


# CEEM

A photograph of three men, KB, Crabb, and Tomlin, against a cloudy sky background. KB is on the left, smiling, wearing a black jacket. Crabb is in the center, wearing a blue shirt. Tomlin is on the right, wearing a black t-shirt and a striped shirt draped over his shoulder.

## KB, CRABB & TOMLIN

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ELLIE HOLCOMB  
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**FATHER'S DAY**  
EDITION

JUNE 15, 2015

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## FEATURES

**HILSONG UNITED**

Despite topping charts, selling millions, and a Hollywood style feature film this Fall—the Australian worship team says its still all about serving the needs of others

**FATHER'S DAY SPECIAL**

Chris Tomlin, Jason Crabb, Ellie Holcomb, KB, John Cooper of Skillet + many more share their personal stories of fatherhood and Father's Day

**MATT MAHER**

Matt Maher has a new calling and a new voice, both clearly evident on his critically acclaimed new album *Saints and Sinners*



## DEPTS

**FROM THE EDITOR****PHOTOS****OUT AND ABOUT**

Pics of your favorite Christian artists on the road, off the road and everywhere in between

**SONG DEVOTIONAL****DAN BREMNES**

"WHERE THE LIGHT IS"

**REVIEWS**

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I have to admit it—I am selfish. Humbly, **Chris Tomlin** admitted that he used to be selfish, too. Tomlin married his wife Lauren at the age of thirty-eight; I am the same age, not married, and he is very correct in stating that when you're single, life tends to be pretty much all about you.

Case in point: When we were preparing our Father's Day specials for this edition of *CCM Magazine*, I was trucking along to find artists who would share their favorite Father's Day memories, or perhaps best moments of being a father. Wrapped up in my own life and personal experience, I already had forgotten reading about **Dan Bremnes'** unexpected loss of his mother in our special Mother's Day edition just six weeks ago; it didn't even cross my mind that Father's Day can also be painful for some.

Around the time we were wrapping up the June 1 issue that featured Reach Records artist **KB**, I watched a [video](#) on his website that mentioned the loss of his biological father. Additionally, someone brought to my attention an on-air interview featuring **Lindsay McCaul** talking about the unfortunate circumstance of her dad's death. Of course, although it hasn't been my personal experience, many of us have experienced life, or portions of it, without a father.

I am so very lucky to still have my dad here, and just like I was blazing through the production of this magazine, I was headed toward breezing through yet another Father's Day oblivious to how deeply blessed I am both by my Heavenly Father and my earthly father. As you will read, our Heavenly Father is the true theme of June 15's *CCM*, as He is both the supreme example of fatherhood *and* the source of our fatherly needs. This Father's Day, be reminded that all of us should pause and give special thanks for—and to—our dads.



**Image:** My father and I touring what is now Amalie Arena in Tampa, FL during its construction in 1996

Blessings,

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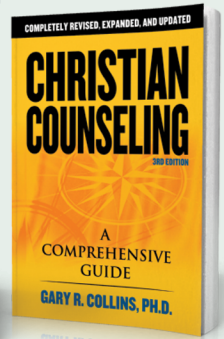
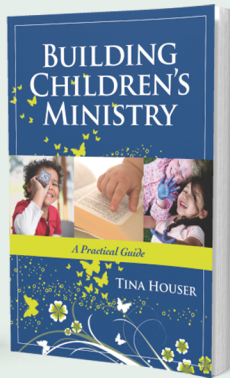
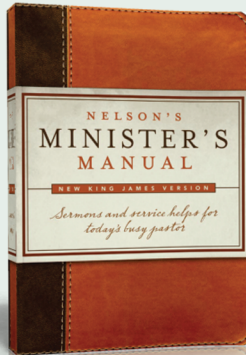
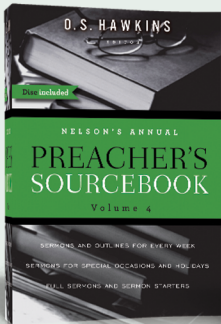
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1



COMPILED BY  
ANDY ARGYRAKIS

**1** Recording artists/authors **Andrew Greer** and **Ginny Owens** visit “Good Day Alabama” to chat about their new book, *Transcending Mysteries*, published by Thomas Nelson’s Refraction collection. Pictured from left to right: Andrew Greer, “Good Day Alabama” co-host Janice Rogers and Ginny Owens.

**2** The members of **Audio Adrenaline** gather in Nashville for a day of interviews to promote their new album, *Sound of the Saints* (FairTrade Services). Seated from left to right are lead vocalist **Adam Agee** and bassist **Dave Stovall**, along with drummer **Jack Campbell** and guitarist **Brandon Bagby** (standing from left to right).

2



3



4



**3** & **4** Faith-focused indie pop/acoustic rock favorite **Danielson** (also a frequent **Sufjan Stevens** collaborator) quite literally illustrates the fruit of the Holy Spirit during a spring tour supporting **Steve Taylor & The Perfect Foil**. (Photos by Andy Argyrakis)

5



**5** Christian pop chart-topper **Francesca Battistelli** takes center spotlight during a stop on The Bible Tour, accompanied by many multi-media marvels. (Photo by LabelLive)

**6** Singer/songwriter and **STORYSONG Music** founder **Mark Wagner** visits Moody Broadcasting's Chicago headquarters to preview Family Christian Stores' **OrphanSong** CD. The collection seeks to raise fund for the physical and educational needs of orphans in Africa and also features Newsboys, Jamie Grace, Jars of Clay, Nicole C. Mullen and Mark Schultz.

6





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**BUILDING  
DOWN**



# MULTITUDE WONDERS

*HILLSONG UNITED: TURNING THE GREATEST SHOW ON  
EARTH ON ITS HEAD THROUGH ACTS OF LOVE AND SERVICE*  
**BY ANDREW GREER**

**BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT,  
FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF  
HEAVEN** (MATTHEW 5:3)

With a list of accomplishments that include a concert in New York City's Central Park with 10,000-plus in attendance, a Top 5 Billboard 200 album debut, major network television performances and a trophy for Top Christian Artist at the 2015 Billboard Music Awards, **Hillsong United's** recent resume sounds more like a boilerplate for the latest American pop music sensation than a worship band bio.

But while it may seem complex to decipher the exact purpose of a band promoting personal worship while receiving massive mainstream recognition, United—a successful spinoff from Hillsong Church's mega-popular music roster in Australia—says the worship band's aim is actually quite simple: serve God, serve others.

In this *CCM Magazine* exclusive, longtime bandleader **Joel Houston** and members **JD Douglass** and **Taya Smith** explain the sincere heartbeat behind the trending heat wave that is Hillsong United.

**CCM: After so much success with the release of *Zion*, how did you guys begin the creative process for this follow up?**

**Joel Houston:** I feel like we have been the underdog, a little worship band from Australia, even though we have had success in different ways over the years. *Zion* really blew us away. The whole experience took us by surprise. To come off the back of that with a new project is not something you can formulate in one creative meeting. You have to sit on it and wait to hear from God.


