

FOUR



THE FILMS

TRUTH, LOVE & ROCK

T-BONE:
'I PRAYED WITH BEYONCÉ'
LAURIE SMITH
OF "TRADING SPACES"

ALSO FEATURING:
EVERYDAY SUNDAY PILLAR TREE63
PLUMB STRYPER'S MICHAEL SWEET
PETRA MIRANDA STONE
SANCTUS REAL THE SWIFT

The mission of *CCM Magazine* is to move readers toward a closer walk with Jesus Christ. CCM celebrates the message of God through the ministry and impact of today's finest Christian artists using Scripture as our interpretive lens.

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COVER STORY 23

CCM celebrates rock 'n' roll with The Elms, Pillar, Kutless, Tree63, All Star United, Everyday Sunday, Women Who Rock and our picks for the 20 Greatest Christian Rock Albums of all time.

BY LIZZA CONNOR, SUE HALFORD, KAE SMITH,
SYDNEY ALEXANDER AND CHRISTA FARRIS

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BEYOND THE SPANDEX

Happy New Year! This first issue of 2003 celebrates rock 'n' roll. I love that one of my favorite bands, The Elms, is on the cover. But no band epitomizes Christian rock 'n' roll like Stryper. I recently had a conversation with Stryper's lead singer, Michael Sweet. He was honest about the band's strengths and failures. Instead of my normal banter, I wanted you to read what Michael had to say. I hope you enjoy. —Matthew

Turner: What's been going on in your life the last few years?

Sweet: I moved my family back to Massachusetts seven years ago. I took some time off from music and worked at the family business, which is a campground and a cranberry business. I needed a break. Although it was a joy to do music, and always will be, it was a tremendous amount of weight and a lot of stress. But in 1998 I recorded *Truth* and released it through my Web site in 2000. I'm now working on a worship album to be released sometime this year.

How do you think rock 'n' roll has changed the image of Christianity?

I think it's opened new doors—doors that may never have been opened otherwise. I love seeing bands like P.O.D. being bold on Ozzfest, mainstream radio and MTV.

With Stryper being the first band to receive recognition in both the Christian and mainstream markets, what would your advice be to bands that are now seeing success in both worlds?

The difficult thing about crossing over is that you're out there on all secular tours, radio, interviews—basically being dropped into war. If I could go back and change things, I would have insisted that we stay in the Word and in prayer. We [Stryper] kind of let up on that, and once we did, things kind of started to tumble. My advice



would be to follow Christ. There are going to be points where it's very difficult, but God's going to help you through it.

What was your most insane moment with Stryper?

There were many. One time we were in Australia doing an in-store appearance. There were probably 6,000 people on the street. The limo driver said, "That's for you guys." We couldn't believe it. Then the driver made the mistake of stopping right in front of where we were supposed to go in the store. And we're like, "OK, what do we do now?" So our tour manager made the decision for us to run for it. By the time we got to the door—this is no exaggeration—we were missing hair, we were scratched and our clothes were ripped off. It was like something out of a movie. Our PR guy handcuffed us and took a promo shot for the local paper. Things like that happened all the time. Just craziness.

Do you keep in pretty close contact with the other members of Stryper?

Yes. I'm not as close as I would like because I'm 3,000 miles away from the guys, but we're still close.

Do you think there will ever be any comeback appearances or things like that in the near future?

Oh my gosh, it's crazy. We get offers—crazy offers. It's constant. It's like that carrot in front of the rabbit. It's always there. But you know, when God says it's time, that's when it will happen.

Are the other members open to it?

Absolutely.

Do you ever look back on your time in Stryper and think the whole experience was surreal?

I do. I was just cleaning out my garage and going through boxes of old memories, and I was looking at old photos of myself. It didn't feel like me. It seemed like it was a different person. It's sometimes very sad. I've given this to God, but in all truthfulness, we [Stryper] kind of dropped the ball. And had we not done that, I think God would still be using the band.



Do you think fame got in the way of ministry?

Yes I do. I think we lost our focus. We were a very different band. We were out in the mainstream, and we were extremely bold. I would compare us to P.O.D. And because we were so bold and out in that

secular marketplace, I think we were more accountable. So when we did do the wrong thing and made the wrong decision, I think God—because we were so accountable—was saying, "Hey, I can't allow this to happen."

When was the first time you thought "This is it, it's over"?

Around 1991. It's not that we were doing horrible things. I don't want people to get the wrong impression. We weren't out injecting ourselves with heroin or anything like that. But we started drinking in mass quantities. But more than that, it was our whole attitude. It was kind of a rebellious state—and I speak for myself. It was just that "Ah, we'll show you" type attitude.

So does God use rock 'n' roll to change people's lives?

Yes! We saw a lot of ministry. I'm not kidding you. From 1985 to 1988, which was from *Soldiers Under Command* to *In God We Trust*, we would say the sinner's prayer from the stage almost every night. We would stand there and witness 7,000 people praying all at once. That was just amazing. We would also see people pull syringes out of their pockets, snap them in two and throw them in the trash. Or we'd get letters from people who decided to not commit suicide after hearing a Stryper song. God does use rock 'n' roll to change lives. It was just an amazing honor to be a part of such a powerful ministry.

You can e-mail Michael Sweet at msweet@capecod.net.

You can e-mail Matthew Turner at mturner@ccmcom.com.



SUPERIKIOL

Your November article on Superchic[k] was great ["Superchic[k] Throws a Light on Growing Up"]! I spent what seemed like forever trying to convince my friends that Christian music was "cool," but by listening to Superchic[k] I saw past that and focused more on the message of Christian music than its "coolness." The band is awesome, and it's time it got the recognition it deserves. Seeing them on the front of CCM helps me to keep faith that Superchic[k] is expanding and reaching the "untouched." Thank you for the article.

Holli Dunson, Nashville, AR

You rock, Holli! We got so many great letters about this story. All of us were excited to have Superchic[k] in the magazine. Everything, from the story to the photo shoot, was a fun experience.

SEX SELLS?

This is about some of the comments Superchic[k] made about Britney Spears. Now, I agree with what they said, but shouldn't they be setting the example? It's hard to take comments like that seriously when one of the band members is a Britney fan, and most importantly, when one of the female members is wearing a tight tank top, with a little belly showing and her arms spread open in one of the photos.

But the main reason I am writing to you is because of your letter "From the Editor," where you seem

to agree with what they said and you "applaud" them. Yet at the same time, in your magazine you have a huge ad with Rachael Lampa wearing a strapless dress and, worst of all, a big ad for backwardfish.com. Now did you even look at some of the shirts they are selling?

So sex sells even in CCM; it even helps sell magazines. It's a shame your magazine can't stop "applauding" for a while and rid itself of the same sexual images the secular world uses to sell.

Fin, via e-mail

Fin, can you really compare Rachael Lampa's strapless dress and the backwardfish.com's mannequin-modeled tank tops to Britney's get-as-close-as-I-can-to-naked-without-being-naked wardrobe? We think not. CCM Magazine is not about selling sex, but we "applaud" you for making your point.

THE CHICKS RULE!

I am very pleased to see Superchic[k] finally hit the cover of CCM. I bought their first CD, *Karaoke Superstars*, and fell in love with every song. I also went to one of their concerts and had a blast! They are a band truly after teenagers, which is a part of our world that really needs to be touched by God right now. Teenagers are the next generation, the leaders to come of our country! If nobody bothers to make sure we are living God-directed lives, where will our country be?

Nikcole Wiles, via e-mail

A DRAG FOR LIFEHOUSE

I was just browsing through the November 2002 "In Review: Music" section and noticed a strange coincidence. Every album you rated, except for the Lifehouse album, got an exceptional review. It's amazing, especially when I turned two pages over and found that it was hurled to the top of your charts in the first month. In your review you claimed, "the hooks are abundant, the lyrics

introspective and the choruses catchy" and yet the title of your review was "Dragging Out a Moment." After reviewing your charts it seems Stanley Climbfall was a moment meant to be "dragged out."

I'm not asking you to rate every album like it's the best that has ever hit the shelves, I'm just basically asking you to write every review just as critically as you rate the mainstream, "TRL-friendly beats."

Stephanie Vanderpool, Roxboro, NC

Thanks for the letter, Stephanie. The majority of Lifehouse album sales are actually from mainstream record stores. The band ranks at No. 1 because it landed distribution in both the Christian and mainstream music industries. If Soundscan were to only include the sales numbers in the Christian music industry, Stanley Climbfall would not be at No. 1.



REAL NICHOLE

Thank you for your article on Nichole Nordeman in the November issue ["The Bottom Line"]! Every time she is interviewed I learn more about this gifted and sincere Christian artist. I admire her for her honesty and ability to become vulnerable with her audience about the struggles and joys found within the Christian faith. It's what makes her real.

Hailey Shafer, Rockwall, TX

Nichole is indeed honest and vulnerable, but did you know she is also a world-champion bull rider? Just kidding!

SINCERE THANKS

I just wanted to shoot you a note regarding your November letter "From the Editor." What a great encouragement and challenge. I have recently struggled with the contradiction between the life of righteousness that we are called to pursue and the life of compromise that seems to surround us, especially in the pop media.

When it's wrapped in cool marketing or hip and edgy writing, it's easy to minimize the reality of sin and its consequences. It's all too easy to forget that God hates sin when I like the message that He love sinners so much better!

It's easy to see this in the extremes, like Christina Aguilera's *Rolling Stone* cover and new video. It's harder to remember where the line is on the more subtle issues like promiscuity, alternative lifestyles or even pride and greed.

Thanks for the reminder that

because we are sinners loved by Christ, we should choose to walk away from sin and messages that glamorize sin.

Anne Mabry, via e-mail

We're with you, Anne. All of us need reminding of this once in a while.

LOVIN' LINCOLN

I just wanted to applaud your November article on Lincoln Brewster ["Trading Fame for Faith"]. Even though it was about life on the road, which I will probably never be a part of, it was encouraging to read a story of a guy who really went through a transformation through God.

Paul Sohn, via e-mail

We welcome your comments. Address letters to Feedback, CCM Magazine, 104 Woodmont Blvd., Ste. 300, Nashville, TN 37205; fax 615/385-4112, attn: Feedback; or e-mail feedback@ccmmagazine.com. Always include your full name, address and phone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

INFO

BRINGING THE BAND TO YOU

Not enough Christian music artists playing in your area? You can take control of the problem by learning how to book a band in your hometown.

It's Anytown, U.S.A. Newsboys, Bebo Norman and Sonicflood are playing shows in towns two to four hours away, but no band has ever played your town before. Why not?

My mother, Laurie Bartenhagen, wondered the same thing nine years ago after attending a dc talk concert with her youth group in a neighboring city. She took control and eventually brought in 12 concerts to her small North Dakota town.

"In our town, there weren't any Christian events where you could take a youth group," Bartenhagen says. "When you travel to another city, it becomes cost prohibitive when you figure hotel rooms for an entire youth group into the equation. I decided to see if a band would come to us instead."

Bartenhagen said that before contacting an artist's booking agent, potential promoters should conduct extensive research. "Talk to local Christian

bookstores, Christian radio stations and youth group leaders to see what bands are popular in your area," Bartenhagen says. "Geoff Moore was extremely well received in our city, but a more urban artist like John Reuben might be better received in another area. You have to get to know your demographic."

According to goa-inc.com, Internet home to booking company Greg Oliver Agency, promoters should allow 14 weeks to properly promote a show. However, many shows are booked at least six months in advance, especially package tour dates.

Bartenhagen's church backed her concerts, but there are other creative ideas to get financial backing and reduce total costs. "Find someone else in the community who really believes in what you are doing," recommends David Lipscomb of Overflow Management. "People are out there who want to be involved but may not know what to do."

All the Hidden Costs

Bringing in a concert costs more than just the fee paid to the band. Before deciding ticket prices, be sure you have calculated the total cost involved. "The mistake many new promoters make is that they are not realistic about concert sales," says Todd White of Mike Atkins Management. "Some never even do the math to find out if a sellout breaks them even." Here are some expenses you may encounter when booking a concert:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Advertising (radio, posters, TV) | Sound/Lights technicians |
| Venue (auditorium) | Electrician |
| Clean-up crew | Load-in crew |
| Printing tickets | Travel (for fly-in dates) |
| Security | Hotel for bands |
| Spotlights | Catering |
| Sound system | Insurance |

COMPILED BY M.B.

PHOTO: MARTHA NEUMAN



Once demographic data has been collected and financial backing has been established, look through album cover booklets and start contacting booking agents. Many booking agencies have Web sites and list their artists and tour schedules online. "When an artist is on tour, you get an entire package: headline act, opening act, sound and lights," says Bartenhagen. "But with a tour date, you have to take the band when it is touring through your area. When you do a fly-in date or a one-off, it's more flexible; but you get only one artist, and you have to provide a sound system. In a smaller city, this can be difficult."

Once a potential artist has been determined, carefully read the contract and rider, which explains all of the band's technical specifications. "Their needs aren't optional," says Bartenhagen. "While they will try to work with what you have, you have to communicate with the management company, not just make decisions on your own."

"It's also important to check the calendar for conflicting area events," says Bartenhagen. "If a nearby city is having a concert that night or if there is a school sports event, you don't want to set yourself up to fail."

Promoters should also determine their mission statement and why they are willing to make the immense effort to bring in a show. "Our mission was to provide quality Christian entertainment to youth, both saved and unsaved, in our area," says Bartenhagen. "Prayer was at the center of everything we did, from when we called the booking agent until the band pulled away from the venue after the show. If you are bringing in Christian concerts, it's important to constantly be in prayer, reminding yourself of the focus."

MARCIA BARTENHAGEN

POP/ROCK NEWS BY CHRISTA FARRIS



NASH

THINGS THAT MAKE YOU GO 'HMMMMMM'

CHRISTIAN MUSIC INDUSTRY
—FRIEND OR FOE?

Sixpence's Leigh Nash surprised Christian fans with recent comments in *Pulse Magazine*: "In 80 percent of the press written about us, 'Christian' is there somewhere, often used sarcastically, and it's so irritating. I hate it. It's always a banner, and we just don't wanna carry that around anymore."

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

• *Maxim Blender* recently gave positive three-star reviews to Sixpence's *Divine Discontent* and Souljahz's *The Fault Is History*. Even more surprising is when the reviewer referred to Sixpence as a "former contemporary Christian band."



SOULJAHZ



HUNTER

• Rollingstone.com recently awarded some virtual props to DJ Andy Hunter by calling his album, *Exodus*, "one of the year's ultimate sensory experiences." Kudos!

CHRISTA'S TOP 5:

Forget Letterman's Top 10 list. This month I offer you the five answers I never want to hear again in an artist interview.

