene is pretty much resigned to the fact that people are going to struggle with saying it correctly. Pronounced "check," Darlene manages to find humor in her situation. "My last name provides many hours of entertainment. I answer to anything, really," she divulges.

19. SINGING FOR HER SUPPER

While many of us were still learning words at age 3, Darlene was already singing. And her first paid gig? "I've been paid to sing full-time since I was 10."

18. HIPPIE CHIC IS ALWAYS IN STYLE

Although she's not likely to sport a daisy chain or bell-bottoms, Darlene admits she's "a bit of a hippie at heart." When it comes to designers, she favors the creations of Australian designers Lisa Ho and Alannah Hill.

17. "HOPELESSLY DEVOTED" TO OLIVIA

While she won't admit just how much of a fan she was, Olivia Newton-John is a pop culture icon in Australia, the way Madonna is in the United States. "Most Australians love Olivia Newton-John for one reason or another," Zschech confesses.

16. THE DRUMBEAT OF LOVE

Forget blind dates or that awkward set-up when it comes to love. Darlene met her husband, Mark, when he auditioned for a drummer position in their youth band. "Praise God, he got in!" Darlene recalls.

15. THE MASTER OF MULTI-TASKING

Between touring, recording and leading worship at her home church, Darlene doesn't always have a lot of time for hobbies. But when she does, she's very domestic as she loves interior design and cooking. Taking pictures of her daughters and listening to music also rank high as fun in her downtime.

14. MY THREE DAUGHTERS

Describing them as "absolutely divine," Darlene's got a teen, a 'tween and a toddler: Amy is 14, Chloe is 11, and Zoe Jewel is 2.

13. WHY PLAY THE RECORDER WHEN THERE'S THE DIDJERIDOO?

Like koalas and kangaroos, didgeridoos are a staple of Aussie culture. In fact, Darlene says, "We have didgeridoos at home and in my office, so we play them quite often, although I use the word 'play' very loosely. Even Zoe has a baby-sized one!"

12. NAME THAT TUNE

Like their mum, Darlene's daughters love music. And with their various ages, their listening includes a broad spectrum of sounds, including Coldplay, Good Charlotte, Delirious, Michael W. Smith's worship CDs and *Elmo and Zoe's Dance Moves* for the youngest Zschech.

11. PRETTY WOMAN

When it comes to her favorite movie, she's a fan of "anything with Julia Roberts in it."

10. SHE'S GOT ENERGY IN HER GENES

Watch any of her Hillsong videos, and Zschech's energetic fervor while worshiping is something you'll notice immediately. Apparently, this intensity runs in the family. "My mom is energetic and at the gym every morning," Darlene reports. "My dad was also a passionate person, and my passion for Christ really does give me great focus and energy."

9. SHORT AND SWEET WORSHIP

When it comes to church, she isn't necessarily a fan of short services; but through her church experiences, she's realized that time is of the essence. "If your church congregation knows they can trust you with their time—that is, honoring the times you advertise—they are much more likely to keep coming and bringing friends. I personally don't believe how spiritual you are and the length of a service are at all related."

8. GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Being a full-time worship leader at her home church, Darlene finds that it's not always easy "trying to keep worship passionate and creative within the 20-minute timeframe."

7. ADVENTURES IN THE GOOD OL' U.S.A

Describing it as "a nation very dear to my heart," Darlene vividly remembers her first trip to the United States 16 years ago. "Within a 20-hour period on a stopover to the United States, we drove to Mexico and bought cheap leather jackets. Then we went to Disneyland for the first time and got back on the plane exhausted but happy."

6. SHE'S OCCASIONALLY HER OWN WORST CRITIC

When it comes to songwriting, Darlene says, "I've written many unworthy songs—still do. But possibly my worst moment is a song I wrote many years ago with our then worship pastor called 'Shaping Your Destiny.' We wrote it for a building fund campaign, and it should win a prize for one of the worst songs ever composed."

5. DARLENE'S PERFECT DAY

It doesn't take extravagance for Darlene to have an ideal day. For her, a perfect day is "being with my family, going out to the beach, having a nice casual lunch and meeting up with friends."

4. A CANINE CATASTROPHE

Although she's "not really injury prone," Darlene's most unusual injury was caused by her dog, Divinci, when he dislocated her finger.

3. AN UNFORGETTABLE MOMENT

One of the most unforgettable women Darlene has met is Oral Robert's wife, Evelyn. "I was in a local church seminar in the United States and heard her give a message, and I sensed the presence of God so powerfully on her life. Her life message had a great impact on me."