I love the words of Jesus in **Matthew 5**. Before we played a note, we sat down in the studio and read through the Beatitudes. They represent the way of God's kingdom, what Jesus



Joel Houston



JD Douglass



Taya Smith

exemplified and has called us to be as the church. It's a way that rages in stark contrast to the natural way the world operates. It's a way that chooses surrender over self-promotion. It's about peacemaking rather than attempting to make things right.

**JD Douglass:** Jesus talks about the poor in spirit. Theirs is the kingdom of heaven. The merciful will be shown mercy. The Beatitudes is this thought that Jesus came to serve and not be great. Everyone wants to build empires, but Jesus came to serve.

**JH:** We decided that the kingdom of God we're here to help build, the kingdom we pray our music helps facilitate or speaks into, will be firmly founded in what Jesus was about. Choosing to not look at everything from the "share the best and hide the rest" perspective, but choosing to firmly put your root in the desire to remain as low as possible. Not in a self-deprecating, weird, false humility kind of way, but in a real way—a way where we know exactly where we stand and we know exactly who God is. And we're willing to start from that point and step in confidence to where God has us. It takes all the pressure off.

To me, this process has brought everything to life. ***Empires*** has come alive inside of us.



**CCM: Have you seen the Beatitudes theme affirmed outside of the studio?**

**Taya Smith:** It's funny how it all lined up. At the start of each year, Hillsong has a church service called "Vision Sunday," where **Pastor Brian [Houston]** sets out a vision. When he started preaching, he talked about "A Dangerous Declaration" and he started reading the Beatitudes, his whole vision for the church this year. Joel said he hadn't actually asked his dad about what he was preaching about that Sunday. He was sitting in church just thinking, *Praise God. We must be hearing from God. We must be on the right track.*

**CCM: How did the process of creating *Empires* impact your personal lives?**

**JDD:** The song "Heart Like Heaven" comes out of Psalm

51. It talks about how God is not looking for a flawless performance or for us to be perfect, but when our pride is shattered, when our hearts are broken, that heart God will not despise.

There is so much freedom in saying, "I don't have it all together, but God's not looking for perfection." He's looking for a heart that is honest and pure and after the things that He's called us to be about. That is a massive relief for us. It's the whole "come as you are" message. God didn't come to make us all jump through hoops. His grace is sufficient and his strength is made perfect in our weakness. That is the heart of God for us.

**JH:** Everyone is striving to be on top. Everyone is searching to achieve something. Even in church we can so quickly feed our souls with the lie

that we have to earn our way to God. Yet at the end of the day we do not feel like super Christians. We feel like ordinary, broken people who need a savior and God's mercy every single day, who need to desperately cling to God's grace in every moment. When you have stood on a platform and there is all this crazy stuff going on, you become more acutely aware of that need in your life.

**CCM: Speaking of the platform, you guys are frequently on stage and in the limelight. As a worship-driven band, that seems a bit paradoxical. How do you balance an obvious desire for excellence in performance and the bigger picture of facilitating corporate worship?**



The most powerful worship experience I have ever seen was in a tiny village church in the Philippines. We roll in and there are a bunch of kids playing on an out-of-tune piano and a guitar with three strings. There are a lot of other kids singing their lungs out. The kids are throwing everything they have into it. So excellence can be a small church in the Philippines. We take the resources and opportunities we have and approach it from the same attitude, the same mindset, the same desire to give God our best. It should be excellent.

The church makes excuses for excellence because we claim it's about the show or the performance. Unfortunately, I've participated in it. There are times I've been more consumed that something looks good than it being appropriate for where we

**“JESUS TALKS ABOUT THE POOR IN SPIRIT. THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. EVERYONE WANTS TO BUILD EMPIRES, BUT JESUS CAME TO SERVE.”**

—JD DOUGLASS

**JH:** Excellence begins in the heart. It's a determination of the spirit to give the best we can, to not settle on giving Him our second best or a half-hearted effort. It would be an indictment on what it is if we were not pursuing excellence in our worship. You know? The lighting and music being on point is the fruit of excellence.









are or what we are trying to do. It doesn't work. People see right through it. You can switch on the TV, go to a conference or see Hillsong in different services and sometimes it's not right. Something is off.

Then you can step into something that on the outside sounds like the worst music you've ever heard, but there is something powerful about it. That's what we chase after with worship. In *The Message*, Psalm 51 reads, "Going through the motions doesn't please you, a flawless performance is nothing to you. I learned God-worship when my pride was shattered. Heart-shattered lives ready for love don't for a moment escape God's notice" (**Psalm 51:16-17 MSG**). To me, that's what excellence is, understanding our position of brokenness but still choosing to come with the sacrificial heart towards God that is a part of us doing the best with what is in our hands. I pray that's what people see when they see Hillsong United. Or when they see something that is in their opinion, flashy. I pray they catch the spirit of it. I guess time will tell. It's out of our control.

**TS:** In the secular world, you have people that are incredible with in-ear monitors, incredible lighting technicians, incredible singers and incredible

musicians. They're out there giving their best. Why can't we do that in the house of God? We don't do it for our own glory, we do it so that through those meetings there wouldn't be anything distracting so people would see Jesus.

**JDD:** Most people see the tiniest snapshot of what we do, which can seem so incredible and glamorous. But the majority of our time is spent serving the church and building God's kingdom. That helps keep us focused. Just knowing in ourselves that we're not doing this because anyone is the most talented or amazing. God has just literally put His hand on what we're doing. We don't really know why. But we're grateful and we'll keep running hard as long as His hand is in and on this.

**CCM: So what is the goal? What is the purpose of the songs, the recordings, the world tours? For what purpose does Hillsong United thrive and exist?**

**JH:** There's so much in the understanding of how God works, that He chooses to use us and work through us to achieve His plan. He desperately wants us to participate in what He is building so that we can trust Him more, grow more, and learn more.

The beautiful thing about the whole story, and our

prayer with these songs going forward, is for people to understand the concept of an upside down kingdom. The world is not going to take notice of the church, of us, as followers of Christ, because of our good works or how good our songs are. What the world is going to take notice of is a heart and life that is truly humble and living a selfless way. Not from a place of passivism or trying to remove our selves from the world. But from a place of doing it with more boldness, more courage, more faith, and more desire to create the best things we can—to do the best things we can, to take the music and the message, and this story of Jesus to places it has never been before. If we can connect those two dots, there is no end to what we can achieve for the kingdom in our lifetime. That's what I want to be a part of. **CCM**

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**HAPPY  
FATHER'S  
DAY!**





# CHRIS TOMLIN

## FOREVER FATHER

Hurricanes and pistols may not be typical words used when describing little girls, but Chris Tomlin is a native Texan, and he loves the fact that his oldest daughter, **Ashlyn**, has a fiery spirit. “I think one of my jobs as a dad is to foster that spirit,” says Tomlin. “A lot of parents will try to do things to break that in their kids, I don’t want to do that. I want to let her be that ball of energy, but at the same time learn how to be respectful and understand how to put others before herself.”