5—"This project was the next logical step for me." *As opposed to the next illogical step? Whaatt?*

4—"These are the songs the Lord gave me to write." *While I believe God certainly does inspire, would God actually write some of the bad songs that make it to Christian radio?*

3—A variation of the following: "Feel free to edit and make me sound better, smarter, wittier, better looking." *Oops, not the last one.*

2—"Is this going to be for the cover story?" *I wish it were, but I promise I'll let you know.*

1—"Although pertinent and true, the No. 1 answer I never want to hear in another artist interview again is... (drum roll please) "Worship is a lifestyle." *After that, the person usually elaborates by saying, "No matter if it's taking out the garbage, loving my wife and kids or feeding our fish, worship is a lifestyle."*

ON THE FLY: TALES OF WOE

VICTIM No. 1

CLIFF YOUNG OF CAEDMON'S CALL
Cause of Accident: Skateboard

When he's not on the road, skateboarding serves as a source of leisure for the Caedmon's vocalist. One particular day, "feeling old and out of shape," he decided to try skateboarding by a "cool drainage ditch" near his Houston, Texas, home. Not paying much attention to the rain from the night before and a huge pile of sand at the bottom of the ditch, Young pitched head-first and hands-first into the sludge. To the singer's embarrassment, the episode occurred two days before the launch of the band's fall tour. Thinking he had only a minor sprain, a doctor later confirmed he'd broken his wrist. For the duration of the tour, Young sported a cast and recruited opening act Randall Goodgame to play guitar in his place. Look for Caedmon's new CD, *Back Home*, to hit stores Feb. 4.

VICTIM No. 2

AUDIO ADRENALINE'S MARK STUART
Cause of Accident: Strained vocal cords

After getting sick and losing his voice, the AA frontman was forced to let several of his "Festival con Dios" tour partners cover the band's songs at a recent show in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Among those helping with singing chores were The Benjamin Gate's Adrienne Liesching and Tree63's John Ellis, who taped cheat sheets to the stage floor to get by. According to tourmate Aaron Spiro, Stuart did scream a word or two from time to time to offer assistance.

VICTIM No. 3

MICHAEL W. SMITH
Cause of Accident: Pesky deer stand

While details are scant on why he was testing out a deer stand way before hunting season, Smith was sporting an arm cast at his recent platinum party for *Worship* after his fall from the aforementioned stand. For the record, Smith says his arm is doing fine, and he was "just trying to follow the rules by keeping the cast on."

NEWS TICKER

>>> EXTRA EXTRA: RELIENT K'S NEW AIR CONDITIONER FAN CLUB PROVIDES COOL BENEFITS • REBECCA ST. JAMES' GREATEST >>>
>>> HITS TRACK LISTING TO BE INFLUENCED BY FANS • SKILLET'S PUBLICIST SETS RECORD STRAIGHT: THAT WASN'T JOHN >>>

POP/ROCK NEWS

STUDIO BUZZ:

- **Sonicflood** is currently working with producer **Mark Byrd** on its upcoming release, tentatively titled *Cry Holy*, which is slated to bow March 11.
- Those crazy rockers in **Relient K** are also logging a little studio time as they prep a third album just in time for March Madness. No word on whether they'll be covering any TV theme songs this time around.



SONICFLOOD IN THE STUDIO



VELASQUEZ

- At press time, singer/songwriter (actress/Latin pop diva, etc.) **Jaci Velasquez** was putting the finishing touches on a follow-up to *Crystal Clear*, titled *Unspoken*. *CCM Magazine* staff recently paid a visit to Velasquez's studio to hear her progress. Expect a full report in next month's column.

WEB LINKS YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT

- Is your lunchbox lacking personality? Well we've got the cure for fans of P.O.D. Now you can nosh with the boys of Southtown. Check it out at necaonline.com/images/P.O.D.Lbx.jpg
- Tired of hearing the William Tell overture when your cell phone rings? How about dc talk's "Jesus Freak" or Jars of Clay's "Fly"? Here's a link to a bunch of Christian ringtones you can purchase and download to your cell to avoid the monotony. Christianmobile.com/

in stores now

the-swift.com
 flickerrecords.com
 thegoshow.org
 BOOKING: vergebooking.com
 615-778-0035



the **swift**

See the Swift on tour with Audio Adrenaline, Mercy Me and Kutless Spring 2003

URBANNEWS BY TIM A. SMITH

Lights, Camera, Action!

FRED HAMMOND RECORDS LIVE VIDEO/DVD.

Capitalizing on the continued popularity of his latest release, *Speak Those Things: POL Chapter 3*, **Fred Hammond** served as host to a free concert in the Grand Ballroom at Chicago's Navy Pier. Used as a vehicle to tape a video, Hammond performed many songs off the current project and included performances from a number of artists on Hammond's own label, F. Hammond Music, including **Shea Norman** and Chicago native **Joann Rosario**. The DVD, "Speak Those Things: POL Chapter 3, Live in Chicago," will be available Feb. 18.



HAMMOND



KIZ CHARIZMATIC

NEW 'KIZ' ON THE BLOCK

MIXING IT ON A NEW LABEL

Veteran hip-hop producer **Kiz Charizmatic** is set to release his new project, *Rawibentic*, on the Myx label, headed up by another veteran of the Christian hip-hop/dance/house music scene, **Scott Blackwell**. Set to drop Feb. 4, the project will feature guest appearances by **LA Symphony** members **Flynn Adam Atkins** and **Pigeon John**. Regarding the project, Charizmatic shares, "Rawibentic is inspired by my struggle to get closer to God without any outside interference. I was illuminated by Romans 14, realizing that we have an obligation to God to live responsibly."

COMING TOGETHER

NEW COMPILATION TO RELEASE

Texas-based SGR Music and MuchLuvv Studios joined forces to kick out a hot compilation, *Da South Screw*. Some of the artists on the project include **Stikk, Tre9, SGR, Lil RAS** and **TruVine**, among others.

A NEW VINE

GRAPETREE INTRODUCES NEW ARTIST, NEW PROJECT

Be on the lookout in February for the new, much-anticipated project from Grapetree Records' artist



Prime Minister. Entitled *Primordial*, the project features 14 new songs geared to giving your bass woofers a good workout.

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NEWS TICKET continued

>>> COOPER IN THOSE KEYSTONE LIGHT BEER TV ADS • TOBYMAC'S VIDEO FOR "IRENE" ADDED TO MAINSTREAM VIDEO SHOW >>>
>>> SILETTA, STARTS NEW LABEL; SIGNS FOUR BANDS • AUSSIE BAND BEANBAG CALLS IT QUITS • CORNERSTONE MUSIC >>>



ON THE SET OF TO END ALL WARS

MOVIE UPDATE: TO END ALL WARS

THIS POWERFUL DRAMA IS FINALLY GETTING ITS DEBUT.

"It's been an intense experience, to say the least. It was about a two-and-a-half-year process to produce this movie, and absolutely nothing about making this movie has been easy," says director **David Cunningham**.

He's not kidding. After losing a distributor and then seeing the release date of his award-winning drama, *To End All Wars*, change more than once, the movie finally had its L.A. premiere in December. Receiving positive reviews from both the Hollywood trades and Christian critics, it will now begin to roll into additional theaters nationwide this month.

Based on the inspirational life story of former Princeton University chaplain Ernest Gordon's time in a P.O.W. camp in World War II, Cunningham describes his movie as "a very unreligious portrayal of the gospel. Some Christians will have a problem with that. But to show the level of forgiveness, you have to show the depth of suffering."

What's up next for the director? Possibly directing a movie for none other than **Steven Spielberg**. In the meantime, find out more about Cunningham and his movie at toendallwars.com.



CUNNINGHAM



PELFREY

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH DANNY PELFREY, TV'S 'MUSIC MAN'

You may not know his name, but you can probably name one of Emmy-nominated composer **Danny Pelfrey's** tunes. He's written music for hit shows like "Felicity" and movies such as *Joseph: King of Dreams*. Now he is currently doing double duty as the weekly composer for "Strong Medicine" on the Lifetime channel and on NBC's new hit drama "American Dreams." Each week he provides the underscore, or background music, for both series in addition to producing new musical arrangements. "American Dreams" is such a perfect fit for me. It's also the type of show that has the kind of values I identify with," says Pelfrey.

The busy composer adds, "I thank God every day for the opportunities I have received in my business and my personal life." And when the studio workload gets a little crazy? Danny responds, "To quote Philipians, 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.'" To hear more of Pelfrey's music, you can go to his Web site at dannypelfrey.com.

TRUE CONFESSIONS OF A HOLLYWOOD ACTOR

FOR ACTOR GEORGE NEWBERN, THE NARROW ROAD IN HOLLYWOOD HAS BEEN A HARD ONE.

With a long list of TV and movie credits to his name, including his most recent role as "Owen Frank" on the NBC show "Providence," actor **George Newbern** (*Father of the Bride*, "Bull") is no stranger to the ups and downs of life in Hollywood. And Newbern doesn't mind admitting he struggles with balancing his work with the occasional crisis of faith and slight need for control.

"It's tough depending on God for your future, your daily bread, your financial situation and all those other big unknowns in your life. Especially [in Hollywood] when things seem so uncertain, I try to control the things I think I can control in my personal life. Then, every time, God says, 'You don't really have an aspect of your life that I don't own.'"

The actor adds, "So many times I've felt like I'm not a Christian anymore because I fall away sometimes. But I always come back. I often think, 'Man, I thought this was going to be much easier than it really is.' It's been a real process of me giving over each area of my life slowly, like holding onto it with my fingernails."



MELINA KANAKAREDES AND GEORGE NEWBERN ON THE SET OF "PROVIDENCE"

making a difference

FINDING GOLD ON THE STREETS OF PHILADELPHIA

Students from all over the world learn a valuable lesson in evangelism from one of the most poverty-stricken communities in the United States.

Greg Feldi would like to live in the country, somewhere near good soil and a trout stream. "All of us hate the city," the ex-sheep farmer insists, referring to himself, his wife, Deb, and their three children. And looking out the window of their home for the past 12 years, it's easy to see why.

Broken beer bottles and torn candy wrappers litter the sidewalk by the Feldis' front door. A closer look reveals piles of used needles, heroin vials and other drug paraphernalia. But the trash isn't just at the Feldis' front door. Every weekend, the family picks up gallons of trash from the park across the street.

When they first moved to the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia in 1990, the Feldis quickly grew accustomed to more than just trash on their doorstep. Every evening, the Feldis can view 75 percent of the drug deals in the entire city just outside their living room window. But this family sees beyond what a newcomer might observe at first glance.

"This place is untapped," Feldi describes. "It's like a gold mine [for missions]."

Feldi has long viewed the world with atypical eyes. Twelve years ago, when he was a youth pastor at a rural church, his congregation saw an enthusiastic and growing youth program. Feldi, however, felt that the students were spiritually dead. "We asked God, 'What are we doing wrong?'" he remembers. "And



STREET MISSIONS GROUPS IN ACTION



God said, 'Take them to a prison.'"

In the prison, Feldi struck gold. "The kids entered into a new realm out of sheer fright," he laughs, "praying and seeing God work and depending on Him totally."

Years later, freshly settled in Kensington, Feldi remembered that youth group and wondered if they still had the passion those initial prison visits had sparked. He called and invited a few from his former youth group to visit. Word spread, and soon 10 or 15 now-college students were coming every weekend

to volunteer in the neighborhood.

That was the beginning of the Urban Resource Center for Evangelism, which in the past 12 years has hosted over 600 groups from all over the world and brought thousands of volunteers to Philadelphia. "You can predict it like clockwork," Feldi says, describing the experience of first-time visitors. "You tell them, 'We're going out on the street—eyeball to eyeball with people.' They say they're scared; they didn't come for that. Finally they go out and do it. And without fail they

say, 'We want to go again!'"

But Feldi still has no idea why such a needy place catalyzes a spiritual awakening for so many who come there. "All I can say," he concludes, "is that it's harder to witness boldly when you're home with your friends. Here, you're trusting God totally for

every word you say, even for your own life and safety. In that environment kids get turned on to serving. Anytime that happens—whether it's cleaning the park, sharing the gospel or painting over graffiti—there's always joy." **LISA TEDDER**

quote this

"All the blessings we enjoy are divine deposits."—JOHN CALVIN

"Obstacles don't have to stop you. If you run into a wall, don't turn around and give up. Figure out how to climb it, go through it or work around it."—MICHAEL JORDAN

"I often wonder if religion is the enemy of God. It's almost like religion is what happens when the Spirit has left the building."—BONO

"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

—JIM ELLIOT

COMPILED BY DANIEL EAGAN

Send suggestions for Quote This to quotes@ccmcom.com. Please include the source of the quote.

message board

CCM Magazine asked readers: "What New Year's resolution are you most likely to actually keep?"

I would probably make a resolution to spend more quality time with friends and family and not allow the busy schedule of everyday life to stand in the way.
—Michelle Pitts, Millersville, MD

To always smile at people when walking by... as well as to eat

chocolate every day!
—Jasmine Light, Shelburne, Ontario, Canada

The only one I ever keep is to meet new people.
—Britney Thurston, Hamilton, OH

Anything not having to do with diet and exercise!
—Sarah Daniel, Salinas, CA

The New Year's resolution I'm most likely to keep is to read my Bible more. I make this

resolution every year, but this year I'm really gonna try hard.
—Paul Keller, Oswayo, PA

I never keep my New Year's resolutions, which is why I never make them!
—Andrew Slate, Cramerton, NC

Look for your chance to respond to the **Message Board** question each month in CCM's electronic Christian music newsletter. To sign up to receive the newsletter, go to CCMmagazine.com.



THE SWIFT

BAND 411 Britt Edwards—26 (piano, lead vocals); Mike Simons—21 (bass, vocals); Chris Byers—26 (guitar); Trae Drose—24 (drums)

HOME STATE North Carolina

ROAD RULES The Swift recently completed a leg on the fall "Festival con Dios" tour and can be seen next spring touring with Audio Adrenaline and MercyMe on the "Go Show" tour.

NAME CHANGE Until this year the band was known as Puddleglum—a name taken from *The Silver Chair* of C.S. Lewis' Narnia series. According to Edwards, "Bands with weird names are a lot of times associated with hardcore bands." The new name was Simons' idea. On the Puddleglum album, *Strange* (2000), Simons and Edwards recorded a hidden track, which was attributed to "The Swift." So, when the band needed a new name, the guys didn't have to look far.

GOAL To raise the bar for other Christian artists. "When you do a concert, there's only so much ministry you can do," Edwards says. "The Lord has always led us to do more retreats and camps and spend more time with the people. I don't necessarily think that Christian music has lost its focus; I just think that as a band and as ministers, we need to make sure we're making more of an impact than just leading a devotion and praying."

WALKING THE WALK The Swift plans to make contact with youth leaders during the spring tour and then spend the rest of the year attending those leaders' churches and performing concerts, engaging in Disciple Now weekend retreats and teaching seminars. Says Edwards, "Hopefully we can use our music as a hook and bait to get in there and do something."