2. NOW FOR THREE PEOPLE SHE'D LIKE TO MEET...

Making the list of people Darlene would love to meet are Billy Graham, Bono and Mother Teresa (while she was still alive).

1. DARLENE'S TWO CENTS ON OUR GUEST EDITOR, MICHAEL W. SMITH

"I was impressed with his heart. While we were on tour, he surprised Nicole C. Mullen by flying her family in for a couple of days, as she was severely missing them. Sounds like a man of God that He can trust with much!" she says.

As Steven Curtis Chapman once noted, "The Artist and Creator of all things has entrusted us with unique artistic abilities to use for His glory. I know of no one who has wrestled more profoundly with these issues than Charlie Peacock."



We agree and are honored to welcome Charlie Peacock to *CCM* with his new monthly column—a forum for this celebrated artist, producer, author and songwriter to speak to us with words of wisdom, enlightening challenges, artistic encouragements and, well, everything else that's on his mind.

Peacock has long been admired as a visionary for Christian music and its artists, an honest commentator on the industry and a champion for the arts and expression in the world of faith. We hope you'll find his voice a welcome addition to our pages.

Vol. 1

More than 20 years ago I was a recovering drug and alcohol abuser. A saxophonist named Mike Butera introduced me to the generosity of God through Jesus. I believed the story of Jesus and His new Kingdom, and it came to define life and reality for me. I bought my first Bible at Tower Records and Books; I had no idea there was a world of Christian bookstores and contemporary Christian music out there. When I finally did visit a Christian bookstore, I purchased a current *CCM Magazine* and six months of back issues. That was a long time ago, and now I have gone on to make my own contributions to the history of Christian music.

As I prayerfully consider my first column for *CCM*, I think it best to begin with encouragement toward a noble goal—one we can achieve together. Friends, this is a time for faith, hope and love—even now, good is in our midst and just around the corner. I can feel it coming with power and beauty. That's the way it is for those who follow Jesus in the new Kingdom way.

Nevertheless, followers of Jesus are prone to forget these important first things and lose the Jesus/Kingdom storyline. Other stories arrive, compete for our attention, and in our weakness we exchange faith, hope and love for something altogether different. These kinds of stories have no light, no brightness. All they want is to see that you and I are scared, faithless, unimaginative and unproductive. Stories with this motive have leaked out of the world and into Christian music.

As you may know there has been a big downshift in the music business with severe revenue loss, many labels and music stores closing, stocks plummeting and layoffs for thousands of industry professionals. Insiders blame it on everything from there being too little music worth buying to the ubiquitous and unlawful peer-to-peer file sharing and burning of CDs. Whatever the ultimate cause, it is real, and people are feeling it. This is the big story of the day—the one that has affected our own ways of being human, of being musical.

Nevertheless, this is not a time to run scared. It's a good time to remember Jesus and His words—His story. His message went something like this: Don't worry about your life—what you'll eat, drink or wear. His great follower Paul jumped all over this as well, saying, "If we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction" (1Tim. 6:6, NIV). Paul had noticed how some followers eager for more and more money had drifted from the first things of what it meant to follow Jesus. This had led to nothing but grief. Paul instructed His disciples to put their energies into pursuing God's kind

of rightness in the world, to be a people consumed not by monetary profit but by deep and creative expressions of faith, hope and love.

A follower of Jesus is one who imagines, speaks and acts the same whether in plenty or in want. Why? We follow Jesus, not the money, the stock market or the effect of technology on culture. Jesus holds the defining story for life and has all the resources to pull it off on our behalf. Like He said, we needn't worry ourselves about it.

It's a time for faith, hope and love. And it's an especially good time for musical followers of Jesus to show that they can and will make great music to God's glory, despite the stories that all is not well in the music business. It's time to focus on Jesus, on what it means to be His kind of person in this world. It's time to imagine, create, market and enjoy music with a new faith for a glorious present and future. God is who He says He is and cares for what He loves. Hold on to this idea and live in light of it.

Musical people: Be faithful, imaginative and productive. Music lovers: Support those who do this and who take following Jesus seriously—that is, who actually do what He said to do. I wonder if there aren't people reading this column right now quietly praying to God in their hearts, revealing their desires to Him, saying: "Oh God, how can I not serve You? How can I not live for You, make my music for You alone, everywhere and in everything? Jesus, grant me this great privilege to be Your kind of musical person in this world, full of faith and hope and love for You, Your people and those who don't yet know You. Oh, Spirit of the living God, fill me, come with power, wisdom and strength. Give me faith to take You at Your Word, to ignore the stories that make me fearful, unimaginative and unproductive. Help me to tell a musical story with my life that says I'm following You and nothing else."