Tomlin also tells *CCM Magazine* that he and his wife Lauren have bestowed a couple of nicknames on Ashlyn, *Pistol* and *Cat-5*. “Like a Category 5 hurricane, she is full-on,” he explains. “Right now, she dresses in ‘uniform’ every day, and that uniform is

usually her Cinderella dress. It doesn’t matter if it’s clean or not, I can’t put any other kind of clothes on her—she loves that dress!”

Coming from a household of all boys, Tomlin admits that he is still trying to figure out “this whole female world,” as he puts it. The Tomlin’s just gave birth to their second girl, **Madison**, just eight months ago. “I feel like I’ve jumped into the deep end, for sure,” adds Tomlin with a laugh.

### **CCM: What makes your girls different from one another?**

**Chris Tomlin:** They’re totally different. Madison is only eight months old, so, it’s a little hard to know how her personality is going to develop. Ashlyn is just an absolute joy, an amazing spirit, and full of life. Whenever she is in a room, everyone

knows it. She is very social and energetic, it’s incredible. [Laughs] She sleeps so hard because she goes all out for as long as she can—I just love that. I love the spirit in her.

Madison seems to be a bit calmer. It’s crazy how [Lauren and I] can be the same parents, have one of our children come out wired so differently. But we can already tell that Madison also has a sweet spirit, mainly because she’s always smiling! She can be a little feisty too, but she displays more of a calm, sweet spirit that’s different than Ashlyn’s. It’s still a little early to know where Madison is completely headed because she’s so young.

**CCM: You mention that you feel you’ve been “thrown in the deep end” in a household of girls. How is that shaping**

## **who you're becoming as a father, and what is most surprising to you?**

**CT:** No one can prepare you for fatherhood. I was single for a long time, longer than most. I got married at age 38, and had my first child at 39. I can only speak for myself, but I feel the longer you're single, the more self-absorbed you can become. Your world, for the most part, is just you. I've always said that you grow up when you get married, but I learned that you *really* grow up when you have a child.

People used to think I was arrogant when I was single because when someone would say, "Being a father is the greatest thing that ever happened to me," I would respond by saying, "You need to get out more!" In the midst of the opportunities in getting to do all of these amazingly wonderful things the past few years, Ashlyn was born and I hit the floor. I have never experienced that kind of love and power in my life, it's almost impossible to explain. It knocked me out, and nothing compares to it.

Having kids represents a whole different level of responsibility, and it takes away any notions of "life going as planned." When you're by yourself, your day can typically go by as you've scheduled it, but that no longer exists with kids in the picture. In terms of perspective, however, I think that's a great thing to have. Even if you're best intentions are for it not to happen, when you're single, life is usually just about you. I love how having kids, and living life with their best interests and plans as priority, is shaping me. When you're a dad, things often don't go as planned and you've got to learn how to mellow out in life and roll with the punches. It is a very good lesson for me to be learning. I feel like I'm a much more relaxed person now.

## **CCM: What do you think Ashlyn has learned from you so far?**

**CT:** That she matters, that she's very special, and that she's very loved. I try to do as many things as I can to relate to her and be on her level. I want to be in her world and do the things she loves to do, and by this I think she can understand that she is a person of worth. In a way, I also think she knows who she is, which is amazing for a three year-old. What I mean, is I feel like she's confident in who she is now, and she knows who to come to when things aren't going her way, or when she's frustrated or scared.

## **CCM: How do you envision instilling examples of the truth and love of their Heavenly Father into your girl's lives?**

**CT:** That's a great question, because the power in that is found in the balance of the two. Actually, when you consider Jesus, you also add grace into that equation. If you ram nothing but truth down their throats, and there's no love in it, it can be very harmful. If you're constantly saying "I love you's," and implying that they can do what ever they want, then that's not real love. So, being truthful by instilling discipline—as opposed to acting as just a best friend of-sorts—while leading and guiding them with grace and love, is how I try to approach fatherhood. I think if you can accomplish a healthy balance of those elements, you're children will grow to have more respect for you.

One thing I have come to realize about being a dad is that it's the one thing in life you can't stop doing. You can stop playing music, stop being married, stop doing your job and go to other things—you can even stop your own life—but you can never stop being that person's father. You are going to be their father forever, whether you come or go, and that's huge. It's a massive responsibility, but what an amazing gift that God has given all of us as fathers. That's the one thing about becoming a dad that has impacted me the most.



# JASON CRABB

## FIRM FOUNDATIONS

Everyone always says kids will change your life forever, but I don't think I truly understood just how much being a dad would change and challenge me for the long haul.

I grew up in Beaver Dam, KY, which is just as small as it sounds. It's the kind of place where everyone knows everybody and in a sense, your neighbors even seem like family. Beyond that, I was traveling the road with my family for years performing music. I know family—I do the *family thing* well! But there is no amount of family time that could ever prepare you for having your own children. There is absolutely nothing in the world like being a father.

For the longest time **Shellye**, my amazing wife, and I couldn't get pregnant. When we finally did, we had two miscarriages. It was a difficult season. We prayed and cried, then prayed some more and in His time, God gave us **Ashleigh** and **Emma**, and they are the joys of our lives.

I do my best everyday to love them, teach them, and be an example of Jesus for them. Lucky for me, I've got the most incredible wife in the world. Shellye helps me be the best father I can be. She helps me better understand those little female minds, and shows me what they need most.

Soon, Ashleigh and Emma are going to be teenagers, which does seem crazy—time flies so fast! The last thing I would ever want to



do is waste any time or miss out on a chance to teach or encourage them in some way. I think as much as Shellye and I want to be the best parents we can be, we're still human and sometimes we're going to experience parenting by trial and error.

I often ask myself: *What are my kids thinking? What's going through their minds? Am I doing this right? Am I giving them enough...or too much? Am I really teaching them how to live a life in Christ?*

In a lot of ways, I find God answering those questions as He is blessing us through the faith that's growing inside of our daughters' hearts. There aren't enough words to describe the feeling of watching my girls

getting to know Christ. It's amazing, but also demands that I keep growing in Him right alongside of them. The Bible tells us, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." (**Proverbs 22:6**).

My prayer is that my girls will learn, through me as their dad, that sometimes life is tough—however all of the time, God is good and He is our Father in Heaven. I hope that by loving them as best I can here on earth, they'll also realize the love of their Heavenly Father.

Being a father is the best thing that has ever happened to me. My girls are the greatest gifts in my life—they're my blessings and our miracles.





# ELLIE HOLCOMB

## ALWAYS ENOUGH

As Father's Day rolls around this year, so do the memories that I have with my dad. Most are sweet. Some are painful, but one stands out as a literal mountain top experience that changed me forever.