BY STEPHANIE OTTOSEN

onestowatch



SANCTUS REAL

BAND 411 Matt Hammit—23 (guitar, vocals); Chris Rohman—22 (lead guitar); Steve Goodrum—23 (bass); Mark Graalman—24 (drums). Together since 1996, SR won a Best Band contest sponsored by a classic rock radio station, beating out 75 other hopefuls.

CURRENT DIGS Toledo, Ohio

NEW ALBUM *Say It Loud* (Sparrow) released Dec. 24. Produced by Pete Stewart (Tait, tobyMac), the album features straight-up rock 'n' roll.

FAV CUTS Musically, Hammit's favorite is "Say It Loud," the first single. "It's energetic, fun and great to perform," he says. But when it comes to lyrics, "After Today" wins. "I wrote the song after graduating high school in 1998, and we've recorded it three times now because we really love it," says Hammit.

ROAD MAP Considering the number of mishaps, there's no chance of these boys getting big egos after their first nationwide tour with "Festival con Dios." According to Hammit, the band's almost-new van "blew up" in San Francisco, and after taking it to a dealer and renting a car, a deer broadsided the rental. As if that weren't enough, two weeks later Hammit dislocated his shoulder while on a motorcycle joyride with Robby McQuary—"Extreme Sports" rider on the con Dios circuit.

TOURING PLUS "My favorite part about touring has been this incredible family we've developed on the road. Everyone really encourages and supports each other," says Hammit.

ROCK 'N' ROLL IDOL Steven Tyler (Aerosmith)

DREAM TOURMATE Weezer

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION Get in shape. "That's the one thing I'd really like to do," says Hammit, "I just struggle with discipline."

ROCK STAR 101

Recently I attended a concert where, in the course of one song, I saw the essence of rock 'n' roll, or at least what I'd always perceived as rock 'n' roll, illustrated in a tangible way. Steven Tyler, the 50-plus Aerosmith frontman, swaggered on the stage in white leather pants and a sweat-soaked American flag T-shirt. He nodded to guitarist Joe Perry to begin plunking out a familiar riff. In the first few distorted notes, the audience recognized the song as one of the group's greatest hits over its 30-year career.

This massive sea of people, from teenagers to grandmothers, began rocking back and forth in unison, pumping fists in the air, waving lighters and singing along with each word.

*Sing with me/Sing for the year/
Sing for the laughter/Sing for the tears...*

For 10 minutes the crowd was lost in the optimistic anthem. And, for your average rock star, the view must have been sweet.

Evidenced by the crowd composition, old-school stadium rock is popular again. Ousting the likes of Britney and 'NSync is a hip wave of rock nostalgia. Termed "neo-garage bands," as both style and sound pay homage to the late '60s/early '70s rock explosion, the rash of "The" bands are leading the revival. Among the new class are The Vines, the White Stripes and the Strokes. Even classic artists like The Rolling Stones and Bruce Springsteen have re-emerged to claim covers of music magazines and rattle arenas the world over.

Within the Christian music realm, a similar wave is rising. For the first time since the original "Jesus music" explosion in the early '70s, there's a roster of rock acts on par and paralleling what's happening in the mainstream. Kutless, All Star United, The Benjamin Gate, The Elms and others featured in CCM's rock issue encompass the look, attitude and musical prowess to compete on such a level.

And the mainstream is taking notice.

Perhaps it's due to fledgling corporate connections. Christian labels, bought out by or absorbed under the umbrella of large, mainstream entertainment conglomerates like BMG and AOL/Time Warner, may have an easier time placing an act on MTV or pairing a Christian band with a notable labelmate *a la* the recent 12 Stones/Creed combo.

Or maybe the mainstream music execs have noticed the rising sales of Christian music over recent years when other genres are in a slump.

Nonetheless, the music is good. The message, however, is what sets Christian rockers apart from their "live fast, die young, leave a good-looking corpse" contemporaries.

Says up-and-comer Owen Thomas of The Elms, "Anybody who wants to sit down and convince me that to be a legit rock 'n' roll band you gotta do drugs, you gotta party, you gotta die young, [is] going to be in for an all night conversation because I don't think that's the essence of rock 'n' roll."

Thomas surmises that rock is about revolution.

CCM's featured rock artists are touting a concept that's a radical redefinition of the oft-glamorized standard. While the guitars are still loud and electric, and the message is still one of rebellion, these men and women want to prove that the truth found in Jesus' teaching is real revolution.

Read on as these artists continue to redefine. **L.C.**



The Elms, All Star United, Kutless and Pillar (top to bottom)

Being young and playing loud are just part of the gig.
Taking risks is the reason they rock.

THE ELMS

BY LIZZA CONNOR



WOMEN WHO ROCK

The very nature of rock is risk. It's danger," says The Elms 24-year-old bandleader, Owen Thomas, pondering his definition of what really *is* the essence of rock 'n' roll in a dimly-lit, empty Lincoln Park pizzeria. "Things like spontaneity and soul come with rock," he says, four hours pre-show to opening for Jars of Clay at Chicago's vibey Park West club.

According to this opinionated frontman, it's the "industry" that has yanked that soulful element out for the sake of "quality control."

"The risk factor is what bodes so poorly with the Christian crowd," he says, wiping his mouth politely with a paper napkin. Band members Chris Thomas, drums, Keith Miller, bass, and Thomas Daugherty, guitars, nod in agreement.

"In the old days of Christian rock, there was no 'Christian industry,'" Owen says. "It was just rock bands that talked about spiritual issues and matters of the heart... It used to be [the mentality that], 'Some of us [bands] sing about God, and some of us don't. Some of us love truth; some of us don't give a crap.'"

"During that era, [bands] were still judged on the music. People would go buy an REO Speedwagon record and a Petra record at the same time."

Obviously, The Elms prefers the old-school approach, and everything from the band's look, sound and message is a testament to such nostalgia. Its current priority is making good music, which, in the guys' view, must be in place first in order to further the message of Christ to an audience they aspire to reach.

Today the foursome is easygoing and goofy, like a band of teenage brothers. Groomed in up-and-comer rock star digs, complete with Beatlesque floppy brown hair, lots of trendy denim, Converse and corduroy, the boys are pin-up worthy—a marketing department's dream. They're laughing at each other's jokes one minute, and the next they're articulate scholars of rock.

Owen isn't knocking the [Christian music] "industry," per se, he says. His own band currently has a foot in both worlds—playing bars like the Chicago haute one night and a youth convention the next in support of its recent release *Truth, Soul, Rock 'n' Roll* (Sparrow).

"I don't know if there are any Christian rock bands that have ever done what we're attempting to do in the sense that I want to go out there and just really make this a legit rock experience. [I want] to prove to people that truth and rock 'n' roll can co-exist, and the very nature—the risk—of rock can exist with a loving God."

Perhaps The Elms' definition of "risk" makes all the difference in its mission to alter the *status quo*.

"I'm not talking about the frivolous, boneheaded element of danger where there might be a naked girl onstage tonight or that the band leader might come out drunk," he clarifies. "I'm talking about the element that I might say something that rubs you the wrong way and purges your heart toward the things you might be doing wrong," Owen says.

Purging hearts? That's not a term heard very often in the context of rock 'n' roll. Continues Thomas, who cites The Stones' Mick Jagger, The Who's Pete Townshend and Queen's Freddie Mercury as his most inspiring influences, "When I go on stage every night, I'm trusting God that spiritual things are going to happen."

The band's burden of proof, that truth and rockdom can indeed co-exist, is evidenced on its sophomore release. Lyrically, the gospel message is subtly sprinkled throughout the 12 songs, and that message is couched in a

Tiffany (Arbuckle) Lee—Simply known as "Plumb" these days, a couple of critically-acclaimed projects brought this former backup singer into the spotlight. A woman of contrasts, Plumb exudes Audrey Hepburn's style and Jonatha Brooke's brand of confessional songwriting. With lyrics that discuss the joys and trials of life as a Christian and even touch on topics like abuse, Plumb isn't afraid to tackle difficult territory. Now signed to Curb Records, she is putting the finishing touches on a new album titled *Beautiful Lumps of Coal*, which is set to release in February. Look for an exclusive interview with Plumb on CCMmagazine.com.



sound that's classic rock 'n' roll. The album is mature, considering its 20-something-aged members; and it's full of big, crunchy guitars, catchy, sing-a-long choruses and Owen's confident, emotive vocals.

Truth, Soul, Rock 'n' Roll is a departure from The Elms 2000 Brit-pop debut, *The Big Surprise*, but band members say they've found their sound with this record, and it's a style they'll be sticking with.

While the fields are ripe for any young rock band given the current trend, The Elms insist that it wasn't a conscious leap onto the revivalist bandwagon. "We don't feel like we sound like The Hives or The Vines," says bassist (and band "sex appeal," according to the others) Keith Miller. "We feel if this new movement is helping us out at all, it's from people like [Tom] Petty and [Bruce] Springsteen. We've

CCM's Top 20 Greatest Rock Albums

CCM Magazine's staff accepted the arduous task of ranking the best 20 rock CDs in Christian music history. From P.O.D. to Petra, see how our list compares against yours, and check out the complete explanation behind our choices at CCMmagazine.com.



Karaoke Superstars,
Superchic[k]
(Inpop)



Faith Hope Love,
King's X
(Megaforce/Atlantic)



Mission of Mercy,
DeGamo & Key
(Power Discs)



This Beautiful Mess,
Sixpence None
the Richer (REX)



Big Town,
Ashley Cleveland
(Atlantic)

got the youthful presence of the new bands, but the songs we have to offer are more in line with the older acts."

Disclaimers aside, it should be noted that The Elms have been five years in the making, and each member's respective musical roots stretch to childhood. Brothers Owen and Chris, and boyhood pal Daugherty, formed the band in '97 after a string of go-nowhere musical side projects. After releasing several independent projects, they garnered the attention of Sparrow Records and signed with the label in '99. Miller joined the band a year later, just before The Elms' debut released.

Since then, the boys have clocked ample time on the road, honing their skills at more than 150 dates a year, including a stint with "Festival con Dios," a recent eight-date run with legendary guitarist Peter Frampton and opening a string of shows for Jars of Clay.

Evident to any observer, whether stage side or one-on-one with the band, is The Elms' passion for the genre. The members will tell you that sonic quality must be on an equal par with what's communicated lyrically.

"We want to go out and be a good band for the sake of people knowing what God is worth to us," Owen says. "He's worth our faithfulness and worth offering our best. We try to put people in the moment with us [so they can] see that we've been cheated on, lied to and let down, but the only consistency in all of that is God's faithfulness."

Audiences like the one they'll entertain tonight at Park West, where Elvis Costello and Beck recently played, are what really drive the band on the road.

"That audience is a music audience that's discriminating. They'll look at a band onstage, and their instincts are, 'If this band isn't good, then I don't care [what they

continued on page 27

ALLSTAR
UNITED



On the Road Again

ALL STAR UNITED FINDS HUMOR AND MINISTRY ON THE ROAD.

"Anybody who says it's glorious to be in a rock band has not actually been on the road for 10 years," laughs All Star United's leader singer and founder, Ian Eskelin. "It gets a little old, losing all your bags in Belfast and trying to find them when they're actually in Rome."

But Eskelin is quick to point out that connecting with a different audience every night is what keeps him energized and in touch with his ministry. "I will never tire of the adrenaline rush [I get] when I'm pouring out my soul and being honest with the crowd," he says. "But at the same time, during that outpouring, I'm being filled up again by the Holy Spirit. It's a really awesome moment."

However, life on the road for those traveling with All Star can be a little dangerous as well, shares Eskelin. "We actually left one guy—who shall go unnamed— asleep on a plane, and the plane started to pull out again. I guess he woke up right before they were about to taxi onto the runway, and they brought the plane back!" says Eskelin. "You try and create fun, especially when you're seeing the same scenarios every single day," he laughs.

Having played more than a thousand shows worldwide in 15 countries since he founded All Star United in 1996—not including the shows he played as a solo artist before forming the band—Eskelin has certainly seen his fair share of planes, trains and automobiles. And even though it might be, as Eskelin puts it, "hard to express the entire New Testament in a three-minute rock song," he recognizes that the stage is a platform from where he can at least share his own life in Christ through music. "The ministry of All Star United is to present the struggles and give some sort of direction in an honest and simple way, and that direction is toward Jesus Christ. And I think we're fulfilling our ministry." **SUE HALFORD**

For more information on All Star United, check out the band's Web site at allstarunited.com.



25



Only Visiting This Planet, Larry Norman (Street Level)

24



Great Lengths, PFR (Sparrow)

23



King of Fools, Delirious (Sparrow)

22



Going Public, Newsboys (Star Song)

21



Vinyl Confessions, Kansas (Sony/Columbia)

The Elms, continued from page 26

have to say],” comments Owen. For audiences like that, the band members will spend their days off practicing in their Seymour, Indiana-based garage, Owen says.

And what they’ve discovered is that it’s an audience by and large outside the church.

While the guys say they feel most “purposed” onstage—outside of the Christian industry—some of their songs are full of messages aimed squarely at reformation inside the church.

Rollicking, Townshend-tinged track, “Speaking in Tongues” is the most obvious example.

*Everybody speaking in tongues/
We gotta speak in love/Talk all day/
But it’s what you show...*

“A lot of people are going to read those words and be

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PILLAR

Rocking Steady

PILLAR WANTS TO ROCK THE MAINSTREAM WITH ITS MESSAGE.

While a lazy music critic might dismiss Pillar as just another addition to the nü metal movement, its music isn’t another P.O.D. knockoff or Limp Bizkit clone. With intricate guitar lines woven around lyrics clearly communicating a Christian message, this Dove Award-winning band may not be Christian music’s best-kept secret for much longer.

“Something big is going to happen this next year,” lead singer Rob Beckley predicts. “We’ve never had the notion of, ‘Hey, we’re going to go out there and play in the mainstream,’ but have simply walked

through the doors that God’s opened. Yet ever since *Fireproof* came out this past year, we’ve had every mainstream label call us.”

And like a baseball player waiting to be recruited for the big leagues, musical scouts from Atlantic, Columbia and the like have been checking out Pillar’s shows on the recent leg of “Festival con Dios.”

“We want to take the Christian band going mainstream to a whole other level where it hasn’t been before,” Beckley says. “We really look up to P.O.D., Blindside and Chevelle; but if this happens for us, we want to take it up a notch lyrically and take that message out to more people than we’ve ever been able to before.”

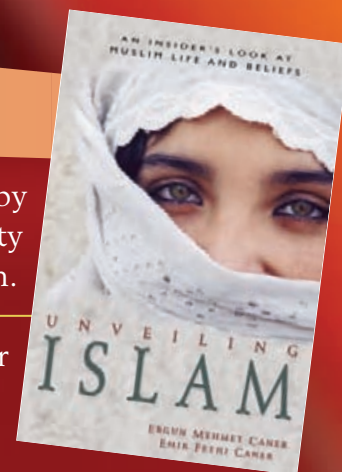
With exciting prospects down the pike, the band, influenced most by Prayer Chain in the early days, has only one professional goal according to Beckley: “to write the best music we can while never backing down from our message.”