Are you praying this prayer? If so, we will all be watching for you with eager anticipation of what God might do through you—how He might reveal that it's Him alone who raises up people to do His work, in His way, in His world. Faith, hope and love. Come on. Bring it.

Charlie Peacock is an artist, producer, author and teacher. You can reach him at peacoc_c@bellsouth.net or visit charliepeacock.com.

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CCM

HALL OF FAME

ANDRAÉ CROUCH OCTOBER 2003

This month, CCM unveils the CCM Hall of Fame. Each month, we will induct an artist who we believe deserves this honor for contributions made to Christian music. For our inaugural CCM Hall of Fame inductee, guest editor Michael W. Smith selected **Andraé Crouch**.

Though the phrase "world renowned" is frequently tossed around often these days to describe pop singers, an artist like Andraé Crouch truly epitomizes the term. Throughout his four decades of making gospel music professionally, Crouch has written hundreds of songs and sold millions of records. He and his group, the Disciples (which included his twin sister, Sandra), played sold-out concerts in 58 countries throughout Europe, Africa, the Far East and North and South America. His songs appear in hymnbooks around the world, and artists ranging from Elvis Presley to Paul Simon have recorded many of them. Andraé has been invited to work with artists, including Stevie Wonder, Madonna, Diana Ross and Michael Jackson, with whom he appeared live on the Grammy Awards telecast in 1988 for a goose bump-inducing version of "Man in the Mirror." Andraé has also made appearances everywhere from Billy Graham Crusades to "Saturday Night Live," has shared the stage with Santana and is one of only a handful of Christian artists to ever play New York's famed Carnegie Hall.

But like everyone, Andraé has had struggles. Since childhood, he has battled dyslexia, and to this day he does not sight-read music, which is amazing given that he is "one of the most gifted songwriters of our time," according to evangelist Billy Graham. Andraé has also survived a bout with cancer, and several years ago both of his parents and his brother passed away within a short period of time.

Today, Andraé (who is "around 60," although he doesn't state his exact age out of respect for his twin) continues to see his influence affecting new audiences. Artists such as Michael W. Smith and CeCe Winans are among his biggest fan, and in 1996, he was honored by them and others, including Twila Paris, Take 6 and Wayne Watson with a tribute album featuring remakes of 12 of his most popular songs. Most recently, Crouch co-wrote the title track for Winans' new album, *Throne Room* (Wellspring/INO/Epic).

Andraé was "the guy" because of the songs. And what an amazing piano player he was! I saw him in concert, too. I was the first one to buy a ticket when he came to Huntington, W.V., when I was probably 17 or 18. Of his songs, "Jesus Is The Answer" is probably my favorite, if I had to pick. Fortunately, I was able to be one of the first to pick which I'd like to do on the tribute album to Andraé. Then to actually spend time with him...

SMITTY SAYS

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

- 1997 *Pray* (Warner Alliance)
- 1996 *Tribute: The Songs of Andraé Crouch* (Warner Alliance)
- 1994 *Mercy* (Warner Alliance)

- 1991 *Volume III... The Contemporary Man* (Light)
- 1991 *Volume II... We Sing Praises* (Light)
- 1991 *Volume I... The Classics* (Light)
- 1984 *No Time to Lose* (Light)
- 1982 *Finally* (Light)
- 1982 *More of the Best* (Light)
- 1981 *Don't Give Up* (Warner Bros.)
- 1979 *I'll Be Thinking of You* (Light)
- 1978 *Live in London* (Light)
- 1976 *This Is Another Day* (Light)
- 1975 *Take Me Back* (Light)
- 1975 *Best of Andraé* (Light)
- 1973 *Live at Carnegie Hall* (Light)
- 1972 *Soulfully* (Light)
- 1971 *Keep on Singing* (Light)
- 1971 *Take the Message Everywhere* (Light)

A FEW OF ANDRAÉ'S MOST WELL-KNOWN SONGS

- "My Tribute (To God Be the Glory)"
- "The Blood Will Never Lose its Power"
- "Soon and Very Soon"
- "Through It All"
- "Jesus is the Answer"

AWARDS, ACCOLADES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Six Grammy Awards
- Multiple Dove Awards
- Academy Award nomination (for the score of *The Color Purple*, directed by Steven Spielberg)
- Contributed to soundtracks of *The Lion King*, *Free Willy* and many other major motion pictures
- Gospel Music Hall of Fame inductee, 1998
- Songs translated into 21 languages