I was a freshman in college, and I was struggling. My dad and I had hiked for a day to reach the top of Mount Leconte. We camped that night and got up early the next morning to watch the sunrise. I wasn't watching it though, as I was just shuffling my feet around in the dirt. I didn't want to look my dad in the face. If I did, I knew I would break down, and I did not want to do that!

Back then I thought that following Jesus was all about being good or strong enough, and holding ourselves together for the sake of the gospel. I was wrong.

I tried to explain to him why I was having such a hard time, and I'll never forget how he responded. He said, "Ellie, it seems like you think you've got to have it all together. You keep telling me that you want to be strong for God and love people well, and you also keep telling me that you feel like a total failure. I want you to picture a beautiful vase. If you poured water into that vase, it would eventually spill out over the edges, right?"

"Now picture a vase with a bunch of cracks in it, and maybe a few holes, too. Pour

water in that one and the water will spill out through those cracks and holes, and over the top, as well. I think it's going to be important for you to remember that the nature of God's love is to fill, heal and pour through our broken places. The more open we are about the broken parts of our lives, the more people can see His love meeting and healing us in our brokenness. Following Jesus isn't really about us being good enough. It's about God's great goodness to us, even when we don't deserve it."

I was undone. Looking away from my dad's face couldn't stop the tears anymore, so I hugged him and thanked him for letting me know that it was okay to be *just okay*. For the first time I learned that God can actually use the broken places in our lives as testaments to His faithfulness.

I didn't know it at the time, but my dad was going through a serious heart transformation. He was living out the wisdom he shared with me that morning on the mountain. My memories of him as a child are sweet. I always knew that he loved my siblings and I, and we adored him. We wanted to be around him any chance we could get, but we didn't get a lot of chances.

Dad is a very successful music producer, and he was constantly working. He now admits that he was a workaholic, incredibly passionate about the ministry of Christian music, but also at the cost of his family. However, God was turning his heart towards home, showing him how vital it was for him to be more present as a father.

The past ten years have been wonderful. I've watched my father humbly allow God to transform his heart and his life, and it has changed our family. He moved his studio from downtown to inside of our home, and began pursuing our family with intentionality. Dad says now that the only things he has to offer his children are love and repentance. He has asked each of us to forgive him for

the ways he has fallen short as a father, acknowledging his brokenness and the ways that it broke our hearts at times. He has lived out the wisdom that he spoke so gently to me on that mountain, letting Jesus pour through his broken places.

When people ask us what it's like to make records together, we usually tear up and say that it's like that promise God makes in **Joel 2:25**: "I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten..."

The Lord really has restored our family, and I'm thanking God this Father's Day, for parents who have bravely lived out lifestyles of repentance, and showing their kids the power of turning from our "not enough" to the "always enough" of Jesus' love.





**KB**

## HOPE RISING

I am no stranger to the devastating effects of being wounded by both an abusive and elusive father. I have had three fathers in my life: my biological father (of whom I've never met), my mother's first husband, and my mother's second husband whose last name I now bear. One by one, the fathers who were once present in my life began to disappear. The concept of fatherlessness was very real to me, it was a dark space in my soul where hope previously had not broken through. In my life, I had experienced fatherlessness three-times over.

As I became older and was blessed to begin a family of my own, God made it abundantly clear that my fathers were really no different

than me. They were sinful, misguided and broken—but I need Jesus just as much as they do. Eventually, this attitude turned my grumbling into gratitude—I learned to forgive. Additionally, I vowed to allow for the darkness of my past to provide the backdrop for a stark, brightly lit contrast of hope I could now display for my own son through real fatherhood.

It was around the same time our son was born was when I began writing and recording my new album *Tomorrow We Live*. My definition of a truly successful musical album is one that leaves a lasting, indelibly positive mark, regardless of chart positions and sales. My main goal for this project was to establish an underlying message of hope for listeners.

Before I could truthfully relay hope to others, however, I felt that I first had to have a hope deep inside of me.

This was a time for me to make music, but also a time to face the music.

From a reassuring confidence, I decided to tackle the last chapter of my fatherless saga. I wanted to meet the man responsible for the very DNA that is running through my body. I wanted to find my biological father. Despite impending odds, I decided to pursue my search for him via a private investigator. After a month's time, the trail turned up cold. As the detective described it, my father apparently "fell off the face of the earth around 1990."

After several more months, I had all but given up on finding any evidence, when suddenly information leading to the discovery

of my father began to surface. To my dismay, we found that he was murdered shortly after I was born. After the news settled, I sought after the Lord and began to find beauty in the hope of my Heavenly Father. In **Matthew 3:17**, it states that after Jesus came up out of the baptismal water, the voice of the Holy Spirit said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

Although I will never have the chance to hear my earthly father utter those words to me, my hope is found in my Heavenly Father. Regardless of prior wounds, hope heals and it makes us stronger. It is with this hope I victoriously rise from the pains of fatherlessness. Through Jesus Christ, I now have the freedom to love my son unashamedly, and passionately be the father figure for him that I never had.





# JOHN COOPER

## ROAD RULES

In our May 1 issue, we featured **Korey Cooper** of **Skillet**, and her daughter **Alex**, as part of our Mother's Day special. One of the more profound elements in Korey's story was her account of how God, despite the crazy road-life the couple endured in Skillet's earlier days, gave her a clear vision that they were going to be parents.

We caught a first-person glimpse into their relationship, and even heard from Alex herself. This time, we sit down with **John Cooper** and ask him a few questions about fatherhood and get to know a little more about his son, **Xavier**.

**CCM: What has been the biggest surprise to you in parenting so far?**

**JC:** Before our own children I hadn't been around kids that much, especially babies, so the biggest shock to me was the realization of just how selfish of a person I was. All of a sudden when you have kids, you have no life, because everything you do revolves around the needs of your child. That's just a fact of life. However, it's quite awesome how God uses that to teach us, again, that our lives are not our own. Our lives belong to Him—what we do, how we spend our time, how we spend our money—all these things belong to the Lord, right? So, it really stunned me when becoming a parent revealed how most of the time I was just living for me.

**CCM: How are your two kids different from each other?**

**JC:** First, both of my kids are very different. Alex is very intelligent, very much like her mother. Ever since she was really young, like three and four years old, we've been able to have very intelligent conversations about Jesus and being a Christian. She learned at a very young age what it meant to love people, and even how to talk with them when

they might be going through hard times. I like to say that she has been evangelizing since around the age of four or five, and in turn, she is exceptional with people.

Xavier is different, he thinks a little more like me. [Laughs] Not to say that he and I are *not* intelligent, but we often like to take the "scenic route" when it comes to getting somewhere—the need of further explanation on understanding something, at times.

It's been great getting to understand how he thinks. As a parent, it's been a needed reminder that we're not here to make our kids into something that they are not. My job is to help them become who God wants them to be, not what I want them to become.