CHRISTA FARRIS

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THE DMZ • Jeanette Windle



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College Dropouts with a Plan

THESE FORMER MALLRATS ARE STICKING TO THEIR ROOTS.

The Elms, continued from page 27

offended, like I'm chastising," says Owen.

"Well, I am. I'm not interested in the church that believes that the crux of its worth is what takes place inside the four walls. I know so many churches that think they're so active and relevant because they have a great Easter pageant, a huge choir or a thriving Sunday School.

"None are inherently wrong. But for a church to assume that the gospel fulfilled is what takes place when people [congregate to hear] the gospel, I just don't think that's truth."

Owen tends to use the word *truth* loosely, but it's evident by the intensity with which he speaks now that he's wrestled with the concept before.

"The mark of a good church is what takes place outside the walls of the church," he explains. "When those people in the body of Christ... are in every way innovating how to reach out to people and love people relentlessly... everybody

understands love. There's something intriguing about love, especially when you don't deserve it. That's what I think the church needs to be doing every day."

Eight hours have passed since the band and I began our exploration of the genre that spawned the original American idols. Meanwhile, the time has been spent setting up equipment, soundchecking, entertaining a flat crowd of 400 and shaking

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WOMEN WHO ROCK

Adrienne Liesching—With her bright orange, spiky hair that's been about every color under the sun, The Benjamin Gate's frontwoman recently continued playing a "Festival con Dios" gig even when she sprained her ankle. Now that's dedication! With a knack for onstage rock 'n' roll showmanship and a gentle spirit offstage, her stage presence and distinctive voice recall Garbage's Shirley Manson, with a hopeful take on life inspired by her relationship with Christ. Learn more about Liesching and The Benjamin Gate at benjamingate.com.

The Dynamic Duo of Tricia and Melissa Brock—Sisters in a band called Superchick[k], you can't help but notice that Tricia's look and stage demeanor could be mistaken for the younger sister of No Doubt's Gwen Stefani. While they have a chemistry that only sisters can have while singing and performing, it's quickly evident that these women have identities clearly their own. With lyrics encouraging teens to just be themselves, these sisters are a "two-girl revolution" that's certainly a rockin' combination. Check out more information at superchick.net.

You never know what dropping out of college and working in a mall can do for a career. Four out of the five members of Oregon-based rock group Kutless were attending Warner Pacific College when they dropped out to pursue their music full time. The fifth member, James Mead (drummer), had recently joined the band and was working at the local mall to make ends meet when he met a representative from Tooth & Nail Records. Thirteen days later, Kutless played four songs for the record company rep and was immediately signed to a record deal.

With a sound that is compared to popular alternative groups like Incubus or Puddle of Mudd, the band's career has moved quickly along since that moment, opening for O.C. Supertones last summer and touring most of last fall to promote the hit single "Your Touch."

Despite the hectic schedule, the band still finds time to play on the college campuses where it first started performing. Lead vocalist, Jon Micah Sumrall, recalls a recent charity benefit the band did at a fraternity house in Portland, Oregon.

"It was great," says Sumrall. "These kids hadn't heard of us, and we had a chance to talk to a lot of the frat guys after the concert. They asked us a lot of questions. It was a great opportunity to share with people we wouldn't have had a chance to otherwise."

As the band looks ahead to performing on the summer's Christian music festival circuit, Sumrall says he hopes the group can continue to balance opportunities to perform in Christian and secular venues. "We want to encourage Christians who listen to our music, but we also want to reach kids who aren't saved," he explains.

Does this mean the band is looking to crossover to the mainstream and leave the Christian music world behind? Not exactly. "I think the message in our songs is pretty clear. We don't try to do music for one market or the other. If the music is good enough, we believe people will listen to it. If the Lord opens up any doors as far as reaching a broader audience, we are open to that; but we would never completely turn our backs on being a part of the Christian music industry." Sumrall adds, "In fact, God has really dealt with us on this. We are to write and play the songs that He gives us and leave the results up to Him." **KAE SMITH**



The Elms, continued from page 28

the hands of every fan at the merch table.

It's after midnight, and Owen is tired. His bandmates have already crashed, leaving Owen to do his "frontman duties" and finish up our dialogue. Dark circles ring his eyes, and his voice lacks the attitude and energy expressed earlier on stage. Still, he's happy to continue the discussion about the music he loves best.

Slumping in an uncomfortable chair in the Hilton lobby, he tells me that a few minutes earlier he found crumbs in his bed and that the toilet in the room he shares with two others is clogged. And he has to get up in four hours to drive to a show in Ohio.

So much for the glamorous rock 'n' roll lifestyle.

"I wish I could live the rock 'n' roll experience for your readers,"

TREE 63



Branching Beyond Legalism

CHRISTIAN ROCK 'N' ROLL TURNS TREE63 ROCKER AWAY FROM THE MONASTERY.

he says, "But it's like, we work our tails off... All the preconceived ideas are false at one time or another... like the glamor, the pampering."

And that brings us back to the idea we'd set out to explore at the interview's start. What is the essence of rock of rock 'n' roll?

"Isn't it as much a lifestyle as it is the music?" I ask.

Owen straightens up in his chair and takes a moment before answering.

"If rock 'n' roll is all about strippers,

drinking 12-packs and smoking doobies—say a band like Mötley Crüe—if that's what makes a rock band, then we're not a rock band. But I don't believe that's what it is.

"To me, 'live fast, die young' is a premise that I adhere to only because it's a 'go for it' attitude. My 'go for it' is different than someone else's. When I walk out on stage, I'm not thinking, 'What can I not do tonight?' I'm thinking, 'What can I possibly do tonight?' ...If we walk offstage and haven't conveyed truth, we haven't done our job."

He adds: "It's the spontaneous element of doing things with soul and passion... It's that you have the capacity to walk out there and really move people."

The following morning, long after The Elms departed for a states away, I boarded a shuttle for the airport. The driver, Arnold, a 50-ish Jamaican man in pressed black pants, a white button-down shirt and a red tie, asked the reason for my visit to his town.

continued on page 31

If it weren't for Newsboys, Johnny Q. Public and Jars of Clay, Tree63's quick-witted frontman, John Ellis, could likely be living a life of solitude in a local monastery.

"When I committed my life to Christ, I became convinced that the rock 'n' roll scene had a big role to play in my downfall [before coming to Christ]," the outspoken South Africa native explains. "I mistakenly guessed that the music itself was inherently opposed to godliness."

With his anti-rock belief firmly intact, Ellis eventually stopped playing music altogether, destroyed his collection of CDs and vinyl records, sold his guitar and "prepared to be a monk."

And then he learned that Christian musicians could rock, too.

"These people looked like I did, played loud guitars and loved Jesus, which was mind-blowing," Ellis asserts. "Later I discovered Delirious and heard Matt Redman's beautiful songs with guitars that opened me to a whole new world. ...I began to feel the effect this music was having on me and how it inspired my walk with Jesus."

With nods to his musical heroes like U2, Crowded House, The Police and Delirious, Ellis and Tree63 bandmates Darryl Swart and new bassist Daniel Ornellas recently released an ambitiously titled sophomore project, *The Life and Times of Absolute Truth* (Inpop).

"God has put a desire inside me for truth, beauty and the need to confront the lies of this modern age," Ellis comments. "My way of expressing that is to write songs and lead a band. ...But ultimately all that really matters is if I stay true to what God wants for me. The rest is just show business."

SYDNEY ALEXANDER

WOMEN WHO ROCK

Miranda Stone—While probably not a household name just yet, Miranda Stone has quietly traversed the United States and Canada as a singer/songwriter for 10 years. Sharing the stage with the likes of Bruce Cockburn, Over the Rhine and Vigilantes of Love, she's known for her thinking woman's lyrics and abundance of well-crafted guitar licks. Now that the secret's out, find out more for yourself at mirandastone.com.

Bon Voyage's Julie Martin—When your husband is known for crafting pop gems with Starflyer 59, it may just seem easier to simply blend into the artistic background. But that's not the case with Julie Martin. With a goal not to "sound like Alanis or any of those angry girls," Martin collaborates with her husband on her latest project *The Right Amount* with vocals that clearly establish her musical prowess. Find out more about Julie's efforts at toothandnail.com.

CHRISTA FARRIS



Jars of Clay, Jars of Clay (Essential)



To Hell With the Devil, Stryper (Enigma)



More Power to Ya, Petra (Star Song)



Jesus Freak, dc talk (ForeFront)

CCM's Greatest Rock Album





EVERYDAY SUNDAY

Wake-Up Call

EVERYDAY SUNDAY GUYS ADJUST TO ROCK 'N' ROLL LIFESTYLE.

It's just after 10:00 on a Wednesday morning, and Everyday Sunday's lead singer, Trey Pearson, answers the phone with an audible yawn and a scratchy "Hello." While it's quickly evident that I woke him up from sound sleep, you won't hear any complaints. After all, interviews are now part of the band's routine, and he's "extremely thrilled" about every new opportunity.

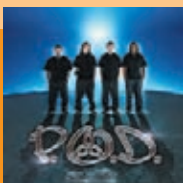
Unlike many musicians who head to Nashville hoping to make it big, Pearson and his bandmates, Andrew Martin, Dan Hunter and Chris Hines, never expected to sign on for the life of "a crazy rock band." Instead, these guys from Columbus, Ohio, who met in youth group, just hoped "they could write a cool song." Then one song became an entire CD's worth, and a band was born.

Influenced by dc talk's *Jesus Freak*, Jars of Clay's self-titled album and MxPx's *Teenage Politics*, Everyday Sunday's music reflects many different styles of rock 'n' roll—a quality that makes the band's debut, *Stand Up* a unique and promising effort.

Starting out as a regular on the Columbus music scene, the band began opening for acts like Skillet, PAX217 and Earthsuit, while its single "Just a Story" from an independent disc climbed the Christian rock charts.

Now signed to Flicker Records, the band that dc talk's Michael Tait, who co-produced the debut album, said "represented something epic," is excited to see its music having an impact upon people's lives the way that Christian music first inspired them. "God created music, and all we want to do is serve Him and share what He's given us with everyone we meet," Pearson says.

CHRISTA FARRIS



Satellite,
P.O.D.
(Atlantic)

The Elms, continued from page 30

"To interview a young rock band," I told him.

"Let me hear their music," he insisted in his thick island accent.

I pulled out my copy of *Truth, Soul, Rock 'n' Roll* and popped it into the van's CD player. He began tapping his fingers on the steering wheel to the opening track, "Speaking in Tongues."

A melody later, while stopped at a busy intersection, air guitar ensued.

At the close of the song, he turned to face me. Pointedly he said, "Let me tell you something. Rock 'n' roll moves people... It's energy.

"This is good.

"Can I keep it?"

I left the disc in Arnold's possession, and he drove away, head still bobbing.

For The Elms, now far from the windy city, mission accomplished. **ccm**

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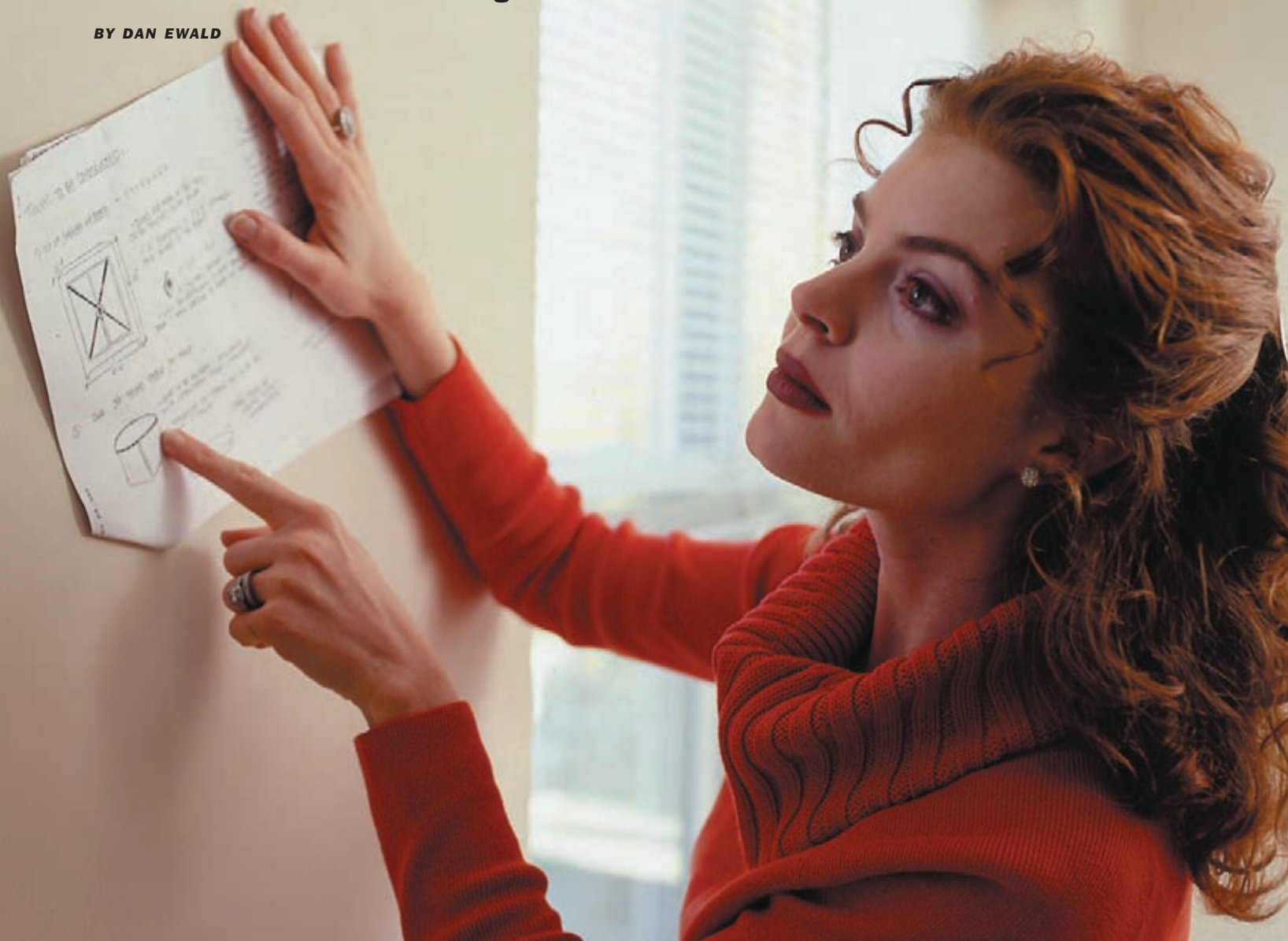
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DESIGNINGWOMAN

people called “trading spaces” Laurie smith crazy for pursuing acting *and* home design, but now the well-known personality laughs with complete confidence at how god “designed” her life.