It's funny, a lot of people seem to assume that our kids would be extremely musical for one reason or another, but they're not. Those things really don't matter to me—what counts are that they're lives are pointing toward Jesus. Even at age nine, I can sense that [Xavier] wants to be used by God, and he is seeking the Lord to direct his life. The great thing about our kids being so different is that Korey and I have to go to God for direction on how to best lead them, as we also want to discern what the Lord is speaking into both of them.

**CCM: What do you think that your kids have learned from you?**

**JC:** I like to think that they have learned,

from the both of us of course, what I just mentioned about our lives not being our own. I've always tried to impress that on to my kids. You can talk to your kids about anything, however, they truly learn by example. For instance, our kids will have seen us take requests for late night prayers outside of our tour bus after a show, knowing that all we wanted and really needed at the time was to be in bed. Definitely one thing they have learned from me is that no matter what you do in your life for a job, for fun, or even how you dress—it's more about what the Lord wants for you, and not what you want for yourself.

We have experienced the fruit of this, from both of our kids, as we have raised them on the road. At first, it was not our desire to have children while traveling in a band, but God had other plans for us. They have fully lived-in to their roles and feel that they have been called to be out on the road just as much as Korey and I have. They are eager to talk to others about Jesus, live for Christ daily, and to be a light anywhere they find themselves. They have had a great impact on our family, and are such a blessing.

**CCM: What do you think they might do when they get older?**

**JC:** I find it amazing that you can already kind-of tell what they're going to be good at in life, even at the young ages of four, five, or six. You can already take notice to what comes natural for them. My kids are both very creative—I wouldn't say musical, but artistic in other ways. They are both excellent storytellers and character developers. As I've mentioned, my son has a very peculiar brain, sometimes it seems like he's slow in figuring things out yet he's exceptional at things like mathematics. You could say that he is very computer-oriented. I can definitely see him going into some sort-of engineering or architecture career.

Honestly, my daughter is good at just about everything she attempts. She's so good with people—she effortlessly understands them very well. Even when she was five or six years old, she would make friends on her own. We would go to a park and she would meet new friends to play with and, eventually, she would come over and tell us "I think that kid over there is sad, they shouldn't be talking about their parents that way, so I prayed for them." What ever she does, I would assume that it's going to be involved in helping people.

I have observed a lot of Christian parents waiting too long in teaching their kids about the Lord. You know, really experiencing Him, His presence, worshipping God, and understanding the Bible. I think a lot of parents assume that because one might be a young child, they wouldn't really be up for any of that. I know from experience that is not the case. When I was growing up, my mom was very intent on me experiencing God and learning about Jesus as a youngster—and it stuck with me.

I think too many Christian parents think that their kids will get that when they get older. I accepted Christ as a young kid and as I got older, I never really experienced any kind of a back sliding period. I never left God to go do what I wanted to, only to come back to Christ later. I believe it was my mother's example that really grabbed me and never let go, so we have tried to instill those same methods in raising our children. I don't think a kid is ever too young to begin worshipping God.

We all go to church together, but we also worship together at home. I don't let my kids sit around and play Lego's while we sing to Jesus, they have to sing to Jesus, too. I believe their lives have been impacted because they have experienced God from a young age, and I hope that they will never forget it. This is probably what I'm most passionate about as a parent.



# DAN BREMNES

## BUILDING SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL

This is the second year I'm able to call myself a father. **Eli Jobiah Bremnes** was born to us on a snowy December day in Salmon Arm, British Columbia, Canada only a few months before we moved to Music City USA, Nashville, Tennessee. My wife and I were both excited and a little nervous, but mostly just looking forward to this new part of our lives.

Although it took me a while to get to know this little guy, there was one experience that I remember from the start—pain. I had never felt someone else's pain like I did Eli's. It broke my heart hearing him cry. If I saw him fall, get bumped, scratch his little

knee—anything that hurt him would hurt me in a way I had never felt before.

In turn, these feelings made me think more about God. Was I was experiencing what God had felt about my life—all of our lives—from the beginning?

Sometimes we fall down and get hurt. Other times it's the action of another person that affects us, and we feel pain. Like a good father, God's heart breaks when our heart breaks. Sometimes in His sovereignty He protects us from trouble, and other times He allows us to go through pain so that we can grow. This Father's Day, remember that God is *for you*. You are His child and He loves you through your pain and through your joy. Trust your life in His hands, because He's building something beautiful.





# TYRUS MORGAN

## LEGACY OF THE HEART

Being a dad has taught me more about the heart of God than any other circumstance in my life. We often hear that as you become a parent, you begin to understand your own parents more. We have all heard the lines “I’m becoming my dad,” or “I sound like my mom!” In my case, I’m beginning to understand trust and unconditional love on a completely different level now that I’m a dad to three amazing kids.

I strive for my children to know they can count on me for provision, comfort and help. I pray that they can trust me. **Matthew 7:11** says, “If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will our Father in heaven give to

His children who ask.” This is a source of great confidence to know our powerful Father is for us, not against us.

I constantly desire to have conversations with my kids and to be involved in their lives. I want to celebrate their successes at things like piano recitals, as well as to hold them in loving arms after a hard day at school. I like to think that those are characteristics of our father, God, who supplies all joy through His presence.

He wants us to pray to Him without ceasing. He promises to never leave us, but to walk with us in the good times and the bad. Yes—He wants a very close relationship with His kids!

Like our Heavenly Father has promised, my own dad has supported me in all of my endeavors. Thanks to him, I have never really experienced fear of failure when attempting something new, because he was always there. My dad once said, “My father, your Grandpa Morgan, always displayed an unconditional love with me. This helped for me to understand the similarities between him, my earthly father, and my Father in heaven. I have tried to model that for you and your siblings.”

A Father’s heart is something that is passed down through each generation, and hopefully nurtured and taught with care. It’s a legacy that reflects the loving heart of our Heavenly Father—a legacy that I hope to leave, in Jesus’ Name, Amen.



## JAY SPEIGHT

### A HIGHER DEFINITION

*The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love...As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him.*

**Psalms 103:8, 13 NIV**

To me, Father's Day is hand-drawn cards and hugs from my kids. A day I stop and thank God for the priceless gifts they are, and how He continually uses them to teach me more about Himself.

However, it's also a day in which I reflect on the awesome responsibility—and opportunity—I have in helping to shape how my children see and relate to their Heavenly Father.

My wife and I recently built a new house and one of the very first purchases we made

upon moving in was a 60-inch HD flat screen television. I'm a gamer and a tech geek, so I was more than pumped. Let's be honest, I was probably more excited about the flat screen than I was about the house itself! Two months later, our two year-old **Zach** decided to heave a big wooden block across the living room. Nailing my "pride and joy" about two inches right of center, he cracked the screen and put an end to my gaming bliss.

My initial reaction of shock and disbelief gave way to frustration. Then as my frustration was about to explode into full-blown anger, I felt the Holy Spirit gently convicting me, "It's only a television. Isn't your son's heart infinitely more valuable than a flat screen hanging on the wall?"

My son didn't understand what he had done, he was simply doing what toddlers do. Had I responded harshly, what would that have taught him about his daddy? Furthermore, how would that shape his view of his Heavenly Daddy?

It's been three months since the accident, and while the television is still broken, my son's heart is intact. Whether he realizes it now or not, I hope he knows that he is far more precious to me than anything money could buy.

This Father's Day (and every day), it is my prayer that the example I set as his earthly father only reinforces what his mother and I are teaching him about the Heavenly One. That, and that he gets a pitching scholarship to pay for college! **CCM**

## LINDSAY McCAUL

Access [CCMMagazine.com](http://CCMMagazine.com) or click the image to listen to a previously recorded on-air interview with **Lindsay McCaul** as she opens up about the loss of her father to myelofibrosis.





**THINK.**

*What do I believe?*



**ACT.**

*What should I do?*



**BE.**

*Who am I becoming?*

*It's one thing to* **KNOW THE STORY OF THE BIBLE.**  
*It's another thing to* **LIVE IT.**

**31-DAY  
READING PLAN**

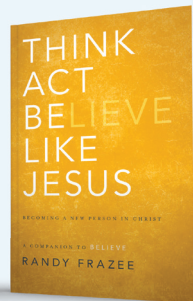
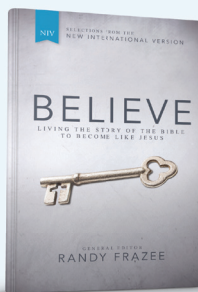
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# THE VOICE



MATT MAHER HAS A NEW CALLING AND A NEW VOICE, BOTH CLEARLY EVIDENT ON HIS CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED NEW ALBUM *SAINTS AND SINNERS*

## BY GRACE ASPINWALL

Great songwriters are master storytellers. They pull listeners inside intricate circles, touching people at their core. While **Matt Maher** was contemplating the narrative for his latest record, *Saints And Sinners*, he found himself focusing on the little-known stories of those he dubs “prophetic voices,” and in doing so, he uncovered more about his own humanity.

### ASKING THE QUESTIONS

The dichotomy that exists between *Saints And Sinners* and Maher himself—a funny, acutely humble songwriter, is an immediate observation. Maher admits that he didn’t set out to pen such a weighty and what many have called controversial album. “I released *All The People Say Amen* and it was packed with live songs—selections that I had been playing for years. I can’t fully explain why I chose the themes [featured on *Saints And Sinners*], except for the mystery of how God sometimes works.” He laughingly “...chalks up the change in his direction to turning forty,” but sober as he details how a current cultural shift plays a role.

He points to social media as a big culprit, citing both the treatment of and behavior of some Christians as part of feeding discouragement. “I’ve been watching social media, and wondering how to get involved. I had to reach the hard conclusion that the best thing I could do is make influential music—music that answered some tough questions.” During the writing phase of the *Saints and Sinners*, he began to ask himself hard questions such as, “What does it mean to be human? God became a man, lived among us, died and arose—what does that say about us?” He pauses and asks, “Does the incarnation change the conversation?”

Maher would find the answers he was looking for in seemingly unusual places. Turning from social networking to the printed

page, he began discovering revelations buried deep inside the pages of history. Among documented accounts of other broken lives, Maher found that people have been wrestling with the same questions throughout time.

### UNLIKELY HEROES

During this time of soul-searching, he reveals the stories and voices that would eventually leap from the lyrics of *Saints And Sinners* found *him* versus the other way around. “Some of these themes are overarching points of conflict the church attempts to address. I began digging, observing the fact that we are saints because of the resurrection, yet we are still sinners,” he sighs. “We do amazing, beautiful things—then we do dreadfully terrible things. Just because we may follow Jesus, it doesn’t make us any less prone to sinning. However, I think it does make us understand mercy a lot more.”

Every song on the album was inspired by people that faced their own sins and were proponents of cultural change, but not every instance illustrates this in a way that you might expect. Maher unpacked the slightly darker, sometimes uncomfortable aspects of familiar heroes of the faith. For example, he mentions that **Mother Teresa’s** name has become an adjective of-sorts to describe saintly personalities, but found that she was most inspirational when facing spiritual crisis. “When she got to Calcutta to serve the poor, she went through a period where the presence of God was ambiguously avoiding her. I found that incredibly profound, and deeply encouraging, because even she struggled.” He continues, “Maybe *she* found herself in a place of position and influence and then realized she wasn’t a saint? There’s probably a lot of leaders who can relate to that.”

The beautiful and majestic “Everything is Grace,” on which Maher sings *Whatever comes my way / I will walk through the flame / You’re turning my fear to faith / My doubt to faith /*



“WE ARE SAINTS BECAUSE OF THE RESURRECTION, YET WE ARE STILL SINNERS. WE DO AMAZING, BEAUTIFUL THINGS—THEN WE DO DREADFULLY TERRIBLE THINGS. JUST BECAUSE WE MAY FOLLOW JESUS, IT DOESN'T MAKE US ANY LESS PRONE TO SINNING. HOWEVER, I THINK IT DOES MAKE US UNDERSTAND MERCY A LOT MORE.” -MATT MAHER



and everything is grace was based on another unlikely hero, **Saint Therese**, a French nun who died from tuberculosis. “She became a nun at fifteen and died at twenty-six, and did nothing but clean and sweep floors,” he says with wonder. “But she wrote this journal, and it’s incredibly profound. She was given the title ‘Doctor of The Church,’ which is reserved for the well-studied and the masters of rhetoric. Yet, here’s this little nun sweeping floors! She said everything was grace, and was a result of the Father’s love for us.

“We complain about our little inconveniences, yet she of all people was thankful and inspiring.” He circles back to the detrimental aspect of social media, citing our drive to be technologically connected as part of the issue with society’s obsession of complaining. “She swept floors and died a horrible death, and she wasn’t complaining. And we, even as Christians, can see suffering by just accessing Google on our phones and complaining about Delta Airlines. How can we do this when the reality [of true suffering] is so evident? There are these little hypocrisies everywhere, and I wanted this project to force people into confrontation with them.”

## PROPHETIC VOICES

As he was studying and subsequently melding together this unique collection of songs, Maher discovered even more revelations. On the song “Sons And Daughters,” which tackles the touchy subject of racism, Maher began to question the church’s role among our country’s growing racial tensions. “I watched the events happening in **Ferguson, Missouri** on television with an unsettling sense of grief. As all of that unfolded, I believed it exposed a wound that has yet to completely heal. Belief in racial equality stems from the gospel and yet, at a point in history, it was counter-cultural.” He further explains, “People forget that **Dr. Martin Luther King** was not someone who set out to be a civil

rights leader—he was a pastor, he went to seminary. That hit me to the core—I wonder how many people have a calling to be involved in something radical, but they aren’t hearing it? Perhaps they’re afraid to respond? One of my expectations for *Saints And Sinners* is for it to reignite prophetic voices for some people.”