BY DAN EWALD



Fans love the last 10 minutes of cable's TLC show "Trading Spaces," when two couples return to their homes and see what their neighbors have done. Host Paige Davis leads each anxious couple—eyes tightly closed—into their newly made-over room. But while the drama plays out, what viewers don't see are the show's interior designers, hiding off-camera.

THE CUSTOMER IS ALWAYS RIGHT

During one taping, Laurie Smith, 31, found herself hiding in a closet with fellow designer Vern Yip and carpenter Ty Pennington, anxious to hear what a Seattle couple thought of their bedroom makeover. With the help of their neighbors, Smith had transformed a boring room into a romantic hideaway, complete with newly built partitions, fresh parchment (think “cream”) paint on the walls and a bedspread made of elegant material. Says Smith, “I had this fabulous vintage fabric that I had held on to for so long, even debating ‘Do I want to put it on “Trading Spaces” or keep it for myself?”

The owner of the house didn't share the same enthusiasm. The first thing out of her mouth was something to the effect of, “I hate this. I hate everything about this.”

“I like it,” replied her husband, trying to lighten the mood.

“Well, you'll like taking it down tomorrow,” she retorted.

After the cameras were turned off, Smith exited the closet and started packing her bags for the long flight home. A producer came up to her and said the homeowner had asked that Smith be escorted out of her house.

“Give me a break,” she thought.

Then demonstrating the cliché of a feisty redhead, Smith skirted around the producer and marched right over to the unhappy woman.

“I'm sorry you're so disappointed in the room,” she said. “I don't know what else to say. We really worked hard. I hope you enjoyed your experience.”

She turned to leave, then all of the sudden had a thought. “I've never done this before,” she said to the woman, “but I couldn't help but overhear that you really dislike the fabric on the bed shams. That happens to be a fabric I love. I'll take them home and put them on my bed if you're going to throw them out.”

The housewife looked at the designer—almost smiling as if she were going to say “yes”—then snapped, “No, I want them now.”

The blood rushed to Smith's face, her cheeks matching the color of her hair. She turned to her producer and grunted, “OK, escort me out!”

A NEW INTEREST

A few years ago, Smith had no idea what to do with her life. At the time, she was working in the marketing department at CNN in Atlanta, but she really wanted to be an actress. At 27, she felt like she had missed the boat as far as pursuing a career in front of the camera. “But I felt like God wasn't [lessening] that desire in me,” she says. “It was very confusing at times.”

Occasionally she would spend a Saturday antiquing with her best friend, Heather Zarrett, an interior designer. “What a fun, creative job she has,” thought Smith. “She has this blank canvas she gets to work with.” The world of design began to intrigue her more and more, prompting her to take a few night classes.

Not long afterward, she started applying to art schools, thinking, “If it happens to be in New York, where I can take film and acting classes, then that wouldn't be a bad thing!”

She did end up in New York City, where she pursued both passions. One day she was learning about color schemes; the next day she was getting headshots taken for auditions. Her art school friends thought she was too ambitious, while her theater friends would jokingly ask, “Are you going to fluff pillows for a living?”

Color schemes and acting methods weren't the only things Smith discovered. While in Manhattan, she met Brad Smith, a lawyer from

Jackson, Mississippi. They fell in love, married and moved back to her husband's hometown, where she found work with some local interior designers. But after six months, the new bride was feeling restless. “I can't get TV out of my system,” she thought. “I'd love to start auditioning again for commercials, but now I'm in Jackson. What do I do?”

Just as she was bemoaning what might have been, her Sunday School class began reading a book called *Beyond the Broken Lights: Simple Words at Sacred Edges*, written by their pastor, Charles E. Poole. The book is about pain and loss, and she found herself reading it while going through her internal struggle. For some reason, Smith signed up to read a chapter and share a testimony with the class.

The teacher called one day and said, “OK, Laurie. We have your chapter assigned to you for next week.” The chapter was titled, “Living in the Gap Between What You Dreamed and What You Got.”

“I literally said, ‘You've got to be kidding me!’” Smith recalls.

Smith says she'll never forget the week she spent preparing for that

testimony. “I think I cried 50 times a day. I was in intense prayer.” She made it through the class by using her acting skills, not letting on about her own personal difficulty.

That night, she was on her knees, praying, “Lord, either take these desires away or rectify the situation. Tell me what to do.”

PHONING IT IN

The next morning, she received a call from her friend in Atlanta. The producers from a new TV series, “Trading Spaces,” had offered Zarrett a job in which she had no interest. “But I know someone who would be perfect for it,” Zarrett told the producers. “She has a television/acting background and happens to have gone to design school.”

The producers called Smith and asked if she could have an audition tape and head shot ready by the following morning. Fortunately, she had a box full of 8-by-10s left over from her New York days.

With only a few friends in Jackson and her husband out of town, she begged a woman who was seven months pregnant to come over and videotape her audition. “It was the most hysterical thing you've ever seen,” she says now. “Either they were so intrigued by that video or they called me in just to have a good laugh!”

When Smith found out she'd gotten the job—an opportunity to combine her design skills with her ambition to be on television—she fell to her knees, trembling. “I was so overwhelmed with God's grace. Every move I'd made in my life made complete sense. I knew I had always had my life in His hands, [but] sometimes I didn't understand the direction I was going in.”

HIPPEST SHOW ON CABLE

Smith can't believe how popular the show is: “We literally thought we'd catch some housewives home at 3 in the afternoons,” she says, “But 6-year-olds are hooked, and college kids think it's the coolest thing ever!” Last year, as the show's appeal grew, viewers saw Smith's belly grow as well with her first pregnancy. Gibson Witherspoon Smith was born last August and already travels with his mom (and grandma) to wherever “Trading Spaces” takes them.

Being a believer around a primarily non-Christian TV crew is a challenge, says Smith. “They live their lives on the road and work hard and play hard. But what I hope to do above anything is befriend everyone.” She tries to watch the way she treats others. “All I can do is stay in prayer and stay as grounded as I can. I try to emulate, to the best of my ability, Christlike qualities.”

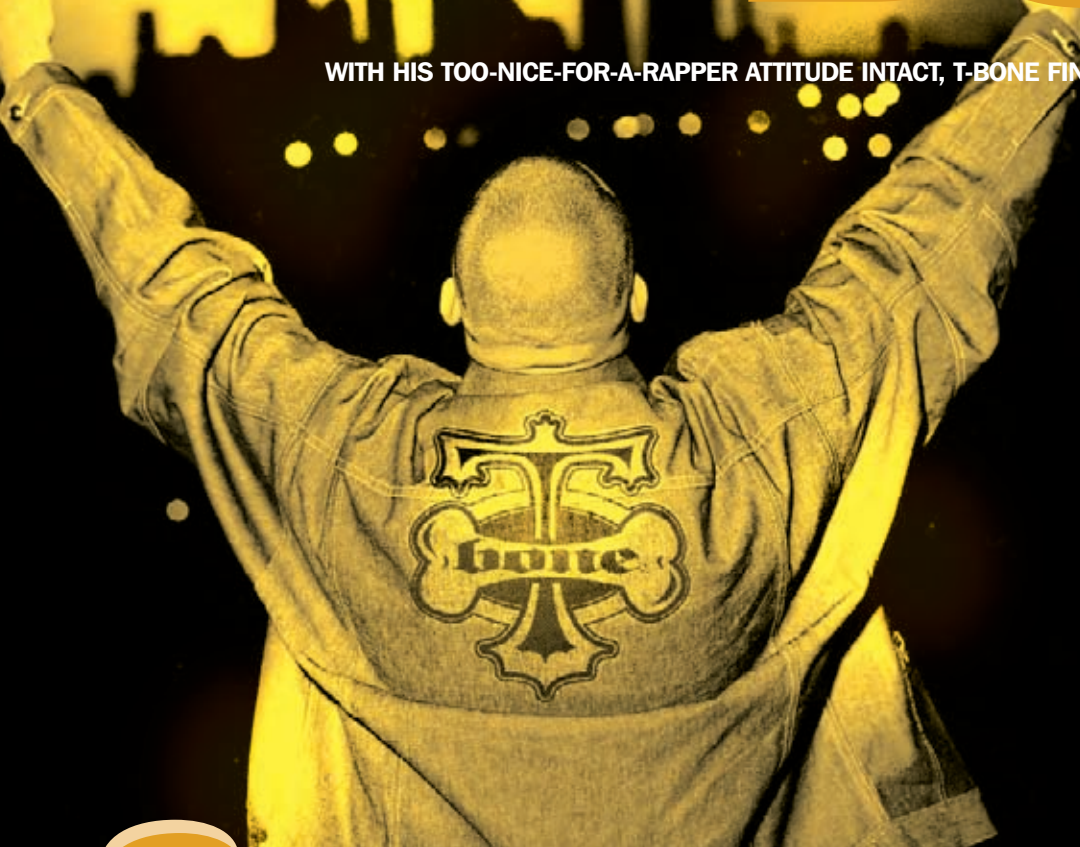
Even when disappointed homeowners emphatically hate her designs. **ccm**

“We literally thought we'd catch some housewives home at 3 in the afternoons,” she says, “But 6-year-olds are hooked, and college kids think it's the coolest thing ever!” —Laurie Smith

Throwing Hollywood a **'BONE'**

WITH HIS TOO-NICE-FOR-A-RAPPER ATTITUDE INTACT, T-BONE FINDS A NEW HOME AMONG HOLLYWOOD'S ELITE.

BY STEVEN DOUGLAS LOSEY



"I'm not going to hide what I'm about."

T-Bone

Chilling in Vegas after nearly three months on the set of his new movie, *The Fighting Temptations*, rapper, preacher and now actor T-Bone is enjoying time with his new bride, Janeia, and recounting what a star-studded last few months he's had. Considering he's spent almost all of his four-month marriage in Atlanta on the movie set, the couple's time off is well-deserved.

With a career that spans more than a decade, T-Bone has helped pioneer the West coast rap movement, garnered Grammy and Dove nominations and is now forging into the new year with a stylistic bang courtesy of his latest opus, *Gospelaphamegafunkyboogie music* (Flicker/Boneyard). Add to this his role in a movie starring Cuba Gooding Jr., and Beyoncé Knowles (Destiny's Child), and you have a man with a busy schedule and a lot of responsibility.

The producers of *The Fighting Temptations* actually had rapper Nelly in mind for the role; but when scheduling conflicts prevented him from taking the part, other high-profile rappers were auditioned, including LL Cool J and Busta

Rhymes. "Getting the part was totally a God thing," says T-Bone. "I was up against some great rappers and some great actors, but when they saw my audition tape they flew me to Hollywood, and I got the part."

In the midst of such a daunting task, you would think the first-time actor might have been subdued on the set, but not this preacher boy. "I was able to minister to Beyoncé, Cuba, Montell Jordan and Lil' Zane. There were so many huge stars in this movie. I've become good friends with Rue McClanahan, who played Blanche on 'The Golden Girls.' I was able to pray with Cuba on a day-to-day basis and with Beyoncé at least once a week. I shared my faith with people like Mike Epps, Steve Harvey and Faith Evans.

"My whole thing is, I'm not going to hide what I'm about," proclaims T-Bone. "I'm here for more than just acting. I'm here to lead people to the Lord."

In addition to being part of the movie, T-Bone worked with legendary producers Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis as well as a bevy of

other stars on the movie's soundtrack. "I'm getting ready to do a song with Michelle Williams. I got to do songs with Beyoncé, Angie Stone, Lil' Zane, Montell Jordan and The O'Jays. It was an incredible experience."

The year 2003 also offers a re-emergence of T-Bone as the artist. His latest release finds him "reinventing" himself. "If you continue to do the same old thing, eventually it's going to get played out. I actually sing on the record and do many different styles."

And more important than his style is T-Bone's desire to see gospel have an impact on the world. "When [Christians] stand in a room that's lit up and I turn on a flashlight," explains the rapper, "it's not going to make any difference. But when I turn out all the lights and then turn on the flashlight, it's going to illuminate that entire room. That's what God has called us to do—to be a light in dark places.

"Satan can't create, he can only imitate and duplicate. We serve the Creator. I believe we should be ahead of the world. We should be leading, not following." **ccm**



A 'Dark' Apoc

"AT THE ROOT [A]POCALYPSE DOESN'T MEAN END-OF-THE-WORLD DESTRUCTION AND FIRE. RATHER, IT SPEAKS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD AS IT IMPACTS THE CURRENT WORLD." —DAVID DARK

On a rather nondescript Saturday afternoon, David Dark greets me with a smile at the front door of the comfortable Nashville home he shares with his wife, musician Sarah Masen, and their two young children, Dorothy Day (named after the Catholic social activist) and Samuel Edward (named after his two grandfathers). I glance around the front rooms and see lots of books—along with an iMac, a guitar, a baby swing and stacks of magazines. Pretty much exactly what you would expect to find in the home of an author/father who doubles as an English teacher and a recording artist/mother who always said she would be a librarian one day.

Dark, 32, eagerly shows me an article about Elvis Costello that he's just had published in *Books & Culture: A Christian Review*. That magazine title appropriately sums up much of Dark's passion in life. He admits to reading every spare moment. "With a family, I end up cramming the reading time in at stoplights and in the bathroom," Dark says.

His literary passion is evident in the newly published *Everyday Apocalypse: The Sacred Revealed in Radiohead, The Simpsons and Other Pop Culture Icons* (Brazos). The book references everyone and everything from Flannery O'Connor to Beck; *The Matrix* to Christian ethicist John Howard Yoder; the Bible to Russian literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin. It is not a light read; CCM's own review of the book remarked that it is "similar to a college-level

apocalypse

**AUTHOR DAVID DARK EXPOUNDS ON “THE SIMPSONS,”
THE CHRISTIAN MARKETPLACE AND JESUS’ AGENDA FOR HUMANITY.**

BY MICHAEL CIANI

philosophy class” (Dec. 2002). Still, Dark raises so many interesting points about our culture and the way we ought to interpret that culture through what he believes to be a truly Christian lens, that it is well worth the effort.

While the word *apocalypse* may bring to mind a doom-and-gloom scenario that many would rather not ponder, Dark says the word merely needs redefining. “I started looking at the word *apocalypse*,” he explains, “and realized that at the root it doesn’t mean end-of-the-world destruction and fire. Rather, it speaks of the Kingdom of God as it impacts the current world, as it calls into question the way the world is being run by governments, corporations and such.

“*Apocalypse* means ‘unveiling’ or ‘revealing.’ I realized that ‘apocalyptic’ was a good way to describe what I liked about *The Simpsons*, Radiohead, *The Matrix*, Beck and *The Truman Show*.”

Heady stuff, to be sure, but Dark believes it to be a vital topic in which today’s Christians should engage. “I think this book is a thoughtful response to a lot of things that a lot of people out there are thinking about, and even if you don’t watch *The Simpsons*, your neighbor probably does, and maybe this could be a common ground between you and your non-Christian neighbor.”

While many would consider “*The Simpsons*” an immoral show, Dark sees things from a different

perspective. “‘*The Simpsons*’ doesn’t create a strained, blissful view of things. It ultimately delivers a pro-family message, but it’s a pro-family message that has survived in spite of adversity and dysfunction,” he explains.

“I think the Bible—when read properly—will challenge our understanding of the world and will also challenge whatever it was we thought the Bible said before we read it,” he continues.

“I think the Bible itself is apocalyptic in the sense that it’s introducing a new world, a Kingdom that challenges the *status quo*. Apocalyptic desire is for the part of us that longs for something better, the part that believes the way things are isn’t the way they have to be. The Bible, more than any other document, calls into question the idea that whatever is, is right.”

Dark himself isn’t afraid to call into question the “rightness” of what he sees around him. “What sells under the ‘Christian’ label at the moment strikes me as escapist literature, escapist music—a relief from the everyday interaction

with the people around us.”

Downing his coffee, he proceeds. “I’m very wary of what comes of market-driven theology, in which the worship music or the books aren’t that which truly drive the church to Christlikeness, but instead sort of anaesthetize believers and encourage them to identify themselves by what they buy, by whatever label they are consuming.

“To be specifically Christian, for me, something must have a connection to Jesus’ teachings on violence and vengeance, caring for the poor, the hungry,” he says, warming to his subject. “That’s what I often think of things that are marketed as ‘Christian.’ The, ‘Oh, I can’t believe how much You love me, Lord’ type of music—which, I suppose is perfect for a time and place. But if that supposed amazement at God’s love for [us] isn’t translated into a love for an outsider, for the least among us, then I would question whether that amazement is anything more than a delusion.”

Dark is aware that what he is saying may be unpopular and may

step on some toes: “Often within the evangelical subculture, it’s all about ‘Jesus is my best friend,’ and it’s as if Jesus has no agenda for humanity other than being the individual best friend of people’s individual souls. It’s good to think of Jesus as your best friend, but you also need to think of Jesus as the best friend of an Afghan refugee or of an Iraqi child.”

Dark cites the work of such legendary figures as C.S. Lewis, Rich Mullins, G.K. Chesterton, Mark Heard, Frederick Buechner and Steve Taylor as being truly apocalyptic. But then, with a hint of sorrow in his voice, he notes, “Aside from their work, I don’t see the biblical apocalyptic theme in most of the top-selling ‘Christian’ [products] that are out there. I look... but it isn’t there the way it used to be.”

Still, Dark is not fatalistic about the future. “I think that God is faithful to His people and that the ship is going to turn around.” **ccm**

For more information, check out everydayapocalyptic.org.

Desperately Seeking Sarah



Whatever happened to David Dark’s “favorite apocalyptic poet,” Sarah Masen? Her last album, *The Dreamlife of Angels* (Word), was released nearly two years ago.

Since then, Dark’s wife has toured Europe, parted ways with her record label, had a second child and written “lots of songs of hope and peace in troubled times that are deeply

witness-bearing. [They] announce the coming Kingdom but are admittedly quite different from most of the music that, lately, falls under the ‘Christian’ category,” he says. For now, the two are still trying to determine the best way to distribute her new material, but he adds that sarahmasen.com is still active and that they are hopeful there will be an album “sooner rather than later” for her many fans.

M. C.

'CRYSTAL' CLEAR

A YEAR OF SELF-DISCOVERY LEADS CRYSTAL LEWIS TO A NEW PHILOSOPHY ON SHARING HER FAITH.

BY LISA TEDDER

"How will people know I'm a Christian?" Crystal Lewis asks me.

It's a rhetorical question.

Just because she's been a recording artist in Christian music since she was 15 doesn't mean her faith is automatically visible to everyone she meets. Yet recently she has come to understand the practicality of revealing and sharing her faith more than ever before.

Maybe Lewis' new album had something to do with it. Although *Holy, Holy, Holy* (Metro1) is her second hymns collection, incorporating hymns that were not used on 1995's *Hymns: My Life* (also Metro1) prompted a new revelation for her.

"Even way back [when these hymns were written]," Lewis ponders, "[the hymnwriters] felt this way. They struggled with temptation, doubt, fear." Identifying with the struggles of Christians from the past has given her more freedom to accept her own struggles, to not fear transparency. "It's the same today," she admits. "The answer [to these struggles] remains the same."

Lewis has always loved these old songs; she grew up with them. But she hasn't always fully understood their message. "It took me a really long time to *get* worship," she explains, "to really feel free worshipping. I did feel something as a kid, listening to hymns with just the organ. But it wasn't until later in life that I allowed that music to touch and affect me."

To Lewis, true worship is about change—and music is a catalyst. "I could listen to all these songs," she continues, "and I could let it turn my focus to Christ. Or I could take it with a grain of salt and not let it drastically affect me. It's up to the individual to allow God to make those changes."

The catalyst that has changed Lewis most in the past year is not music but a book. Brennan Manning's *The Wisdom of Tenderness*

(HarperSanFrancisco) was the inspiration for the only original song on her new release. After reading the book three times through, "The point of the book got across to me," Lewis says.

She summarizes what she learned in the book simply: "We are adored by Jesus. We can't even fathom what He has done to win our love. He stopped at nothing to convince us of His love. Regardless of what we look like, regardless of who we are, regardless of our faults, regardless of anything, we are adored by Him."

The more real that love becomes to Lewis, the more sure she is of what it means to live out her faith. Going back to her original question of, "How will people know I'm a Christian?" Lewis surmises, "Jesus says to love people. When we are able to put it in perspective, to realize that we don't have to worry what anyone else thinks because we are already totally adored by Him, then we can take what we've been given and give it to others. God doesn't say to love *Him* as He loved us; He says to love *others*. We are loved; therefore, we can love each other." **ccm**



Plumb returns with a graceful new project.

PLUMB

Beautiful Lumps of Coal Curb

File under: Pop/Rock

Sounds like: Jonatha Brook, Patty Griffin

Buying this album should be everyone's New Year's resolution.

It's been nearly four years since we reveled in the sweet bliss of Tiffany Arbuckle Lee's captivating lyrics and powerfully poignant vocals. Now simply known as "Plumb" (think "Pink"), she returns to the limelight with her Curb Records debut, *Beautiful Lumps of Coal*.

Plumb's delivery on *Lumps* is nothing short of breathtaking. Opening cut, "Free," captivates the listener's ear with a smooth guitar riff that is only bettered when the singer's whispery voice embraces the first line, "You thought you had me all tied up in a little knot/You thought I'd go on living just like you until you asked me nicely to stop/But surprise...I'm Free." This attitude-fringed song is a delightful introduction to an album full of musical diary entries.

Carefully painted images and fully explained destructive situations are the rule here. When Plumb senses pain, the listener feels it. Her pensive yet fearless lyrics attack sexual abuse, marital struggle, alcoholism and love all in the same song at times.

This album boasts moments of tough-girl rock anthems about freedom ("Walk Away") and softer moments of tears and desperation that focus on grace ("Sink n' Swim," "Nice, Naïve and Beautiful"). Heavy guitars and floating strings accent each epic nicely.

Beautiful Lumps of Coal is an exhausting—though welcomed—journey into the life and mind of this talented songwriter. Plumb shows maturity and depth in her ability to tell a story, and she presents that story with near-perfection. **MATTHEW TURNER**

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File under:
Pop/Rock
Sounds like:
Pearl Jam, Creed

POOR OLD LU

The Waiting Room Tooth & Nail
Still rocking in a post-grunge era

When music fans couldn't get enough angst, flannel and Nirvana, Seattle-based Poor Old Lu pioneered the alternative rock movement with a Christian worldview. With blistering guitar anthems, POL's live performances endeared them to an army of crazed fans before the band eventually called it quits in 1998.

Leading off with its trademark guitar riffs on *The Waiting Room*, the band's return cements its status as musical innovators. Not a group comfortable to tread the familiar path, a knack for melody combined with jangly guitar interludes brings its sound to the present day. And with lyrics occasionally as thought provoking as a U2 song on tracks like "Praying for the Perfect World" and "Friday to Sunday," listeners can also take something valuable away after listening. **CHRISTA FARRIS**



File under:
Hardcore Rock/Metal
Sounds like:
P.O.D., Blindside

PROJECT 86

Truthless Heroes Atlantic
Rock with substance and style

Project 86 continues to rage against the dehumanizing forces on this aggressive follow-up to 2000's *Drawing Black Lines*. Intense and heavy, yet resiliently melodic and creative, Project 86 paints a bleak picture of modern existence, where individual conviction is a threat. Like reading Paul's epistles to understand the struggles in Corinth, or reading C.S. Lewis' *The Screwtape Letters* to understand how Satan and his demons undermine believers, Project 86 suggests hope and grace by revealing their absence in a world that chooses anesthetics over consciousness, consumerism over the search for truth. This serious rock effort defies such a hollow existence. **BRIAN QUINCY NEWCOMB**



File under:
Rock
Sounds like:
Puddle of Mudd, Dogwood

CHEVELLE

Wonder What's Next Epic
Dude, here's your car!

The Chicago-based Loeffler brothers—Sam, Pete and Joe—collectively known as Chevelle, aren't riding around in a car, but the music from their sophomore release, *Wonder What's Next*, is certainly revving up rock audiences.

These guitar-driven songs are heavy and aggressive, with the angst-driven "Comfortable Liar" and the despair of "Closure." "The Red" has a catchy melody and infectious groove and is an emotionally charged song that talks about being at a breaking point.

Wonder What's Next stops listeners in their tracks, just long enough to push the play button so they can listen again. **GINNY McCABE**



File under:
Pop/Rock
Sounds like:
Phantom Planet, Bleach

CADET

The Observatory BEC
A cure for the predictable pop blues

This quartet makes an incredible leap forward here, leaving its debut's too-derivative pop in the dust. With *The Observatory*, Cadet heaps on thick slabs of hard rock, and the result is righteous. These 11 varying yet cohesive tunes feature excellent harmonies, thoughtful lyrics, inventive instrumentation and a dual guitar interplay that smartly echoes Matthew Sweet's best work. Standout tracks include "Change My Name," a steady hailstorm of worship, and the piano-driven closer, "Wishing Well," a welcome surprise and the icing on an altogether tasty cake. Talk about a total transformation! **DAVE URBANSKI**

THE REMIX RADAR BY **CHRISTA FARRIS**

With remix albums being the recent rage in Christian music, CCM charts the reinvention prowess of several artists.

VITAL SIGNS:

Blur by Rachael Lampa (Word) puts on a danceable R&B spin that reflects the 17-year-old's musical influences.

Mix of Life by ZOEgirl (Sparrow) reinvents its sound with a more progressive pop flare and R&B grooves.

No strangers to mixing things up, **Newsboys Remixed** (Sparrow) gives familiar hits a new musical luster.

02/Avalon Remixed (Sparrow) features an upbeat take on 10 No. 1 hits and boasts cameo appearances from the Katinas, Andy Hunter and more.

SUNNIEST TRACK:

It's a tie between the sassy En Vogue approach on "Savior Song" and the frenetic techno beat on "Live for You."

"Plain" gets a catchy new makeover that's not anything like its title would suggest.

The cleverly edited "Mega Mix," highlights of the 'Boys best-loved material, stands out as the best.

"Make It Last Forever" is nothing short of stellar when the group brings Out of Eden on board for a guest appearance.

THE FORECAST:

Partly sunny with a few clouds. The effort starts out strong but ends up muddled with too many bells and whistles.

Mostly sunny. With production values that add vitality to songs like "Dismissed," it's mission accomplished!

Stormy. With only slight musical variations, you'd expect them to step up to the mixing board a bit more on this CD.

Partly sunny. While some ballads like "Can't Live a Day" never should be remixed, this project is mostly a winner.



File under: Pop/Rock
Sounds like: Billy Joel, Ben Folds

THE SWIFT

The Swift Flicker

Evangelism goes retro

Following in the path of Keith Green, new Flicker band The Swift plays bouncy piano pop that packs its punch in lyrics of invitation and challenge. The opener, "Till I Met You," celebrates the gift of Christ, but "Come On" directs believers to get busy about evangelism.

"More Than Gold," a richly orchestrated ballad, celebrates God's Word, while "You Surround Me" is a majestic hymn of grace. If the direct approach on "Wake Up" and the Green cover, "Soften Your Heart," come off a little preachy, that's OK. That's what these guys are about. They hope to make a difference through these '70s-styled melodic pop songs.

BRIAN QUINCY NEWCOMB



File under: Modern Pop/Rock
Sounds like: Coldplay, The Pixies

STARFLYER 59

Can't Stop Eating EP

Tooth & Nail

Worth every extra calorie

After providing a musical trip down memory lane with a nod to the Beach Boys' *Pet Sounds* era on its last disc *Leave Here a Stranger*, Starflyer 59 is back with a brief but satisfying helping of what it does best—crafting dreamy,

atmospheric three-and-a-half minute pop gems.

In what's been a long legacy of songwriting, it's a surprise that Jason Martin hasn't become more of a household name. A master of the musical hook, Martin pens earnest songs like "West Coast Friendship" and "Happy Birthday John" that resonate with lilting vocals and interesting chord progressions. Waxing poetic like some of the best bands that surprisingly creep into Top 40 radio *a la* Coldplay and Dashboard Confessional, Starflyer 59 proves once again on *Can't Stop Eating* that pop songs can have substance and style—a combination that doesn't come along very often in pop music. **CHRISTA FARRIS**

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the wwwait is over!

Beginning this month On Tour has moved from *CCM Magazine* to www.CCMmagazine.com! No more waiting... you will now be able to access the touring schedules of all your favorite artists anytime. Check it out today!



File under: Pop/Rock
Sounds like: Oasis, Beatles

ALL STAR UNITED

Revolution Furious? **Brit-rock the Gallagher brothers could love**

Sporting a decidedly Euro-rock swagger, Ian Eskelin & Co.'s tight lineup includes 10 hard-pop tunes. While All Star United excels in the hook-filled melody department and shows musical diversity (check out the ballad "Making It Beautiful" and the progressive rock of "Kings and Queens"), the best elements are Eskelin's marriage of vocal attitude and lyrical aptitude. He gets to the heart of the matter often but adds cool wit and playful wording along the way. *Revolution* is a total, head-turning package inside or outside Christian music. **DAVE URBANSKI**



File under: Pop/Rock
Sounds like: Hoobastank, Audio Adrenaline

SANCTUS REAL

Say It Loud Sparrow **Crank up the volume!**

Drawing from classic rock and modern pop nuances, Ohio-bred Sanctus Real's label debut starts strong and never lets up. Former Grammatrain vocalist Pete Stewart capably assists in the production, but the quartet itself provides the firepower on this commanding and cohesive release.