To be clear, Maher isn’t wishing his album inspires a crop of street corner evangelists or Bible-thumping theologians, rather everyday people obeying the call on their lives to do brave things for Christ. “I think one does invoke the spirit of God when talking about something being ‘prophetic,’ but what *Saints And Sinners* brings to light are the men and women that God chooses to be His mouthpieces.” Emphatically, he adds, “I think everyone who follows Jesus is supposed to be a prophetic voice! I often think that our culture currently silences our great prophets, and in doing so, maybe we’re also silencing the voices inside, too. We do this in the name of comfort...even in the name of technology.”

## NEW HEROES

Maher also pursued stories from living examples, such as modern day hymn writers **Bill** and **Gloria Gaither**. Already a successful single from the album, “Because He Lives (Amen),” is based off of a well-known hymn celebrating the resurrection. “This was another situation where the song literally found me. I was writing songs for **Passion** and someone said, ‘We should write a song called ‘Because He Lives,’ and thought it was awkward because there already is one!’ He laughs, then adds that his other hit “Lord I Need You” was also based on an older hymn, and that he considers hymns a healthy component of modern-day worship.

“It dawned on me while writing [“Because He Lives (Amen)"] that there really are only so many times you can say ‘because He lives’ before having to say ‘I can face tomorrow’—then it went straight from inspiration to





plagiarism! So, we had to go to get permission from the Gaithers to use their lyrics and they became co-writers on the song." Gloria's response? Upon hearing the song, she wrote a letter to Maher stating she knew that it would help a new generation find hope and celebrate the resurrection. In addition to that experience, Maher gained a new respect for the gospel greats, saying, "I look at Bill and Gloria, and they're truly a set of prophetic voices. You know, I suppose people look at them and think '[Trinity Broadcasting Network] and Cracker Barrel,' but there's so much more to them. They are deep and profound people, with a real faith, and their impact on the church will be felt for years to come. Unfortunately, I think they can be an example of our society sort of shooting down modern-day prophets in the name of being cool or relevant. Their song actually began the process of recording *Saints And Sinners*, so I'm very grateful for them. Additionally, the resurrection is where our story of faith begins."



## THE NEXT CHAPTER

"I've been playing these [new] songs live for a few months now, and even though they're more intimate and vulnerable, it actually hasn't been hard," admits Maher. "I'm realizing that a crucial element in the process of making music is separating yourself from the expectations of others. I could worry if people are going to like [my music], or even wonder what kind of a reaction it will cause. Now, I'm more concerned about being aban-

doned to the will of God, because I'm giving the listener a song that I think is important.

"When sometimes people don't clap during a live performance, I kind of think that it's even more of a compliment, because the audience is tuned in to the moment." Maher goes on to say that this new batch of songs has come easier, because he has reached a point in his career where these topics—controversial, or not—are what he is choosing to talk about. "This is where I am, and this [period of time] is where we are as a culture, and for this season, it is the burden and the message God has given me," he concludes. Call it eloquent, or call it provocative—he is giving all of us an ear into God's unique call on his life, and Matt Maher has found his own prophetic voice. **CCM**

**+** CHECK OUT OUR REVIEW OF "SAINTS AND SINNERS" FROM THE APR. 1, 2015 EDITION OF CCM MAGAZINE



## “WHERE THE LIGHT IS”

SONG DEVOTIONAL BY DAN BREMNES

If you grew up in church like I did, at times it can feel as if you were born into the light. We are surrounded by so many good things, great people, and influences—you can almost forget what the darkness can be like. I didn't go from darkness into light like some have experienced, I gave my heart to Jesus as a very young boy. The down side, at least for me, was that I kind-of floated through many seasons with a faith that had never truly been challenged.

One day my world came crashing down and I found myself in the darkest place I had ever been. I received an unexpected phone call one night—the voice on the other end of the line stated, “Dan, your mom lost her life in a car accident.” I don't think anyone could ever be prepared for such a moment. I remember going to bed that night and wishing that I didn't wake up the next morning. I didn't know how to face this. All that I knew how to do was to call out to Jesus. I was lost—in a dark place—and for the first time I couldn't see a way out. I needed a Savior.

*God come quickly only you can save me, will You lead me where the light is*

*God be with me, don't know where I'm going, will You lead me where the light is  
I've been living in the dark, I've been looking for daylight, You're my daylight*

I used to think that Jesus was just here to bring people into the light, and once He brought them there, everything was good-to-go! So, I left myself out of the equation. I didn't realize, until that tragic moment, the power that I needed from Him. I began to see that I was hopeless on my own.

When I awoke that next day, I felt a small ray of hope and light. God began guiding me into the light again, and in the midst of a storm I felt overwhelming peace and comfort. What initially seemed to be a wound that would never heal, He healed.

*There's no hurt, no scar or bruise, there's not a wound too deep for you.*

Sometimes we feel like we have to fight on our own, as if we're a superhero Christian of sorts. God hasn't called on us to be alone, in



fact, He tells us that “His strength is made perfect in our weakness.” Whether we're running away from Him, or we've been faithfully walking with Him for many years—we all still

need Jesus daily. We need Him to keep leading us to where the light is. ☐☐☐

*Dan Bremnes' full-length debut album featuring the title track “Where The Light Is,” is now available on iTunes.*

**CLICK HERE TO READ THIS DEVOTIONAL WHILE STREAMING THE SONG “WHERE THE LIGHT IS” ON CCMAGAZINE.COM!**

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2 Corinthians 12:8-10, John 8:12

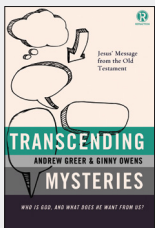
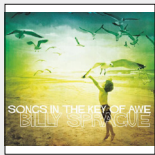
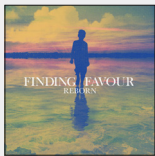


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*Joy Electric*  
 ★★★★★☆

Since the late 2000s, Adam Young (better known the world over as Owl City) experienced a trajectory nothing short of meteoric. After selling millions of records, the small townner from Owatonna, MN has practically laid the blueprints for the modern pop/electronic troubadours following in his footsteps. All the while, he has never been shy about his faith, which continues alongside the mounds of sugary surges that permeate the fifth full-length effort *Mobile Orchestra*. In addition to delightfully quirky arrangements and diary-styled lyrics, Young taps Avicii collaborator Aloe Blacc on “Verge,” aims straight for the dance floor with Hanson on “Unbelievable,” and takes a somewhat unexpected though still catchy country sidestep with Jake Owen throughout “Back Home.” Come the contemplative finale “This Isn’t The End,” telling the tale of a girl whose father takes his life, but ultimately points to forgiveness, redemption and the reminder that “when the light goes out, this isn’t the end.”