Shredding guitar riffs, crisp harmonies and stomping rhythms fuel the project, especially on the richly melodic title track and the bombastic standout "Audience of One." The band even displays a sensitive side with "I Love You," a graceful ballad with a sound that suggests Incubus sharing coffee with Remy Zero. Best of all, the beautiful message of spiritual redemption rings true throughout this amazing project. **DAVID McCREARY**



File under: Pop/Rock
Sounds like: dc talk, CeCe Winans

VARIOUS

Let's Roll: Together in Unity, Faith and Hope 770/TMB **A beautiful tribute to courage**

Let's Roll is a compilation project that honors the heroic actions taken by Todd Beamer and others on United Airlines Flight 93, which crashed in Pennsylvania on Sept. 11, 2001.

Beamer's last known words, "Let's roll," are echoed and expressed through contributions of a multi-genre and diverse group of artists and musical styles. From dc talk's almost cheer-like yet inspiring title cut to moving tearjerkers such as Wynonna's "Carry On," this project offers something for everyone.

Let's Roll was created and produced by some of music's most outstanding talents, and this shows in everything you hear.

GINNY McCABE

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story behind the song



PETRA CIRCA 1985

‘MORE POWER TO YA’

THE FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE LEGENDARY PETRA REMINISCES ABOUT ONE OF THE BAND'S MOST POPULAR SONGS.

By 1982 the phrase “more power to ya” was already a cliché—and a somewhat cynical one at that. But when Petra’s Bob Hartman co-opted it that year for the title track to the band’s *More Power to Ya* album, a biblical twist turned it into one of the band’s most famous songs.

“It was using something familiar to present a concept that is as old as the gospel,” says the guitarist and principal songwriter for the band, who recently played his first concert with Petra after a seven-year break from performing. “I looked to do that a lot in my songs.”

Hartman based the lyrics on a verse from Isaiah 40 (NIV): “Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles.”

“The song lyrically was talking about where power comes from,” he says. “I tried to talk about the modern-day struggles that can hold us back in our quest for spiritual power.”

Musically, Hartman built “More Power to Ya” upon his simple acoustic guitar, plus synthesizer by Petra’s then-keyboardist, John Slick. “The synthesizer is what I think really makes that song sparkle,” Hartman says. “He did some things that created an atmosphere for the acoustic guitar that made the song seem much bigger than it was before.” **ANTHONY DEBARROS**

TOP TWENTY

POSITION	POSITION LAST MONTH	TITLE/ARTIST/LABEL
1	9	WOW CHRISTMAS Various Word
2	2	WORSHIP AGAIN Michael W. Smith Reunion
3	1	WOW HITS 2003 Various Sparrow
4	3	O BROTHER, WHERE ART THOU? Various Lost Highway
5	—	CHRISTMAS EVE Trans Siberian Orchestra Atlantic
6	4	I WORSHIP: A TOTAL WORSHIP EXPERIENCE Various Integrity
7	8	WORSHIP Michael W. Smith Reunion
8	6	STANLEY CLIMBFALL Lifehouse Dreamworks
9	5	SPOKEN FOR MercyMe INO
10	7	SATELLITE P.O.D. Atlantic
11	14	ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD Jump5 Sparrow
12	—	WHITE CHRISTMAS Martina McBride Sparrow
13	13	ALMOST THERE MercyMe INO
14	—	CHRISTMAS WORSHIP John Tesh Garden City Music
15	12	THE REBIRTH OF KIRK FRANKLIN Kirk Franklin Gospo Centric
16	11	INCREDIBLE Mary Mary Columbia/Integrity
17	—	JOY Avalon Sparrow
18	17	SONGS 4 WORSHIP: SHOUT TO THE LORD Various Integrity
19	15	WOVEN AND SPUN Nichole Nordeman Sparrow
20	—	BLESSED BY ASSOCIATION John P. Kee Verity

(— indicates album did not appear on previous month's chart)

Top Twenty reports album sales from a national monthly sample of Christian and general market retail store and rack sales reports. Collected, compiled and provided by SoundScan (© 2003 Salem Publishing and SoundScan Inc.). This month the chart reflects November 2002 sales.

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AM I THE ONE? CLUES TO BECOMING AND FINDING A PERSON WORTH MARRYING

James R. Lucas

(Broadman & Holman)

Just in time for those New Year's resolutions, here's a book every person should read—whether you're

content with your current status or itching to get down the aisle. In fact, I'd even be so bold as to say *Am I the One?* should be included with every freshman Christian college student's registration packet. Reading this book could actually save a lot of unnecessary time—hoping for that “ring by spring”—when you begin carefully accessing the subject matter.

Seemingly written with skeptical critics in mind, the book balances a healthy respect for those lonely single times while challenging readers to evaluate whether they're at a place spiritually, emotionally and psychologically to even think about a lifelong commitment like marriage.

With helpful checklists including “Twelve Lousy Reasons for Getting Married” and “Ten Ways to Know You've Found ‘The One,’” the author's approach is anchored in practicality and devoid of clichés often presented in other books dealing with singleness. Instead of providing tips on how to bag the spouse you want while making you feel spiritually inadequate if you haven't yet, the book celebrates singleness as a time of tremendous personal growth and freedom. **CHRISTA FARRIS**



BLINK

Ted Dekker (W Publishing)

How would your life be different if you could see into the immediate future? What if you could see multiple futures—all possible—depending upon your choices and actions?

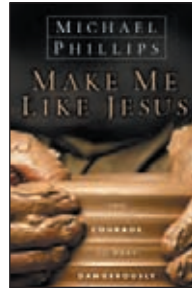
This is the premise driving

the story of two cultural misfits thrust together into the epicenter of a geopolitical crisis, running for their lives.

The book begins slowly, alternating chapters between the two diverse cultures of America and Saudi Arabia, while exploring the personalities of key characters. Once the reader learns and understands the motivations of the book's many players, the pace quickens and the story flows with complex plot points, all coming together to

create the literary tension vital for this genre.

Occasionally an element of predictability allows the reader to see the future of the main characters as well, but there are enough twists along the way to make this story of faith versus sight ultimately satisfying. **TERRY PRICE**



MAKE ME LIKE JESUS: THE COURAGE TO PRAY DANGEROUSLY

Michael Phillips

(Waterbrook)

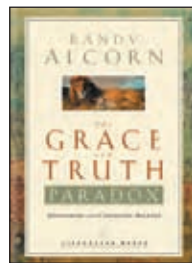
Those who are new believers or who are seeking out specific blessings from God may not find fulfillment from

this book. Michael Phillips doesn't focus on the “feel-good” messages of Christianity but instead explores the lifelong pursuit of dying to self and truly relinquishing one's will in order to be more like Christ.

Make Me Like Jesus addresses God's ultimate purpose for our lives—that we would develop an intimate relationship with Him and become more like Jesus in our attitudes, thoughts and motivations. To pray the prayer of Christlikeness requires courage and a dedication to obedience in God's commandments and direction.

Phillips doesn't offer a simple formula or solution to this path less traveled. Rather, he offers insight into topics like denying self, abiding in Christ and living in a state of joy (even when circumstances are less than joyful). The book encourages mature Christians, reinforcing the principles and the mindset needed in a daily walk with God.

DAWN PHARRIS



THE GRACE AND TRUTH PARADOX: RESPONDING WITH CHRISTLIKE BALANCE

Randy Alcorn

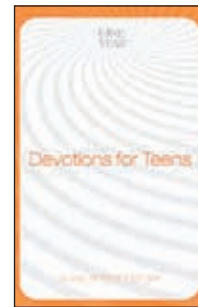
(Multnomah)

You don't have to be in the middle of a crisis to wonder, “What would

Jesus do?” On a daily basis, life generally presents plenty of opportunities for you to ask yourself that question, and sometimes it can be more than a challenge to respond to certain situations in a Christlike manner.

In this new release, best-selling author Randy Alcorn suggests that if you're having a tough

time responding with Christlike balance, you may just be running a little short on grace, or perhaps you're being a little heavy-handed with the truth—or vice versa. Alcorn explores the need for achieving a healthy balance of grace and truth in our lives if we truly want to do what Jesus would do. Despite its brevity, Alcorn is successful in conveying his message: If you want to become more Christlike, take a closer look at what Christ was like. **SUE HALFORD**



ONE YEAR DEVOTIONS FOR TEENS

Susie

Shellenberger

(Tyndale)

For teens whose New Year's resolution is to grow their relationship with God, the *One Year Devotions for Teens* is

right on time. The first teen devotional in Tyndale's One Year product line offers a clear spiritual route to teens bombarded with distorted messages by the world.

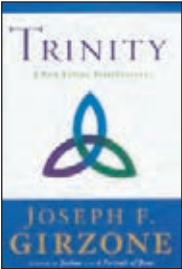
Author Susie Shellenberger is adept at speaking to teens in their language. As a former high school teacher and now serving as editor of teen magazine *Brio*, her writing remains free of condescension with realistic applications for situations teens face daily. Although the hypothetical diary entries sometimes veer from what weighs most heavily on teen minds, they do show the depth of compassion teens feel.

Providing a daily connection with God, the “Know It!” “Read It!” and “Pray It!” sections recap the main thought of each day's devotion, provide key Scripture passages for additional reading and offer suggestions for personal prayer time. The devotion may seem like a big commitment for busy teens, but if used correctly it provides a great method of accountability, especially if used for discussion in youth groups. **AMY LEE**

TRINITY: A NEW LIVING SPIRITUALITY

Joseph F. Girzone (Doubleday)

The mystery of the trinity—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—has puzzled believers for centuries. The paradox is that many believe, yet struggle to understand. Retired priest Joseph F. Girzone, best known for his book-turned-major-motion-picture, *Joshua*, tackles this profound and complex



doctrine with *Trinity*.

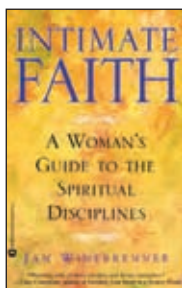
Girzone begins by exploring the concept philosophically. Through anecdotes and musings, he does a fine job of making a difficult concept attainable.

In the historical section, however, names and arguments whiz by like a dreaded pop quiz with too many details and not enough context. It's a shame, too, because the author makes an interesting point: Considering the tumultuous nature of Church history, the only explanation for the Church's survival is the living, persistent presence of the trinity at work.

The third section of the book brings the concept to the practical realm. Here, Girzone helps readers consider a more personal relationship with a loving God.

At only 128 pages, *Trinity* should have been a quicker read. However, it does provide food for thought; and whether or not one agrees with everything Girzone suggests, it is, nonetheless, an important dialogue.

CHRIS WELL



INTIMATE FAITH: A WOMAN'S GUIDE TO THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

Jan Winebrenner

(Warner Books)

Expect to be challenged and convicted. Expect to grow. *Intimate Faith: A Woman's Guide to the Spiritual Disciplines* is one of those

life-changing books that catches you off guard with its depth and shakes up your thinking. Moving beyond service, study and prayer as ways to grow closer to Christ, Jan Winebrenner examines often-neglected disciplines such as humility, simplicity, solitude, secrecy, chastity, celebration and confession.

In addition to explaining the "how," Winebrenner establishes the "why" of each discipline and justifies its relevance in the year 2003. Gently reminding readers not to simply think of these disciplines as more items to add to their "to do" lists, she suggests using these practices to heighten one's awareness of God's presence and love.

This is not a book to curl up with as an escape. The chapters should be slowly

digested, allowing plenty of time to wrestle with the ideas. With a list of questions included in a study guide, *Intimate Faith* would make a great book for a home fellowship group or Bible study. If you are ready to take some bold steps to grow in discipleship—or to step back into solitude—*Intimate Faith* will help you shake up the *status quo*. **JANET CHISMAR**



THE CHRISTIAN WEDDING PLANNER
Introduction by H. Norman Wright

(Bethany House)

I curiously picked up this wedding planner because of the word "Christian" in the title. I wondered, "Are there

Christian marriage traditions I don't know about?" Or I thought perhaps the book might discuss the spiritual symbolism in the marriage preparations and ceremony.

While I—surprisingly—didn't find either, what I did find was a comprehensive wedding planner for prospective brides and grooms looking to create a traditional wedding. This wedding planner is impressively thorough in explaining, guiding and advising on each and every area of a wedding—everything from cuts and settings of the engagement ring, to seasonal flowers for decorations, to seating arrangements for the rehearsal dinner. What

makes this book stand out is the way it not only helps the bride and groom accomplish the huge list of tasks involved in a wedding but also details the traditions and etiquette that go along with those tasks. Though I'm not sure how "Christian" this planner is, it is still a valuable resource for brides-to-be.

STEPHANIE OTTOSEN



UNDERSTANDING LOVE AND THE SECRETS OF THE HEART, BOOK 3

Dr. Myles Munroe

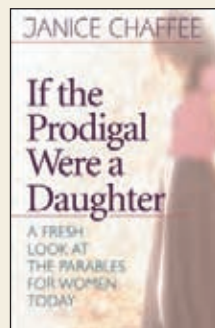
(Destiny Image)

It's "Love 101"—a concise text that explains the differences between *phileo*, *storge*, *eros*, *agape* and how

God loves us, as well as how we are to love one another. This is a great starter manual for a new believer but not much insight for those raised in the church or for those who have already read other relationship studies.

Munroe's style is simple and clear. Throw in pull-quotes and a summary of each chapter's main points, and you can breeze through *Understanding Love* in one, painless sitting. If you are new to the faith, you'll take away some important principles, but more seasoned believers may be disappointed at the lack of anything really new. **JANET CHISMAR**

editor's pick



IF THE PRODIGAL WERE A DAUGHTER

Janice Chaffee (Harvest House)

Like Mel Gibson trying on pantyhose and applying mascara to get a feminine perspective on life in the movie *What Women Want*, Janice Chaffee uses her knack for vivid storytelling to help women experience the universal truths of the parables. Adapting the language of the New Testament, the stories read like a volume of *Chicken Soup for the Soul*—heartwarming with hearty doses of modern-day reality.

For instance, instead of a prodigal son, you have Solana, the prodigal daughter. And rather than the vague account provided about the son's downfall, readers discover the story behind the

story. Solana squandered her fortune on luxury dining, beach vacations and hand-painted china. And she also deals with abusive relationships before she finally realizes she needs to humble herself and return home. For those interested in digging even deeper, there's also a section of discussion questions at the end that would make for a great women's Bible study.

While Chaffee's approach may offend a biblical purist the way the *New Living* translation may not measure up to a *King James* advocate, the literary liberties taken make for engaging reading that's both entertaining and beneficial. Readers may even learn a little more about compassion, humility, grace and forgiveness in the process. **CHRISTA FARRIS**

GEAR ON THE EDGE

FROM FENDER TO EPIPHONE, WE TELL YOU WHAT'S HOT IN 2003



OLP GUITARPORT PACK

Here's a new twist on the common guitar/amp package theme. Instead of a knockoff guitar and a small practice amp, OLP has worked out a program that allows the company to present an authorized version of a famous guitar at an attractive price. Combined with a Line6 GuitarPort amp modeler, a set of Ernie Ball strings and a nice pair of headphones, the Pack puts name-brand recognition in the palm of your hand at no-name pricing. The GuitarPort is capable of some amazing simulations and, with the headphones attached, lets you wail without disturbing the neighbors. In metallic red, the visual statement is as strong as the aural thrust and the packaging makes it easy to take home.

\$429

officiallylicensedproduct.com

CRATE TX15 TAXI

If you've been to New York City lately, you've probably seen this taxi in addition to the usual yellow ones on wheels. On subway and street corners, this battery powered guitar amplifier is making itself heard with 15 watts of power through the eight-inch woofer and piezo tweeter. Additional vocals are covered with a mic input connector along with the obvious instrument jack and additional inputs for a portable CD player. The tone is excellent, the four-band equalizer is effective and the included AC adapter/ charger is handy. Crate proves you *can* take it with you.

\$199

crate.com

EPIPHONE ZAKK WYLDE LES PAUL CUSTOM

While guitars can make you swoon, getting vertigo isn't usually part of the deal—unless you're talking about this guitar. The higher-cost Gibson version may be the collectible model, but this guitar is a rocker in its own right. Real EMG humbucker pickups and stable tuning gears create and maintain a serious tonal range, while the maple neck, back and top lay a solid foundation for the player seeking a home for flailing fingers. The finishing gold hardware touch is just right to put this instrument in a spiral straight to your door.

\$1,329

epiphone.com

FENDER FM-52E

How can a mandolin be considered edgy? Well, when the hottest musical trend is the timeless simplicity of folk music, it's a good time to be a mandolin maker. With backorders lasting months, these "manual



violins" are all the rage. Good build, quality and classic design are mated to a clean pickup with volume and tone controls. Fender's reputation is upheld by the FM-52E's playability and sound; and, for the price, it makes sense to start playing a new instrument in the new year.

\$314

fender.com



ROLAND MC-909 SAMPLING GROOVE STATION

Remember Martha Quinn, the perky VJ who made her mark during MTV's infancy? Well, if she had possessed this chunky box, she would be in the Broadcasting Hall of Fame. Roland has been quietly creating a line of video editing systems, with the DB7 Video Canvas as the current model. It just made sense, then, to combine the morphing features of the MC Groove Stations with the latest video editing hardware. The result: a system that can manipulate video images in realtime while twisting the audio stream into a raging torrent. With its integral V-Link, the MC-909 can talk to the DB7 and trigger various MIDI continuous controllers to adjust hue, color saturation and tonal balance. The onboard USB port is designed for easy file swapping with a standard PC .wav files, turning a trickle of new images into a continuous stream. The large touch-sensitive pads and excellent LCD display ensure the groove is easy to find, but it's the video bends that make this station hard to pass up for any DJ looking for the next thing.

\$1,795

rolandus.com



NEVER TOO EARLY

WHETHER IT'S PURSUING THE JOB MARKET OR HEADING TO GRADUATE SCHOOL, IF YOU'RE A GRADUATING SENIOR, NOW IS THE TIME TO BEGIN PREPARING FOR LIFE BEYOND THE DIPLOMA.

Chances are, you're basking in post-finals bliss at the tail end of a much-needed Christmas break and asking yourself, "How will I spend my remaining time off before the next semester starts?" Unfortunately, now is not the time for a break; it's time to prepare for what comes next. During the next few months, employers will be making hiring decisions, and graduate schools will be sending out acceptance letters. With that in mind, here are a few tips to ensure that you aren't left in the dust come June.

GETTING STARTED ON THE JOB SEARCH

Have you started putting together a resume? Waiting until April or May is not the best idea. You don't want those other thousands of seniors to get the jump on you, right?

What are the basics you should have ready for any potential employer at a moment's notice? Resume; cover letter; faculty, staff and internship recommendations; interview-appropriate clothing; *et cetera*. But according to Lew Gibbs, director of career services at Cedarville University in Ohio, there's much more to consider as well.

"Two years ago when you sent out a resume, 15 companies jumped on it," Gibbs notes. "But with the

"You can't depend on job fairs anymore."

—Duane Grooms,
Barton College

economy being what it is today, graduating seniors need to be doing everything they can to make face contact with potential employers. Today, only the most tenacious and serious will get the good jobs."

Duane Grooms, director of career services at Barton College in Wilson, N.C., agrees. "You can't depend on job fairs anymore. Companies don't have to search for employees; they have people looking for work all the time."

Gibbs also says the biggest hiring organization over the next 10 years will be the federal government, as it will lose 75 percent of its work force to retirement.

GOING FOR THE MASTERS

If you're headed to graduate school, are you on track to meet your application deadlines? Have you

taken the GRE or the MCAT?

Just because you're vying for a lengthier academic stay doesn't mean that life is all peachy. Many graduate schools require extensive essays, in-depth interviews and, of course, testing before full acceptance into your program of choice. Schools and programs vary, so check your school's Web site for detailed information about its expectations and processes.

Other things to think about as you prepare for grad school are making housing arrangements, sending college transcripts, securing financial aid and—if you're also planning to work while in school—finding a flexible employer. If you want a more detailed timeline for the grad school process, check out

cedarville.edu/dept/cpp/gradschool/timeline.htm.

AND JUST ONE MORE REMINDER

Are you 100 percent sure that you're qualified to walk down that aisle come commencement time? Due to poor planning or an advisor's mistake, many students find themselves one credit short to graduate. We recommend making one more visit to your school advisor to verify that you've not neglected any classes, chapel or convocation credits or anything else that may keep you from graduating. And—here's the fun part—don't forget to order your cap and gown!

WHAT'S HOT ON COLLEGE ROCK RADIO?

At press time, here were the tunes on heavy rotation at Wheaton College's station, WETN, 88.1 FM:

1. "Breathe Your Name" **Sixpence None the Richer** (*Divine Discontent*)
2. "Fly" **Jars of Clay** (*The Eleventh Hour*)
3. "Speaking in Tongues" **The Elms** (*Truth, Soul, Rock & Roll*)
4. "Juggernaut" **Five Iron Frenzy** (*Electric Boogaloo*)
5. "The Fad of the Land" **Newsboys** (*Thrive*)
6. "Summertime" **Audio Adrenaline** (*Lift*)
7. "Understand" **Jeremy Camp** (*Stay*)
8. "Brand New Thing" **Supertones** (*Hi-Fi Revival*)
9. "Superstar" **East West** (*Light in Guinevere's Garden*)
10. "40 Days" **Third Day** (*Come Together*)



COLD WEATHER. HOT MUSIC.

OUR *CCM* WEB EDITOR GIVES READERS THE MUSICAL TOUR OF HER COLLEGE HOMETOWN.

When people hear about Minneapolis, it's usually the weather that comes to mind. After all, there are not too many places where 20-degree temps can be considered a heat wave. But the home to the Mall of America, General Mills breakfast cereal and Mary Tyler Moore's infamous hat-throwing scene is more than just a hub for great snow skiing and ice fishing. It's also a city known for its wide array of musical roots.

Considering that artists like Prince, The Replacements, Soul Asylum and famed producers Terry Lewis and Jimmy Jam emerged from this music scene, there's certainly no shortage of great places to hear the latest sounds. And Christian music is no exception, with a thriving scene where fans can hear everything from pop to punk throughout the year.

While Prince's famed First Avenue club is still a premiere venue for general-market acts and the occasional **Pedro the Lion** or **MxPx** show, several other locales have become equally popular with far more musical diversity.

With a rock 'n' roll vibe and 24,000 square feet—astronomical dimensions when compared to most club settings—**The Quest** is a great

place to dance and hear live music. While it primarily caters to general-market acts, plenty of Tooth & Nail bands like **Me Without You** and hometown punks **Ace Troublesooter** make their way to the Ascot Room—one of two rooms in this spacious locale.

With an identity changing as rapidly as Prince's name, the **Fireball Espresso Cafe** is a cozy place to hear music on the fringe. Formally known as The Coffee Shock and then as The Living Room, this musical haven caters to fans looking for a comfortable place to hear local and newer national acts. Unlike most clubs, this place is even family-friendly, as the owners refuse to sell alcohol.

But when it comes to hearing Christian music in the Twin Cities, **The New Union** is probably the location of choice. Known for hosting acts everywhere on the Christian musical spectrum and for its annual band tournament, the venue is owned by Living Word Christian Center. Hoping to reach out to youth through music by offering a non-alcoholic, smoke-free music club, The New Union also features a CD shop, mini-restaurant, pool tables and a lounge-like setting for hanging out with friends. **CHRISTA FARRIS**

HOMETOWN LEGENDS

Like Estes Park in Colorado, the band tournament at The New Union in Minneapolis has helped launch the careers of many favorite Christian artists of past and present. Remember those Beatlesque rockers known for songs like "Goldie's Last Day" and "Great Lengths"? **PFR**'s discovery propelled the venue into the spotlight after the trio was signed in 1990. While they briefly reunited for the release of *Disappear (Squint)* in 2001, the band members work in different musical capacities as they get together for the occasional PFR concert and pursue individual interests.

Clear was another Christian band that emerged from the Minneapolis scene when it won the band tournament and eventually signed with Ardent Records. Calling it quits after two albums, the band garnered a following with its brand of sincere lyrics and the whimsical vocals of Alison Ogren.

Other Minneapolis notables include singer/songwriter **Sara Groves** (not associated with the band tournament), and the 1998 band tournament winner, **Wee Little Kelly**, which was signed to Gravity Records.

For more information on how your band could "get discovered" through the band tournament, check out newunionclub.com.

THE HOT BOX

MINNEAPOLIS ARTISTS YOU'VE NEVER HEARD

We asked Twin Cities' resident and North Central University Radio's Music Director, Matt Modrich, who some of the hottest up and comers are in the local scene.

The Nina, The Pinta & The Santa Maria

With a raw talent more impressive than what some signed acts offer, this college rock band recently released its CD titled *You Never Finish What You Start*. ninapinta.com

Eastern Standard

Former Ace Troublesooter player Scott Schull fronts this emo band that's making some serious noise on the Minneapolis music scene. With relentless touring and a new EP, this is a band on the rise. easternstandard.net

Outkry

If you like your music loud and similar to the sounds Solid State Records is releasing, you'll probably love Outkry. With hardcore and metal influences, fans of bands on the fringe will be more than pleased. angelfire.com/ky2/outkry/pages/home.html

Angry Atom

Garnering a write-up recently in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Angry Atom is easily the best pop punk band in the area. With plenty of touring in the works, the band released its debut, *4 Years to Nowhere*, in the fall of 2001. angryatom.com

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time machine

WHERE THE HECK DID HOI POLLOI GO?

Before No Doubt's Gwen Stefani, there was Hoi Polloi's Jenny Gullen. With distinctive vocals that whispered one minute and growled the next, Gullen set out to prove that women could rock and lend a credible voice to a male-dominated industry. If you need a reminder, just listen to "Rest Tonight."

Featuring Gullen's husband, Andrew Horst, on bass, guitarist David Ball and drummer Jozsef Fityus, these native New Zealanders played their first U.S. show at Cornerstone in Bushnell, Ill., in 1990. With a performance that caught the attention of Reunion Records, the band seemed destined for greatness with two successful independent efforts already under its belt.

But as an unlikely label companion to the likes of Michael W. Smith and Kathy Troccoli on Reunion's roster in the early '90s, Hoi Polloi, (the Greek word for "common people") didn't exactly resonate with everyone. Critically acclaimed but not always commercially successful, with two releases including a self-titled project in '92 and *Spin Me* in '93, the band recorded one more album, titled *Happy Ever After*, on VIA before officially calling it quits in 1996. **CHRISTA FARRIS**



HOI POLLOI

music that matters

OUT OF EDEN SONG HELPS READER TRUST GOD WITH PAIN

All my life my dad has been in and out of my life. As far back as I can remember, I held in the tears and the hurt and told myself I didn't need anyone.

I got Out of Eden's latest CD, *This Is Your Life*. I was listening to it for the first time, and the song "Rolling Stone" hit me like a ton of bricks. The words they were singing echoed the way I've felt my whole life: "How you sit and wonder, how could all this be, someone that you love so much/Just turn their backs and leave."

After hearing this song, I realized I had been holding back a part of myself from God—the part that's hurting. Now I see that even though it may hurt, I have to trust God enough to know that even in the pain, He's healing me.

Shonda Harper,
Milledgeville, GA

"The words they were singing echoed the way I've felt my whole life."

What's your story? How has Christian music changed your world? E-mail us at tellcm@ccmmagazine.com with a letter (300 words or less) that tells how a song, an album or an artist has impacted your life. Submissions must include your full name, address and phone number to be considered for publication.

page turners

This town ain't big enough for the both of us

Rock producer Steve Hindalong learns a lesson from a Western.

I appreciate the power of well-crafted words. But for the most part, give me entertainment! Something akin to a harrowing hatchet fight in the first paragraph will suit me fine. I must have melodrama from the get-go, or I'll be sleeping soundly by the third page.

Recently I read the great western classic *Shane*, by Jack Warner Schaefer, published in 1949. The movie has been a favorite of mine since childhood, and the book was captivating as well. Indeed, I took to heart Shane's counsel to young Bob regarding how best to handle a gun:

"Your holster's too low," he said. "Don't let it drag full arm's length. Have it just below the hip, so the grip is about halfway between your wrist and elbow when your arm's hanging limp. If it's speed you're after, Bob, don't split the move into parts."

So I'm wearing my cell phone a bit higher now, and I'm able to start talking after one swift motion.

In sharp contrast, and at the insistence of my friend Julie Miller, I'm currently halfway through Brennan Manning's *Abba's Child: The Cry of the Heart for Intimate Belonging*. It's much about God's mercy, and I'm reminded how fortunate I am to be granted amnesty for my own

crimes. Abba, our loving Father, loves us more than we can imagine.

"God not only forgives and forgets our own shameful deeds," explains Manning, "but even turns their darkness into light. All things work together for those who love God, even our sins."

To clumsily bring this "book report" to a conclusion, I should mention that I have been deeply moved by the profound spiritual insights of Manning, Yancey, Buechner and Chambers. But for an airplane ride or relaxing in a lounge chair by the lake, I recommend *Shane*.

A founding member, drummer/percussionist and lyricist of The Choir, Steve Hindalong has made a creative impact on Christian music for more than 20 years. Lately, he has kept busy with his work on the City on a Hill series.



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final word

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