–Andy Argyrakis

IN THIS ISSUE



WE LIKE: “Verge” (featuring Aloe Blacc)



## FINDING FAVOUR

**Reborn** (Gotee)

FOR FANS OF: Mikeschair

★★★★☆

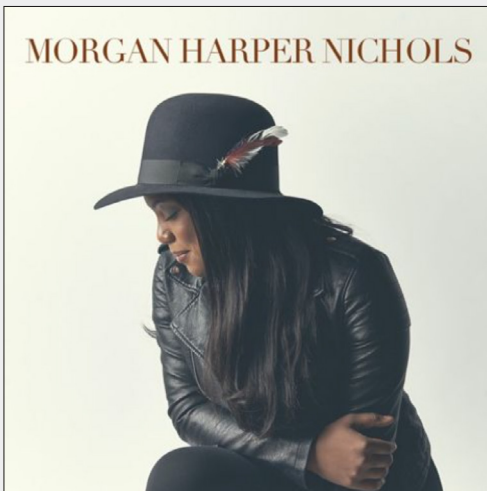
Two years ago, Gotee Records announced a new signing with a buoyant pop EP that featured the worshipful lyrics of Finding Favour. The short set whet the appetite for something more, and *Reborn* is the long-awaited answer. Fortunately, the band's fans will find their patience rewarded.

Almost every song on *Reborn* is tailor-made to sing along. "Feels Like The First Time" is going to be a clap-along favorite in the live set, and "Cast My Cares" is already taking advantage of its radio readiness. Even slower numbers are straightforward yet memorable, which make them easy to pick up and hold onto in meaningful moments.

—Matt Conner

WE LIKE: "Feels Like The First Time"

## MORGAN HARPER NICHOLS



## MORGAN HARPER NICHOLS

**Morgan Harper Nichols** (Gotee)

FOR FANS OF: Jamie Grace

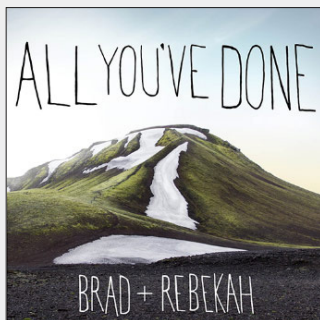
★★★★☆

The initial story told about Morgan Harper Nichols will actually be about her younger sister, Jamie Grace. As the older sibling to one of Gotee Records' most recognizable new artists, Nichols will need time to carve out her own platform. But given the talent that runs in the family, the silky smooth pop artist will undoubtedly find her own footing and fan base soon enough.

It's not as if Nichols wants to avoid the connection. After all, the strongest song on her self-titled debut, "Storyteller," features an appearance from Grace. Other guests also appear including Mac Powell ("I Can't Save Myself") and All Sons & Daughters ("A Prayer for Grace"). But songs like "Grateful" show that Nichols can stand tall on her own.

—Matt Conner

WE LIKE: "Storyteller (feat. Jamie Grace)"



**BRAD + REBEKAH**

**All You've Done**

*(Discovery House)*  
 FOR FANS OF: All Sons & Daughters, Ellie Holcomb, The Brilliance

★★★★☆

Husband and wife duo Brad + Rebekah launches a debut double-disc featuring twelve upbeat studio recordings of praise and worship songs on disc one, and six stripped-down acoustic selections on the second. The duo's chief aim was to create congregational-style songs that were both catchy and spiritually deep, of which we confidently give two "thumbs-up." The title track "All You've Done" is a heartfelt anthem about the power of praise, while "We Are Not the Same" is a reverent revelation.

—Rebekah Bell

WE LIKE: "All You've Done!"



**BILLY SPRAGUE**

**Songs in the Key of Awe**

*(Elevate Entertainment)*  
 FOR FANS OF: Phil Keaggy, Wayne Kirkpatrick, Wes King

★★★★☆

Taking title cues from Stevie Wonder's similarity titled 1976's double album opus, multiple Dove Award winner Billy Sprague ("Via Dolorosa," "Man After Your Own Heart") also shoots for the stars on this ambitious new singer/songwriter collection. With some help from talented family members, Phil Keaggy and a few other famous friends, the veteran addresses themes of God's infinite glory, grace and praise with his easygoing vocals cloaked in an acoustic pop meets adult contemporary motif.

—Andy Argyrakis

WE LIKE: "Thank You, Lord" (featuring Phil Keaggy)



**HOUSE OF PEACE**

**Into The Great Unknown**

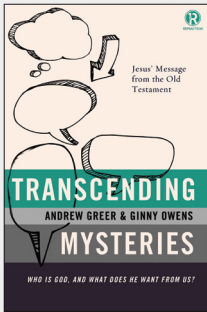
*(Capitol CMG)*  
 FOR FANS OF: Jeremy Camp, Shane & Shane

★★★★☆

House of Peace's new album mixes modern lyrics with ancient spiritual truths to create a diverse, catchy soundtrack. "The title 'Into the Great Unknown' is basically about trusting the Lord in the things we don't understand," lead singer David Liscum shares. Highlights include "Passover Lamb" which melds new lyrics with the age-old hymn "Nothing But the Blood," while "Break the Bread (Communion Song)" is a stripped down tune reminiscing on Christ's ultimate sacrifice. With a penchant for singing profound truths in new ways, this new outfit is one worshippers of all ages and tastes will appreciate.

—Rebekah Bell

WE LIKE: "Break the Bread"



## TRANSCENDING MYSTERIES: WHO IS GOD AND WHAT DOES HE WANT FROM US?

Authors: Andrew Greer & Ginny Owens  
 Publisher: Thomas Nelson

★★★★☆

For some Christians (and non-Christians alike), reading through

the Old Testament can be a challenge. Dove Award winning artist Ginny Owens and Dove Award nominated singer/songwriter Andrew Greer join forces to help bridge the Bible gap, or as the official press release for *Transcending Mysteries* more accurately states, “the book tackles how we as Christians can reconcile the God of the Old Testament and Jesus of the New Testament.”

The appealing aspect of this book is its intended and ongoing conversations between the two authors, as Greer and Owens open up about their own tussles and triumphs with faith. This expertly allows the reader to gather a sense that they are able to anonymously eavesdrop or feel like they’re sitting face-to-face with the authors in a coffee shop. “Ginny and I wanted to reopen the story of Scripture, pair it with our own stories as disciples today, and attempt to discover—rather than dictate—God,” states Greer. Adding to its unique approach is the book’s main reliance on *The Voice* translation (Thomas Nelson) of the Bible, which provides for special nuances to biblical insight and stories.

—Kevin Sparkman



Andrew Greer & Ginny Owens

## VIDEO RESOURCES



LEARN MORE ABOUT TRANSCENDING MYSTERIES FROM GINNY OWENS & ANDREW GREER.



ANDREW & GINNY'S FAVORITE CHAPTERS FROM TRANSCENDING MYSTERIES + PERFORMANCES!



GINNY & ANDREW DISCUSS PUTTING WORDS INTO ACTION.



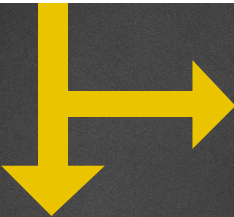
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